THE
POETICAL WORKS
OF
JOHN MILTON,
PRINTED FROM THE TEXT OF
TODD, HAWKINS AND OTHERS.

A NEW EDITION
COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.

WITH THE POET'S LIFE
BY
EDWARD PHILIPS.

LEIPSIC:
PRINTED FOR ERNEST FLEISCHER.
1854.
Or all the several parts of history, that which sets forth the lives, and commemorates the most remarkable actions, sayings, or writings of famous and illustrious persons, whether in war or peace; whether many together, or any one in particular, as it is not the least useful in its self, so it is in highest vogue and esteem among the studious and reading part of mankind. The most eminent in this way of history were among the ancients Plutarch and Diogenes Laertius of the Greeks; the first wrote the lives, for the most part, of the most renowned heroes and warriors of the Greeks and Romans; the other the lives of the ancient Greek philosophers; and Cornelius Nepos (or as some will have it Aemilius Probus) of the Latins, who wrote the lives of the most illustrious Greek and Roman generals. Among the moderns, Machiavel, a noble Florentine, who elegantly wrote the life of Castruccio Castracano, Lord of Luca; and of our nation, Sir Fulk Grevil, who wrote the life of his most intimate friend Sir Philip Sidney: Mr. Thomas Stanly; of Cumberlo-Green, who made a most elaborate improvement to the foresaid Laertius, by adding to what he found in him, what by diligent search and enquiry he collected from other authors of best authority.

- Isaac Walton, who wrote the lives of Sir Henry Wotton, D. Donne; and for his divine poems, the admired Mr. George Herbert. Lastly, not to mention several other biographers of considerable note, the great Gas-sendus of France, the worthy celebrator of two no less
worthy subjects of his impartial pen; viz. the noble philosopher Epicurus, and the most politely learned virtuoso of his age, his country-man, Monsieur Periesk. And pity it is the person whose memory we have here undertaken to perpetuate, by recounting the most memorable transactions of his life, (though his works sufficiently recommend him to the world) finds not a well-informed pen able to set him forth, equal with the best of those here mentioned: for doubtless had his fame been as much spread through Europe, in Thuanus's time as now it is, and hath been for several years, he had justly merited from that great historian, an eulogy not inferior to the highest, by him given to all the learned and ingenious that lived within the compass of his history. For we may safely and justly affirm, that take him in all respects, for acumen of wit, quickness of apprehension, sagacity of judgment, depth of argument, and elegancy of style, as well in Latin as English, as well in verse as prose, he is scarce to be paralleled by any the best of writers our nation hath in any age brought forth. He was born in London, in a house in Bread-street, the lease whereof, as I take it, but for certain it was a house in Bread-street, became in time part of his estate in the year of our Lord, 1606. His father, John Milton, an honest, worthy, and substantial citizen of London, by profession a scrivener, to which profession he voluntarily betook himself, by the advice and assistance of an intimate friend of his, eminent in that calling, upon his being cast out by his father, a bigoted Roman Catholic, for embracing, when young, the Protestant faith, and abjuring the Popish tenets; for he is said to have been descended of an ancient family of the Miltons, of Milton, near Abington in Oxfordshire; where they had been a long time seated, as appears by the monuments still to be seen in Milton church, till one of the family having taken the wrong side, in the contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, was sequestered of all his estate, but what he held by his wife. However, certain it is, that this vocation he followed for many years, at his said house in Bread-street, with success suitable to his industry, and prudent conduct of his affairs; yet did he not so far quit his own generous and ingenious inclinations, as to make
himself wholly a slave to the world: for he sometimes found vacant hours to the study (which he made his recreation) of the noble science of music, in which he advanced to that perfection, that as I have been told, and as I take it, by our author himself, he composed an II Nomine of forty parts: for which he was rewarded with a gold medal and chain by a Polish prince, to whom he presented it. However, this is a truth not to be denied, that for several songs of his composition, after the way of these times, three or four of which are still to be seen in Old Wilby's set of airs, besides some compositions of his in Ravenscroft's Psalms, he gained the reputation of a considerable master in this most charming of all the liberal sciences: yet all this while, he managed his grand affair of this world with such prudence and diligence that by, the assistance of divine providence favouring his honest endeavours, he gained a competent estate, whereby he was enabled to make a handsome provision both for the education and maintenance of his children; for three he had, and no more, all by one wife, Sarah, of the family of the Castons, derived originally from Wales. A woman of incomparable virtue and goodness; John, the eldest, the subject of our present work; Christopher, and an only daughter, Ann; Christopher being principally designed for the study of the common law of England, was entered young a student of the Inner-Temple, of which house he lived to be an ancient bencher, and keeping close to that study and profession all his lifetime, except in the time of the civil wars of England; when being a great favourer and assertor of the king's cause, and obnoxious to the parliament's side, by acting to his utmost power against them, so long as he kept his station at Reading; and after that town was taken by the parliament forces, being forced to quit his house there, he steered his course according to the motion of the king's army.

But when the war was ended with victory and success to the parliament party, by the valour of General Fairfax, and the craft and conduct of Cromwell; and his composition made by the help of his brother's interest, with the then prevailing power, he betook himself again to his former study and profession, following cham-
ber-practice every term, yet came to no advancement in
the world in a long time, except some small employ in
the town of Ipswich, where (and near it) he lived all
the latter time of his life. For he was a person of a
modest quiet temper, preferring justice and virtue before
all worldly pleasure or grandeur: but in the beginning of
the reign of King James the II. for his known integrity
and ability in the law, he was by some persons of qua-

lity recommended to the king, and at a call of Serjeants
received the coif, and the same day was sworn one of
the barons of the exchequer, and soon after made one
of the judges of the common pleas; but his years and
indisposition not well brooking the fatigue of public em-
ployment, he continued not long in either of these sta-
tions; but having his quietus est, retired to a country
life, his study and devotion. Ann, the only daughter of
the said John Milton the elder, had a considerable dowry
given her by her father, in marriage with Edward Phi-
lips, (the son of Edward Philips of Shrewsbury,) who
coming up young to town, was bred up in the crown
office in chancery, and at length came to be secondary
of the office under old Mr. Bembo; by him she had, be-
sides other children that died infants, two sons yet sur-
viving, of whom more hereafter; and by a second hus-
band, M. Thomas Agar, who (upon the death of his in-
timate friend Mr. Philips) worthily succeeded in the place,
which except some time of exclusion before and during
the interregnum, he held for many years, and left it to
Mr. Thomas Milton (the son of the aforementioned Sir
Christopher) who at this day executes it with great re-
putation and ability. Two daughters, Mary who died
very young, and Ann yet surviving.

But to hasten back to our matter in hand: John our
author, who was destined to be the ornament and glory
of his country, was sent, together with his brother, to
Paul's school, whereof Dr. Gill, the elder, was then
chief master; where he was entered into the first rudiments of learning, and advanced therein with that ad-
mirable success, not more by the discipline of the school
and good instructions of his masters, (for that he had
another master possibly at his father's house, appears
by the fourth elegy of his Latin poems written in his
eighteenth year, to Thomas Young, pastor of the English company of merchants at Hamborough, wherein he owns and stiles him his master) than by his own happy genius, prompt wit and apprehension, and insuperable industry; for he generally sat up half the night, as well in voluntary improvements of his own choice, as the exact perfecting of his school exercises: so that at the age of fifteen he was full ripe for academic learning, and accordingly was sent to the University of Cambridge; where in Christ's College, under the tuition of a very eminent learned man, whose name I cannot call to mind, he studied seven years; and took his degree of master of arts; and for the extraordinary wit and reading he had shown in his performances to attain his degree, (some whereof spoken at a vacation exercise in his nineteenth year of age, are to be yet seen in his miscellaneous poems) he was loved and admired by the whole university, particularly by the fellows and most ingenious persons of his house. Among the rest there was a young gentleman, one Mr. King, with whom, for his great learning and parts, he had contracted a particular friendship and intimacy; whose death (for he was drowned on the Irish Seas in his passage from Chester to Ireland) he bewails in that most excellent monody in his forementioned poems, intitled Lycidas. Never was the loss of friend so elegantly lamented; and among the rest of his juvenile poems, some he wrote at the age of fifteen, which contain a poetical genius scarce to be paralleled by any English writer. Soon after he had taken his master's degree, he thought fit to leave the university: not upon any disgust or discontent for want of preferment, as some ill-willers have reported; nor upon any cause whatsoever forced to fly, as his detractors maliciously feign; but from which aspersion he sufficiently clears himself in his second answer to Alexander Morus, the author of a book called Clamor Regii Sanguinis ad Caelum, the chief of his calumniators; in which he plainly makes it out, that after his leaving the university, to the no small trouble of his fellow-collegiates, who in general regretted his absence, he for the space of five years lived for the most part with his father and mother at their house at Horton, near Colebrook, in Berkshire; whither his father
having got an estate to his content, and left off all business, was retired from the cares and fatigues of the world. After the said term of five years, his mother then dying, he was willing to add to his acquired learning the observation of foreign customs, manners, and institutions; and thereupon took a resolution to travel, more especially designing for Italy; and accordingly, with his father's consent and assistance, he put himself into an equipage suitable to such a design; and so intending to go by the way of France, he set out for Paris, accompanied only with one man, who attended him through all his travels; for his prudence was his guide, and his learning his introduction and presentation to persons of most eminent quality. However, he had also a most civil and obliging letter of direction and advice from Sir Henry Wotton, then provost of Eaton, and formerly resident ambassador from King James the First to the state of Venice; which letter is to be seen in the first edition of his miscellaneous poems. At Paris being recommended by the said Sir Henry and other persons of quality, he went first to wait upon my Lord Scudamore, then ambassador in France from King Charles the First. My lord received him with wonderful civility; and understanding he had a desire to make a visit to the great Hugo Grotius, he sent several of his attendants to wait upon him, and to present him in his name to that renowned doctor, and statesman, who was at that time ambassador from Christina, Queen of Sweden, to the French king. Grotius took the visit kindly, and gave him entertainment suitable to his worth, and the high commendations he had heard of him. After a few days not intending to make the usual tour of France, he took his leave of my lord, who at his departure from Paris, gave him letters to the English merchants residing in any part through which he was to travel, in which they were requested to show him all the kindness, and do him all the good offices that lay in their power.

From Paris he hastened on his journey to Nicaea, where he took shipping, and in a short space arrived at Genoa; from whence he went to Leghorn, thence to Pisa, and so to Florence: in this city he met with many charming objects, which invited him to stay a longer time than he intended; the pleasant situation of the place, the noble-
ness of the structures, the exact humanity and civility of the inhabitants, the more polite and refined sort of language there, than elsewhere. During the time of his stay here, which was about two months; he visited all the private academies of the city, which are places established for the improvement of wit and learning, and maintained a correspondence and perpetual friendship among gentlemen fitly qualified for such an institution: and such sort of academies there are in all or most of the most noted cities in Italy. Visiting these places, he was soon taken notice of by the most learned and ingenious of the nobility, and the grand wits of Florence, who caressed him with all the honours and civilities imaginable, particularly Jacobo Gaddi, Carolo Dati, Antonio Francini, Frescobaldo, Cultellino, Banmatthei and Clementillo: whereof Gaddi hath a large elegant Italian Canzonet in his praise: Dati, a Latin epistle; both printed before his Latin poems, together with a Latin distich of the Marquess of Villa, and another of Selvaggi, and a Latin tetrastich of Giovanni Salsilli, a Roman.

From Florence he took his journey to Siena, from thence to Rome; where he was detained much about the same time he had been at Florence; as well by his desire of seeing all the rarities and antiquities of that most glorious and renowned city, as by the conversation of Lucas Holstenius, and other learned and ingenious men; who highly valued his acquaintance, and treated him with all possible respect.

From Rome he travelled to Naples, where he was introduced by a certain hermit, who accompanied him in his journey from Rome thither, into the knowledge of Giovanni Baptista Manso, Marquess of Villa, a Neapolitan by birth, a person of high nobility, virtue and honour, to whom the famous Italian poet, Torquato Tasso, wrote his treatise de Amicitia; and moreover mentions him with great honour in that illustrious poem of his, intituled, Jerusalemme Liberata: this noble marquess received him with extraordinary respect and civility; and went with him himself to give him a sight of all that was of note and remark in the city, particularly the viceroy's palace, and was often in person to visit him at his lodgings. Moreover, this noble marquess honoured him so far, as to
make a Latin distich in his praise, as hath been already mentioned; which being no less pithy than short, though already in print, it will not be unworthy the while here to repeat.

**Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, si:) pietas, sic,**

**Non Anglus, verum Hercle Angelus, ipse foret.**

In return of this honour, and in gratitude for the many favours and civilities received of him, he presented him at his departure with a large Latin eclogue, intitled, Mansus, afterwards published among his Latin poems. The marquess at his taking leave of him gave him this compliment, that he would have done him many more offices of kindness and civility, but was therefore rendered inpacable in regard he had been over-liberal in his speech against the religion of the country.

He had entertained some thoughts of passing over into Sicily and Greece, but was diverted by the news he received from England, that affairs there were tending towards a civil war; thinking it a thing unworthy in him to be taking his pleasure in foreign parts, while his countrymen at home were fighting for their liberty: but first resolved to see Rome once more; and though the merchants gave him a caution that the Jesuits were hatching designs against him, in case he should return thither, by reason of the freedom he took in all his discourses of religion; nevertheless he ventured to prosecute his resolution, and to Rome the second time he went, determining with himself not industriously to begin to fall into any discourse about religion; but, being asked, not to deny or endeavour to conceal his own sentiments. Two months he staid at Rome; and in all that time never flinched, but was ready to defend the orthodox faith against all opposers; and so well he succeeded therein, that good providence guarded him, he went safe from Rome back to Florence, where his return to his friends of that city was welcomed with as much joy and affection, as had it been to his friends and relations in his own country, he could not have come a more joyful and welcome guest. Here, having stayed

*) This word relates to his being a Protestant not a Roman Catholic.
as long as at his first coming, except an excursion of a few days to Luca, crossing the Apennine, and passing through Bononia and Ferrara, he arrived at Venice, where when he had spent a month's time in viewing of that stately city, and shipped up a parcel of curious and rare books which he had picked up in his travels; particularly a chest or two of choice music-books, of the best masters flourishing about that time in Italy, namely, Luca Maruzzo, Monte Verde, Horatio Vecchi, Cafa, the prince of Venosa, and several others, he took his course through Verona, Milan, and the Poenine Alps, and so by the Lake Leman to Geneva, where he staid for some time, and had daily converse with the most learned Giovanni Deodati, theology-professor in that city, and so returning through France, by the same way he had passed it going to Italy, he, after a peregrination of one complete year and about three months, arrived safe in England, about the time of the king's making his second expedition against the Scots. Soon after his return, and visits paid to his father and other friends, he took him a lodging in St. Bride's church-yard, at the house of Russel a tailor, where he first undertook the education and instruction of his sister's two sons, the younger whereof had been wholly committed to his charge and care. And here by the way, I judge it not impertinent to mention the many authors both of the Latin and Greek, which through his excellent judgment and way of teaching, far above the pedantry of common public schools, (where such authors are scarce ever heard of) were run over within no greater compass of time, even than from ten to fifteen or sixteen years of age. Of the Latin the four grand authors De Re Rustica, Cato, Varro, Columella, and Palladius; Cornelius Celsus, an ancient physician of the Romans; a great part of Pliny's Natural History, Vitruvius's Architecture, Frontinus's Stratagems, with the two egregious poets, Lucretius and Manilius. Of the Greek, Hesiod, a poet equal with Homer; Aratus's Phaenomena and Diosemeia, Dionysius, Afer de situ Orbis, Oppian's Cynegeticks and Halieuticks. Quintus Calaber's poem of the Trojan War, continued from Homer; Apollonius Rhodius's Argonauticks, and in prose, Plutarch's Placita Philosophorum, Περὶ Παλαθἀνων Αγαφίας, Geminus's Astronomy; Xenophon's Cyri In-
stitutio et Anabasis, Aelian’s Tactics, and Polyænus’s Warlike Stratagems; thus thy teaching, he in some measure increased his own knowledge, having the reading of all these authors as it were by proxy; and all this might possibly have conduced to the preserving of his eye-sight, had he not moreover, been perpetually busied in his own laborious undertakings of the book or pen. Nor did the time thus studiously employed in conquering the Greek and Latin tongues hinder the attaining to the chief Oriental languages, viz. the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac, so far as to go through the Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses in Hebrew, to make a good entrance into the Targum or Chaldee Paraphrase, and to understand several chapters of St. Matthew in the Syriac Testament, besides an Introduction into several Arts and Sciences, by reading Urstisius’s Arithmetic, Riff’s Geometry, Petiscus’s Trigonometry, Joannes de Sacro Bosco de Sphaera; and into the Italian and French tongues, by reading in Italian Giovan Villani’s History of the Transactions between several petty States of Italy; and in French a great part of Pierre Davity, the famous Geographer of France in his time. The Sunday’s work was for the most part the reading each day a chapter of the Greek Testament, and hearing his learned exposition upon the same (and how this savoured of Atheism in him, I leave to the courteous backbiter to judge). The next work after this was the writing from his own dictation, some part, from time to time, of a Tractate, which he thought fit to collect from the ablest of divines, who had written of that subject, Amesius, Wellebius, &c. viz. A perfect System of Divinity, of which more hereafter. Now persons so far manœuvred into the highest paths of literature, both divine and human, had they received his documents with the same acuteness of wit and apprehension, the same industry, alacrity, and thirst after knowledge, as the instructor was endued with, what prodigies of wit and learning might they have proved! the scholars might in some degree have come near to the equalling of the master, or at least have in some sort made good what he seems to predict in the close of an elegy he made in the seventeenth year of his age, upon the death of one of his sister’s children, (a daughter) who died in her infancy.
Then thou the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That to the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

But to return to the thread of our discourse; he made no long stay in his lodgings in St. Bride's church-yard; necessity of having a place to dispose his books in, and other goods fit for the furnishing of a good handsome house, hastening him to take one; and accordingly a pretty garden-house he took in Aldersgate-street, at the end of an entry; and therefore the fitter for his turn, by the reason of the privacy, besides that there are few streets in London more free from noise than that.

Here first it was that his academic erudition was put in practice, and vigourously proceeded, he himself giving an example to those under him, (for it was not long after his taking this house, ere his elder nephew was put to board with him also) of hard study, and spare diet; only this advantage he had, that once in three weeks or a month, he would drop into the society of some young sparks, of his acquaintance, the chief whereof were Mr. Alphry, and Mr. Miller, two gentlemen of Gray's-Inn, the beaus of those times, but nothing near so bad as those now-a-days; with these gentlemen he would so far make bold with his body, as now and then to keep a gaudy day.

In this house he continued several years, in the one or two first whereof, he set out several treatises, viz. that of Reformation; that against Prelatical Episcopacy; the Reason of Church Government; the Defence of Smtimnuus, at least the greatest part of them, but as I take it, all; and some time after, one sheet of Education, which he dedicated to Mr. Samuel Hartlib, he that wrote so much of husbandry; this sheet is printed at the end of the second edition of his poems; and lastly, Areopagitica. During the time also of his continuance in this house, there fell out several occasions of the increasing of his family. His father, who till the taking of Reading, by the Earl of Essex's forces, had lived with his other son at his house there; was upon that son's dissettlement neces-
sitated to betake himself to this his eldest son, with whom he lived for some years, even to his dying day. In the next place he had an addition of some scholars, to which may be added, his entering into matrimony; but he had his wife's company so small a time, that he may well be said to have become a single man again soon after. About Whitsun'tide it was, or a little after, that he took a journey into the country, nobody about him certainly knowing the reason, or that it was any more than a journey of recreation. After a month's stay, home he returns a married man, that went out a bachelor; his wife being Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, then a justice of peace, of Forrest-hill, near Shotover, in Oxfordshire, some few of her nearest relations accompanying the bride to her new habitation, which by reason the father nor any body else were yet come, was able to receive them, where the feasting held for some days, in celebration of the nuptials, and for entertainment of the bride's friends. At length they took their leave, and returning to Forrest-hill, left the sister behind, probably not much to her satisfaction, as appeared by the sequel; by that time she had for a month or thereabout, led a philosophical life (after having been used to a great house, and much company and joviality.) Her friends, possibly incited by her own desire, made earnest suit by letter, to have her company the remaining part of the summer, which was granted, on condition of her return at the time appointed, Michaelmas, or thereabouts: in the mean time came his father, and some of the formentioned disciples. And now the studies went on with so much the more vigour, as there were more hands and heads employed, the old gentleman living wholly retired to his rest and devotion, without the least trouble imaginable. Our author, now as it were, a single man again, made it his chief diversion, now and then in an evening, to visit the lady Margaret Lee, daughter to the —— Lee, Earl of Marlborough, lord high treasurer of England, and president of the privy council to King James the First. This lady being a woman of great wit and ingenuity, had a particular honour for him, and took much delight in his company, as likewise her husband, Captain Hobson, a very accomplished gentleman; and what esteem he at the same time had for her, appears by a sonnet he made in
praise of her, to be seen among his other sonnets in his ex-
tant poems. Michaelmas being come, and no news of his
wife's return, he sent for her by letter, and receiving no
answer, sent several other letters, which were also unan-
swered; so that at last he dispatched down a foot mes-
enger with a letter, desiring her return; but the messenger
came back not only without an answer, at least a satisfac-
tory one, but to the best of my remembrance, reported
that he was dismissed with some sort of contempt. This
proceeding, in all probability, was grounded upon no other
cause but this, namely, that the family being generally
addicted to the cavalier party, as they called it, and some
of them possibly engaged in the king's service, who by
this time had his head quarters at Oxford, and was in some
prospect of success, they began to repent them of hav-
ing matched the eldest daughter of the family to a person
so contrary to them in opinion, and thought it would be a
blot in their escutcheon whenever that court should come
to flourish again; however, it so incensed our author that
he thought it would be dishonourable ever to receive her
again, after such a repulse, to that he forthwith prepared
to fortify himself with arguments for such a resolution,
and accordingly wrote two treatises, by which he un-
dertook to maintain, that it was against reason (and the
enjoyment of it not proveable by scripture) for any married
couple disagreeable in humour and temper, or having an
aversion to each, to be forced to live yoked together all
their days. The first was, his Doctrine and Discipline of
Divorce; of which there was printed a second edition,
with some additions. The other in prosecution of the first,
was styled Tetrachordon. Then the better to confirm his
own opinion, by the attestation of others, he set out a
piece called the Judgment of Martin Bucer, a protestant
minister, being a translation out of that reverend divine,
of some part of his works, exactly agreeing with him in
sentiment. Lastly, he wrote in answer to a pragmatical
clerk, wo would needs give himself the honour of writing
against so great a man, his Colasterion, or Rod of Cor-
rection for a Saucy Impertinent. Not very long after the
setting forth of these treatises, having application made to
him by several gentlemen of his acquaintance, for the edu-
cation of their sons, as understanding haply the progress
he had infixed by his first undertakings of that nature, he laid out for a larger house, and soon found it out; but in the interim before he removed, there fell out a passage, which though it altered not the whole course he was going to steer, yet it put a stop or rather an end to a grand affair, which was more than probably thought to be then in agitation. It was, indeed, a design of marrying one of Dr. Davis's daughters, a very handsome and witty gentlewoman, but averse as it is said to this motion; however, the intelligence hereof, and the then declining state of the king's cause, and consequently of the circumstances of Justice Powell's family, caused them to set all engines on work, and to restore the late married woman to the station wherein they a little before had planted her; at last this device was pitched upon. There dwelt in the Lane of St. Martin's le Grand, which was hard by, a relation of our author's, one Blackborough, whom it was known he often visited, and upon this occasion the visits were the more narrowly observed, and possibly there might be a combination between both parties; the friends on both sides concentring in the same action though on different behalfs. One time above the rest, he making his usual visit, the wife was ready in another room, and on a sudden he was surprised to see one whom he thought to have never seen more, making submission and begging pardon on her knees before him; he might probably at first make some shew of aversion and rejection; but partly his own generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger and revenge; and partly the strong intercession of friends on both sides soon brought him to an act of oblivion, and a firm league of peace for the future; and it was at length concluded, that she should remain at a friend's house till such time as he was settled in his new house at Barbican, and all things for her reception in order; the place agreed on for her present abode was the widow Webber's house in St. Clement's church-yard, whose second daughter had been married to the other brother many years before; the first fruits of her return to her husband was a brave girl, born within a year after; though, whether by ill constitution or want of care, she grew more and more decrepit. But it was not only by children that she increased the number of the fa-
mily, for in no very long time after her coming, she had a great resort of her kindred with her in the house, viz. her father and mother, and several of her brothers and sisters, which were in all pretty numerous; who upon his father's sickening and dying soon after, went away. And now the house looked again like a house of the Muses only, though the accession of scholars was not great. Possibly his proceeding thus far in the education of youth may have been the occasion of some of his adversaries calling him pedagogue and schoolmaster. Whereas it is well known he never set up for a public school to teach all the young fry of a parish, but only was willing to impart his learning and knowledge to relations, and the sons of some gentlemen that were his intimate friends; besides, that neither his converse, nor his writings, nor his manner of teaching, ever savoured in the least any thing of pedantry; and probably he might have some prospect of putting in practice his academical institution, according to the model laid down in his sheet of education. The progress of which design was afterwards diverted by a series of alteration in the affairs of state; for I am much mistaken if there were not about this time a design in agitation of making him adjutant-general in Sir William Waller's army; but the new modelling of the army soon following, proved an obstruction to that design; and Sir William's commission being laid down, as the common saying is, to turn cat in pan. It was not long after the march of Fairfax and Cromwell through the city of London with the whole army, to quell the insurrections, Brown and Massey, now malcontents also, were endeavouring to raise in the city against the army's proceedings, ere he left his great house in Barbican, and betook himself to a smaller in High Holborn, among those that open backward into Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, here he lived a private and quiet life, still prosecuting his study and curious search into knowledge, the grand affair perpetually of his life; till such time as the war being now at an end, with complete victory to the parliament's side, as the parliament then stood purged of all its dissenting members, and the king after some treaties with the army, reinfecta, brought to his trial; the form of government being now changed into a free state, he was hereupon obliged to write a treatise,
called the Tenure of Kings and Magistrates. After which his thoughts were bent upon retiring again to his own private studies, and falling upon such subjects as his proper genius prompted him to write of, among which was the history of our own nation from the beginning till the Norman conquest, wherein he had made some progress. When for this his last treatise, reviving the fame of other things he had formerly published, being more and more taken notice of for his excellency of stile, and depth of judgment, he was courted into the service of this new commonwealth, and at last prevailed with (for he never hunted after preferment, nor affected the tintamar and hurry of public business) to take upon him the office of Latin secretary to the counsel of state; for all their letters to foreign princes and states; for they stuck to this noble and generous resolution, not to write to any, or receive answers from them, but in a language most proper to maintain a correspondence among the learned of all nations in this part of the world; scorning to carry on their affairs in the wheeling, lisping jargon of the cringing French, especially having a minister of state able to cope with the ablest any prince or state could employ for the Latin tongue; and so well he acquitted himself in this station, that he gained from abroad both reputation to himself, and credit to the state that employed him; and it was well the business of his office came not very fast upon him; for he was scarce well warm in his secretariyship before other work flowed in upon him, which took him up for some considerable time. In the first place there came out a book said to have been written by the king, and finished a little before his death, entitled, Εἰκόν Βασιλική, that is, The Royal Image; a book highly cried up for its smooth style, and pathetical composure; wherefore to obviate the impression it was like to make among the many, he was obliged to write an answer, which he entitled Εἰκονομική, or Ima e-breaker; and upon the heels of that, out comes in public the great Kill-cow of Christendom, with his De- fensio Regis contra Populum Anglicanum; a man so famous and cried up for his Plinian Exercitations, and other pieces of reputed learning, that there could no where have been found a champion that durst lift up the pen against so formidable an adversary, had not our little English
David had the courage to undertake this great French Goliath, to whom he gave such a hit in the forehead, that he presently staggered, and soon after fell; for immediately upon the coming out of the answer, entitled, Defensio Populi Anglicani, contra Claudium Anonymum, &c. he that till then had been chief minister and superintendent in the court of the learned Christina, Queen of Sweden, dwindled in esteem to that degree, that he at last vouchsafed to speak to the meanest servant. In short, he was dismissed with so cold and slighting an adieu, that after a faint dying reply, he was glad to have recourse to death, the remedy of evils, and ender of controversies, and now I presume our author had some breathing space; but it was not long; for though Salmasius was departed, he left some stings behind, new enemies started up, barkers, though no great biters; who the first assessor of Salmasius's cause was, is not certainly known, but variously conjectured at, some supposing it to be one Janus, a Lawyer of Gray's Inn, some Dr. Bramhal, made by King Charles the Second, after his restoration, Archbishop of Armagh in Ireland; but whoever the author was, the book was thought fit to be taken into correction, and our author not thinking it worth his own undertaking, to the disturbing the progress of whatever more chosen work he had then in hands, committed this task to the youngest of his nephews, but with such exact emendations before it went to the press, that it might have very well have passed for his, but that he was willing the person that took the pains to prepare it for his examination and polishment, should have the name and credit of being the author; so that it came forth under this title, Joannis Philippi Anglicani Defensio pro Populo Anglicano contras, &c. during the writing and publishing of this book, he lodged at one Thompson's, next door to the Bull-Head tavern at Charter Cross, opening into the Spring Garden, which seems to have been only a lodging taken, till his designed apartment in Scotland Yard was prepared for him; for hither he soon removed from the foresaid place; and here his third child, a son, was born, which through the ill usage, or bad constitution of an ill chosen nurse, died an infant; from this apartment, whether he thought it not healthy, or otherwise convenient for his use, or what-

* 3
ever else was the reason, he soon after took a pretty garden-house in Petty France, in Westminster, next door to the Lord Scudamore's, and opening into St. James's Park; here he remained no less than eight years, namely, from the year 1652, till within a few weeks of King Charles the Second's restoration. In this house his first wife dying in childbed, he married a second, who after a year's time died in childbed also; this second marriage was about two or three years after his being wholly deprived of sight, which was just going about the time of his answering Salmasius; whereupon his adversaries gladly take occasion of imputing his blindness as a judgment upon him for his answering the king's book, &c. whereas it is most certainly known that his sight, what with his continual study, his being subject to a head-ache, and his perpetual tampering with physic to preserve it, had been decaying for above a dozen years before, and the sight of one for a long time clearly lost. Here he wrote, by his amanuensis, his two answers to Alexander More; who upon the last answer quitted the field. So that being now quiet from state-adversaries and public contests, he had leisure again for his own studies and private designs; which were his foresaid History of England, and a new Thesaurus Linguae Latinae, according to the manner of Stephanus; a work he had been long since collecting from his own reading, and still went on with it at times, even very near to his dying day; but the papers after his death were so discomposed and deficient, that it could not be made fit for the press; however, what there was of it, was made use of for another dictionary. But the height of his noble fancy and invention began now to be seriously and mainly employed in a subject worthy of such a Muse, viz. A heroic poem, entitled, Paradise Lost; the noblest in the general esteem of learned and judicious persons, of any yet written by any either ancient or modern: this subject was first designed a tragedy, and in the fourth book of the poem there are six verses, which several years before the poem was begun, were shewn to me, and some others, as designed for the very beginning of the said tragedy. The verses are these:
O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd!
Look'st from thy sole dominion, like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call
But with no friendly voice; and add thy name
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams
That bring to my remembrance, from what state
I fell; how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
Warring in Heaven, against Heaven's glorious King.

There is another very remarkable passage in the composition of this poem, which I have a particular occasion to remember; for whereas I had the perusal of it from the very beginning; for some years as I went from time to time to visit him, in a parcel of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time, which being written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want correction as to the orthography and pointing; having as the summer came on, not been shewed any for a considerable while, and desiring the reason thereof, was answered, that his vein never happily flowed, but from the autumnal equinoctial to the vernal, and that whatever he attempted was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much; so that in all the years he was about this poem, he may be said to have spent but half his time therein. It was but a little before the king's restoration that he wrote and published his book in defence of a commonwealth; so undaunted he was in declaring his true sentiments to the world; and not long before, his power of the civil magistrate in ecclesiastical affairs; and his treatise against Hirelings, just upon the king's coming over; having a little before been sequestered from his office of Latin secretary, and the salary thereunto belonging, he was forced to leave his house also, in Petty France, where all the time of his abode there, which was eight years, as above-mentioned, he was frequently visited by persons of quality, particularly my Lady Ranala, whose son for some time he instructed; all learned foreigners of note, who could not part out of this city, without giving a visit to a person so eminent; and lastly, by particular friends that had a high esteem for him, viz. Mr. Andrew Marvell, young
Laurence, (the son of him that was president of Oliver's council) to whom there is a sonnet among the rest, in his printed poems; Mr. Marchamont Needham, the writer of Politicus; but above all, Mr. Syriak Skinner, whom he honoured with two sonnets, one long since public among his poems; the other but newly printed. His next removal was, by the advice of those that wished him well, and had a concern for his preservation, into a place of retirement and abscondence, till such time as the current of affairs for the future should instruct him what farther course to take; it was a friend's house, in Bartholomew Close, where he lived till the act of olivion came forth, which it pleased God proved as favourable to him as could be hoped or expected, through the intercession of some that stood his friends both in council and parliament; particularly in the House of Commons, Mr. Andrew Marvel, a member for Hull, acted vigorously in his behalf, and made a considerable party for him; so that, together with John Goodwin, of Coleman Street, he was only so far excepted as not to bear any office in the commonwealth. Soon after appearing again in public, he took a house in Holborn, near Red-Lion Fields, where he stayed not long before his pardon having passed the seal, he removed to Jewin Street, there he lived when he married his third wife, recommended to him by his old friend Dr. Paget, in Coleman Street; but he stayed not long after his new marriage ere he removed to a house in the Artillery-walk, leading to Bunhill Fields. And this was his last stage in this world, but it was of many years continuance, more perhaps than he had had in any other place besides. Here he finished his noble poem, and published it in the year 1666; the first edition was printed in quarto, by one Simons, a printer, in Aldersgate Street; the other in a large octavo, by Starky, near Temple Bar, amended, enlarged, and differently disposed as to the number of books, by his own hand — that is by his own appointment; the last set forth many years since his death in a large folio, with cuts, added by Jacob Tonson. Here it was also that he finished and published his history of our nation till the conquest, all complete so far as he went, some passages only excepted, which being thought too sharp against the clergy, could not pass the hand of
the licencer, were in the hands of the late Earl of Anglesey, while he lived, where at present is uncertain. It cannot certainly be concluded when he wrote his excellent tragedy entitled Samson Agonistes, but sure enough it is that it came forth after his publication of Paradise Lost, together with his other poem called Paradise Regained, which doubtless was begun and finished and printed after the other was published, and that in a wonderful short space, considering the sublimeness of it; however, it is generally censured to be much inferior to the other, though he could not hear with patience any such thing when related to him; possibly the subject may not afford such variety of invention, but it is thought by the most judicious to be little or nothing inferior to the other for style and decorum. The said Earl of Anglesey, whom he presented with a copy of the unlicensed papers of his history, came often here to visit him, as very much coveting his society and converse, as likewise others of the nobility, and many persons of eminent quality; nor were the visits of foreigners ever more frequent than in this place, almost to his dying day. His treatise of true Religion, Heresy, Schism and Toleration, &c. was doubtless the last thing of his writing that was published before his death. He had, as I remember, prepared for the press an answer to some little scribining quack in London, who had written a scurrilous libel against him, but whether by the dissuasion of friends, as thinking him a fellow no worth his notice, or for whatever cause I know not, this answer was never published. He died in the year 1673, towards the latter end of the summer, and had a very decent interment according to his quality, in the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, being attended from his house to the church by several gentlemen then in town, his principal well-wishers and admirers. He had three daughters, who survived him many years, (and a son) all by his first wife, (of whom sufficient mention hath been made). Anne, his eldest, as abovesaid, and Mary, his second, who were both born at his house in Barbican; and Debora, the youngest, who is yet living, born at his house in Petty France, between whom and his second daughter, the son, named John, was born as abovementioned, at his apartment in Scotland Yard. By his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of
Captain Woodcock, of Hackney, he had only one daughter, of which the mother, the first year after her marriage, died in childbed, and the child also within a month after. By his third wife, Elizabeth, the daughter of one Mr. Minshal, of Cheshire, (and kinswoman to Dr. Paget) who survived him, and is said to be yet living, he never had any child; and those he had by the first he made serviceable to him in that very particular in which he most wanted their service, and supplied his want of eye-sight by their eyes and tongue; for though he had daily about him one or other to read to him, some person of man's estate, who of their own accord greedily caught at the opportunity of being his readers, that they might as well reap the benefit of what they read to him, as oblige him by the benefit of their reading; others, of younger years sent by their parents to the same end, yet excusing only the eldest daughter by reason of her bodily infirmity, and difficult utterance of speech, (which to say truth I doubt was the principal cause of excusing her) the other two were condemned to the performance of reading, and exactly pronouncing of all the languages of whatever book he should at one time or other think fit to peruse; vix. the Hebrew (and I think the Syriac), the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, Spanish and French. All which sorts of books to be confined to read, without understanding one word, must needs be a trial of patience, almost beyond endurance; yet it was endured by both for a long time, yet the irksomeness of this employment could not be always concealed, but broke out more and more into expressions of uneasiness; so that at length they were all (even the eldest also) sent out to learn some curious and ingenious sorts of manufacture, that are proper for women to learn, particularly embroideries in gold or silver. It had been happy indeed if the daughters of such a person had been made in some measure inheritrices of their father's learning; but since fate otherwise decreed, the greatest honour that can be ascribed to this now living (and so would have been to the others had they lived) is to be daughter to a man of his extraordinary character.

He is said to have died worth 1500l. in money, (a considerable estate, all things considered,) besides house-
hold goods; for he sustained such losses as might well have broke any person less frugal and temperate than himself; no less than 2000l. which he had put for security and improvement into the excise office, but neglecting to recal it in time, could never after get it out, with all the power and interest he had in the great ones of those times; besides another great sum, by mismanagement and for want of good advice.

Thus I have reduced into form and order whatever I have been able to rally up, either from the recollection of my own memory, of things transacted while I was with him, or the information of others equally conversant afterwards, or from his own mouth by frequent visits to the last.

I shall conclude with two material passages, which though they relate not immediately to our author, or his own particular concerns; yet in regard they happened during his public employ, and consequently fell most especially under his cognizance; it will not be amiss here to subjoin them. The first was this.

Before the war broke forth between the states of England, and the Dutch, the Hollanders sent over three ambassadors in order to an accommodation; but they returning re infecta, the Dutch sent away a plenipoteniary, to offer peace upon much milder terms, or at least to gain more time.

But this plenipotentiary could not make such haste, but that the parliament had procured a copy of their instructions in Holland, which were delivered by our author to his kinsman that was then with him, to translate for the council to view, before the said plenipotentiary had taken shipping for England; an answer to all he had in charge lay ready for him, before he made his public entry into London.

In the next place there came a person with a very sumptuous train; pretending himself an agent from the Prince of Conde, then in arms against Cardinal Mazarine: the parliament mistrusting him, set their instrument so busily at work, that in four or five days they had procured
intelligence from Paris, that he was a spy from King Charles; whereupon the very next morning our author's kinsman was sent to him, with an order of council commanding him to depart the kingdom within three days, or expect the punishment of a spy.

By these two remarkable passages, we may clearly discover the industry and good intelligence of those times.
## CONTENTS

**PARADISE LOST**, Book I. ........................................ 1
Book II. .................................................. 25
Book III. .............................................. 36
Book IV. .................................................. 50
Book V. .................................................. 69
Book VI. .................................................. 86
Book VII. .................................................. 103
Book VIII. ............................................... 115
Book IX. .................................................. 127
Book X. ................................................... 149
Book XI. .................................................. 170
Book XII. ............................................... 187

**PARADISE REGAINED**, Book I. ............................ 200
Book II. .................................................. 210
Book III. ............................................... 219
Book IV. .................................................. 228
Samson Agonistes ........................................... 242
Lycidas .................................................. 276
L’Allegro .................................................. 279
Il Penseroso ............................................... 282
Arcades ................................................... 286
Comus ...................................................... 288

**SONNETS.**

To the Nightingale .......................................... 309
On his being arrived at the Age of Twenty-three —
When the Assault was intended to the City —
To a virtuous Young Lady ................................ 310
To the Lady Margaret Ley —
On the Detraction which followed upon my writing certain Treatises —
On the same ............................................. 311
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To Mr. H. Lawes, on the publishing his Airs</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the religious Memory of Mrs. Catherine Thomson</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the Lord General Fairfax</td>
<td>312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the Lord General Cromwell</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Sir Henry Vane, the Younger</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the late Massacre in Piemont</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On his Blindness</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Mr. Lawrence</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To Cyriack Skinner</td>
<td>314</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To the same</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On his deceased Wife</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ODES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ode</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On the Morning of Christ's Nativity</td>
<td>315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Passion</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upon the Circumcision</td>
<td>321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the Death of a fair Infant</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On Time</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At a solemn Music</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song on May Morning</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### MISCELLANIES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Vacation Exercise</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Epitaph on William Shakspeare</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the University Carrier</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another on the same</td>
<td>329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On the New Forcers of Conscience</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### TRANSLATIONS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Fifth Ode of Horace, Lib. I.</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Geoffrey of Monmouth</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Dante</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Dante</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Ariosto</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Horace</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Euripides</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Horace</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Horace</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Sophocles</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From Seneca</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PSALMS.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psalm I.</td>
<td>332</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II.</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psalm</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>III.</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI.</td>
<td>335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII.</td>
<td>336</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXIX</td>
<td>338</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXI</td>
<td>339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXII</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXIII</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXIV</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXV</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXVI</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXVII</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LXXXVIII</td>
<td>346</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CXIV</td>
<td>347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CXXXVI</td>
<td>348</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### POEMATA

- Testimonia de auctore ................................................. 350
- Elegia I ................................................................. 353
- II. III ................................................................. 355
- IV ................................................................. 357
- V ................................................................. 359
- VI ................................................................. 362
- VII ................................................................. 364
- In prodictionem bombardicam ........................................ 366
- In eandem .............................................................. —
- In eandem .............................................................. —
- In eandem .............................................................. 367
- In inventorem bombardae ............................................. —
- Ad Leonoram Romae canentem ....................................... —
- Ad eandem .............................................................. —
- Ad eandem .............................................................. 368
- Apologus de rustico et hero ......................................... —

### SILVARUM LIBER

- In obitum procancellarii Medici .................................. 368
- In quintum Novembris ................................................ 369
- In obitum praesulis Eliensis ....................................... 374
- Naturam non pati senium .......................................... 375
- Ad patrem .............................................................. 377
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENTS</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psalm CXIV. (græce)</td>
<td>379</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosopher ad Regem quendam (græce)</td>
<td>380</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In effigie ejus sculptorem (græce)</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Salsillum poetam Rom.</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansus</td>
<td>381</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epitaphium Damonis</td>
<td>383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Joan. Rousium</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad Christinam, Suecor. Reghin</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ITALIAN POEMS.

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sonnet I, II.</td>
<td>391</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canzone</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sonnet III, IV, V.</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PARADISE LOST

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

Of man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, heav'nly muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the heav'n's and earth
Rose out of chaos: or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Sion's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer

A
Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,
Dove-like sat' on the vast abyss,
And mad'st 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 heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of hell; say first, what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favour'd of heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their Creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduce'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel angels; by whose aid, aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equal'd the Most High,
If he oppos'd; and, with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God,
Rais'd impious war in heav'n, and battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire,
Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded, though immortal: but his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,
Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
At once, as far as angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild;
A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
As one great furnace flam'd; yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, dolcful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes
That comes to all: but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:
Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd
For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of heav'n,
As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.
O, how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and wert'ring by his side
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
Beelzebub. To whom th' arch-enemy,
And thence in heav'n call'd Satan; with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:
'If thou best he; but O, how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who, in the happy realms of light,
Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest
From what high seat fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder; and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
In dubious battle on the plains of heaven,
And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,
And study of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to submit or yield,
And what is else not to be overcome;
That glory never shall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
Who from the terror of this arm so late
Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
That were an ignominy, and shame beneath
This downfall: since by fate the strength of gods
And this empyreal substance cannot fail;
Since through experience of this great event
In arms not worse, in foresight much advance'd,
We may with more successful hope resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcileable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and, in th' excess of joy
Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heaven.'
'So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair;
And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:
'O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
That led th' embattled Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
Fearless, endanger'd heav'n's perpetual king,
And put to proof his high supremacy,
Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
Too well I see, and rue the dire event,
That with sad overthrow, and foul defeat,
Hath lost us heav'n, and all this mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus low,
As far as gods and heav'nly essences
Can perish; for the mind and spirit remains
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our Conqu'ror (whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'erpow'r'd such force as ours) 145
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep:
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment? 155
Whereeto with speedy words th' arch-fiend replied:
'Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable:
Doing or suffering; but of this be sure,
To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see, the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of heav'n: the sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn
Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The seat of desolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
There rest, if any rest can harbour there;
And, re-assembling our afflicted powers,
Consult how we may henceforth most offend
Our enemy, our own loss how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope;
If not, what resolution from despair?

Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That sparkling blaz'd; his other parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove;
Briareus or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held; or that sea-beast
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugest that swim th' ocean stream:
Him, haply, slumb'ring on the Norway foam,
The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
Moors by his side under the lee, while night
Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
So stretch'd out huge in length the arch-fiend lay,
Chain'd on the burning lake: nor ever thence
Had ris'n, or heav'd his head; but that the will
And high permission of all-ruling heaven
Left him at large to his own dark designs,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
Evil to others; and, enrag'd, might see
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown
On man by him seduce'd; but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance pour'd,
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
Driv'n backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd
In billows, 'leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thund'ring Aetna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate:
Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

‘Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,’
Said then the lost Arch-angel, ‘this the seat
That we must change for heav'n; this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he,
Who now is Sovran, can dispose and bid
What shall be right; farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors, hail,
Infernal world, and thou profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time:
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of 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; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure, and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven!
But wherefore let us then our faithful friends,
Th' associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion; or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in heav'n, or what more lost in hell?’

So Satan spake, and him Beelzebub
Thus answer'd: ‘Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive; though now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on you lake of fire,
As we while, astounded and amaz'd;
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.’

He scarce had ceas'd, when the superior fiend
Was moving toward the shore: his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy large, and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
Of some great admirial, were but a wand,
He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps
Over the burning marble, not like those steps
On heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
Smote on him sore beside, vaulted with fire:
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd
His legions, Angel forms, who lay intranc'd
Thick as annual leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades,
High over-arch'd, imbow'r; or scatter'd sedge
Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they pursued
The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
From the safe shore their floating carcasses
And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
Abject and lost they strew, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
Of hell resounded. 'Princes, potentates,
Warriors, the flow'r of heav'n, once yours, now lost,
If such astonishment as this can seize
Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
To adore the Conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon
His swift pursuers from heav'n-gates discern
Th' advantage, and descending, tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.'

'Vey heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear
Of their great sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even balance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude, like which the populous north
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
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 pow'rs that erst in heaven sat on thrones,
Though of their names in heav'ly records now
Be no memorial; blotted out and ras'd
By their rebellion from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names; till, wand'ring o'er the earth,
Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
God their Creator, and th' invisible
Glory of him that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions, full of pomp and gold,
And devils to adore for deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various idols through the heathen world.
Say, muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
Rous'd from the slumber on that fiery couch
At their great emp'ror's call, as next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof.
The chief were those, who, from the pit of hell,
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First, Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipp'd in Rabba and her wat'ry plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove  
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of hell.  

Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,  
From Aror to Nebo, and the wild  

Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond  
The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines,  
And Eleiile to th' asphaltic pool.  

Peor his other name, when he entic'd  
Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,  
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  

Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd  

Ev'n to that hill of scandal, by the grove  
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;  
Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell.  

Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names  
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth; those male,  
These feminine: for spirits, when they please,  
Can either sex assume, or both; so soft  
And un compounded is their essence pure;  
Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,  
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,  
Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,  
Can execute their aery purposes,  
And works of love or enmity fulfil.  

For those the race of Israel oft forsook  
Their living strength, and unfrequented left  
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down  
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low  
Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear  
Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians call'd  
Astarte, queen of heav'n, with crescent horns;  
To whose bright image nightly by the moon  
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;  
In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
Her temple on th' offensive mountain, built  
By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,  
Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell  
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,  
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd  
The Syrian damsels to lament his fate  
In amorous ditties all a summer's day;  
While smooth Adonis from his native rock  
Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood  
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale  
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat;  
Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch  
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,  
His eye survey'd the dark idolatries  
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands loft off
In his own temple, on the grunsel edge,
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers:
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
And downward fish; yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful seat
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abanna and Pharpar, lucid streams.
He also against the house of God was bold:
A leper once he lost, and gain'd a king;
Ahaz, his sottish conqu'ror, whom he drew
God's altar to disparage and displace
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the gods
Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
A crew, who, under names of old renown,
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek
Their wandr'ing gods disguis'd in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Lik'ning his Maker to the grazed ox;
Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
From Egypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
Fell not from heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood,
Or altar smok'd; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns,
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage; and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron, to avoid worse rape.
These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than heav'n and earth,
Their boasted parents: Titan, heav'n's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;  
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete  
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top  
Of cold Olympus, rul'd the middle air,  
Their highest heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,  
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds  
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old  
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields,  
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.  

All these and more came flocking; but with looks  
Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appear'd  
Obscure, some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief  
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
In loss itself, which on his count'nance cast  
Like doubtful hue: but he, his wonted pride  
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd  
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.  

Then straight commands, that at the warlike sound  
Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd  
His mighty standard: that proud honour claim'd  
Azazel as his right, a Cerub tall:  
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd  
Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advance'd,  
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
With gems and golden lustre rich enblaz'd,  
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while  
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:  
At which the universal host up-sent  
A shout, that tore hell's concave, and beyond  
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.  

All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand banners rise into the air  
With orient colours waving; with them rose  
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms  
Appear'd and serried shields in thick array  
Of depth immeasurable; anon they move  
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood  
Of flutes and soft recorders; such as rais'd  
To high'd of noblest temper heroes old  
Arming to battle; and instead of rage,  
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd  
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;  
Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate and swage  
With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase  
Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain  
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,  
Breathing united force, with fixed thought,  
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd  
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now  
Advanc'd in view they stand; a horrid front  
Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield;  
Awaiting what command their mighty chief  
Had to impose: he through the armed files
Darts his experience'd eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views, their order due,
Their visages and stature as of gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
Glories: for never since created man
Met such embodied force, as nam'd with these
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son
Begin with British and Armorick knights;
And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
Josted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Their dread commander: he, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness; nor appear'd
Less than Arch-angel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun, new risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all the Arch-angel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd; and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss), condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain,
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of heav'n, and from eternal splendours flung
For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as when heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way.
'O Myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers
Matchless, but with th' Almighty; and that strife
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge, past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied heav'n, shall fail to reascend
Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
For me, be witness all the host of heaven,
If counsels different, or dangers shunn'd
By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns
Monarch in heav'n, till then as one secure
Sat on his throne upheld by old repute,
Consent or custom; and his regal state
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provok'd; our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not: that he no less
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof so rife
There went a fame in heav'n that he ere long
Intended to create, and therein plant
A generation, whom his choice regard
Should favour equal to the sons of heaven:
Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere;
For this infernal pit shall never hold
Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th' abyss
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd;
For who can think submission? War then, war,
Open or understood, must be resolv'd.'
He spake; and, to confirm his words, out-flew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
Far round illumin'd hell; highly they rag'd
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.
There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf; undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,
A numerous brigade hasten'd: as when bands
Of pioneers, with spade and pickax arm'd,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on;
Mammon, the least erect ed spirit that fell
From heav'n; for e'en in heav'n his looks and thoughts 680
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than aught, divine or holy, else enjoy'd
In vision beatific: by him first
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
For treasures, better hid.
Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
And digg'd out ribs of gold.
Let none admire
That riches grow in hell; that soil may best
Deserve the precious bane.
And here let those,
Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
And strength and art, are easily outdone
By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they with incessant toil
And hands innumerable scarce perform.
Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepar'd,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Slin'd from the lake, a second multitude
With wondrous art founded the mazy ore,
Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross:
A third as soon had form'd within the ground
A various mould, and from the boiling cells,
By strange conveyance, fill'd each hollow nook;
As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
Anon, out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet,
Built like a temple, where pilasters round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did there want
Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven:
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
Equal'd in all their glories, to enshrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascending pile
Stood fix'd her stately highth: and straight the doors
Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth
And level pavement; from the arched roof
Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise,
And some the architect: his hand was known
In heav’n by many a tower’d structure high,
Where scepter’d angels held their residence,
And sat as princes; whom the supreme King
Exalted to such pow’r, and gave to rule,
Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
Nor was his name unheard or unador’d
In ancient Greece; and in Ansonian land
Men call’d him Mulciber; and how he fell
From heav’n, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o’er the crystal battlements: from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A summer’s day; and with the setting sun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
On Lemnos th’ Aegean isle: thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
Fell long before; nor aught avail’d him now
To have built in heav’n high towers; nor did he ‘scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent.
With his industrious crew to build in hell.
Meanwhile, the winged heralds, by command
Of sovrän pow’r, with awful ceremony
And trumpet’s sound, throughout the host proclaim
A solemn council, forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers: their summons call’d
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon,
With hundreds and with thousands, trooping came,
Attended: all access was throng’d: the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
(Though like a cover’d field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm’d, and at the soldan’s chair
Defied the best of panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance),
Thick swarm’d, both on the ground and in the air
Brush’d with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb’d with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs: so thick the airy crowd
Swarm’d and were straiten’d; till, the signal given,
Behold a wonder! They but now who seem’d
In bigness to surpass earth’s giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth
Wheels her pale course; they, on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large, 790
Though without number still, amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave sat,
A thousand demigods on golden seats,
Frequent and full. After short silence then,
And summons read, the great consult began.

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 Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd
To that bad eminence: and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiat to pursue
Vain war with heav'n; and, by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus display'd:
‘Pow'rs and dominions, deities of heaven;
For since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fall'n,
I give not heav'n for lost. From this descent
Celestial virtues rising, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
Me though just right, and the fix'd laws of heaven,
Did first create your leader; next, free choice,
With what besides, in council or in fight,
Hath been achiev'd of merit; yet this loss,
Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full consent. The happier state
In heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the highest place exposes
Foremost to stand against the Thund'rer's aim,
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is then no good
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
From faction; for none sure will claim in hell
Precédence, none whose portion is so small
Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more. With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in heav'n, we now return
To claim our just inheritance of old,
Surer to prosper than prosperity
Could have assur'd us; and, by what best way,
Whether of open war, or covert guile,
We now debate: who can advise, may speak.'
He ceas'd; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
That fought in heav'n, now fiercer by despair:
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in strength; and rather than be less
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost
Went all his fear; of God, or hell, or worse,
He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake:
'My sentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not; 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 ling'ring here
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark, opprobrious den of shame,
The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? No, let us rather choose,
Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once,
O'er heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his almighty engine he shall hear
Infernal thunder; and, for lightning, see
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
Among his angels; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and pursued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction; if there be in hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse
Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of unextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorable, and the torturing hour,
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus,
We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which, to the highth enrag'd,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce
To nothing this essential; happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being:
Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our pow'r sufficient to disturb his 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 denounc'd
Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
To less than gods. On th' other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane:
A fairer person lost not heav'n; he seem'd
For dignity compos'd, and high exploit:
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low:
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful; yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began:
"I should be much for open war, O peers,
As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;
When he, who most excels in 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 tow'rs of heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable: oft on the bord'ring deep
Encamp their legions; or, with obscure wing,
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
By force, and at our heels all hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heavn's purest light; yet our great enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted; and th' ethereal mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
Th' almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure,
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? And who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed,
Reserv'd, and destin'd, to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What, when we fled amain, pursued, and struck
With heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse,
What if the breath, that kindled those grim fires,
Awak'd, should blow them into sev'nfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or, from above,
Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? What if all
Her stores were open'd, and this firmament
Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threat'ning hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd
Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converse with everlasting groans,
Unrepitied, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
Views all things at one view? He from heav'n's highth
All these our motions vain sees, and derides;
Not more almighty to resist our might,
Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the race of heaven
Thus trampled, thus expell'd to suffer here
Chains and these torments? Better these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
Our strength is equal, nor the law unjust
That so ordains: this was at first resolv'd,
If we were wise, against so great a foe
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear
What yet they know must follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The sentence of their conq'ror: this is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
Our supreme foe in time may much remit
His anger: and perhaps, thus far remov'd,
Not mind us not offending, satisfied
With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapour; or, inr'd, not feel;
Or, chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light;
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting; since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe.'
Thus Belial, with words cloth'd in reason's garb,
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:
'Either to disenthrone the King of heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost: him to unthron'e we then
May hope, when everlasting fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us
Within heav'n's bound, unless heav'n'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

205
220
225
230
235
Stand in his presence humble, and receive

Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne

With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing

Forc'd hallelujahs; while he lordly sits

Our envied sovran, and his altar breathes

Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,

Our servile offerings? This must be our task

In heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome

Eternity go spent, in worship paid

To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue

By force impossible, by leave obtain'd

Unacceptable, though in heav'n, our state

Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek

Our own good from ourselves, and from our own

Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,

Free, and to none accountable, preferring

Hard liberty before the easy yoke

Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear

Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,

Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,

We can create; and in what place soe'er

Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain,

Through labour and endurance. This deep world

Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst

Thick clouds and dark doth heav'n's all-ruling Sire

Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd,

And with the majesty of darkness round

Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders rear

Must'ring their rage, and heav'n resembles hell.

As he our darkness, cannot we his light

Imitate when we please? This desert soil

Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;

Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise

Magnificence; and what can heav'n show more?

Our torments also may in length of time

Become our elements; these piercing fires

As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd

Into their temper; which must needs remove

The sensible of pain. All things invite

To peaceful counsels, and the settled state

Of order, how in safety best we may

Compose our present evils, with regard

Of what we are, and where: dismissing quite

All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise?

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmurs fill'd

Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain

The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long

Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull

Seafaring men o'er-watch'd, whose bark by chance

Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay

After the tempest: such applause was heard

As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd

Advising peace: for such another field

They dreaded worse than hell: so much the fear

Of thunder and the sword of Michaél.
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 Beelzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state; deep on his front engrav'd
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic, though in ruin: sage he stood
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noon'tide air, while thus he spake:
'Thrones and Imperial Pow'rs, Offspring of Heaven, Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now
Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire: doubtless, while we dream,
And know not that the King of heav'n hath doom'd
This place our dungeon; not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
Bauded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd
Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude: for he, be sure,
In bigness 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 scepter rule
Us here, as with his golden those in heaven,
What sit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchsa'ld or sought; for what peace will be given
To us enslav'd, but custody severe
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
But to our pow'r hostility and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow;
Yet ever plotting how the conqu'ror last
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
With dang'rous expedition to invade
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
Some easier enterprise? There is a place
(If ancienct and proph'ctic fame in heaven
Err not), another world, the happy seat
Of some new race, call'd Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though less
In pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more
Of him who rules above; so was his will
Pronounc'd among the gods; and by an oath,
That shook heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould
Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
And where their weakness, how attempted best,
By force or subtlety. Though heav'n be shut,
And heav'n's high Arbitrator sit secure
In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd,
The utmost border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
By sudden onset; either with hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
The puny habitants, or, if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy uplift
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires: Thus Beelzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice, to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? But their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal states, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renew's:

'Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,
Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd, which, from the lowest deep,
Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence, with neigh'ring arms
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter heav'n; or else in some mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of heav'n's fair light,
Secure; and at the bright'ning orient beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,
To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
Shall breathe her balm. But first, whom shall we send
In search of this new world? whom shall we find
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wand'ring feet
The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyss,
And through the palpable obscure find out
His uncounted way, or spread his airy flight
Upborne with indefatigable wings,
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle? What strength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe
Through the strict senteries and stations thick
Of angels watching round? Here he had need
All circumspection, and we now no less
Choice in our suffrage; for, on whom we send,
The weight of all and our last hope relies.'
This said, he sat; and expectation held
His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,
Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In other's count'nance read his own dismay,
Astonish'd: none among the choice and prime
Of those heav'n-warring champions could be found
So hardy, as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake:
'O Progeny of heav'n, empyreal Thrones,
With reason hath deep silence and demur
Seiz'd us, though undismay'd. Long is the way
And hard, that out of hell leads up to light;
Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us round
Ninefold, and gates of burning adamant,
Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
Of unessential night receives him next
Wide-gaping, and with utter loss of being
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him less
Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
But I should ill become this throne, O peers,
And this imperial sovranty, adorn'd
With splendour, arm'd with pow'r, if aught propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
Refusing to accept as great a share
Of hazard as of honour, due alike
To him who reigns, and so much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the rest
High honour'd sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
Terror of heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,
While here shall be our home, what best may ease
The present misery, and render hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
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 rais'd,
Others among the chief might offer now
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd;
And, so refus'd, might in opinion stand
His rivals: winning cheap the high repute,
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure, than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose:
Their rising all at once, was as the sound
Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a god
Extol him equal to the High'st in heav'n:
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,
That for the general safety he despis'd
His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
Their specious deeds on earth which glory excites,
Or close ambition, varnish'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
Heav'n's cheerful face, the louring element
Scowl'd o'er the darken'd land-skip snow, or shower;
If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd
Firm concord holds, men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife,
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars,
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to accord)
Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
That, day and night, for his destruction wait.
The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth
In order came the grand infernal peers:
Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
Alone th' antagonist of heav'n, nor less
Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme,
And God-like imitated state: him round
A globe of fiery Seraphin enclos'd
With bright imblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their session ended they bid cry
With trumpets' regal sound the great result:
Towards the four winds four speedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the sounding alchemy,
By herald's voice explain'd; the hollow abyss
Heard far and wide, and all the host of hell
With deaf'ning shout return'd them loud acclaim.

Then more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
Disband, and, wand'ring, each his several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
Leads him, perplex'd where he may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
The irksome hours, till his great chief return.

Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields;
Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.

As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
To battle in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears,
Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.
Others with vast Typhoean rage more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind; hell scare holds the wild uproar.

As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a silent valley, sing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
By doom of battle; and complain that fate
Free virtue should 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 retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy:
Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
Pain for a while, or anguish, and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams:
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her wat'ry labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems
Of ancient pile: or else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire.
Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd,
At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink;
But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good;
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and Hydars, and Chimeras dire.

Meanwhile, the adversary of God and man,
Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of hell
Explores his solitary flight; sometimes
He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars
Up to the fiery concave tow'ring high.

As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengal, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they, on the trading flood,
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,
Ply steaming nightly toward the pole: so seem'd
Far off the flying fiend. At last appear
Hell-bound, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates: three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock
Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire.
Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair;
But ended soul in many a scaly fold
Voluminous and vast; a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell-bounds never-ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
Within unseen. Far less abhor'd than these
Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
For each seem'd either: black it stood as night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as hell,
And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head,
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving onward came as fast
With horrid strides; hell trembled as he strode.
Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd,
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valued he, nor shunn'd;
And with disdainful look thus first began:

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

To whom the goblin full of wrath replied:

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

So spoke the grisly terror, and in shape,

So speaking and so threat'ning, grew tenfold,
More dreadful and deform. On th' other side,
Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood
Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend, and such a frown
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
With heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on

Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell
Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood;
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
Had been achiev'd, whereof all hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceress, that sat
Fast by hell-gate, and kept the fatal key,
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between,

'O father, what intends thy hand,' she cried,

'Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom;
For him who sits above and laughs the while
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.'
She spake, and at her words the hellish pest
Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd:
'So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why,
In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him and thee?
'T' whom thus the portress of hell-gate replied:
'Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd
In bold conspiracy against heav'n's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swim
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth; till, on the left side opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung; amazement seiz'd
All th' host of heav'n; back they recoil'd afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
And fields were fought in heav'n; wherein remain'd
(For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
Clear victory; to our part loss and rout,
Through all the empy'ean: down they fell
Driv'n headlong from the pitch of heaven, down
Into this deep; and in the general fall
I also; at which time this pow'rful key
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my opening. Pensive here I sat
Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb,
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
Prodigious motion felt, and rueful throes.
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out Death!
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded, Death!
I fled: but he pursued (though more, it seems,) 790
Inflamm'd with lust than rage, and, swifter far,
Me overtook his mother all dismay'd,
And in embraces forcible and foul.

Ingend'ring with me, of that rape begot 795
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for, when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.

Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death, my son and foe; who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour 805
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involv'd, and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounc'd.
But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow: neither vainly hope
To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly; for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd; and the subtle fiend his lore
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth:
'Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
Of dalliance had with thee in heav'n, and joys
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
Befall'n us, unforeseen, unthought of; know,
I come no enemy, but to set free
From out this dark and dismal house of pain
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
Of spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd,
Fell with us from on high: from them I go
This uncouth errand sole; and one for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
Created vast and round, a place of bliss
In the purlieus of heav'n, and therein plac'd
A race of upstart creatures, to supply
Perhaps our vacant room: though more remov'd
Lest heav'n, surcharg'd with potent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils. Be this or aught
Than this more secret now design'd, I haste
To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
And bring ye to the place where thou and Death
Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
Wing silently the buxom air, imbal'm'd
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey.'
He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd; and bless his maw
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:

'The key of this infernal pit by due,
And by command of heav'n's all-pow'rful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might.
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of heav'n, and heav'nly-born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowls feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'est 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 beseeems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.'

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high up-drew,
Which, but herself, not all the Stygian powers
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens. On a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host,
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear
The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark
Ilimitable 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 mast'ry, and to battle bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their several clans,
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
Levied to side with warring winds, and poise
Their lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,
He rules a moment: Chaos umpire sits,
And by decision more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyss,
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air, nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant causes mix'd
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
Stood on the brink of hell, and look'd a while,
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare
Great things with small), than when Bellona storms,
With all her battering engines bent to raise
Some capital city; or less than if this frame
Of heav'n were falling, and these elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The stedfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides
Andacious; but, that 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 staid,
Quench'd in a boggy syrtis, neither sea,
Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
As when a gryphon through the wilderness
With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
Pursues the Arimaspian, who by stealth
Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
The guarded gold: so eagerly the fiend
O'er bog, or steep, through straight, rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies: At length, a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds, and voices all confus'd,
Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
With loudest vehemence; thither he plies,
Undaunted, to meet there whatever power
Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
Bord’ring on light; when straight behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread
Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthron’d
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon! Rumour next and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroi’d,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
T’ whom Satan turning boldly, thus: ‘Ye powers
And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy,
With purpose to explore or to disturb
The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint
Wand’ring 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 heav’n; or if some other place,
From your dominion won, th’ ethereal King
Possesses lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound; direct my course;
Directed, no mean recompense it brings
To your behoof, if I that region lost,
All usurpation thence expell’d, reduce
To her original darkness, and your sway
(Which is my present journey), and once more
Erect the standard there of ancient Night:
Yours be th’ advantage all, mine the revenge.’
Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With falt’ring speech and visage incompos’d,
Answer’d: ‘I know thee, stranger, who thou art,
That mighty leading angel, who of late
Made head against heav’n’s King, though overthrown.
I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
Fled not in silence through the frightened deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confusion worse confounded; and heav’n-gates
Pour’d out by millions her victorious bands
Pursuing, I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will serve
That little which is left so to defend,
Encroach’d on still through your intestine broils
Weak’ning the scepter of old Night: first hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately heav’n and earth, another world,
Hung o’er my realm, link’d in a golden chain
To that side heav’n from whence your legions fell:
If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger; go, and speed;
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.’
He ceas’d; and Satan staid not to reply,
But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity, and force renew’d,
Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
Into the wild expanse, and, through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ’d, wins his way; harder beset
And more endanger’d, than when Argo pass’d
Through Bosporus, betwixt thejustling rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn’d
Charybdis, and by th’ other whirlpool steer’d.

So he with difficulty and labour hard
Mov’d on, with difficulty and labour he;
But, he once past, soon after, when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven,
Pav’d after him a broad and beaten way
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur’d a bridge of wondrous length,
From hell continued reaching th’ utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night,
A glistening 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,
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
Far off th’ empyreal heav’n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermin’d square or round,
With opal tow’rs and battlements adorn’d
Of living 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,
Accurs’d, and in a cursed hour, he hies.
B O O K  I I I.

T H E  A R G U M E N T.

God, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this world; then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foresees 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 withstand his tempter: yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he felt not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praise to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards man; but God again declares, that grace cannot be extended towards man without the satisfaction of divine justice: man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in heaven and earth; commands all the angels to adore him. They obey, and hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Mean while Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity: what persons and things fly up thither: thence comes to the gate of heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and, pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: alights first on mount Niphates.

Hail, holy Light! offspring of heav'n first-born,
Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam,
May I express thee unblain'd? since God is light,
And never but in unapproach'd light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright influence of bright essence increas'd.
Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
Before the heav'n's thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising world of waters dark and deep,
Wor from the void and formless infinite.
Thie I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight
Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
With other notes than to th' Orphean lyre,
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
Tought by the heav'nly muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-asceind,
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovan vital lamp: but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn:
So thick a drop serene hath quench'd their orbs, 25
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander, where the muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smite with the love of sacred song; but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet: and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
So were I equall'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Maconides,
And Tiresias and Phineus, prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid,
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return: but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with a universal blank
Of nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight.
Now had th' Almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyranc where he sits
High thron'd above all hight, bent down his eye,
His own works, and their works, at once to view;
About him all the sanctities of heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance; on his right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only Son; on earth he first beheld
Our two first parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coasting the wall of heav'n on this side night
In the dun air sublime, and ready now
To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world; that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his prospect high,
Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreseeing spake:
'Only begotten Son, seest thou what rage
Transports our adversary? whom no bounds
Prescrib'd, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
On desperate revenge, that shall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
Not far off heav'n, in the precincts of light,
Directly towards the new-created world
And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay
If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
By some false guile pervert; and shall pervert,
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And easily transgress the sole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall
He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
All he could have; I made him just and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall;
Such I created all th' ethereal powers
And spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;
Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
Where only what they needs must do appear'd,
Not what they would? what praise could they receive,
What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
When will and reason (reason also is choice)
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
Made passive both, had serv'd necessity,
Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly accuse
Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predestination over-rul'd
Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
They trespass, authors to themselves in all
Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so
I form'd them free: and free they must remain,
Till they enthral themselves; I else must change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom, they themselves ordain'd their fall.
The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: man falls, deceiv'd
By th' other first: man therefore shall find grace,
The other none: in mercy and justice both,
Through heav'n and earth, so shall my glory excel:
But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.'
Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd
All heav'n, and in the blessed spirits elect
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
Most glorious: in him all his Father shone
Substantially express'd; and in his face
Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
Love without end, and without measure grace,
Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake:
'O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
Thy sovran sentence, that man should find grace;
For which both heav'n and earth shall high extol
Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.
For should man finally be lost, should man,
Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
With his own folly! That be from thee far,
That far be from thee, Father, who art Judge
Of all things made, and judgment only right.
Or shall the adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
Abolish thy creation, and unmake
For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
So should thy goodness and thy greatness both
Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence?
To whom the great Creator thus replied:
'O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
Freely vouchsaf'd; once more I will renew
His lapsed pow'rs, though forfeit, and enthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe;
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incensed Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide,
My umpire, conscience; whom if they will hear,
Light after light, well us'd they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be harden'd; blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done; man disobeying,
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
Affecting Godhead, and, so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath naught left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He, with his whole posterity, must die,
Die he or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
Say, heav'nly Pow'rs, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save?
Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?
He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,
And silence was in heav'n: on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that burst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudge'd to death and hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd:
'Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?
Happy for man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once implor'd, unsought;
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 last die
Well pleas'd; on me let Death wreak all his rage;
Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ev'r; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die: yet, that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell:
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show
The pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
Pleas'd, out of heaven shalt look down and smile,
While, by thee rais'd, I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave:
Then, with the multitude of my redeem'd,
Shall enter heav'n, long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
And reconciliation; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.'
His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
All heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend,
Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus replied:
'O thou in heav'n and earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou
My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor man the least,
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.
Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time 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 restor'd
As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit,
Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So man, as is most just,
Shall satisfy for man, be judg'd and die,
And dying rise, and rising with him raise
His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem, what hellish hate
So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all, to save
A world from utter loss, and hast been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthiest to be so by being good,
Far more than great or high; because in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,
Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
With thee thy manhood also to this throne;
Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
Both God and man, Son both of God and man,
Anointed universal King; all power
I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
Thy merits; under thee, as head supreme,
Thrones, principedoms, pow'rs, dominions, I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
In heav'n, or earth, or under earth in hell.
When thou, attended gloriously from heaven,
Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
The summoning Archangels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal: forthwith from all winds
The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all past ages, to the general doom
Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
Then, all thy saints assembled, thou shalt judge
Bad men and angels; they arraign'd, shall sink
Beneath thy sentence: hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
New heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
And, after all their tribulations long,
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,
For regal scepter then no more shall need,
God shall be all in all. But, all ye gods,
Adore him, who to compass all this dies;
Adore the Son, and honour him as me."
No sooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of angels, with a shout
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
As from blest voices, uttering joy, heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
With solemn adoration down they cast
Their crowns invoke with amaranth and gold
Immortal amaranth, a flow'r which once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life.
Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence
To heav'n remov'd, where first it grew; there grows,
And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliss through midst of heaven
Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
With these that never fade the spirits elect
Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams;
Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
Then, crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side
Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they introduce
Their sacred song, and waken raptures high;
No voice exempt, no voice but well could join
Melodious part, such concord is in heaven.

'Thee, Father, first they sung Omnipotent,
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
 Eternal King; thee, Author of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear,
Yet dazzle heav'n, that brightest Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they sang of all creation first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines,
Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
Impress'd th' effulgence of his glory abides,
Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
Thee heav'n of heav'n's and all the pow'rs therein
By thee created; and by thee threw down
Th' aspiring dominations: thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drowst of warring angels disarray'd.
Back from pure neat thy pow'rs with loud acclaim
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes;
Not so on man; him, through their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only Son
Perceive thee purpose'd not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd;
He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee; offer'd himself to die
For man's offence. O unexampled love,
Love no where to be found less than divine!
Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! Thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.'
Thus they in heav'n, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hynning spent.
Meanwhile upon the firm opacious globe
Of this round world, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs, enclos'd
From Chaos, and th' inroad of darkness old,
Satan alighted walks; a globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms
Of Chaos blust'ring round, inelement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of heaven,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud:
Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a vulture on Imaüs bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
So, on this windy sea of land, the fiend
Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this place,
Living or lifeless, to be found as none,
None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
Up hither, like aereal vapours, flew
Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men;
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or th' other life;
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds;
All th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrons, or unkindly mix'd,
Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here:
Not in the neigh'ring moon, as some have dream'd;
Those argent fields more likely habitants,
Translated saints, or middle spirits hold
Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
First from the ancient world those giants came
With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd: 465
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came single; he, who to be deem'd
A god, leap'd fondly into Aetna flames,
Empedocles; and he, who to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
CLEOBROTUS; and many more too long,
Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars
White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery.
475
Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven;
And they, who, to be sure of Paradise,
Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd;
They pass the planets sev'n, and pass the fix'd,
And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd;
And now Saint Peter at heav'n's wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
A violent cross wind from either coast
Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry
Into the devious air: then might ye see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, toss'd
And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
The sport of minds: all these, upwhirl'd aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world far off,
Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd
The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd,
And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste
His travell'd steps: far distant he descries
Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of heav'n a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace-gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and gold
Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by shading pencil, drawn.
The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open sky,
And waking cried; 'This is the gate of heaven.'
Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
There always, but 'drawn up to heav'n sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd, 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 open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-times
Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,
Over the Promis'd Land, to God so dear;
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beersabba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair,
That seal'd by steps of gold to heaven-gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams;
Such wonder seiz'd, though after heaven seen,
The spirit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade), from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,
Beyond th' horizon; then from pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without longer pause
Downright into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
Thrice-happy isles; but who dwell happy there
He staid not to inquire: above them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest heaven,
Allur'd his eye; thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By center or eccentric, hard to tell, 575
Or longitude), where the great luminary
Alas 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, towards his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoo's invisible virtue ev'n to the deep:
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with aught on earth, metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that, which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In valu, though by their powerful art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbec to his native form.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
Th' arch-chymic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd,
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of colour glorious, and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the devil met
Undazzled; far and wide his eye commands;
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from th' equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall; and th' air,
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun;
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders, flede with wings,
Lay waving round; on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope
To find who might direct his wand'ring flight;
To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd:
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore,
Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
Th' Archangel Uriel, one of the seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run through all the heav'n's, or down to th' earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:
'Urriel, 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 heav'n to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honour to obtain, and as his eye
To visit oft this new creation round;
Unspeakable desire to see, and know,
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly man,
His chief delight and favour, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd,
Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath man
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell;
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration, him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The universal Maker we may praise,
Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
To deepest hell, and, to repair that loss,
Created this new happy race of men
To serve him better: wise, are all his ways.'
By his permissive will, through heav'n and earth: And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps. At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill Where no ill seems: which now for once beguil'd Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held The sharpest sighted spirit of all in heaven; Who to the fraudulent impostor foul, In his uprightness, answer thus return'd: 'Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know The works of God, thereby to glorify The great Work-master, leads to no excess That reaches blame, but rather merits praise The more it seems excess, that led thee hither From thy empyreal mansion thus alone, To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps, Contented with report, hear only in heaven: For wonderful indeed are all his works, Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all Had in remembrance always with delight; But what created mind can comprehend Their number, or the wisdom infinite That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep? I saw when at his word the formless mass, The world's material mould, came to a heap: Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd; Till at his second bidding darkness fled, Light shone, and order from disorder sprung: Swift to their several quarters hasted then The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire; And this ethereal quintessence of heaven Flew upward, spirited with various forms, That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move; Each had his place appointed, each his course; The rest in circuit walls this universe. Look downward on that globe, whose hither side With light from hence, though but reflected, shines; That place is earth, the seat of man; that light His day, which else, as th' other hemisphere, Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon (So call that opposite fair star) her aid Timely interposes, and her monthly round Still ending, still renewing, through mid heaven, With borrow'd light her countenance triform Hence falls and empties to enlighten th' earth, And in her pale dominion checks the night. That spot to which I point is Paradise, Adam's abode; those lofty shades, his bower. Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan, bowing low, As to superior spirits is wont in heaven, Where honour due and reverence none neglects, Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,
Down from th' eclipic, sped with hop'd success, 740
Throws his steep flight in many a airy wheel,
Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he lights.

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 thence intends to found his temptation, by seducing them to transgress; then leaves them a while to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel descending on a sun-beam warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil spirit had escaped the deep, and passed at noon by his sphere in the shape of a good angel down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount, Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest; theirbower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the round of Paradise, appoints two strong angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping; there they find him at the ear of Eve tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance; but, hindered by a sign from heaven, flies out of Paradise.

O, For that warning voice, which he, who saw Th' Apocalypse, heard cry in heav'n aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
'Woe to th' inhabitants on earth!' that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and 'scap'd,
Haply so 'scap'd his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The tempter ere th' accuser of mankind,
To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to hell:
Yet, not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt; which nigh the birth
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The hell within him; for within him hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
One step, no more than from himself, can fly,
By change of place: now conscience wakes despair,
That slumber’d; wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue,
Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his griev’d look he fixes sad;
Sometimes towards heav’n, and the full-blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began:
’O thou, that, with surpassing glory crown’d,
Look’st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminish’d heads; to thee I call,
But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
O sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what state
I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
Warring in heav’n against heav’n’s matchless King:
Ah, wherefore! he deserv’d no such return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
What could be less than to afford him praise,
The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
How due! yet all his good prov’d ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
I sdein’d subjection, and thought one step higher
Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
The debt immense of endless gratitude,
So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
Forgetful what from him I still receiv’d,
And understood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
Indebted and discharg’d; what burden then?
O had his pow’rful destiny ordain’d
Me some inferior angel, I had stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais’d
Ambition. Yet why not? some other power
As great might have aspir’d, and me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other pow’rs as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations arm’d.
Hadst thou the same free will and pow’r to stand?
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
But heav’n’s free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accrus’d, since love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, curs’d be thou; since against his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
Me miserable! which way shall I fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell; 75
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threatening to devour me opens wide,
To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
O, then, at last relent: is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduce'd
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85
Th' Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of hell.
With diadem and scepter high advance'd,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery: such joy ambition finds.
But say I could repent, and could obtain,
By act of grace, my former state; how soon
Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign'd submission swore! Ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For never can true reconcilement grow,
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace:
All hope excluded thus, behold, instead
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world,
So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
Farewell remorse; all good to me is lost;
Evil, be thou my good: by thee at least
Divided empire with heav'n's King I hold,
By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
As man ere long, and this new world shall know.
Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:
For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practis'd falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd: whose eye pursued him down
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her 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 height of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene; and, as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung:
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire neighb'ring round:
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd:
On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath show'r'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
That landscape: and of pure, now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past
Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy shore
Of Araby the blest; with such delay
Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles:
So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend,
Who came their bane: though with them better pleas'd
Than Asmodeus with the fishy fame
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent
From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
But further way found none, so thick entwin'd,
As one continued brake, the undergrowth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
All path of man or beast that pass'd that way.
One gate there only was, and that look'd east
On th' other side: which when th' arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdain'd; and, in contempt,
At one slight bound high overlap'd all bound
Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
PARADISE LOST.  Book IV.

Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve 185
In hurdle d cotes amid the field secure,
Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold:
Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross-barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
To them who liv'd; nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views,
To all delight of human sense expos'd,
In narrow room, nature's whole wealth, yea more,
A heav'n on earth: for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
Of Eden planted; Eden stretch'd her line
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar: in this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd;
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
Our death, the tree of knowledge, grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill.
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath engulf'd; for God had thrown
That mountain as his garden-mould high rais'd
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Water'd the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And, now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
How from that 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
Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noontide bow'rs: thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
Or palmy hillock; or the flow'ry lap
Of some irrigous valley spread her store,
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose:
Another side, unbragious grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murm'ring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on th' eternal Spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer bow'r, by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye;
Nor where Abass kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
By Nils' head, enclos'd with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend
Saw, un delights, all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
In naked majesty seem'd lords of all:
And worthy seem'd; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure
(Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd),
Whence true authority in men; though both 295
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he and valour form'd;
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him:
His fair large front and eye sublime declair'd 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 305
Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
Of God or angel; for they thought no ill: 320
So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
That ever since in love's embraces met;
Adam the goodliest man of men since born
His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
Under a tuft of shade that on a green 325
Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain-side
They sat them down; and, after no more toil
Of their sweet gard'ning labour than suffic'd
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made case
More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite
More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline
On the soft downy bank damask'd with flowers:
The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind, 335
Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream;
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking play'd
All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase 340
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gamboll'd before them; th' unwieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd 345
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
Declin'd, was hasting now with prone career
To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale
Of heav'n the stars that usher evening rose;
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fall'd speech recover'd sad:
'O hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advent'd
Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd
Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how high
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 sec'r'd
Long to continue, and this high seat your heaven
Ill fenc'd for heav'n to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied: league with you I seek,
And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me
Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,
Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give; hell shall unfold,
To entertain you two, her widest gates,
And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
Not like these narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
Than him who puts me loth to this revenge
On you, who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
And should I at your harmless innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd,
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.'
So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
Down he alights among the sportful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and unspied,
To mark what of their state he more might learn,
By word or action mark'd: about them round
A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
Then is 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,
Grip'd in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
Turn'd him, all ear to hear new utterance flow:
'Sole partner, and sole part of all these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must the Power
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
In all this happiness, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
From us no other service than to keep
This one, this easy charge, of all the trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left
Among so many signs of pow'r and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given
Over all other creatures that possess
Earth, air, and sea. Then let us not think hard
One easy prohibition, who enjoy
Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
Unlimited of manifold delights:
But let us ever praise him, and extol
His bounty, following our delightful task,
To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers,
Which were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.'

To whom thus Eve replied: 'O thou for whom
And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head! what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him indeed all praises owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd
Under a shade on flow'res, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd
Pure as th' expanse of heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite  
A shape within the watry gleam appear'd, 
Bending to look on me: I started back, 
It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd, 
Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answer'ing looks 
Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire, 
Had not a voice thus warn'd me: What thou seest, 
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself; 
With thee it came and goes; but follow me, 
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces, he 
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy 
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear 
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be call'd 
Mother of human race. What could I do, 
But follow straight, invisibly thus led? 
Till I espied thee, fair indeed and tall, 
Under a platane; yet methought less fair, 
Less winning soft, less amiable mild, 
Than that smooth watry image: back I turn'd; 
Thou following cry'st aloud, Return, fair Eve; 
Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, 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 
Seiz'd mine: I yielded; and from that time see 
How beauty is excell'd by manly grace, 
And wisdom, which alone is truly fair,' 
So spake our general mother, and with eyes 
Of conjugal attraction unreprov'd, 
And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd 
On our first father; half her swelling breast 
Naked met his, under the flowing gold 
Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight 
Both of her beauty and submissive charms, 
Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter 
On Juno smiles, when he impregn's the clouds 
That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip 
With kisses pure: aside the Devil turn'd 
For envy; yet with jealous leer malign 
Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd: 
'Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two, 
Imparadis'd in one another's arms, 
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill 
Of bliss on bliss; while I to hell am thrust, 
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire, 
Among our other torments not the least, 
Still unfulfill'd, with pain of longing pines. 
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd 
From their own mouths; all is not theirs, it seems; 
One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? And do they only stand
By ignorance? Is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wand'ring spirit of heav'n by fountain-side,
Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.'

So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection, and began
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
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, wounding 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 th' angelic guards, awaiting night;
About him exercis'd heroic games
Th' unarmed youth of heav'n, but nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high, with diamond flank'd, and with gold,
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even
On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star
In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his compass to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste:

'Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach or enter in.
This day at highth of noon came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
More of th' Almighty's works and chiefly man,
God's latest image: I describ'd his way
Bent all on speed, and mark'd his airy gait;
But in the mount, that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks
Alien from heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,
I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
New troubles; him thy care must be to find.'

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

So promis'd he; and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fall'n
Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,
By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there
Arraying with reflected purple and gold
The clouds that on his western throne attend.
Now came still evening on, and twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompanied; for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale,
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led
The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at length
Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve: 'Fair consort, th' hour
Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest,
Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
Labour and rest, as day and night to men
Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines
Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of heav'n on all his ways;
While other animals inactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flow'ry arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
That mock our scant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth;
Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums,
That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.
To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd:
'My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st
Unargued I obey: so God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.
With thee conversing I forget all time;
All seasons, and their change, all please alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train:
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,
With this her solemn bird; nor walk by moon,
Or glitt'ring star-light; without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
To whom our general ancestor replied:
'Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve,
These have their course to finish round the earth
By morrow evening, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In nature and all things; which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish, or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth, made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain. Nor think, though men were none,
That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep:
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold.
Both day and night, How often from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven.'
Thus talking, hand in hand alone they pass'd
On to their blissful bow'r; it was a place
Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use; the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broder'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none,
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nympha
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed;
And heav'nly quires the hymenean sung,
What day the genial angel to our sire
Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods
Endow'd with all their gifts: and O too like
In sad event, when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
Thus, at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: 'Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day
Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncopt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.
This said unanimous, and other rites
Observing none, but adoration pure
Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
Handed they went; and, eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise, of all things common else.
By thee adul'trous lust was driv'n from men
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
Casual fruition; nor in court-amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
Show'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
Blest pair; and 0 yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.
Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the Cherubim,
Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
To their night-watches in warlike parade,
When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake:
'Ozziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
Our circuit meets full west.' As flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:
'Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd,
Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap'd
The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt:
Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.'
So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the bow'r direct
In search of whom they sought: him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve,
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
Th' animal spirits, that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.
He thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the sun, some magazine to store
Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain,
With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air;
So started up in his own shape the fiend.
Back stept those two fair angels, half amaz'd
So sudden to behold the grisly king;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon:
'Which of those rebel spirits adjug'd to hell
Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd,
Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?'
'Know ye not then,' said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
'Know ye not me? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar:
Not to know me, argues yourselves unknown,
The lowest of your throng: or, if ye know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much in vain?'
To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn:
'Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same,
Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
As when thou stand'st in heav'n upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resembllest now
Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.'
So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: abash'd the devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pin'd
His loss; but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd
Undaunted. 'If I must contend,' said he,
'Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost.' 'Thy fear,' said Zephon bold,
'Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.'
The fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
But, like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud:
'O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade,
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who by his gait
And fierce demeanour seems the prince of hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defianceours.'
He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
'Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have pow'r and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?'
To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow:
'Gabriel, thou hast in heav'n th' esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,
Though thither doom'd? Thou would'st thyself, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou might'st hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought;
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not tried: and will object
His will who bounds us? Let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance: thus much what was ask'd.
The rest is true, they found me where they say; 900
But that implies not violence or harm.

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied:
'O loss of one in heav'n to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his prison 'scape'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Un licens'd from his bounds in hell prescrib'd;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to 'scape his punishment!
So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,
Which thou incur'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.

But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled; or thou than they
Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief!

The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.*

To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern:
'Not that I less endure or shrink from pain,
Insulting angel! well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid
The blasting vollen'd thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.

But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assays and ill successes 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;
Though for possession put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.' 945

To whom the warrior-angel soon replied:
'To say and straight unsay, pretending first
Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a liar trac'd,
Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!

Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Power Supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
Heav'n's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I areed thee now, Avant;
Fly thither whence thou fled'st. If from this hour
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd,
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facile gates of hell too slightly barr'd.'
So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied:
'Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
Proud limitary cherub! but ere then
Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compere,
Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of heav'n star-pav'd.'
While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
Turn'd their fiery red, sharpening in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On th' other side, Satan, alarm'd,
Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremov'd:
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
Sat horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp
What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued, nor only Paradise,
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth with balance'd air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of light:
The latter quick up-flew, and kick'd the beam;
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend:
'Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine;
Neither our own, but giv'n: what folly then
To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
Than Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist.' The fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night. 1015

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

Morning approached, Eve relates to Adam her troublesome dream;
he likes it not, yet comforts her: they come forth to their
day-labours: their morning hymn at the door of their bower.
God, to render man increscible, 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 ap-
pearance described; his coming discerned by Adam afar off sit-
ting at the door of his bower; he goes out to meet him, brings
him to his lodge, entertains him with the choicest fruits of Para-
dise got together by Eve; their discourse at table; Raphael per-
forms 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, persuad-
ing all but only Abel;id a Scarch, who in argument dissuades
and opposes him, then forakes him.

Now morn, her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd, so custom'd; for his sleep
Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred,
And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only sound
Of leaves and sowing rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much the more
His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet rest; he, on his side
Leaning half-rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: 'Awake,
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heav'n's last best gift, my ever-new delight!
Awake: the morning shines, and the fresh field
Calls us; we lose the prime to mark how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet."

Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake:
'O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
My glory, my perfection! glad I see
Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night
(Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irksome night: Methought
Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice; I thought it thine: it said,
Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
Full-orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard; heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire?
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And, as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from heaven
By us oft seen: his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;
And, O fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor man? Is knowledge so despi'd?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offer'd good; why else set here?
This said, he pause'd not, but with vent'rous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted; me dant horror chill'd
At such bold words vouche'd with a deed so bold:
But he thus, overjoy'd: O fruit divine,
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus crot, Forbitten here, it seems, as only fit
For gods, yet able to make gods of men:
And why not gods of men; since good, the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impair'd, but honour'd more?
Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve!
Partake thou also: happy though thou art,
Happler thou mayst be, worthier canst not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
But sometimes in the air, as we; sometimes
Ascend to heav'n, by merit thine, and see
What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Ev'n to my mouth of that same fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd; the pleasant savoury smell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
And various: wond'ring at my flight and change
To this high exaltation; suddenly
My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O, how glad I wak'd
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad:
'Best image of myself, and dearer half,
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
Affects me equally; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil sprung, I fear;
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know, that in the soul
Are many lesser faculties, that serve
Reason as chief; among these fancy next
Her office holds; off all external things,
Which the five watchful senses represent,
She forms imaginations, aery shapes,
Which reason joining, or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
Into her private cell, when Nature rests.
Oft in her absence mimic fancy wakes
To imitate her; but misjoining shapes,
Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
Ill-matching words and deeds long past or late,
Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
Evil into the mind of God or man
May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employments rise
Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.'
So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd;
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.
So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first, from under shady arborous roof
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the sun, who, scarce up-risen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim,
Shot parallel to th' earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style: for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounce'd, or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse
More tuneable than needed lute or harp
To add more sweetness; and they thus began:
'These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty! Thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair: Thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in heaven,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st,
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
And ye five other wand'ring fires, that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
And nourish all things; let your ceaseless change
Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honour to the world's great Author rise;
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
Rising or falling, still advance his praise.
His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.

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

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

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

So spake th' Eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint
After his charge receiv'd; but from among
Thousand celestial ardours, where he stood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up-springing light

Flew through the midst of heav'n; th' angelic quires,
On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
Through all th' empyreal road: till, at the gate
Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide
On golden hinges turning, as by work

Divine the sovran Architect had fram'd.

From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interpos'd, however small, he sees,
Not unconform to other shining globes,
Earth, and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd

Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes

Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:
Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades

Delos or Samos first appearing, kens

A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight

He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing

Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan

Winnows the buxom air; till, within soar

Of tow'ring eagles, to all the fowls he seems

A phoenix, gaz'd 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 th' eastern cliff of Paradise

He lights, and to his proper shape returns

A Seraph wing'd: six wings he wore to shade

His lineaments divine; the pair that clad

Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast

With regal ornament; the middle pair

Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round

Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
And colours dipt in heav'n; the third his feet

Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,

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

And shook his plumes, that heav'ny fragrance fill'd

The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of angels under watch; and to his state,
And to his message high, in honour rise;

For on some message high they guess'd him bound.

Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come

Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odours, cassia, nard, and balm;

A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here

Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will

Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.

Him through the spicy forest onward come.
Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat.
Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm.
Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs:
And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd.
For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please.
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst.

Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream.
Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd:
'Have hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold.
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape.
Comes this way moving; seems another morn.
Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from heaven.

To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe:
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And, what thy stores contain, bring forth and pour.
Abundance, fit to honour and receive.

Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford:
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow;
From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies:
Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows.
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.'

To whom thus Eve: 'Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
Of God inspir'd! small store will serve, where store;
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains.
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes:

But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our Angel-guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on earth,
God hath dispens'd his bounties as in heaven.'

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste:
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to choose for delicacy best,
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring.
Taste after taste upheld with kindliest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever earth, all-bearing mother, yields.

In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell.
She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths.
From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold.

Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground
With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.
Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet
His God-like guest, walks forth, without more train.
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections; in himself was all his state,
More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue long
355
Of horses led, and grooms besmeared with gold,
Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
Nearer his presence Adam, though not aw'd,
Yet with submiss approach and reverence meek,
As to a superior nature, bowing low,
360
Thus said: 'Native of heav'n, for other place
None can than heav'n such glorious shape contain;
Since by descending from the thrones above,
Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us
365
Two only, who yet by sovrain gift possess
This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
To rest, and what the garden choicest bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the sun more cool decline.'
370
Whom thus th' angelic Virtue answer'd mild:
'Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though spirits of heaven,
To visit thee; lead on then where thy bower
375
O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
I have at will.' So to the sylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbour smil'd
With flow'rets deck'd, and fragrant smells; but Eve
Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair
380
Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
Stood to entertain her guest from heav'n; no veil
She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel 'Hail!'
385
Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
Long after to bless Mary, second Eve:
'Hail, mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
Than with these various fruits the trees of God
390
Have heap'd this table.' Rais'd of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
And on her ample square from side to side
All autumn pit'd, though spring and autumn here
Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold, 395
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
Our author: 'Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmensur'd o't, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caus'd
400
The earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all.'
To whom the angel: 'Therefore what he gives
(Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational; and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created needs
To be sustain'd and fed: of elements
The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd.
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental recompense
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the ocean. Though in heav'n the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain; yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with heav'n; and to taste
Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
Of theologians; but with keen dispatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate; what redounds, transpires
Through spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire
Of sooty coal th' empiric alchymist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell.
Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
Giv'n him by this great conference, to know
Of things above his world, and of their being
Who dwell in heav'n, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far; whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence, whose high pow'r so far
Exceeded human: and his wary speech
Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd:
'Inhabitant with God, now know I well
Thy favour, in this honour done to man;  
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsa'fd  
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,  
Food not of angels, yet accepted so,  
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem  
At heav'n's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?

To whom the winged hierarch replied:  
'O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom  
All things proceed, and up to him return,  
If not deprav'd from good; created all  
Such to perfection, one first matter all,  
Endued with various forms, various degrees  
Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;  
But more refin'd, more spirituous, and pure,  
As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending  
Each in their several active spheres assign'd,  
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds  
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root  
Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves  
More aery, last the bright consummate flower  
Spirits odorous breathes: flow'rs and their fruit,  
Man's nourishment; by gradual scale sublim'd,  
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,  
To intellectual; give both life and sense,  
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul  
Reason receives, and reason is her being,  
Discursive, or intuitive, discourse  
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours,  
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.  
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good  
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,  
To proper substance. Time may come, when men  
With angels may participate, and find  
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;  
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps  
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,  
Improv'd by tract of time, and, wing'd, ascend  
Ethereal; as we; or may, at choice,  
Here or in heav'nly Paradises dwell;  
If ye be found obedient, and retain  
Unalterably firm his love entire,  
Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy  
Your fill what happiness this happy state  
Can comprehend, incapable of more.'

'To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:  
'O favourable spirit, propitious guest,  
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct  
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set  
From center to circumference; whereon,  
In contemplation of created things,  
By steps we may ascend to God. But say,  
What meant that caution join'd, "If ye be found  
Obedient?" Can we want obedience then  
To him, or possibly his love desert,  
Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?
To whom the angel: 'Son of heav'n and earth,
Attend: that thou art happy, owe to God;
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd,
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee; but to persevere
He left it in thy pow'r; ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity;
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve
Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?
Myself, and all th' angelic host, that stand
In sight of God, enthron'd, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none: freely we serve,
Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall:
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from heav'n to deepest hell; O fall
From what high state of bliss, into what woe!
To whom our great Progenitor: 'Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neigh'ring hills
Aerial music send: nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;
Yet that we never shall forget to love
Our Maker, and obey him whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
Assur'd me, and still assure: though what thou tell'st
Hath pass'd in heav'n, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of heav'n.'
Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,
After short pause assenting, thus began:
'High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
Sad task and hard: for how shall I relate
To human sense th' invisible exploits
Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
The ruin of so many glorious once
And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps
Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
This is dispens'd; and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
As may express them best; though what if earth
Be but the shadow of heav’n, and things therein 575
Each to other like; more than on earth is thought?
‘As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reign’d where these heav’ns now roll, where earth now rests
Upon her center pois’d; when on a day
(For time, though in eternity, applied 580
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future), on such day
As heav’n’s great year brings forth, th’ empyreal host
Of angels by imperial summons call’d,
Innumerable before th’ Almighty’s throne 585
Forthwith, from all the ends of heav’n, appear’d
Under their hierarchs in orders bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advance’d,
Standards and gonfalons ’twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz’d
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
By whom in bliss imbosom’d sat the Son,
Amidst as from a flaming mount whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:
“Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of light, 600
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevok’d shall stand,
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
All knees in heav’n, and shall confess him Lord:
Under his great vicegerent reign abide
United, as one individual soul,
For ever happy: him who disobeys,
Me disobey, breaks union, and that day,
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingul’d, his place
Ordain’d without redemption, without end.’” 615
‘So spake th’ Omnipotent, and with his words
All seem’d well pleas’d; all seem’d, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets, and of fix’d, in all her wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv’d, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular they seem;
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones, that God’s own ear
Paradise to 675

We ours for change delectable, not need;
Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
Tables are set, and on a sudden pil’d
With angel’s food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heaven.
On flow’r’s repos’d, and with fresh flow’rets crown’d,
They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
Quaff immortality and joy, secure
Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
Excess, before th’ all-bounteous King, who show’r’d
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhal’d
From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
Spring both, the face of brightest heav’n had chang’d
To grateful twilight (for night comes not there
In darker veil), and roseate dews dispos’d
All but th’ unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globous earth in plain outspread
(Such are the courts of God), th’ angelic throng,
Dispers’d in bounds and files, their camp extend
By living streams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear’d,
Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
Fann’d with cool winds; save those, who, in their course,
Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
Alternate all night long; but not so wak’d
Satan; so call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in heav’n; he of the first,
If not the first Archangel, great in power,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
With envy against the Son of God, that day
Honour’d by his great Father, and proclaim’d
Messiah King anointed, could not bear
Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair’d.
Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv’d
With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
Unworshipp’d, unobey’d, the throne supreme,
Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
Awak’ning, thus to him in secret spake:
‘Sleep’st thou, companion dear? What sleep can close
Thy eye-lids? and remember’st what decree
Of yesterday, so late hath pass’d the lips
Of heav’n’s Almighty. Thon 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 impos’d;
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
In us who serve, new counsels, to debate
What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
To utter is not safe. Assemble thou,
Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
Tell them, that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward, with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King,
The Great Messiah, and his new commands,
Who speedily through all the hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws."

'So spake the false archangel, and infus'd
Bad influence into th' unwary breast' 695
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent powers,
Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disencumber'd heaven,
The great hierarchal standard was to move;
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superior voice
Of their great potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in heaven;
His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
Drew after him the third part of heav'n's host.
Meanwhile th' Eternal eye, whose sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
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 night,
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
We mean to hold what ancienly 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 pow'r is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ
In our defence, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill."

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

"So spake the Son: but Satan with his powers
Far was advanc'd on winged speed; an host
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
Of Seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
In their triple degrees; regions to which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea, from one entire globe
Stretch'd into longitude; which having pass'd,
At length into the limits of the north
They came; and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing; as a mount
Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
The palace of great Lucifer (so call
That structure in the dialect of men
Interpreted), which not long after, he,
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declar'd in sight of heaven,
The mountain of the Congregation call'd;
For thither he assembled all his train,
Pretending, so commanded, to consult
About the great reception of their king,
Thither to come; and with calumnious art
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:
"Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;
If these magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engross'd
All pow'r, and us eclips'd under the name
Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,
This only to consult; how we may best,
With what may be devis'd of honours new,
Receive him coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!
Too much to one! but double how endur'd,
To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?
But what if better counsels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
Will 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 heav'n possess'd before
By none; and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
Who can in reason then or right assume
Monarchy over such as live by right
His equals, if in pow'r and splendour less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without law
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to th' abuse
Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve."

Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience; when among the Seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
The current of his fury thus oppos'd:
"O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in heav'n
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounce'd and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right endued
With regal scepter, every soul in heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful king? Unjust, thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucessed power.
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and form'd the pow'rs of heaven
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is; how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state, under one head more near
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom,
As by his word, the Mighty Father made
All things, ev'n thee; and all the spirits of heaven
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Essential Pow'rs; nor by his reign obscur'd,
But more illustrious made; since he the head,
One of our number thus reduce'd becomes;
His laws our laws: all honour to him done
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
Th' incensed Father, and th' incensed Son,
While pardon may be found in time besought.
'So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judg'd,
Or singular and rash: whereat rejoic'd
Th' apostate, and, more haughty, thus replied:
'That we were form'd then, say'st thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son? strange point and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd:
Who saw When this creation was?
Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
We know no time when we were not as now;
Knaves none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd
By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native heav'n, ethereal sons.
Our puissance is our own; our right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt th' almighty throne
Beseeking or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to th' anointed King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.'

'He said; and, as the sound of waters deep,
Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause
Through the infinite host: nor less for that
The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone
Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold:
"O alienate from God, O spirit accurs'd,
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
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 vouchsaFd; other decrees
Against thee are gone forth without recall;
That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,
Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;
Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know."

'So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmov'd,
Unshaken, unseduc'd, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them forth he pass’d,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain’d
Superior, nor of violence fear’d aught;
And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn’d
On those proud tow’rs to swift destruction doom’d.

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 de-
scribed: Satan and his powers retire under night; he calls a coun-
cil; 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, overwhelm 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, pur-
sues them, unable to resist, towards the wall of heaven; which
opening, they leap down with horror and confusion into the place
of punishment prepared for them in the deep: Messiah returns
with triumph to his Father.

‘All night the dreadless angel, unpursued,
Through heav’n’s wide champain held his way; till Morn,
Wak’d by the circling Hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr’d the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through heaven
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour
To veil the heav’n, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn,
Such as in highest heav’n, array’d in gold
Empyreal; from before her vanish’d night,
Shot through with orient beams, when all the plain
Cover’d with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
War he perceiv’d, war in procinct; and found
Already known what he for news had thought
To have reported; gladly then he mix’d
Among those friendly pow’rs, who him receiv’d
With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
That of so many myriads fall’n, yet one
Return'd not lost. On to the sacred hill
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard:
"Servant of God, well done; well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintain'd
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence; for this was all thy care,
To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
Judg'd thee perverse: the easier conquest now
Remains thee: aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
Than scorn'd thou didst depart; and to subdue
By force, who reason for their law refuse,
Right reason for their law, and for their King
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince;
And thou, in military prowess next,
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible; lead forth my armed saints,
By thousands and by millions, rang'd for fight,
Equal in number to that godless crew
Rebellious: them with fire and hostile arms
Fearless assault: and to the brow of 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 awak'd; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:
At which command the powers militant
That stood for heav'n, in mighty quadrate join'd
Of union irresistible, mov'd on
In silence their bright legions, to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd
Heroic ardour to advent'rous deeds
Under their God-like leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the passive air upbore
Their nimble tread. As when the total kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden to receive
Their names of thee; so over many a tract
Of heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last,
Far in th' horizon to the north app'ar'd
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded pow'rs of Satan hasting on
With furious expedition; for they ween'd
That self-same day, by sight, or by surprise,
To win the mount of God, and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain
In the mid way: though strange to us it seem'd
At first, that angel should with angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
Hymning th' Eternal Father. But the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
High in the midst, exalted as a god,
Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
Idol of majesty divine, enclos'd
With flaming cherubim, and golden shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval, and front to front
Presented stood in terrible array
Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold;
Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart explores:
"O heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and reality
Remain not! wherefore should not strength and might
There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whose reason I have tried
Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
That he, who in debate of truth hath won,
Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
Most reason is that reason overcome."
'So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens'd, and thus securely him defied:
"Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The highth of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
The throne of God unguarded, and his side
Abandon'd, at the terror of thy power
Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain
Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms;
Who out of smallest things could, without end,
Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand
Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,
Unaided, could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest
All are not of thy train: there he, who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not visible, when I alone

Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
From all: my sect thou seest; now learn too late
How few sometimes may know, when thousands err."

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

'To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied:
"Apostate! still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
Or nature: God and nature aid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude:
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself enthrall'd;
Yet lewdly dar'st our minist'ring upbraid.
Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
In heav'n God ever-blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd;
Yet chains in hell, not realms, expect: meanwhile
From me return'd, as erst thou said'st, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest receive."

'So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee
His massy spear upstaid; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters, forcing way,
Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
Half-sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd
The rebel thrones but greater rage, to see
Thus foil'd their mightiest; ours joy fill'd, and shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle: whereat Michael bid sound
Th' 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 join'd
The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
And clamour, such as heard in heav'n till now
Was never; arms on armour clashing bray'd
Horrible discord, and the maddening wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd; dire was the noise
Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And flying vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rush'd
Both battles main, with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage. All heaven
Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth
Had to her center shook. What wonder? when
Millions of fierce encounter'ing angels fought
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions; how much more of power
Army against army, numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not th' Eternal King Omnipotent,
From his strong hold of heav'n, high over-ruled
And limited their might; though number'd such
As each divided legion might have seem'd
A numerous host; in strength each armed hand
A legion; led in fight, yet leader, seem'd
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway,
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
Thas argued fear; each on himself relied,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war, and various; sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight, then, soaring on main wing,
Tormented all the air; all air seem'd then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference. At his approach,
The great Archangel from his warlike toil
Succes'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in heav'n, the arch-foe subdued,
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown
And visage all inflam'd first thus began:
"Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
Unmann'd in heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest,
These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
Though heaviest by just measure on thyself
And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd
Heav'n's blessed peace, and into nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instill'd
Thy malice into thousands, once upright
And faithful, now prov'd false! But think not here
To trouble holy rest; heav'n casts thee out
From all her confines. Heav'n, the seat of bliss,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and evil go with thee along,
Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell;
Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance, win'gd from God,
Precipitate thee with augmented pain!"
'So spake the prince of angels, to whom thus
The adversary: "Nor think thou with wind
Of aery threats to awe whom yet with deeds
Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
Unvanquish'd; easier to transact with me
That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end
The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
The strife of glory: which we mean to win,
Or turn this heav'n itself into the hell
Thou fablest; here, however, to dwell free,
If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh."
'They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of angels, can relate, or to what things
Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to such lightlu
Of Godlike pow’r? for likest gods they seem’d,
Stood they or mov’d, in stature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great heaven.
Now wav’d their fiery swords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
Blaz’d opposite, while expectation stood
In horror: from each hand with speed retir’d,
Where erst was thickest fight, th’ angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion; such as, to set forth
Great things by small, if, nature’s concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both with next to almighty arm
Up–lifte, and imminent, one stroke they aim’d
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of pow’r at once; nor odds appear’d
In might or swift prevention: but the sword
Of Michaël from the armoury of God
Was given him temper’d so, that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor staid,
But with swift wheel reverse, deep ent’ring, shar’d
All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
And with’d him to and fro convolv’d; so sore
The gridding sword with discontinuous wound
Pass’d through him: but th’ ethereal substance clos’d,
Not long divisible; and from the gash
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow’d
Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stain’d, crewhile so bright.
Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
By angels many and strong, who interpos’d
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood retir’d
From off the files of war: there they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame,
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.
Yet soon he heald; for spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, all sense; and, as they please,
They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size,
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.
‘Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserv’d
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
Of Moloch, furious king; who him defied,
And at his chariot-wheels to drag him bound,
Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of heaven
Refrain'd his tongue blasphémonous; but anon
Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
And uncouth pain bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and Raphæl, his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
Vanquish'd Adramelech and Asmadai,
Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
Nor stood unmindful Ahdiel to annoy
The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow
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
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
Cancell'd from heav'n and sacred memory,
Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For strength from truth divided, and from just,
Haudable, naught merits but dispraise
And ignominy; yet to glory aspires
Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
Therefore eternal silence be their doom.
'And now, their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerv'd,
With many an inroad gorg'd; deformed rout
Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery-foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
Then first with fear surpris'd, and sense of pain,
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise th' inviolable saints,
In cubic phalanx firm, advance'd entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd;
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes; not to have sinn'd,
Not to have disobey'd; in fight they stood
Unworn; unobnoxious to be pain'd
By wound, though from their place by violence mov'd.
'Now night her course began, and over heaven
Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
And silence on the odious din of war:
Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
Victor and vanquish’d: on the foughten field
Michael and his angels prevalent
Encamping, plac’d in guard their watches round,
Cherubic waving fires: on th’ other part,
Satan with his rebellious disappear’d,
Far in the dark dislodg’d; and, void of rest,
His potentates to council call’d by night;
And in the midst thus undismay’d began:

“O now in danger tried, now known in arms
Not to be overpow’rd, companions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone,
Too mean pretence! but what we more affect,
Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustaine’d one day in doubtful fight
(And if one day, why not eternal days?)
What heaven’s Lord had pow’rfullest to send
Against us from about his throne, and judg’d
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm’d,
Some disadvantage we endur’d and pain,
Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemn’d;
Since now we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable, and though pierc’d with wound,
Soon closing, and by native vigour heal’d,
Of evil then so small, as easy think
The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none: if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.”

‘Me sat; and in th’ assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
As one he stood escap’d from cruel fight,
Sore toil’d, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answ’ring spake:

“Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our right as gods; yet hard
For gods, and too unequal work we find,
Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
Against unpain’d, impassive; from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
Valour or strength, though matchless, quell’d with pain
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
But live content, which is the calmest life:
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and, excessive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
No less than for deliverance what we owe.'

'Whereto with look compos'd Satan replied:
“Not uninvented that, which thou aright
Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
This continent of spacious heav'n adorn'd
With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems, and gold;
Whose eye so superficially surveys
These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
Of spiritious and fiery spume, till, touch'd
With heaven's ray, and temper'd, they shoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?

These in their dark nativity the deep
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
Which, into hollow engines, long and round,
Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
From far, with thund'ring noise, among our foes
Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm, whatever stands
Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd
The Thund'er of his only dreaded bolt.
Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd.'

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

Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
With silent circumpection, unespied.
'Now when fair morn orient in heav'n appear'd,
Up rose the victor-angels, and to arms
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for 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 fight; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see
Sad resolution, and secure: let each
His adamantine coat gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
Borne ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire."
'So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment;
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward mov'd embattled: when behold!
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
Training his devilish enginery, impal'd
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
A while; but suddenly at head appear'd
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud:
"Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open breast
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse:
But that I doubt; however, witness heaven,
Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
Freely our part: ye, who appointed stand,
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that all may hear."
'So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended; when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retir'd:
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars laid
On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
Of hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,
With branches loft, in wood or mountain fell’d), 575
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gap’d on us wide,
Portending hollow truce: at each behind
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tipp’d with fire; while we, suspense, 580
Collector stood within our thoughts amus’d,
Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
But soon obscur’d with smoke, all heav’n appear’d, 585
From those deep-throated engines belch’d, whose roar
Embowell’d with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chain’d thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes; which, on the victor host
Levell’d, with such impetuous fury smote,
That, whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
By thousands, angel on archangel roll’d,
The sooner for their arms; unarm’d, they might 595
Have easily, as spirits, evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove; but now
Foul dissipation follow’d, and forc’d rout;
Nor serv’d it to relax their serried files.
What should they do? if on they rush’d, repulse 600
Repeated, and indecent overthrew
Doubled, would render them yet more despis’d,
And to their foes a laughter; for in view
Stood rank’d of Seraphim another row,
In posture to disloque their second tire
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhor’d. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call’d:
“O friends! why come not on these victors proud?
Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we, 610
To entertain them fair with open front
And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
Of composition, straight they chang’d their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem’d
Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps
For joy of offer’d peace: but I suppose,
If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.” 615
“To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood: 620
“Leader! the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg’d home;
Such as we might perceive amus’d them all,
And stumbled many: who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand; 625
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.”
“So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, heighten’d in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory: Eternal Might
To match with their inventions they presum'd
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble: but they stood not long;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power
Which God hath in his mighty angels plac'd!)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For earth hath this variety from heaven,
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale),
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;
From their foundations loosing to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Uplifting bore them in their hands: amaze,
Be sure, and terror, seiz'd the rebel host,
When coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
Till on those cursed engines' triple row
They saw them helm'd, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd;
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruised
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;
Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light,
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neigh'ring hills uptake:
So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
Hurl'd to and fro with jactulation dire,
That under ground they fought in dismal shade;
Infernal noise! war seem'd a civil game
To this uproar; horrid confusion heap'd
Upon confusion rose. And now all heaven
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread;
Had not th' Almighty Father, where he sits
Shrin'd in his sanctuary of heav'n secure,
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All pow'r on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,
Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began:
"Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd,
Son, in whose face invisible is behold
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 pow'rs went forth to tame
These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd;
For to themselves I left them; and thou know'st,
Equal in their creation they were arm'd,
Save what sin hath impair'd; which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found:
War wearied hath perform'd what war can do,
And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
With mountains, as with weapons, arm'd; which makes
Wild work in heav'n, and dangerous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordain'd it; and thus far
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
In heav'n and hell thy pow'r above compare;
And, this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
Of all things; to be Heir, and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
Go then, thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might;
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
From all heav'n's bounds into the utter deep:
There let them learn, as like's them, to despise
God, and Messiah, his anointed King."

'He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full; he all his Father full express'd
Ineffably into his face receiv'd;
And thus the filial Godhead ans'ring spake:
"O Father, O Supreme of heav'nly thrones,
First, Highest, Holiest, Best; thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son; I always thee,
As is most just: this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me, well pleas'd, declar'st thy will
Fulfil'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Scepter and pow'r, thy giving, I assume,
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever; and in me all whom thou lov'st:
But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
Arm'd with thy might, rid heav'n of these rebell'd,
To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm,
That from thy just obedience could revolt,
Whom to obey is happiness entire.
Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.”

So said, he, o'er his scepter bowing, rose
From the right hand of glory where he sat;
And the third sacred morn began to shine,
Dawning through heav'n. Forth rush'd with a whirlwind sound
The chariot of Paternal Deity,
Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with stars, their bodies all,
And wings, were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels
Of beryl, and careering fires between;
Over their heads a crystal firmament,
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with purè
Amber, and colours of the show'ry arch.
He, in celestial panoply all arm'd
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Ascended; at his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd;
And from about him fierce effusion roll'd
Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:
Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
He onward come; far off his coming shone;
And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen:
He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
On the crystalline sky; in sapphire thron'd,
Illustrious far and wide; but by his own
First seen: them unexpected joy surpris'd,
When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd
Aloft by angels borne, his sign in heaven;
Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
His army, circumfus'd on either wing;
Under their head imbodied all in one.
Before him Pow'r Divine his way prepar'd;
At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
Obsequious; heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smil'd.
This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd,
And to rebellious fight rallied their powers,
Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
In heav'nly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
But to convince the proud what signs avail,
Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent?
They, harden'd more by what might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
Took envy; and aspiring to his height
Stood re-embattled 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, disdainful flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake:

"Stand still in bright array, ye saints; here stand,
Ye angels arm'd; this day from battle rest:
Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause:
And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done,
Invincibly: but of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand belongs;
Vengeance is his, or whose he so appoints:
Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
Nor multitude; stand only, and behold
God's indignation on these godless pour'd
By me; not you, but me, they have despis'd,
Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
Because the Father, 't' whom in heav'n supreme
Kingdom, and pow'r, and glory appertains,
Hath honour'd me, according to his will.
Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd:
That they may have their wish, to try with me
In battle which the stronger proves; they all,
Or I alone against them; since by strength
They measure all, of other excellence
Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe."

'So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
His count'nance too severe to be beheld,
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the four spread out their starry wings
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night: under his burning wheels
The steadfast empyræan shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
Plagues: they, astonish'd, all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode
Of thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
That wish'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.
Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd four
Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One spirit in them rul'd; and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength, 850
And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven:
The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
With terrors and with furies, to the bounds
And crystal wall of heav'n; which, opening wide,
Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
Into the wasteful deep: the monstrous sight
Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
Urg'd them behind: headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of heav'n; eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.
'Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, hell saw
Heav'n ruining from heav'n, and would have fled
Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
Her dark foundations; and too fast had bound,
Nine days they fell: confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Encumber'd him with ruin: hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd;
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburden'd heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
Sole Victor, from th' expulsion of his foes,
Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:
To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advance'd; 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 heav'n, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father thron'd
On high; who into glory him receiv'd,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
'Thus measuring things in heav'n by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd
What might have else to human race been hid;
The discord which befel, and war in heaven
Among th' angelic pow'rs, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
With Satan; he who envies now thy state,
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
His punishment, eternal misery;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite done against the Most High,
Thy once to gain companion of his woe.
But listen not to his temptations, warn
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,
By terrible example, the reward
Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.'

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 Sa-
tan 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 perform-
ance thereof, and his reascension into heaven.

Descend from heav'n, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasian wing.
The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou
Nor of the muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heav'nly-born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of th' Almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song Up led by thee,
Into the heav'n of heav'n's I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy temp'ring: with like safety guided down,
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime),
Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere:
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east: still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Barchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian hard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.
Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphaël,
The affable Archangel, had forewarn'd
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,
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
So easily obey'd amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wand'ring. He, with his consort Eve,
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
With admiration and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange; things, to their thought
So unimaginable, as hate in heaven.
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
With such confusion: but the evil, soon
Driv'n back, redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung; impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this world
Of heav'n and earth conspicuous first began;
When, and whereof created; for what cause;
What within Eden, or without, was done
Before his memory: as one whose drought
Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current stream,
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest:
'Great things and full of wonder in our ears,
For differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter! by favour sent
Down from the empyræan, to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach;
For which to th' infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sovran will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsa'd
Gently, for our instruction, to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest Wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail us known,

How first began this heav'n which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd

Embracing round this florid earth: what cause
Mov'd the Creator, in his holy rest
Through all eternity, so late to build
In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon
Absolv'd; if unforbid thou may'st unfold

What we, not to explore the secrets ask
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the magnificent 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,
And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of nature from the unapparent deep:

Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring
Silence; and sleep, list'ning to thee, will watch;
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.'

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;

And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild:
'This also thy request, with caution ask'd,
Obtain; though to recount almighty works
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing; such commission from above
I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain
To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
Only Omniscent, hath suppress'd 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.

'Know then, that, after Lucifer from heaven
(So call him, brighter once amidst the host
Of angels, than that star the stars among),
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
Into his place, and the great Son return'd
Victorious with his saints, th' Omnipotent
Eternal Father from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:
   "At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station; heav'n, yet populous, retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms
Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
Wich ministeries due, and solemn rites:
But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled heaven,
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost; and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here; till by degrees of merit rais'd,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience tried;
And earth be chang'd to heav'n, and heav'n to earth,
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye pow'r's 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 heav'n and earth;
Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
Infinitude; nor vacuous the space,
Though I, uncircumscrib'd myself, retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not; necessity and chance
Approach not me, and what I will is fate."
   'So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion, but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told as earthly notion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in heaven,
When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will;
Glory they sung to the Most High, good will
To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight
And th' habitations of the just; to him
Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd
Good out of evil to create; instead
Of spirits malign, a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse
His good to worlds and ages infinite.
   'So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son
On his great expedition now appear'd,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
Of majesty divine: sapience and love
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
About his chariot numberless were pour'd
Cherub and Seraph, potentates and thrones,
And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots wing'd
From th' armoury of God; where stand of old
Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodg'd
Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
Celestial equipage; and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd,
Attendant on their Lord: heav'n open'd wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory, in his pow'rful Word
And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.
On heav'nly ground they stood; and from the shore
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
Heav'n's highth, and with the center mix the pole.
" Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace,"
Said then th' omnipific Word, "your discord end!
Nor stay'd; but, on the wings of Cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
Follow'd in bright procession, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then stay'd the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepar'd
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created things:
One foot be center'd, and the other turn'd
Round through the vast profundity obscure,
And said, "Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This by thy just circumference, O world!"
Thus God the heav'n created, thus the earth,
Matter unform'd and void: darkness profound
Cover'd th' abyss; but on the watry calm
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth,
Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purg'd
The black, tartareous, cold, infernal dregs,
Adverse to life: then founded, then conglob'd
Like things to like; the rest to several place
Disparted, and between spun out the air:
And earth, self-balance'd, on her center 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,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good;
And light from darkness by the hemisphere
Divided: light the day, and darkness night,
He nam'd. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial quires, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;
Birth-day of heav'n and earth; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works; Creator they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

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

'The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryon immature involv'd,
Appear'd not: over all the face of earth
Main ocean flow'd, not idle; but, with warm
Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Satiate with genial moisture; when God said,
"Be gather'd now, ye waters under heaven,
Into one place, and let dry land appear."
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command impress'd
On the swift floods; as armies at the call
Of trumpets (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard; so the watry throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft ebbing: nor withstood them rock or hill;
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, Earth; and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters, he call'd Seas:
And saw that it was good; and said, "Let th' earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth."
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flow'r'd
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet; and, these scarce blown,
Forth flourish'd thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept
The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattled in her field, and th' humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd
Their blossoms: with high woods the fields were crown'd,
With tufts the valleys, and each fountain-side;
With borders long the rivers: that earth now
Seem'd like to heav'n, a seat where gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was; but from the earth a dewy mist
Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each
Plant of the field; which, ere it was in th' earth,
God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem: God saw that it was good:
So ev'n and morn recorded the third day.
Again th' Almighty spake, "Let there be lights
High in th' expanse of heaven, to divide
The day from night; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
And let them be for lights, as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of 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
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
Surveying his great work, that it was good:
For of celestial bodies first the sun
A mighty sphere he fram'd, unlightsome first,
Though of ethereal mould: then form'd the moon
Globeose, and every magnitude of stars,
And sow'd with stars the heav'n, thick as a field:
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light; firm to retain
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
And hence the morning planet gilds her 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,
Regent of day, and all th' horizon round
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
His longitude through heav'ns high road; the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him dance'd,
Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon,
But opposite in levell'd west was set,
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him; for other light she needed none
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
Till night; then in the east her turn she shines
Revolv'd on heav'n's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorn'd
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.

"And God said, "Let the waters generate
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Display'd on the open firmament of heaven."

And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds;
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying,

"Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill:
And let the fowl be multiplied on th' earth."
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals
Of fish that with their fins, and shining scales,
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
Bank the mid sea; part single, or with mate,
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray; or sporting with quick glance,
Show to the sun their way'd coats dropt with gold;
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk,
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
Tempest the ocean: there leviathan,
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
And seems a moving land; and at his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
Their brood as numerous hatch, from th' egg that soon
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd
Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge
They summ'd their pens; and, soaring th' air sublime,
With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud
In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
On cliffs and cedar-tops their eyries build:
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise
In common, rang'd in figure, wedge their way,
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their acry caravan, high over seas
Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane
Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air
Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes:
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
Sola'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
Till ev'n; nor then the solemn nightingale
Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays:
Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bath'd
Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck,
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit
The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
The mid aereal sky: others on ground
Walk'd firm; the crested cock whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and th' other whose gay train
Adorns him, colour'd with the florid hue
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
Evening and morn solemniz'd the fifth day.
"The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin; when God said,
"Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of th' earth,
Each in their kind." The earth obey'd and straight
Opening her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth
Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,
Limb'd and full grown: out of the ground up rose,
As from his lair, the wild beast, where he won
In forest wild, in thicket, brake or den;
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd:
The cattle in the fields and meadows green:
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung,
The grassy clods now calv'd; now half appear'd
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then springs, as broke from bonds, 465
And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,
The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
In hillocks: the swift stag from under ground
Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould
Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
His vastness: fieèd the flocks and bleating rose,
As plants: ambiguous between sea and land
The river-horse, and scaly crocodile.
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
Insect or worm: those wav'd their limber fans
For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride,
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
These as a line their long dimension drew,
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
Minims of nature: some of serpent-kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious enmet, provident
Of future; in small room large heart enclos'd;
Pattern of just equality perhaps
Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes
Of commonality: swarming next appear'd
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stor'd: the rest are numberless,
And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.
Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand
First wheel'd their course: earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smil'd; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum; was walk'd,
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd:
There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and eyes,
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God Supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake:
"Let us make now man in our image, man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the earth,
And every creeping thing that creepeth the ground."  
This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O man,  
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd  
The breath of life; in his own image he  
Created thee, in the image of God  
Express; and thou became'st a living soul.  
Male he created thee; but thy consort  
Female, for race; then bless'd mankind, and said,  
"Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,  
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold  
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of th' air,  
And every living thing that moves on th' earth."  
Wherever thus created, for no place  
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,  
He brought thee into this delicious grove,  
This garden, planted with the trees of God,  
Delectable both to behold and taste;  
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food  
Gave thee: all sorts are here all th' earth yields,  
Variety without end; but of the tree,  
Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,  
Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest;  
Death is the penalty impos'd; beware,  
And govern well thy appetite; lest sin  
Surprise thee, and her black attendant death."  
"Here finish'd he, and all that he had made  
View'd, and behold all was entirely good;  
So ev'n and morn accomplish'd the sixth day:  
Yet not till the Creator, from his work  
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,  
Up to the heav'n of heav'n, his high abode;  
Thence to behold this new-created world,  
Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd  
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,  
Answering his great idea. Up he rode  
Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound  
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tun'd  
Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air  
Resounded (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st),  
The heav'n's and all the constellations rang,  
The planets in their station list'ning stood,  
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant,  
"Open, ye everlasting gates!" they sung,  
"Open, ye heav'n's! your living doors; let in  
The great Creator from his work return'd  
Magnificent, his six days' work, a world;  
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign  
To visit oft the dwellings of just men,  
Delighted; and with frequent intercourse  
Thither will send his winged messengers  
On errands of supernnal grace." So sung  
The glorious train ascending: he through heaven,  
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led  
To God's eternal house direct the way;  
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest 580
Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
For running night; when at the holy mount
Of heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne 585
Of Godhead fix'd for ever firm and sure,
The Filial Pow'r arriv'd, and sat him down
With his great Father: for he also went
Invisible, yet stay'd (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence), and the work ordain'd,
Author and End of all things; and, from work
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the seventh day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept: the harp
Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe, 595
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral or unison: of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount.
Creation and the six days' acts they sung:
"Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
Thy pow'r! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee? Greater now in thy return
Than from the giant angels: thee that day
Thy thunders magnified; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, Mighty King, or bound
Thy empire? easily the proud attempt
Of spirits apostate, and their counsels vain,
Thou hast repell'd; while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another heaven
From heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 610
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
Earth with her nether ocean circum'st'd,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men, 625
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advance'd!
Created in his image there to dwell
And worship him; and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshippers
Holy and just; thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!"
'So sung they, and the empyræan rung
With hallelujahs: thus was sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfill’d, that ask’d
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning; that posterity,
Inform’d by thee, might know: if else thou seek’st
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.'

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 desires to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation; his placing in Paradise; his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society; his first meeting and nuptials with Eve: his discourse with the Angel thereupon; who, after admonitions repeated, departs.
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose
Such restless revolution day by day
Repeated; while the sedentary earth,
That better might with far less compass move,
Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
Her end without least motion, and receives,
As tribute, such a 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 seem'd
Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve
Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,
With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,
Her nursery; they at her coming sprang;
And, touch'd by her fair tendance, gladdier grew.
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd,
Adam relating, she sole auditrress;
Her husband the relater she preferr'd
Before the angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would internix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses; from his lip
Not words alone pleas'd her. O! when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd?
With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
Not unattended; for on her, as queen,
A pomp of winning graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire
Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt propos'd,
Benevolent and facile thus 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 heav'n move or earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
From man or angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scannd 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
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 supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor heav’n such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit. Consider first, that great
Or bright inferst not excellence: the earth
Though, in comparison of heav’n, so small,
Nor glist’ring, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines:
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful earth; there first receiv’d,
His beams, unactive, their vigour find.
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious; but to thee earth’s inhabitant.
And for the heav’n’s wide circuit, let it speak
The Maker’s high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his line stretch’d out so far;
That man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg’d in a small partition, and the rest
Ordain’d for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual: me thou think’st not slow,
Who since the morning-hour set out from heaven
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv’d
In Eden; distance inexpresible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the heav’ns, to show
Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov’d;
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac’d heav’n from earth so far, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be center to the world; and other stars,
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wand’ring course now high, now low, then hid
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest; and what if sev’nth to these
The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move?
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
Mov’d contrary with thwart obliquitics;
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos’d,
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day
Travelling east, and with her part averse
From the sun’s beam meet night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray, What if that light, 
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air, 
To the terrestrial moon be as a star, 
Enlight'ning her by day as she by night 
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there, 
Fields and inhabitants? her spots thou seest 
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce 
Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat 
Allotted there; and other suns perhaps, 
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry, 
Communicating male and female light; 
Which two great sexes animate the world, 
Stor'd in each orb perhaps with some that live:
For such vast room in nature unpossess'd 
By living soul, desert, and desolate, 
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 
Each orb a glimpse of light convey'd so far 
Down to this habitable, which returns 
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute. 
But whether thus these things, or whether not; 
Whether the sun, predominant in heaven, 
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 plac'd, let him dispose; joy thou 
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise 
And thy fair Eve; heav'n is for thee too high 
To know what passes there; be lowly wise: 
Think only what concerns thee, and thy being; 
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there 
Live, in what state, condition, or degree: 
Contented thus far hath been reveal'd 
Not of earth only, but of highest heaven.' 
To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, replied; 
'How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure 
Intelligence of heav'n, angel serene! 
And freed from intricacies, taught to live 
The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts 
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which 
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 
And not molest us; unless we ourselves 
Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain. 
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove 
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end; 
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 
That not to know at large of thing 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,
Unpractis’d, unprepar’d, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise
Of something not unseasonable to ask,
By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deign’d.
Thy 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;
Pond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
For, while I sit with thee, I seem in heaven,
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.

To whom thus Raphael answer’d heav’nly meek:
‘Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour’d
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee; and each word, each motion, forms;
Nor less think we in heav’n of thee on earth
Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with man:
For God, we see, hath honour’d thee, and set
On man his equal love: say therefore on;
For I that day was absent, as befel,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
Far on excursion toward the gates of hell;
Squar’d in full legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work;
Lest he, incens’d at such eruption bold,
 Destruction with creation might have mix’d.
Not that they durst without his leave attempt;
But us he sends upon his high behests
For state, as Sovran King; and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut,
The dismal gates, and barricado’d strong;
But long ere our approaching heard within
Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we return’d up to the coasts of light
Ere sabbath-evening: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleas’d with thy words no less than thou with mine.’
So spake the Godlike pow’r, and thus our sire:
'For man to tell how human life began
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid,
In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed,
Straight toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd a while the ample sky; till rais'd
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet: about me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams: by these
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd or flew;
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd;
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause,
Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. "Thou sun," said I, "fair light,
And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills, and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
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 pow'r pre-eminent:
Tell me, how I may know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know."
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light; when, answer none return'd,
On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy to believe I yet had being.
And liv'd: one came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, "Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
First father! call'd by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd."
So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd,
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, enclos'd with goodliest trees
Plantèd with walks and bow'rs; that what I saw
Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree,
Loadèd with fairest fruit that hung to th' eye
Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively shadow'd: here had new begun
My wand'ring, had not He, who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiss: he rear'd me, and, "Whom thou sought'st I am;"
Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To fill and keep, and of the fruit to eat:
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no death:
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die,
From that day mortal; and this happy state
Shalt lose, expell'd 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
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd:
"Not only these fair bounds, both all the earth
To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live,
Or live in sea, or air; beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof, each bird and beast behold
After their kinds; I bring them to receive
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
With low subjection; understand the same
Of fish within their watry residence,
Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
Their element, to draw the thinner air."
As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two; these cow'ring low
With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing.
I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
My sudden apprehension: but in these
I found not what methought I wanted still;
And to the heav'nly vision thus presum'd:
"O, by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
Surpassèst far my naming; how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe,
And all this good to man? for whose well-being
So amply, and with hands so liberal,
Thou hast provided all things: but with me
I see not who partakes. In solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?"
Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
As with a smile more brighten'd, thus replied:
"What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
Replenish'd, and all this at thy command
To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
Their language and their ways? They also know,
And reason not contemptibly: with these
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large."
So spake the Universal Lord, and seem'd So ord'ring:
I, with leave of speech implor'd,
And humble depreciation, thus replied:
"Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly Power,
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?
Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Giv'n and receiv'd; but, in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike; of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight; wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort: they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
So well converge, nor with the ox the ape;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all."
"Whereeto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd:
"A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
Of happiness, or not? who am alone
From all eternity; for none I know
Second to me or like, equal much less.
How have I then with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents
Beneath what other creatures are to thee?"
"He ceas'd; I lowly answer'd: "To attain
The 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 deficiency found: not so is man,
But in degree; the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defects. No need that thou
Shouldst propagate, already infinite;
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,
Seek'et not social communication;
Yet so pleas'd,
Canst raise thy creature to what height thou wilt
Of union or communion, deified:
J, by conversing,
cannot these erect
From prone;
nor in their ways complacence find."
Thus I embolden'd spake,
and freedom us'd
Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd
This answer from the gracious voice divine:
"Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;
And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself;
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My image, not-imported to the brute:
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;
And be so minded still: I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone:
And no such company as then thou saw'st
Intended thee; for trial only brought,
To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire."
He ended, or I heard no more:
for now
My earthly by his heav'nly overpower'd,
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to th' height
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
By nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell
Of fancy, my internal sight; by which,
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood:
Who stooping open'd my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh: wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd:
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew,
Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her sumn'd up, in her contain'd
And in her looks; which from that time infusion'd
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspir'd
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappear'd, and left me dark; I wak'd
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
With what all earth or heaven could bestow
To make her amiable; on she came,
Led by her heavily Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice; nor uniform'd
Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
I, overjoy'd, could not forbear aloud:
"This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself
Before me: Woman is her name; of man
Extracted: for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul."
"She heard me thus; and though divinely brought,
Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but; retir'd,
The more desirable; or, to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turn'd:
I follow'd her; what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approv'd
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn: all heaven,
And happy constellations, on that hour
Shed their selectest influence; the earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds: fresh gales and gentle airs
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Plung rose, plung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening-star
On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp.
"Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss,
Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As, us'd or not, works in the mind no change,  
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies  
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,  
Walks, and the melody of birds: but here  
Far otherwise, transported I behold,  
Transported touch; here passion first I felt,  
Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else  
Superior and unmov'd; here only weak  
Against the charm of beauty's pow'rful glance.  
Or nature fail'd in me, and left some part  
Not proof enough such object to sustain;  
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps  
More than enough; at least on her bestowed  
Too much of ornament, in outward show  
Elaborate, of inward less exact.  
For well I understand in the prime end  
Of nature her th' inferior, in the mind  
And inward faculties, which most excel;  
In outward also her resembling less  
His image who made both, and less expressing  
The character of that dominion given  
O'er other creatures: yet when I approach  
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems  
And in herself complete, so well to know  
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,  
Seems wisest, virtuosest, discreetest, best:  
All higher knowledge in her presence falls  
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her  
Loses discountenanc'd, and like folly shows;  
Authority and reason on her wait,  
As one intended first, not after made  
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,  
Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat  
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe  
About her, as a guard angelic plac'd.  
To whom the Angel with contracted brow:  
'Accuse not nature, she hath done her part;  
Do thou but thine; and be not disdaining  
Of wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou  
Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,  
By attributing overmuch to things  
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.  
For, what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,  
An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well  
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;  
Not thy subjection; weigh with her thyself;  
Then value: oft-times nothing profits more  
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right  
Well manag'd; of that skill the more thou know'st,  
The more she will acknowledge thee her head,  
And to realities yield all her shows:  
Made so adorn for thy delight the more,  
So awful, that with honour thou mayst love  
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.  
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
Is propagated, seem such dear delight
Beyond all other; think the same vouchsaf'd
To cattle and each beast; which would not be
To them made common and divulg'd, if aught
Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him move.
What higher in her society thou find'st
Attractive, human, rational, love still;
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true love consists not: love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious; is the scale
By which to heav'nly 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 abash'd, Adam replied:
'Neither her outside form'd 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,
Those thousand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions mix'd with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear.
Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing; yet, still free,
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love, thou blam'st me not; for love, thou say'st,
Leads up to heav'n, is both the way and guide;
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:
Love not the heav'nly spirits, and how their love
Express they? by looks only? or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?
To whom the Angel, with a smile that glow'd
Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
Answer'd: 'Let it suffice thee that thou know'st
Us happy, and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st
(And pure thou wilt 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 restrain'd conveyance need,
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
But I can now no more; the parting sun
Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.
Be strong, live happy, and love! but, first of all, Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command; take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgement to do aught, which else free will
Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware!
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in thine own arb'trement it lies.
Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel.'
So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction. 'Since to part,
Go, heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,
Sent from who? sovran goodness I adore!
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
With grateful memory: thou to mankind
Be good and friendly still, and oft return!
So parted they; the Angel up to heaven
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

SATAN HAVING COMPASSED THE EARTH, WITH MEDITATED GUILLE RETURNS, AS A MIST, BY NIGHT INTO PARADISE; ENTERS INTO THE SERPENT SLEEPING. ADAM AND EVE IN THE MORNING GO FORTH TO THEIR LABOURS, WHICH EVE PROPOSES TO DIVIDE IN SEVERAL PLACES, EACH LABOURING APART: ADAM CONSENTS NOT, ALLEGING THE DANGER, LET THAT ENEMY, OF WHOM THEY WERE FOREWARNED, SHOULD ATTEMPT HER FOUND ALONE: EVE, BOTH 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 SUbLE APPROACH, FIRST GAZING, THEN SPEAKING; WITH MUCH FLATTERY EXTOLLING EVE ABOVE ALL OTHER CREATURES. EVE, WONDERING TO HEAR THE SERPENT SPOkE, 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, EXTINGUISHING THE TRESPASS, CATCH ALSO OF THE FRUIT: THE EFFECTS THEREOF IN THEM BOTH: THEY SEEK TO COVER THEIR NAKEDNESS; THEN FALL TO VARIANCE AND ACCUSATION OF ONE ANOTHER.

NO MORE OF TALK WHERE GOD OR ANGEL GUEST
WITH MAN, AS WITH HIS FRIEND, FAMILIAR US'D
TO SIT INDULGENT, AND WITH HIM PARTAKE
RURAL REPET; PERMITTING HIM THE WHILE
Venial discourse unblam'd. I now must change
Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
Dishonour 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,
That thought into this world a world of woe,
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery
Death's harbinger: sad task, yet argument
Not less but more heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursu'd
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia desespous'd;
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son;
If answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplur'd,
And dictates to me slumb'ring; or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse:
Since first this subject for heroic song
Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deem'd; chief mast'ry to dissect
With long and tedious havoc fabled knights
In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unsung; or to describe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast
Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneshals;
The skill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which justly gives heroic name
To person or to poem. Me, of these
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.

The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veil'd th' horizon round;
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On man's destruction, mangre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
From compassing the earth; cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried
His entrance, and forewarn’d the Cherubim
That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,
The space of sev’n continued nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
He circled; four times cross’d the ear of night
From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
On th’ eighth return’d; and on the coast averse
From entrance or Cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life:
In with the river sunk, and with it rose,
Satan, involv’d in rising mist; then sought
Where to lie hid; sea he had search’d, and land
From Eden over Pontus and the pool
Moeotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downard as far antarctic: and in length,
West from Orontes to the ocean barr’d
At Darien; thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus: thus the orb he roam’d
With narrow search; and with inspection deep
Consider’d every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found
The serpent subllest beast of all the field.
Him after long debate; irresolute
Of thoughts revolv’d, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight: for, in the wily snake
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding; which, in other beasts observ’d,
Doubt might beget of diabolic power
Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolv’d, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour’d:
‘O earth, how like to heav’n, if not preferr’d
More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God, after better, worse would build?
Terrestrial heav’n, danc’d round by other 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 center, yet extends to all; so thou,
Centring, receiv’st from all those orbs: in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ’d up in man.
With what delight could I have walk’d thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries: all good to me becomes
Bane, and in heav'n much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, nor nor in heaven
To dwell, unless by mast'ring heav'n's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroyed,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe;
In woe then, that destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among
Th' infernal pow'rs, in one day to have marr'd
What be, Almighty sty'd, six nights and days
Continued making; and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than since 1, in one night, freed
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: he, to be aveng'd,
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd
More Angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or, to spite us more,
Determin'd to advance into our room
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With heavily spoils, our spoils: what he decreed,
He effected; man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounc'd; and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service angel-wings,
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge: of these the vigilance
I dread, and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I, who erst contended
With gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
Into a beast; and, mix'd with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the highth of deity aspir'd!
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low
As high he soar’d; obnoxious, first or last,
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:
Let it; I reck not, so it light well aim’d,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of heav’n, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker rais’d
From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.’
So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on
His midnight search, where soonest he might find
The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-roll’d,
His head the midst, well stor’d with subtle wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,
Fearless unforc’d he slept: in at his mouth
The devil enter’d; and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon inspir’d
With act intelligential; but his sleep
Disturb’d not, waiting close th’ approach of morn.

Now, when as sacred light began to dawn,
In Eden on the humid flow’rs, that breath’d
Their morning incense, when all things, that breathe,
From th’ earth’s great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And join’d their vocal worship to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs:
Then commune, how that day they best may ply
Their growing work: for much their work outgrew
The hands’ dispatch of two gard’ning so wide,
And Eve first to her husband thus began:
‘Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoin’d; but till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present:
Let us divide our labours; thou, where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,
In yonder spring of roses intermix’d
With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:
For, while so near each other thus all day
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on; which intermits
Our day’s work, brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd?  
To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd:
'Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living creatures dear!
Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,
How we might best fulfil the work which here
God hath assign'd us; nor of me shalt pass
Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,
To brute denied, and are of love the food;
Love, not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksome toil, but to delight,
He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
These paths and bow'r's doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands are long
Assist us: but if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return.
But other doubt possessest, lest harm
Befall thee sever'd from me; for thou know'st
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
Envying our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need:
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.'
To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus replied:
'Offspring of heav'n and earth, and all earth's lord!
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn,
And from the parting angel over-heard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduce'd;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?
To whom with healing words Adam replied:
'Daughter of God and man, immortal Eye!
For such thou art; from sin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperes
The tempted with dishonour foul, suppos'd
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Against temptation; thou thyself with scorn
And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong,
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or daring, first on me th' assault shall light.
Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels; nor think superfluous others' aid.
I, from the influence of thy looks, receive
Access in every virtue; in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome or over-reach'd,
Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial 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.
Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd:
'If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endued
Single with like defence, wherever met;
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin; only our foe,
Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity; his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surprize prov'd false, find peace within,
Favour from heav'n, our witness, from th' event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single or combin'd.
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were no Eden, thus expos'd.'
To whom thus Adam fervently replied:
'O woman, best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them; his creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created, much less man,
Or aught that might his happy state secure,
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will; for what obeys
Reason, is free; and reason he made right,
But bid her well be ware, and still erect;
Lest, by some fair-appearing good surpris'd,
She dictate false; and misinform the will
To do what God expressly hath forbid.
Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins,
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;
Since reason not impossibly may meet
Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better, and most likely if from me
Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.'
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience; th' other who can know;
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But, if thou think, trial unsought may find
Us both secure than thus warn'd thou seem'st,
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.'
So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied:
'With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touch'd only; that our trial, when least sought,
May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,
The willingness 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,
Bëtook her to the groves; but Delia's self
In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd,
But with such gard'ning-tools as art yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or Angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd, Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd
To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush, hid among sweet flow'rs and shades,
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss!
For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
In bow'r and field he sought,
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc'd; when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glow'd, oft stooping to support
Each flow'r of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,
Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd
Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd
Alcinous, host of old Laërtes' son;
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much he the place admir'd, the person more.
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more;
She most, and in her look sums all delight:
Such pleasure took the serpent to behold
This flow'ry plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone: her heav'nly form
Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture, or least action, overaw'd
His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
That space the evil one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
Stupidly good; of enmity disarm'd,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:
But the hot hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid heav'n, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure, not for him ordain'd; then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:
'Thoughts, whither have ye led me? with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us? hate, not love; 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
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 informidable! exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath hell debas'd, and pain
Enfeebled me, to what I was in heaven.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods!
Not terrible, though terror be in love
And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under show of love well feign'd;
The way which to her ruin now I tend?
So spake the enemy of mankind enclos'd
In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve
Address'd his way: not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floated redundant; pleasing was his shape
And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen;
He with Olympias; this with her who bore
Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:
So varied he, and of his tortuous train
 Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound
Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
To such disport before her through the field,
From every beast; more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.

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

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

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

'What may this mean? language of man pronounc'd
By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?
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
I knew, but not with human voice endued;
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam’st thou speakable of mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?
Say, for such wonder claims attention due.
To whom the guileful tempter thus replied:
‘Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou command’st; and right thou shouldst be
obey’d:
I was as first as other beasts that graze
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food; nor aught but food discern’d
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till, on a day roving the field, I chanc’d
A goodly tree far distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix’d,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas’d my sense
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
Unsuck’d of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv’d
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Pow’rful persuaders, quicken’d at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg’d me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
For, high from ground, the branches would require
Thy utmost reach or Adam’s: round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I sparc’d not; for, such pleasure till that hour,
At feed or fountain, never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward pow’rs; and speech
Wanted not long; though to this shape retain’d,
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turn’d my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Consider’d all things visible in heaven,
Or earth, or middle; all things fair and good:
But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty’s heav’nly ray,
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Book IX. PARADISE LOST. 139

Equivalent or second, which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee of right declar'd
Sovran of creatures, universal dame!

So talk'd the spirited sly snake; and Eve,
Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus replied:
'Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd;
But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us; in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden nature of her birth
To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad:
'Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.'

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

Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake:
'Serpent, we might have spard our coming hither, 
Frutiless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves; our reason is our law.'

To whom the tempter guilefully replied:

'Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declar'd of all in earth or air?'

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless: 'Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat;
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat.
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'
She scarce had said, though brief; when now more bold
The tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on; and as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renown'd,
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected; while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay
Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:
So standing, moving, or to highth up-grown,
The tempter, all impassion'd, thus began:
"O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
Mother of science! now I feel thy power
With me clear; not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.
Queen of this universe! do not believe
Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die:
How should you? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge; by the threat'ner? look on me,
Me, who have touch'd and tasted; yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than fate
Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass? and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd; whatever thing death be,
Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;
Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe?
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers? He knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall presently be then
Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods,
Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
That ye shall be as gods, since I as man,
Internal man, is but proportion meet;
1, of brute, human; ye, of human, gods,
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,
Though threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring,715
And what are gods, that man may not become
As they, participating god-like food?
The gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds;
I question it; for this fair earth I see,
Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind;
Them, nothing: if they all things, who enclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whose eats thereof, forwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
Th' offence, that man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart against his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heav'nly breasts? These, these, and many more
Causes import your need of this fair fruit,
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste.'
He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
Into her heart too easy entrance won:
Fix'd on the fruit she gaz'd, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
With reason, to her seeing, and with truth:
Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell
So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
Inclining now grown to touch or taste,
Solicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to herself she mus'd:
'Great are thy virtues, doubless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd;
Whose taste, too long forborn, 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,
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown, sure is not had; or, had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!
How dies the serpent? he hath eat'n and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us denied
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy
The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good or evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?

Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?

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

'O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscure'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;
Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give;
For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
In ignorance; thou open'dst wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret: heav'n is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me; or rather not,
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power
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! Confirm’d then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.’
So saying, from the tree her step she turn’d:
But first low reverence done, as to the Power
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus’d
Into the plant sciential sap, deriv’d
From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flow’rs a garland, to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promis’d to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay’d:
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him; he the falt’ring measure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn when first they parted: by the tree
Of knowledge he must pass; there he met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil’d,
New gather’d, and ambrosial smell diffus’d.
To him she hasted; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt;
Which, with bland words at will, she thus address’d:855
‘Hast thou not wonder’d, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have miss’d, and thought it long, depriv’d
Thy presence; agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,
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 restrain’d as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become,
Not dead, as we are threaten’d, but thenceforth
Endued with human voice and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration; and with me
Persuasively hath so prevail’d, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th’ effects to correspond; open my eyes
Dim crest, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
Tedious, unshar’d with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree.
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit.'

Thus Eve with count’nanee blithe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glow’d.

On th’ other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz’d,
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill’d

Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax’d;
From his slack hand the garland wreath’d for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:

Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke:

‘O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God’s works, creature in whom excell’d
Whatever can to sight or thought be form’d,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!

How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,
Defac’d, deflower’d, and now to death devote!

Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbidd’n! Some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguil’d thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruin’d; for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die:

How can I live without thee! how forego
Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join’d,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn!

Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel
The link of nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe?

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

‘Bold deed thou hast presum’d, advent’rous Eve,
And peril great provok’d, who thus hast dar’d,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.

But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God omnipotent, nor fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profan’d first by the serpent, by him first
Made common, and unhallow’d, ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives;
Lives, as thou said’st, and gains to live, as man,

Higher degree of life; inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain

Proportional ascent; which cannot be
But to be gods, or angels, demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threat'ning, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,
Set over all his works; which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
Not well conceiv'd of God, who, though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would be loth
Us to abolish, lest the adversary
Triumph, and say: "Fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruin'd, now mankind; whom will he next?"

Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
However, I with thee have fix'd my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: if death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of nature draw me to my own;
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state cannot be sever'd; we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.'

So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied:

'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 resolv'd,
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;
Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion,) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known.
Were it I thought death menace'd would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assur'd
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful, love unequall'd; but I feel
Far otherwise th' event; not death, but life
Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds.'

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy
Tenderly wept; much won, that he 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 merite) from the bough 995
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000
In pangs; and nature gave a second groan;
Sky lour'd; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wpt at completing of the mortal sin
Original: while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to sooth
Him with her lov'd society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010
Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
Far other operation first display'd,
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move: 1015
"Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part;
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate call judicious; I the praise
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd,
For this one tree had been forbidden ten,
But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare;
For never did thy beauty, since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!"
So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent; well understood 1025
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he seiz'd; and to a shady bank,
Thick over-head with verdant roof imbow'rd,
He led her nothing loth; flow'r's were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth, earth's freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play. 1030
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhale'd; and grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams
Encumber'd, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
How darken'd; innocence; that as a veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone;
Just confidence, and native righteouness,
And honour, from about them, naked left
To guilty shame; he cover'd, but his robe
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap
Of Philistean Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength; they destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat; as strucken mute:
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd,
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd:
'O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,
False in our promis'd rising: since our eyes
Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
Our wond'rous ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concipiscence; whence evil store;
Ev'n shame, the last of evils; of the first
Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
Henceforth, of God or Angel, erst with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? Those heav'ly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O! might I here
In solitude live savage; in some glade
Obscur'd, where highest woods, impenetrable
To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
And brown as evening: cover me, ye pines!
Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more!
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sew'd,
And girded on our loins, may cover round
Those middle parts; that this new-comer, shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.'
So counsel'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd,
But such as at this day, to Indians known,
In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade
High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: those leaves
They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe;
And, with what skill they had, together sew'd,
To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame! O, how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found th' American, so girt
With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part
Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind,
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tossed and turbulent:
For understanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore; both in subjection now
To sensual appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sovran reason claim'd
Superior sway; from thus distemper'd breast,
Adam, estrang'd in look and alter'd style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd:
'Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and staid
With me, as I besought thee, when that strange
Desire of wand'ring, this unhappy morn,
I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then
Remain'd still happy; not as now, despoil'd
Of all our good; sham'd, naked, miserable!
Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve
The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.'
To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve:
'What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam severe!
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will
Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
But might as ill have happen'd, thou being by,
Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake;
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib.
Being as I am, why didst thou, the head,
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger, as thou said'st?
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.
To whom, then first incens'd, Adam replied:
'S is this the love, is this the recompense
Of mine to thee, ingratitude Eve! express'd
Immutable, when thou wast lost, not I;
Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
To whom, then first incens'd, Adam replied:
'Is this the love, is this the recompense
Of mine to thee, in grateful Eve!
Express'd Immutable, when thou wast lost, not I;
Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more?
I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this, had been force;
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on; secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also err'd, in overmuch admiring
What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime,
And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall 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 appear'd no end.

B O O K  X.

T H E  A R G U M E N T.

Man's transgression known, the guardian-Angels forsake Para-
dise, 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 trans-
gressors; who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in
pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting
still 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 ar-
rives at Pandemonium, in full assembly relates with boasting his
success against man; instead of applause is entertained with a
general kiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also
suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then, deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but, for the present, commands his Angels to make several alterations in the heavens and elements. Adam, more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails, rejects the concomitance of Eve; she persists, and at length appears him: then, to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways, which he approves not; but, conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the serpent; and exhorts her with him to seek peace 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 heav'n; for what can 'scape the eye
Of God all-seeing; or deceive his heart
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd
Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remember'd,
The high injunction, not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
Incur'd (what could they less?) the penalty;
And, manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.
Up into heav'n from Paradise in haste
Th' angelic guards ascended, mute and sad,
For man; for of his state by this they knew,
Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n
Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
From earth arriv'd at heaven-gate; displeas'd
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet, mix'd
With pity, violated not their bliss.
About the new-arriv'd in multitudes
Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know
How all befell: they towards the throne supreme,
Accountable, made haste, to make appear,
With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance,
And easily approv'd; when the Most High
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,
Amidst in thunder utter'd thus his voice:
'Assembled Angels, and ye Pow'rs return'd
From unsuccessful charge; be not dismay'd,
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent;
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from hell.
I told ye then he should prevail; and speed
On his bad errand; man should be seduc'd,
And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker; no decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
His free-will, to her own inclining left
In even scale. But fall'n he is; and now
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
On his transgression, death denounce'd that day?
Which he presumes already vain and void,
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquaintance, ere day end.
Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee
Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd
All judgement, whether in heav'n, or earth, or hell,
Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
Man's friend, his Mediator, his design'd
Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
And destin'd man himself to judge man fall'n.

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

'Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
Mine, both in heav'n and earth, to do thy will
Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son belov'd,
Mayst ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,
When time shall be; for so I undertook
Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
On me deriv'd; yet I shall temper so
Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none
Are to behold the judgement, but the judg'd,
Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
Conviction to the serpent none belongs.'
Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose
Of high collateral glory. Him thrones, and powers
Prueddoms, and dominations ministrant,
Accompanied to heaven-gate; from whence
Eden, and all the coast, in prospect lay.
Down he descended straight; the speed of gods
Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing'd.
Now was the sun in western cadence low
From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in
The 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 declin'd; they heard,
And from his presence hid themselves among

The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God,
Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud:
"Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude,
Where obvious duty ere while appear'd unsought:
Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth!"
He came; and with him Eve, more loth, though first
To offend; discountnanc'd both, and discompos'd;

Love was not in their looks, either to God,
Or to each other; but apparent guilt,
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile,
Whence Adam falt'ring long, thus answer'd brief:
"I heard thee in the gard'n, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself." To whom
The gracious Judge without revile replied:
"My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
But still rejoice'd; how is it now become
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree,
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?"
To whom thus Adam sore beset replied:
"O heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand
Before my Judge; either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame
By my complaint: but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint;
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolv'd; though, should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
This woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill;
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat."
To whom the 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 excell'd
Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such, as under government well seem'd;
Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part
And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.'

So having said, he thus to Eve in few:
'Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?
To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd replied:
'The serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat.'

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgement he proceeded on th' accus'd
Serpent, though brute; unable to transfer
The guilt on him who made him instrument
Of mischief, and pollute from the end
Of his creation: justly then accus'd,
As vitiated in nature: more to know
Concern'd not man (since he no further knew),
Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last
To Satan first in sin his doom applied,
Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:
And on the serpent thus his curse let fall:
'Because thou hast done this, thou art accus'd
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
Emnity, and between thine and her seed;
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,
Spoil'd principalities and pow'rs, triumph'd
In open show; and, with ascen-ion bright,
Captivity led captive through the air,
The realm itself of Satan, long usurp'd;
Whom he shall tread at last under our feet;
Ev'n he, who now foretold his fatal bruise;
And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd:
'Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will
Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.'

On Adam last thus judgement he pronounce'd:
'Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree concerning which
I charg'd thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof;
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof, all the days of thy life;
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unbid; and thou shalt eat of th' 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 wast taken, know thy birth,  
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.'  
So judg'd he man, both judge and saviour sent;  
And th' instant stroke of death, denounce'd that day, 210  
Remov'd far off; then, pitying how they stood  
Before him naked to the air, that now  
Must suffer change, distain'd not to begin  
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume;  
As when he wash'd his servants' feet; so now 215  
As father of his family, he clad  
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,  
Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;  
And thought not much to clothe his enemies:  
Nor he their outward only with the skins 220  
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more  
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,  
Arraying, cover'd from his Father's sight.  
To him with swift ascent he up return'd,  
Into his blissful bosom reassum'd 225  
In glory, as of old; to him appeas'd,  
All, though all-knowing; what had pass'd with man  
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.  
Meanwhile, ere thus was simm'd and judg'd on earth,  
Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death, 230  
In counterview within the gates, that now  
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame  
Far into Chaos, since the fiend pass'd through,  
Sin opening; who thus now to Death began:  
'O son, why sit we here each other viewing 235  
Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives  
In other worlds, and happier seat provides  
For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be  
But that success attends him; if mishap,  
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven 240  
By his avengers, since no place like this  
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.  
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,  
Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large  
Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on, 245  
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,  
Pow'rful at greatest distance to unite  
With secret amity things of like kind,  
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade  
Inseparable, must with me along: 250  
For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.  
But, lest the difficulty of passing back  
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf  
Impassable, impervious; let us try  
Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine 255  
Not unagreeable, to found a path  
Over this main from hell to that new world,  
Where Satan now prevails; a monument  
Of merit high to all th' infernal host,  
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,  
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 meager shadow answer'd soon:
'Go, whither fate, and inclination strong,
Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw
Of carmage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of death from all things there that live;
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.'
So saying, with delight he smil'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field,
Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcasses design'd
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd
His nostril wide into the murky air;
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
Then both from out hell-gates, into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverse; and with pow'r (their pow'r was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove,
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of hell:
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive
Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagin'd way
Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote, and fix'd as firm
As Delos, floating once; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
And with asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of hell the gather'd beach
They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high-arch'd, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable 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 compar'd,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
Came to the sea; and, over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd,
And scourg'd with many a stroke th' indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,
Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
Of Satan to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round world; with pins of adamant
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
And durable; and now in little space

The confines met of empyrean heaven,
And of this world; and, on the left hand, hell
With long reach interpos'd; three several ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.

And now their way to earth they had descried,
To Paradise first tending; when, behold!
Satan, in likeness of an angel bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.

He, after Eve seduc'd, unmind'd 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, terrifed
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun

The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath
Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd
By night, and list'ning where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
Thence gather'd his own doom; which understood
Not instant, but of future time, with joy
And tidings fraught, to hell he now return'd;
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd

Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:
'O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies! which thou view'st as not thine own;
Thou art their author, and prime architect:

For I no sooner in my heart divin'd
(My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet),
That thou on earth hast pro-ser'nd, which thy looks
Now also evidence, but straight I felt,
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
That I must after thee, with this thy son;
Such fatal consequence unites us three!

Hell could no longer hold us in our bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast achiev'd our liberty, confin'd
Within hell-gates till now; thou us impower'd
To fortify thus far, and overlay,

With this portentous bridge, the dark abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not; thy wisdom gain'd
With odds what war hath lost, and fully aveng'd
Our foil in heav'n; here thou shalt monarch reign,
There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
As battle hath adjudget; from this new world
Retiring, by his own doom alienated;
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
Of all things, parted by th' empyreal bounds,
His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;
Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne?
Whom thus the prince of darkness answer'd glad:
'Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both;
High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race
Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
Antagonist of heav'n's Almighty King),
Amply have merited of me, of all
Th' infernal empire, that so near heav'n's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
Mine, with this glorious work; and made one realm,
Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore, while I
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
To my associate pow'rs, them to acquaint
With these successes, and with them rejoice;
You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
There dwell, and reign in bliss; thence on the earth
Dominion exercise and in the air,
Chiefly on man, sole lord of all declar'd;
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
My substitutes I send ye, and create
Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
Through Sin to Death expos'd by my exploit.
If your joint pow'r prevail, th' affairs of hell
No detriment need fear; go, and be strong.'
So saying, he dismiss'd them; they with speed
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look'd wan,
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
Then suffer'd. Th' other way Satan went down
The causeth to hell-gate; on either side
Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaim'd,
And with rebonding surge the bars assail'd,
That scorn'd his indignation: through the gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,
And all about found desolate; for those,
Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
Far to th' inland retir'd, about the walls
Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
Of Lucifer; so by allusion call'd
Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd;
There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
In council sat, solicitous what chance
Might intercept their emperor sent; so he
Departing gave command, and they observ'd.

As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
Ay Astrakan, 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 Taurus or Casbeen: so these, the late
Heav'n-banish'd host, left desert utmost hell

Many a dark league, redre'd in careful watch
Round their metropolis; and now expecting
Each hour their great adventurer, from the search
Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmark'd,
In show plebeian angel militant
Of lowest order, pass'd; and from the door
Of that Plutonian hall, invisible

Ascended his high throne; which, under state
Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
Was plac'd in regal instre. Down a while
He sat, and round about him saw unseen;
At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter; clad
With what permissive glory since his fall
Was left him, or false glitter: all amaz'd
At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
Their mighty chief return'd; loud was th' acclaim:

Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting peers,
Rais'd from their dark divan, and with like joy
Congratulant approach'd him; who with hand
Silence and with these words attention, won:

'Thrones, dominations, princiomed, virtues, powers;
For in possession such, not only of right,
I call ye, and declare ye now; return'd
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
Triumphant out of this infernal pit

Abominable, accurs'd, the house of woe,
And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess,
As lords, a spacious world, to our native heaven
Little inferior, by my adventure hard
With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell
What I have done, what suffer'd: with what pain
Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep
Of horrible confusion; over which
By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd,
To expedite your glorious march; but I
Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride
Th' untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;
That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely oppos'd
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
Protesting fate supreme; thence how I found
The new-created world, which fame in heaven
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
Of absolute perfection! therein man
Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy: him by fraud I have seduc'd
From his Creator; and, the more to increase
Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat
Offended, worth your laughter! hath giv'n up
Both his belov'd man and all his world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
To range in, and to dwell, and over man
To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape
Man I deceiv'd: that which to me belongs,
Is enmity, which he will put between
Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,
But up, and enter now into full bliss?
So having said, a while he stood, expecting
Their universal shout, and high applause,
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal biss, the sound
Of public scorn; he wonder'd, but not long
Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more;
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;
His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater Power
Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd,
According to his doom. He would have spoke,
But his for his return'd with forked tongue
To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories
To his bold riot: dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick-swarming now
With complicated monsters head and tail,
Scorpion and asp, and amphisbaena dire,
Cerastes horn'd, hydrus, and elops drear,
And dipsas (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
Ophiusa); but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Ingender'd in the Pythian vale or slime,
Huge Python, and his pow'r no less he seem'd
Above the rest still to retain; they all
Him follow'd, issuing forth to th' open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array;
Sublime with expectation when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious chief;  
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd  
Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell,  
And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw,  
They felt themselves, now changing; down their arms,  
Down fell the spear and shield; down they as fast;  
And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form  
Catch'd', by contagion; like in punishment,  
As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant  
Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame  
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood  
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,  
His will who reigns above, to aggravate  
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that  
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve  
Us'd by the tempter: on that prospect strange  
Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining  
For one forbidden tree a multitude  
Now ris'n, to work them further woe or shame;  
Yet, parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,  
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;  
But on they roll'd in heaps, and, up the trees  
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks  
That curd Megaera: greedily they pluck'd  
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew  
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd;  
This more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay  
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit  
Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste  
With spattering noise rejected; oft they assay'd,  
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugg'd as oft,  
With hatefullest disrelish with'd their jaws,  
With soot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell  
Into the same illusion, not as man  
Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they plagu'd  
And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,  
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd;  
Yearly enjoin'd, some say, to undergo  
This annual humbling certain number'd days,  
To dash their pride, and joy, for man seduc'd.  
However, some tradition they dispers'd  
Among the heathen of their purchase got,  
And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd  
Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide-  
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule  
Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driven  
And Ops, ere yet Dictaean Jove was born.  
Meanwhile in Paradise the hellish pair  
Too soon arriv'd; Sin, there in pow'r before  
Once actual; now in body, and to dwell  
Habitual habitant; behind her Death,  
Close following, pace for pace, not mounted yet  
On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began:  
'Second of Satan sprung, all-conqu'ring Death!'
What think'st thou of our empire now, though earn'd
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,
Unnam'd, undreaded, and thy-self half-starv'd?' 595

Whom thus the sin-born monster answer'd soon:
'To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike is hell, or Paradise, or heaven;
There best, where most with ravine I may meet;
Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems
'To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corpse'
'To whom th' incestuous mother thus replied:
'Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;
No homely morsels; and whatever thing
The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspar'd;
Till I, in man residing, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect;
And season him thy last and sweetest prey.'

This said, they both betook them several ways,
Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
All kinds, and for destruction to mature
Sooner or later; which th' Almighty seeing,
From his transcendent seat the saints among,
To those bright orders utter'd thus his voice:
'See, with what heat these dogs of hell advance
To waste and 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
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 heav'nly; and, conniving, seem
To gratify my scornful enemies,

That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;
And know not that I call'd, and drew them thither,
My hell-bounds, to lick up the draf't and filth

Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure; till cram'd and gorg'd, nigh burst
With suck'd and glutted offat, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning grave, at last
Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of hell
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
Then heav'n and earth renew'd shall be made pure
To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:
Till then, the course pronounce'd on both precedes.' 640

He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,
Destin'd Restorer of mankind, by whom
New heav'n and earth shall to the ages rise,
Or down from heav'n descend.' Such was their song;
While the Creator calling forth by name
His mighty angels, gave them several charge,
As sorted best with present things. The sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might affect the earth with cold and heat
Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
Decrepit winter; from the south to bring
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blank moon
Her office they prescribed; to the other five
Their planetary motions, and aspects,
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join
In synod unbienign; and taught the fix'd
Their influence malignant when to shower,
Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,
Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set
Their corners, when with bluster to confound
Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aëreal hall.
Some say he bid his angels turn askance
The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,
From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd
Oblique the centric globe; some say, the sun
Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
Up to the tropic Crab: thence down amain
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 snail'd on earth with vernant flowers,
Equal in days and nights, except to those
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,
To recompense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still th' horizon and not known
Or east or west; which had forbid the snow
From cold Estotiland, and south as far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit
The sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turn'd
His course intended; else, how had the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
These changes in the heav'ns, though slow, produc'd
Like change on sea and land; sidereal blast,
Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
Corrupt and pestilent: now, from the north
Of Noumbega, and the Samoed shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice,
And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
Boreas, and Caeceias, and Argestes loud,
And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn;
With adverse blast upturns them from the south
Paradise

From Serraliona; thwart of these, as fierce,
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
Daughter of Sin, among the irrational
Death introduce'd, through fierce antipathy:
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish; to grace the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him; or, with countenance grim,
Glar'd on him passing. These were from without
The growing miseries, which Adam saw
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within;
And, in a troubled sea of passion toss'd,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:
'O miserable of happy! Is this the end
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accurs'd, of blessed? hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my bight
Of happiness! Yet well, if here would end
The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
My own deservings; but this will not serve:
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard
Delightfully, increase and multiply;
Now death to hear! for what can I increase,
Or multiply, but curses on my head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head? 'Ill fare our ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam' but his thanks
Shall be the execration: so, besides
Mine own that abide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;
On me, as on their natural center, light
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious garden? As my will
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust;
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd; unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
Thy justice seems; yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refus'd
Those terms, whatever, when they were propos'd:  
Thou didst accept them: wilt thou enjoy the good,  
Then cavil the conditions? and, though God  
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son  
Prove disobedient; and, reprov'd, retort,  
"Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not?"  
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee  
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,  
But natural necessity, begot.  
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own  
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace;  
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.  
Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,  
That dust I am, and shall to dust return:  
O welcome hour whenever! Why delays  
His hand to execute what his decree  
Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?  
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out  
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet  
Mortality my sentence, and be earth  
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  
To me, and to my offspring, would torment me  
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt  
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;  
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of man  
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish  
With this corporeal clod; then, in the grave,  
Or in some other dismal place, who knows  
But I shall die a living death? O thought  
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath  
Of life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life  
And sin? The body properly 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 doom'd. How can he exercise  
Wrath without end on man, whom death must end?  
Can he make deathless death? That were to make  
Strange contradiction, which to God himself  
Impossible is held; as argument  
Of weakness, not of pow'r. Will he draw out,  
For anger's sake, finite to infinite,  
In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour,  
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;  
Not to th' extent of their own sphere. But say  
That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,  
Bereaving sense, but endless misery  
From this day onward; which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me; and so last
To perpetuity: ay me! that fear
Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head; both death and I
Are found eternal, and incorporate both;
Nor I on my part single; in me all
Posterity stands curs'd: fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, sons! O, were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!
So disinherited, how would ye bless
Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind,
For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt; both mind and will depray'd
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? How can they then acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,
Force'd I absolve: all my evasions vain,
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
But to my own conviction: first and last
On me, me only, as the source and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
So might the wrath! Fond wish! 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 desir'st,
And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and future;
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O conscience! into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driv'n me; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!
Thus Adam to himself lamented loud,
Through the still night; not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with blaw air
Accompanied; with damps and dreadful gloom;
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror: on the ground
Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground; and oft
Curs'd his creation; death as oft accus'd
Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
The day of his offence. 'Why comes not death,'
Said he, 'with one thrice-acceptable stroke
To end me? Shall truth fail to keep her word,
Justice divine not hasten to be just?
But death comes not at call; justice divine
Mends not her slowest pace for pray'rs or cries.
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers! 860
With other echo late I taught your shades
To answer, and resound far other song;
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approaching night,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd;
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd:
'Out of my sight, thou serpent! That name best
Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false
And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine, may show
Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth; lest that so heav'ly form, pretended
To hellish falsehood, mare them! But for thee
I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
Though by the devil himself; him overweening
To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,
Fool'd and beguil'd; by him thou, I by thee,
To trust thee from my side: imagin'd wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;
And understood not all was but a show,
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. O! why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at once
With men, as angels, without feminine;
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? This mischief had not then befell'n,
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;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld
By parents; or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound.'
He added not, and from her turn'd; but Eve,
Not so repuls'd, with tears that cease'd not flowing,
And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:
'Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness heaven
What love sincere, and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unwheeting have offended,
Unhapply deceiv'd! Thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress,
My only strength and stay: forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?  
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,  
Between us two let there be peace; both joining  
As join'd in injuries, one enmity  
Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,  
That cruel serpent: on me exercise not  
Thy hatred for this misery befall'n;  
On me already lost, me than thyself  
More miserable! both have sin'n; but thou  
Against God only, I against God and thee;  
And to the place of judgement will return,  
There with my cries importune Heav'n; that all  
The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light  
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe;  
Me, me only, just object of his ire!  

She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,  
Immoveable, till peace obtain'd from fault  
Acknowl'dg'd and deplor'd, in 'Adam wrought  
Commiseration: soon his heart relent'd  
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,  
Now at his feet submissive in distress;  
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,  
His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid:  
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,  
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon:  
'Unwary, and too desirous, as before,  
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st  
The punishment all on thyself; alas!  
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain  
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,  
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If 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 infirm sex forgiven,  
To me committed, and by me expos'd.  
But rise; — let us no more contend, nor blame  
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere; but strive  
In offices of love, how we may lighten  
Each other's burden, in our share of woe;  
Since this day's death denounc'd, if aught I see,  
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac'd evil;  
A long day's dying to augment our pain,  
And to our seed (O hapless seed!) deriv'd.'  

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, 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.  
Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place  
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain  
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart  
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide  
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,  
Tending to some relief of our extremes,
Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of easier choice.
If care of our descent perplex us most,
Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd
By death at last; and miserable it is,
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own 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 Deat
Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two
Be forc'd to satisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet;
And with desire to 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,
Let us seek Death; or, he not found, supply
With our own hands his office on ourselves:
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
That show no end but death, and have the power,
Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
Destruction with destruction to destroy?
She ended here, or vehement despair
Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
But Adam with such counsel nothing sway'd,
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Lab'ring had rais'd; and thus to Eve replied:
'Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee something more sublime
And excellent, than what thy mind contends;
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 overlovd.'
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounce'd; doubt not but God
Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire, than so
To be forestall'd; much more I fear lest death,
So snatch'd, will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay; rather, such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live: then let us seek
Some safer resolution, which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
The serpent’s head; piteous amends! unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,
Satan; who, in the serpent, hath contriv’d
Against us this deceit: to crush his head.
Would be revenge indeed! which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days.
Resolve’d, as thou proposest; so our foe
Shall ’scape his punishment ordain’d, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
No more be mention’d then of violence
Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness.
That cuts us off from hope; and savours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God and his just yoke.
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard, and judg’d,
Without wrath or reviling; we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day; when, lo! to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth; soon recompens’d with joy,
Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope.
Glance’d on the ground; with labour I must earn
My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse;
My labour will sustain me; and, lost cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely care.
Hath, unbesought, provided; and his hands
Cloth’d us unworthy, pitying while he judg’d;
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
Th’ inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow?
Which now the sky, with various face, begins
To show us in this mountain; while the winds
How 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 benumm’d, ere this diurnal star
Leave cold the night, how we his gather’d beams
Reflected may with matter sere foment;
Or, by collision of two bodies, grind
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds
Justling, or push’d with winds, rude in their shock,
Tine the slant lightning; whose thwart flame driv’n
down:
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
And sends a comfortable heat from far,
Which might supply the sun: such fire to use,
And what may else be remedy or cure.
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
He will instruct us praying, and of grace
Beseeching him; so as we need not fear
To pass commodiously this life, sustain’d
By him with many comforts, till we end
In dust, our final rest and native home.
What better can we do, than, to the place
Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
When angry most he seem'd and most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and mercy, shone?

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

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

Thus they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-sent above
Prevenient grace descending had remov'd
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breath'd
Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer
Inspir'd, and wing'd for heav'n with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: yet their port
Not of mean suitors; nor important less
Seem'd their petition, than when th' ancient pair
In fables old, less ancient ye than these,
Deydalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
OfThemis stood devout. To heav'n their prayers
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heav'nly doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fram'd,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Presenting, thus to intercede began:
  'See, Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in man; these sighs
And pray'rs, which in this golden censer, mix'd
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring;
Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
Of Paradise could have produce'd, ere fall'n
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear
To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him; me, his advocate
And propitiation; all his works on me,
Good, or not good, ingraft; my merit those
Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
Accept me; and, in me, from these receive
The smell of peace toward mankind; let him live
Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
Number'd, though sad; till death, his doom (which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse),
To better life shall yield him: where with me
All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss;
Made one with me, as I with thee am one.'
To whom the Father, without cloud, serene:
  'All thy request for man, accepted Son,
Obtain; all thy request was my decree:
But, longer in that Paradise to dwell,
The law I gave to nature him forbids:
Those pure immortal elements that know
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
Eject him, tainted now; and purge him off,
As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,
And mortal food; as may dispose him best
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
Distemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
Created him endow'd; with happiness,
And immortality: that fondly lost,
This other serv'd but to eternize woe;
Till I provided death: so death becomes
His final remedy; and, after life,
Tried in sharp tribulation, and refin'd,
By faith and faithful works, to second life,
Wak'd in the renovation of the just,
Resigns him up with heav'n and earth renew'd.
But let us call to synod all the best,
Through heav'n's wide bounds: from them I will not hide
My judgements; how with mankind I proceed,
As how with peccant angels late they saw,
And in their state, though firm, stood more confirm'd.'
  He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch'd; he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom. Th' angelic blast
Fill'd all the regions: from their blissful bowers
Of amaranthine shade, fountain or spring;
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light
Hastened, resorting to the summons high;
And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his sovran will:
'O sons, like one of ns 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;
Hap'ner, had it suffic'd him to have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.
He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
My motions in him; longer than they move,
His heart I know, how variable and vain,
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the garden forth to till
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.
Michael, this my behest have thou in charge;
Take to thee from among the Cherubim
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
Or in behalf of man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair;
From hallow'd ground th' unholy; and denounce
To them, and to their progeny, from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd
(For I behold them soften'd, and with tears
Bewailing their excess), all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:
And on the east side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch; and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of life:
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey;
With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude.
He eauses; and th' archangelic pow'r prepar'd
For swift descend; 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
Of Argus, and more watchful than to drowse,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,
To re-salute the world with sacred light,
Lencothen wak'd, and with fresh dews embalm'd
The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and found
Strength added from above; new hope to spring
Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet link'd;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd:
'Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
The good which we enjoy from heav'n descends;
But, that from us ought should ascend to heaven
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer,
Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
Evn'to the seat of God. For since I sought
By pray'r th' offended Deity to appease;
Kneel'd, and before him humbled all my heart;
Methought I saw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
That I was heard with favour; peace return'd
Home to my breast, and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our soc;
Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of death
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
Mother of all things living, since by thee
Man is to live; and all things live for man.'
To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek:
'ill-worthy I such title should belong
To me transgressor; who, for thee ordain'd
A help, became thy snare; to me reproach
Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd
The source of life; next favourable thou,
Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st,
Far other name deserving. But the field
To labour calls us, now with sweat impos'd,
Though after sleepless night; for see! the morn,
All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
Her rosy progress smiling; let us forth;
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoin'd
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content.'
So spake, so wish'd much-humbled Eve; but fate
Subscrib'd not: nature first gave signs, impress'd
On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclips'd,
After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight
The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his aery tour,
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight.
Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
Pursuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake:
'O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
Which Heav'n, by these mute signs in nature, shows
Forerunners of his purpose; or to warn
Us, haply too secure, of our discharge
From penalty, because from death releas'd
Some days: how long, and what till then our life,
Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust
And thither must return, and be no more?
Why else this double object in our sight
Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? why in the east
Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning-light
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
And slow descends with something heav'nly fraught?'
He err'd not; for by this the heav'nly bands
Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt;
A glorious apparition, had not doubt
And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
Not that more glorious, when the Angels met
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright;
Nor that, which on the flaming mount appear'd
In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
One man, assassin like, had levied war,
War unproclaim'd. The princely hierarch
In their bright stand there left his pow'rs, to seize
Possession of the garden; he alone,
To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way,
Not unperceiv'd of Adam; who to Eve,
While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake:
'Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will soon determine, or impose
New laws to be observ'd; for I descriy,
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
One of the heav'nly host; and, by his gait,
None of the meanest; some great potentate,
Or of the thrones above; such majesty
Invests him coming! yet not terrible,
That I should fear; nor 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 th' Archangel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms
A military vest of purple flow'd,
Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof;
His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime
In manhood where youth ended; by his side,
As in a glist'ring zodiac, hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.
Adam bow'd low; he, kingly, from his state
Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declar'd:

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

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

'O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil! these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of gods? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O 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 th' ambrosial fount?
Thee lastly, nuptial bow'r! by me adorn'd
With what to sight or smell was sweet! from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world; to this obscure
And wild? how shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits?'

Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:
'Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost, nor set thy heart,
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine:
Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.'
Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
Recovering, and his scatter'd spirits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words address'd:

'Celestial, whether among the thrones, or nam'd
Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem
Prince above princes! gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us; what besides
Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes! all places else
Inhospitable appear, and desolate;
Nor knowing us, nor known: and, if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries;
But pray'r against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd
His blessed count'nance; here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd
Presence Divine; and to my sons relate,
"On this mount he appear'd; under this tree
Stood visible; among these pines his voice
I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd;"
So many 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 neither world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or foot-step trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet, recall'd
To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
Of glory; and far off his steps adore,'

To whom thus Michael with regard benign:
'Adam, thou know'st heav'n his, and all the earth;
Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual pow'r and warm'n:
All th' earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
Of Paradise, or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations; and had hither come
From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee, their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,
God is, as here, and will be found alike
Present; and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirm'd
Ere thou from hence depart; know, I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee, and to thy offspring; good with bad
Expect to hear; supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow; equally inur'd
By moderation either state to hear,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar'd endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This hill; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight walk'st;
As once thou slept'st, while she to life was form'd.'
   To whom thus Adam gratefully replied:
'Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path
Thou lead'st me; and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
However chast'ning; to the evil turn
My obvious breast; arm'd to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,
If so I may attain.' So both ascend
In the visions of God. It was a hill,
Of Paradise the highest; from whose top
The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,
Stretch'd out to th' ampest reach of prospect lay.
Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,
Whereon, for different cause, the tempter set
Our second Adam, in the wilderness;
To show him all earth's kingdoms, and their glory.
His eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd walls
Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinaean kings; and thence
To Agra and Labor of Great Mogul,
Down to the Golden Chersonese; or where,
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan; or where the Russian k sar
In Mosco; or the sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken
Th' empire of Negus to his utmost port
Ercoco, and the less, maritime kings
Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south;
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,  
Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;  
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway  
The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw  
Rich Mexico, the seat of Monteume,  
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat.  
Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoil'd  
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons  
Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights  
Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,  
Which that false fruit that promis'd clearer sight  
Had bred; then purg'd with emphrasy and rue  
The visual nerve, for he had much to see;  
And from the well of life three drops instill'd.  
So deep the pow'r of these ingredients pierc'd,  
E'en to th' innmost seat of mental sight,  
That Adam, now enforce'd to close his eyes,  
Sink'd down, and all his spirits became entranc'd;  
But him the gentle Angel by the hand  
Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd:  
'Adam, now ope thine eyes; and first behold  
Th' effects, which thy original crime hath wrought  
In some to spring from thee; who never touch'd  
Th' excepted tree; nor with the snake conspir'd;  
Nor sinn'd thy sin; yet from that sin derive  
Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.'  
His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,  
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves  
New-reap'd; the other part sheep-walks and folds;  
'I' th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,  
Rustic, of grassy sord; thither anon  
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought  
First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,  
Uncull'd, as came to hand; a shepherd next,  
More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,  
Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid  
The inwards and their fat, with incense strew'd  
On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd:  
His offering soon propitious fire from heaven  
Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam;  
The other's not, for his was not sincere;  
Whereat he inly rag'd, and, as they talk'd,  
Smote him into the midriff with a stone  
That beat out life; he fell; and, deadly pale,  
Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd.  
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
Dismay'd, and thus in haste to th' Angel cried:  
'O teacher, some great mischief hath befall'n  
To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd;  
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?'  
'T whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, replied:  
'These two are brethren, Adam, and to come  
Out of thy loins; th' unjust the just hath slain,  
For envy that his brother's offering found  
From heav'n acceptance; but the bloody fact
Will be aveng’d; and th’ other’s faith, approv’d,
Lose no reward; though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire: 460
‘Alas! both for the deed, and for the cause!
But have I now seen death? Is this the way
I must return to native dust? O sight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!’ 465
To whom thus Michael: ‘Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on man; but many shapes
Of death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at th’ entrance, than within.
Some, as thou saw’st, by violent stroke shall die;
By fire, flood, famine, by intem’rance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know 475
What misery th’ inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on men.’ Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear’d, sad, noisome, dark;
A laz’r-house it seem’d; wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseas’d; all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,
Demoniac phrensy, moping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,
Dropies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delay’d to strike, though oft invok’d
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-e’y’d behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of woman born; compassion quell’d
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrain’d excess;
And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renew’d:
‘O miserable mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv’d!
Better end here unborn. Why is life given
To be thus wrested from us? rather, why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offer’d, or soon beg to lay it down;
Glad to be so dismiss’d in peace. Can thus
Th’ image of God in man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debas’d
Under inhuman pains? why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude

Book XI. PARADISE LOST. 178
In part, from such deformities be free,
And, for his Maker's image sake, exempt?"

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

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

"There is," said Michael, "if thou well observe
The rule of Not too much by temp'rance taught,
In what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not glutinous delight,
Till many years over thy head return:
So mayst thou live; till, like ripe fruit, thou drop
Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease
Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd; for death mature:
This is old age; but then, thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change
To wither'd, weak, and gray; thy senses then,
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
To what thou hast; and for the air of youth,
Hopeful and 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
Of rendering up, and patiently attend
My dissolution," Michael reply'd:
"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 look'd, and saw a spacious plain, wherein
Were tents of various hues; by some, were herds
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
Was heard, of harp and organ; and who mov'd
Their stops and chords was seen; his volant touch
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.
In other part stood one who, at the forge
Lab'ring, 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 wash'd by stream
From underground); the liquid ore like drain'd
Into fit moulds prepar'd; from which he form'd
First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought
Fusil or gray'n in metal. After these,
But on the hither side, a different sort
From the high neighbour'ing hills, which was their seat,
Down to the plain descended; by their guise
Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain
Long had not walk'd, when from the tents, behold!
A bevy of fair women, richly gay,
In gems and wanton dress; to th' harp they sang
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:
The men, though grave, ey'd them; and let their eyes
Rove without rein; till, in the amorous net
Fast catch'd, they lik'd; and each his liking chose;
And now of love they treat, 'till th' evening star,
Love's harbinger, appear'd; then, all in heat,
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd:
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview, and fair event
Of love and youth not lost; songs, garlands, flowers,
And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart
Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus express'd:
'True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest;
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past;
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
Here nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.'
To whom thus Michael: 'Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet;
Created, as thou art, to nobler end
Holy and pure, conformity divine.
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother; studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare;
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetence, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye.
To these that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
Ig Nobly, to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy,
Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which
The world ere long a world of tears must weep.
To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:
‘O pity and shame, that they, who to live well
Enter’d so fair, should turn aside to tread
Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!
But still I see the tenour of man’s woe
Holds on the same, from woman to begin.’
‘From man’s effeminate slackness it begins.’
Said th’ Angel, ‘who should better hold his place
By wisdom, and superior gifts receiv’d.
But now prepare thee for another scene.’
He look’d, and saw wide territory spread
Before him, towns, and rural works between;
Cities of men with lofty gates and towers,
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threat’ning war,
Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise;
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single or in array of battle rang’d
Both horse and foot, nor idly must’ring stood;
One way a band select from forage drives
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,
From a fat meadow ground; or fleecy flock,
Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,
Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray;
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;
Where cattle pastur’d late, now scatter’d lies
With carcasses and arms th’ ensanguin’d field,
Deserted: others to a city strong
Lay siege, encamp’d; 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 scepter’d heralds call
To council, in the city-gates; anon
Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mix’d,
Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon,
In factious opposition; till at last
Of middle age one rising, eminent
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
And judgment from above: him old and young
Exploded, and had seiz’d with violent hands;
Had not a cloud descending snatch’d him thence,
Unseen amid the throng: so violence
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turn’d full sad: ‘O what are these,
Death’s ministers, not men? who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew
His brother: for of whom such massacre
Make they, but of their brethren; men of men? 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-mates marriages thou saw'st;
Where good with bad were match'd, who of themselves 685
Abhor to join; and, by imprudence mix'd,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants, men of high renown;
For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
And valour and heroic virtue call'd;
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 styl'd great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods;
Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on earth;
And what most merits fame in silence hid.
But he, the sev'nth from thee, whom thou beheld'st
The only righteous in a world perverse,
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
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds
Did, as thou saw'st, 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;
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.'

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd;
The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance;
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allur'd them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declar'd,
And testified against their ways; he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs or festivals; and to them preach'd
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison, under judgements imminent:
But all in vain; which when he saw, he ceas'd
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off;
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth;
Smear'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth;
Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large,
For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
Came sev'ns, and pairs; and enter'd in as taught
Their order: last the sire and his three sons,
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the south-wind rose, and, with black wings
Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under heav'n; the hills to their supply
Vapour, and exhalation dust and moist,
Sent up again; and now the thicken'd sky
Like a dark ceiling stood; down rush'd 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 overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd: sea cover'd sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left, in one small bottom swum imback'd.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,
Depopulation! Thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drown'd,
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently rear'd
By th' Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless; as when a father mourns
His children, all in view destroy'd at once;
And scarce to th' Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint:
'O visions ill foreseen! better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future! so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear; those now, that were dispens'd
The burd'n 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
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 escap'd
Famine and anguish will at last consume,
Wand'ring that watry desert: I had hope,
When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth,
All would have then gone well; peace would have crown'd
With length of happy days the race of man;
But I was far deceiv'd; for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide,
And whether here the race of man will end.'
To whom thus Michael: 'Those, whom last thou saw'st
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent
And great exploits, but of true virtue void;
Who, having spilt much blood and done much waste
Subduing nations, and achiev'd thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth.
Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war,
Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
And fear of God; from whom their piety feign'd
In sharp contest of battle found no aid
Against invaders; therefore, cool'd in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
Worldly or dissolve, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for th' earth shall bear
More than enough, that temp'rance may be tried:
So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd;
Justice and temp'rance, truth and faith, forgot;
One man except, the only son of light
In a dark age, against example good,
Against allurement, custom, and a world
Offended: fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish; and before them set
The 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 observ'd
The one just man alive; by his command
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
To save himself, and household, from amidst
A world devote to universal wreck.
No sooner he, with them of man and beast
Select for life, shall in the ark be lodg'd,
And shelter'd round; but all the cataracts
Of heav'n set open on the earth shall pour
Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep,
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds; till inundation rise
Above the highest hills; then shall this mount
Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd
Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang:
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No sanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now what further shall ensue, behold?
He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood,
Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
Driv'n by a keen north-wind, that, blowing dry,
Wrinkled the face of deluge as decay'd;
And the clear sun on his wide watry glass
Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot towards the deep; who now had stopt
His sluices, as the heav'n his windows shut.
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,
Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
And now the tops of hills, as rocks, appear;
With clamour thence the rapid currents drive,
Towards the retreating sea, their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
And after him, the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground, whereon his foot may light:
The second time returning, in his bill
An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign:
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends, with all his train;
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
Greatly rejoic'd; and thus his joy broke forth:
'O thou, who future things canst represent
As present, heav'nly Instructor! I revive
At this last sight; assur'd that man shall live,
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
Far less I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice
For one man found so perfect, and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in heaven,
Distended, as the brow of God appears'd?
Or serve they, as a flow'ry verge, to bind
The fluid skirts of that same watry cloud,
Let it again dissolve, and show'r the earth?
To whom th' Archangel: 'Dextrously thou aim'st;
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting him of man deprav'd;
Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw
The whole earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way; yet, those remov'd,
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight,
That he relents, not to blot out mankind;
And makes a covenant, never to destroy
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,
With man therein or beast; but when he brings
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-colour'd bow, whereon to look,
And call to mind his covenant: day and night,
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new, 900
Both heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.'

BOO K XII.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

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

AS one who in his journey baits at noon,
Though bent on speed; so here th' Archangel paus'd
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd
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:
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;
Lab'ring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd; and dwell
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
Under paternal rule; till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart; who, not content
With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth;
Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game)
With war, and hostile snare, such as refuse
Subject to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
Before the Lord; as in despite of heaven,
Or from heav'n claiming second sovranity;
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell:
Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build
A city and tow'r, whose top may reach to heaven;
And get themselves a name; lest, far dispers'd
In foreign lands, their memory be lost;
Regardless whether good or evil fame.
But God, who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon,
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
Obstruct heav'n-tow'rs; and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various spirit, to raise
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; till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in heaven,
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange,
And hear the din: thus was the building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd.'
Whereby thus Adam fatherly displeas'd:
'0 execrable son! so to aspire
Above his brethren; to himself assuming
Authority usurp'd, from God not given:
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation; but man over men
He made not lord; such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free.
But this usurper his encroachment proud
Stays not on man; to God his tow'r intends
Siege and defiance: wretched man! what food
Will he convey up 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
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty; yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twin'd, and from her hath no indivual being:
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,  
Immediately inordinate desires,  
And upstart passions, catch the government  
From reason; and to servitude reduce  
Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits  
Within himself unworthy pow'rs to reign  
Over free reason, God, in 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 annex'd,  
Deprives them of their outward liberty;  
Their inward lost: witness th' irreverent son  
Of him who built the ark; who, for the shame  
Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,  
"Servant of servants," on his vicious race.  
Thus will this latter, as the former world,  
Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last,  
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw  
His presence from among them, and avert  
His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth  
To leave them to their own polluted ways;  
And one peculiar nation to select  
From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,  
A nation from one faithful man to spring:  
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,  
Bred up in idol-worship: O, that men  
(Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,  
While yet the patriarch liv'd, who 'scap'd the flood,  
As to forsake the living God, and fall  
To worship their own work in wood and stone  
For gods! yet him God the Most High vouchsafes  
To call by vision, from his father's house,  
His kindred, and false gods, into a land  
Which he will show him; and from him will raise  
A mighty nation; and upon him 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 Chaldaea, passing now the ford  
To Haran; after him a cumbrous train  
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;  
Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth  
With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.  
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents  
Pitch'd about Sechem, and the neighb'ring plain  
Of Morch; 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 unnam'd);
From Hermon east to the great western sea;
Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each place behold
In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
Mount Carmel; here, the double-sounded 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
Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This patriarch blest,
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
A son, and of his son a grand-child, leaves;
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown:
The grand-child, with twelve sons increase'd, departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
See where it flows, disgorging at sev'n months
Into the sea: to sojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger son
In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that realm
Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation; and, now grown,
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
In hospitably, and kills their infant males:
Till by two brethren (these two brethren call
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
His people from enthralment, they return
With glory, and spoil, back to the promis'd land.
But first, the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compell'd by signs and judgements dire;
To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murren die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,
And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born
Of Egypt must die dead. Thus with ten wounds
The river-dragon tam'd at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart; but still, as ice
More harden'd after thaw; till in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea
Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass,
As on dry land, between two crystal walls;
Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:
Such wondrous pow'r God to his saint will lend,
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 th' obdurate king pursues:
All night he will pursue; but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning watch;
Then through the fiery pillar, and the cloud,
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war: the race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance
Through the wild desert, not the readiest way;
Lest, ent'ring on the Canaanite alarm'd,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness; there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate choose
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd:
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain
To civil justice; part, religious rites
Of sacrifice; informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall 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
Whithout mediator, whose high office now
Moses in figure bears; to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus, laws and rites
Establish'd, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle;
The Holy One with mortal men to dwell:
By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,  
The records of his covenant; over these  
A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings  
Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn  
Sev'n lamps as in a zodiac representing  
The heav'nly fires; over the tent a cloud  
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night;  
Save when they journey, and at length they come,  
Conducted by his Angel, to the land  
Promis'd to Abraham and his seed: — The rest  
Were long to tell; how many battles fought;  
How many kings destroy'd; and kingdoms won;  
Or how the sun shall in mid heav'n stand still  
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,  
Man's voice commanding, "Sun, in Gibeon stand,  
And thou, moon, in the vale of Aialon,  
Till Israel overcome!" so call the third  
From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him  
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd: 'O sent from Heaven,  
Enlight'ner of my darkness, gracious things  
Thou last reveal'd; those chiefly, which concern  
Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find  
Mine eyes true-opening, and my heart much cas'd;  
Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts, what would become  
Of me and all mankind: but now I see  
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest;  
Favour unmerited by me, who sought  
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.  
This yet I apprehend not, why to those  
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 of thee begot;  
And therefore was law giv'n 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,  
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 towards God, and peace  
Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies  
Cannot appease; nor man the moral part  
Perform; and, not performing, cannot live.  
So law appears imperfect; and but given  
With purpose to resign them, in full time,  
Up to a better covenant; disciplin'd  
From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;  
From imposition of strict laws, to free  
Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear
To filial; works of law to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call,
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary-serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long-wander'd man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest,
Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd,
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
The second, both for piety renown'd
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
All prophecy, that of the royal stock
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
A son, the woman's seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
The last; for of his reign shall be no end.
But first, a long succession must ensue;
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wand'ring, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
Such follow him as shall be register'd
Pard good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll;
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion; Babylon thence call'd,
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The space of sev'nty years; then brings them back,
Remembr'ring mercy, and his covenant sworn
To David, establish'd as the days of heaven.
Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
They first re-edi fy; and for a while
In mean estate live moderate; till grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But first among the priests dissention springs,
Men who attend the altar, and should most
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize
The scepter, and regard not David's sons;
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed king Messiah might be born
Barr'd of his right; yet at his birth a star,
Unseen before in heav'n, proclaims him come;  
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire  
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:  
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells  
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;  
They gladly thither haste, and by a quire  
Of squadron'd angels hear his carol sung.  
A virgin is his mother, but his sire  
The pow'r of the Most High: he shall ascend  
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign  
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heavens.  
He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy  
Surcharg'd, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,  
Without the vent of words; which these he breath'd:  
'O prophet of glad tidings, finisher  
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand  
What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain;  
Why our great Expectation should be call'd  
The seed of woman; Virgin Mother, hail,  
High in the love of heav'n; yet from my loins  
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son  
Of God Most High; so God with man unites.  
Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise  
Expect with mortal pain: 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  
Satan, whose fall from heav'n, a deadlier bruise,  
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:  
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,  
Not by destroying Satan, but his works  
In thee, and in thy seed: nor can this be,  
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,  
Obedience to the law of God, impos'd  
On penalty of death, and suffering death;  
The penalty to thy transgression due,  
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:  
So only can high justice rest appaid.  
The law of God exact he shall fulfil  
Both by obedience and by love, though love  
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment  
He shall endure, by coming in the flesh  
To a reproachful life, and cursed death;  
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe  
In his redemption; and that his obedience,  
Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits  
To save them, not their own, though legal, works.  
For this he shall live hated, be blasphe'm'd,  
Seiz'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd  
A shameful and accurs'd, nail'd to the cross  
By his own nation; slain for bringing life:  
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,
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
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of mourn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which man from death redeems,
His death for man, as many as offer'd life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works: this God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,
Defeating sin and death, his two mains arms;
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temp'ral death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or their 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 follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd
And his salvation; them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profliuent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer died.
All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;
So in his seed all nations shall be blest.
Then to the heav'n of heav'ns he shall ascend
With victory triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in heav'n; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and pow'r to judge both quick and dead
To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in heav'n or earth; for then the earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.'
So spake th' Archangel Michael; then paus'd,
As at the world's great period; and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:
'O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done, and occasion'd; or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring;
To God more glory, more good-will to men
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to heaven
Must reascend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
His people, who defend? Will they not deal
Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?
 'Be sure they will,' said th' Angel; 'but from 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
With spiritual armour; able to resist
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;
What man can do against them, not afraid,
Though to the death; against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompens'd,
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors; for the Spirit,
Pour'd first on his apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts endue
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from heav'n: at length
Their ministry perform'd, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of heaven
To their own vile advantages shall turn
Of lucre and ambition; and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to join
Secular pow'r; though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The spirit of God, promis'd alike, and given
To all believers; and, from that pretence,
Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force
On every conscience; laws which none shall find
Left them inroll'd, 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:
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
Bestruck with sland'rous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign;
Under her own weight groaning; till the day
Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
The woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord;
Last, in the clouds, from heav'n to be reveal'd
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world; then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
New heav'n's, new earth, ages of endless date,
Founded in righteousness, and peace and love;
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.'
He ended; and thus Adam last replied:
'How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest,
Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fix'd! Beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart;
Greatly in peace of thought; and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God; to walk
As in his presence; ever to observe
His providence; and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
By simply meek; that suffering for truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory,
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
Taught this by his example, whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.'
To whom thus also th' Angel last replied:
'This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou know'st by name, and all th' ethereal Pow'rs,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
Or works of God in heav'n, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst,
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
By name to come call'd charity, the soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be 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,
By me encamp'd on yonder hill, expect
Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.
We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd
Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd
To meek submission: thou, at season fit,
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;
Chiefly, what may concern her faith to know,
The great deliverance by her seed to come
(For by the woman's seed) on all mankind;
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one faith unanimous, though sad
With cause for evils past; yet much more cheer'd
With meditation on the happy end?
He ended, and they both descend the hill;
Descended, Adam to the bow'r, where Eve
Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her wak'd;
And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd:
'Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;'
For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on;
In me is no delay; with thee to go,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
Art all things under heav'n, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
This further consolation yet secure
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
By me the promis'd Seed shall all restore.'
'So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
Well pleas'd, but answer'd not; for now, too nigh
Th' Archangel stood; and from the other hill
To their fix'd station, all in bright array,
The Cherubim descended; on the ground
Gllding metastorous, as evening mist
Ris'n from a river o'er the marish glides,
And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advance'd,
The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd,
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Libyan air adust,
Began to parch that temp'rate clime; whereat
In either hand the hast'ning Angel caught
Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappear'd.
They, looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon; 645
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They, hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.
PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

The subject proposed. Invocation of the Holy Spirit. The poem opens with John baptizing at the river Jordan. Jesus coming there is baptized; and is attested by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and by a voice from heaven, to be the Son of God. Satan, who is present, upon this immediately flies up into the regions of the air; where, summoning his infernal council, he acquaints them with his apprehensions that Jesus is that seed of the woman, destined to destroy all their power, and points out to them the immediate necessity of bringing the matter to proof, and of attempting, by snares and fraud, to counteract and defeat the person, from whom they have so much to dread. This office he offers himself to undertake; and, his offer being accepted, sets out on his enterprise. In the mean time God, in the assembly of holy angels, declares that he has given up his Son to be tempted by Satan; but foretells that the tempter shall be completely defeated by him: upon which the angels sing a hymn of triumph. Jesus is led up by the Spirit into the wilderness, while he is meditating on the commencement of his great office of Saviour of mankind. Pursuing his meditations he narrates, in a soliloquy, what divine and philanthropic impulses he had felt from his early youth, and how his mother Mary, on perceiving these dispositions in him, had acquainted him with the circumstances of his birth, and informed him that he was no less a person than the Son of God; to which he adds what his own inquiries and reflections had supplied in confirmation of this great truth, and particularly dwells on the recent attestation of it at the river Jordan. Our Lord passes forty days fasting, in the wilderness; where the wild beasts become wild and harmless in his presence. Satan now appears under the form of an old peasant; and enters into discourse with our Lord, wondering what could have brought him alone into so dangerous a place, and at the same time professing to recognize him for the person lately acknowledged by John, at the river Jordan, to be the Son of God. Jesus briefly replies. Satan rejoins with a description of the difficulty of supporting life in the wilderness; and entreats Jesus, if he be really the Son of God, to manifest his divine power, by changing some of the stones into bread. Jesus reproves him, and at the same time tells him that he knows who he is. Satan instantly avows himself, and offers an artful apology for himself and his conduct. Our blessed Lord severely reprimands him, and refutes every part of his justification. Satan, with much semblance of humility, still endeavours to justify himself; and, professing his admiration of Jesus and his regard for virtue, requests to be permitted at a future time to hear more of his conversation; but is answered, that this must be as he shall find permission from above. Satan then disappears, and the book closes with a short description of night coming on in the desert.

I, WHO erewhile the happy garden sung
By one man’s disobedience lost, now sing
Recover’d Paradise to all mankind,
By one man’s firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And Eden rais'd in the waste wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who ledd'st this glorious ermite
Into the desert, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence
By proof th' undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompt song, else mute,
And bear through hight hough or depth of nature's bounds,
With prosp'rous wing full summ'd, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age;
Worthy t' have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great proclaimer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
Repentance, and heav'n's kingdom nigh at hand
To all baptiz'd: to his great baptism flock'd
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd
To the flood Jordan; came, as then obscure,
Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptist soon
Descried, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
To him his heav'nly office; nor was long
His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd
Heav'n open'd, and in likeness of a dove
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
From heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.

That heard the adversary, who, roving still
About the world, at that assembly fam'd
Would not be last, and, with the voice divine
Nigh thunder-struck, th' exalted man, to whom
Such high attest was giv'n, a while survey'd
With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
To council summons all his mighty peers,
Within thick clouds, and dark, ten-fold involv'd,
A gloomy consistory; and them amidst,
With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:
'O ancient powers of air, and this wide world
(For much more willingly I mention air,
This our old conquest, than remember hell,
Our hated habitation), well ye know
How many ages, as the years of men,
This universe we have possess'd, and rule'd,
In manner at our will, th' affairs of earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceiv'd by me; though since
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
Upon my head. Long the decrees of heav'n
Delay, for longest time to him is short;
And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
Must bide the stroke of that long-threaten'd wound
(At least if so we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infringing'd, our freedom and our being,
In this fair empire won of earth and air);
For this ill news I bring, the woman's seed
Destin'd to this, is late of woman born.
His birth to our just fear gave no small cause:
But his growth now to youth's full flow'r, displaying
All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them, so
Purified, to receive him pure, or rather
To do him honour as their King: all come,
And he himself among them was baptiz'd;
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony of heav'n, that who he is
Thenceforth the nations may not doubt; I saw
The prophet do him reverence; on him, rising
Out of the water, heav'n above the clouds
Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head,
A perfect dove descend (whate'er it meant),
And out of heav'n the sovran voice I heard,
"This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd,"
His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the monarchy of heaven:
And what will he not do to advance his Son?
His first-begot, we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep:
Who this is we must learn, for man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But must with something sudden be oppos'd
(Not force, but well-couch'd fraud, well-woven snares),
Ere in the head of nations he appear,
Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruin Adam; and th' exploit perform'd
Successfully: a calmer voyage now
Will waft me; and the way, found prosp'rous once,
Induces best to hope of like success.'
He ended, and his words impression left
Of much amazement to th' infernal crew,
Distracted, and surpris'd with deep dismay
At these sad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprise
To him, their great dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
From hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
So to the coast of Jordan he directs
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,
Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,
This man of men, attested Son of God,
Temptation and all guile on him to try;
So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
To end his reign on earth, so long enjoy'd:
But, contrary, unweeving he fulfill'd
The purpos'd counsel, pre-ordain'd and fix'd,
Of the Most High; who, in full frequency bright
Of angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:
'Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold,
Thou and all angels conversant on earth
With man or men's affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message, late
On which I sent thee to the virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a son
Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
To her a virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the pow'r of the Highest
O'ershadow her. This man, born and now up-grown,
To show him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt, and now assay
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostasy; he might have learnt
Less overweening, since he fail'd in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent,
He now shall know I can produce a man,
Of female seed, far ablest to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to hell;
Winning, by conquest, what the first man lost,
By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean
To exercise him in the wilderness;
There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer sin and death, the two grand foes,
By humiliation and strong sufferance:
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
That all the angels and ethereal powers,
They now, and men hereafter, may discern,
From what consummate virtue I have chose
This perfect man, by merit call'd my Son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men.'
So spake th' Eternal Father, and all heaven
Admiring stood a space, then into hymns
Burst forth, and in celestial measures mov'd,
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument:
"Victory and triumph to the Son of God,
Now ent'ring his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!
The father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of hell,
And, devilish machinations, come to naught!"

So they in heav'n their odes and vigils tun'd:
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodg'd in Bethabara, where John baptiz'd,
Musing, and much revolving in his breast,
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his God-like office now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse
With solitude, till, far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He enter'd now, the bord'ring desert wild,
And, with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy meditations thus pursu'd:
"O, what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd!
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that, ere yet my age
Had measur'd twice six years, at our great feast
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own;
And was admir'd by all: yet this not all
To which my spirit aspir'd; victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts; one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;
Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd:
Yet held it more humane, more heavi'ly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul,
Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware
Misle'd; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoic'd,
And said to me apart, "High are thy thoughts,
On son, but nourish them, and let them soar
To what highth sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire,
For know, thou art no son of mortal man;
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
Thy father is th' Eternal King who rules
All heav'n and earth, angels and sons of men;
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceiv'd in me a virgin; he foretold
Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne,
And of thy kingdom there should be no end,
At thy nativity, a glorious quire
Of angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung
To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born,
Where they might see him; and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
For in the inn was left no better room:
A star, not seen before, in heav'n appearing,
Guided the wise men thither from the East,
To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold;
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star, new-grav'n in heaven,
By which they knew the king of Israel born.
Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warn'd
By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood."

This having heard, straight I again revolv'd
The law and prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found, of whom they spake
I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard assay, ev'n to the death,
Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins
Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
Yet, neither thus dishearten'd, or dismay'd,
The time prefix'd I waited; when behold
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight), now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare!
!, as all others, to his baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd
Me him (for it was shown him so from heaven),
Me him, whose harbinger he was; and first
Refus'd on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won:
But, as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heav'n open'd her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove,
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from heav'n, pronounc'd me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes
Th' authority which I deriv'd from heaven.
And now by some strong motion I am led
Into this wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet; perhaps I need not know,
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.'
So spake our Morning-star, then in his rise,
And, looking round, on every side beheld
A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades;
The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod;
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come
Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon on shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak,
Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in one cave, is not reveal'd;
Not tasted human food, nor hunger felt
Till those days ended; hunger'd then at last
Among wild beasts: they at his sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd; his walk
The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glare'd aloof.
But now an aged man in rural weeds,
Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray ewe,
Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve
Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,
He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd spake:
'Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place,
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In troop or caravan? for single none
Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
His carcass, pin'd with hunger and with drought.
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
Our new baptizing prophet at the ford
Of Jordan honour'd so, and call'd thee Son
Of God: I saw and heard, for we sometimes
Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
To town or village nigh (nighest is far),
Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happens new; fame also finds us out.'
To whom the Son of God: 'Who brought me hither, 335
Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek.'
'By miracle he may,' replied the swain;
'What other way I see not; for we here
Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inured'
More than the camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much misery and hardship born:
But, if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread,
So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve
With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste?'
He ended, and the Son of God replied:
'Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written
(For I discern thee other than thou seem'st),
Man lives not by bread alone, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed
Our fathers here with manna? In the mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat, nor drank;
And forty days Elijah, without food,
Wander'd this barren waste; the same I now:
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?'
Whom thus answer'd th' arch-fiend, now undisguis'd:
'Tis true I am that spirit unfortunate,
Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,
Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
By rigour unconvincing, but that oft,
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in th' air; nor from the heav'n of heav'n's
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth;
And, when to all his angels he propos'd
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets gibb'd with lies
To his destruction, as I had in charge;
For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be beloved of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire,
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense:
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee, and approach thee, whom I know
Declard the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind: why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence; by them
I lost not what I lost, rather by them
I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell,
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,
Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my misery and woe.
At first it may be; but long since with woe
Nearer acquainted, now I feel, by proof,
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd:
This wounds me most (what can it less?) that man,
Man fall'n, shall be restor'd, I, never more.'

To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:
'Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
Who boast'st release from hell, and leave to come
Into the heav'n of heav'n: thou com'st indeed,
As a poor miserable captive thrall.
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendour, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shunn'd,
A spectacle of ruin or of scorn.

To all the host of heav'n: the happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment, representing
Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in hell than when in heav'n.

But thou art serviceable to heav'n's King.
Wilt thou impute t' obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
With all inflictions? but his patience won.
The other service was thy chosen task,
To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all oracles
By thee are giv'n, and what confess'd more true
Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy answers? what but dark,
Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,
Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
And, not well understood, as good not known?
Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct,
To fly or follow what concern'd him most,
And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
For God hath justly giv'n the nations up
To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous: but, when his purpose is
Among them to declare his providence
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
But from him, or his angels president
In every province, who, themselves disdaining
To approach thy temples, give thee in command
What, to the smallest title, thou shalt say
To thy adorers? Thou, with trembling fear,
Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st:
Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;
No more shalt thou by oracling abuse
The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are eas'd,
And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos, or elsewhere;
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his living oracle
Into the world to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle
To all truth requisite for men to know?
So spake our Saviour; but the subtle fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembled, and this answer smooth return'd:
"Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
But misery hath wrested from me. Where
Easily canst thou find one miserable,
And not enforce'd oft-times to part from truth,
If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord;
From thee I can, and must, submiss endure
Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
Hard are the ways of truth, add rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue discours'd, pleasing to th' ear,
And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? Most men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
To hear thee when I come (since no man comes),
And talk at least, though I despair to attain.
Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
To tread his sacred courts, and minister
About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing; and vouchsaf'd his voice
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inspir'd: disdain not such access to me."
To whom our Saviour, with unalter'd brow:
'Thy coming hither, though I knew thy scope,
I bid not, or forbid; do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more.'
He added not; and Satan, bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappear'd
Into thin air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her sullen wings to double-shade
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couch’d;
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The disciples of Jesus, uneasy at his long absence, reason amongst themselves concerning it. Mary also gives vent to her maternal anxiety: in the expression of which she recapitulates many circumstances respecting the birth and early life of her Son. Satan again meets his infernal council, reports the bad success of his first temptation of our blessed Lord, and calls upon them for counsel and assistance. Belial proposes the tempting of Jesus with women. Satan rebukes Belial for his dissoluteness charging on him all the profligacy of that kind ascribed by the poets to the heathen gods, and rejects his proposal as in no respect likely to succeed. Satan then suggests other modes of temptation, particularly proposing to avail himself of circumstance of our Lord’s hungering; and, taking a band of the chosen spirits with him, returns to resume his enterprise. Jesus hungered in the desert. Night comes on; the manner in which our Saviour passes the night is described. Morning advances. Satan again appears to Jesus, and, after expressing wonder that he should be so entirely neglected in the wilderness, where others had been miraculously fed, tempts him with a sumptuous banquet of the most luxurious kind. This he rejects, and the banquet vanishes. Satan, finding our Lord not to be assaulted on the ground of appetite, tempt him again by offering him riches, as the means of acquiring power: this Jesus also rejects, producing many instances of great actions performed by persons under virtuous poverty, and specifying the danger of riches, and the cares and pains inseparable from power and greatness.

MEANWHILE the new-baptiz’d, who yet remain’d
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly call’d
Jesus Messiah, Son of God declar’d,
And on that high authority had belief’d,
And with him talk’d, and with him lodg’d; I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others, though in holy writ not nam’d;
Now missing him, their joy so lately found
(So lately found, and so abruptly gone),
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And, as the days increas’d, increas’d their doubt.
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the mount and missing long,
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to heav’n, yet once again to come:
Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara; in Jericho
The city of palms, Enon, and Salem old,
Machaerus, and each town or city wall'd
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Perea; but return'd in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
Plain fishermen (no greater men them call),
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and plaints outbreath'd:
‘Alas, from what high hope to what relapse
Unlook'd for are we fall'n! our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our fathers; we have heard
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth.
“Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
The kingdom shall to Israel be restor'd;”
Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of Israel,
Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
Behold the kings of th' earth, how they oppress
Thy chosen; to what highth their pow'r unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee; arise, and vindicate
Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke.
But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him;
By his great prophet, pointed at and shown
In public, and with him we have convers'd;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his providence; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall,
Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
Soon we shall see our hope, our joy, return.’
Thus they, out of their plaints, new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found un-sought:
But, to his mother Mary, when she saw
Others return'd from baptism, not her son,
Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure
Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus chad:
‘O, what avails me now that honour high,
To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute,
“Hail, highly favour'd, among women blest!”
While I to sorrows am no less advance'd,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other women, by the birth I bore;
In such a season born, when scarce a shed
Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
A manger his; yet soon enforc'd to fly
Thence into Egypt, till the murd'rous king
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem;
From Egypt home return'd in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life
Private, inactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to any king; but now
Full grown to man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
Son own'd from heaven by his Father's voice,
I look'd for some great change; to honour? no,
But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in Israel, and to a sign
Spoken against, that through my very soul
A sword shall pierce: this is my favour'd lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high;
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.

But where delays he now? some great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself, but went about
His Father's business; what he meant I must'd,
Since understand; much more his absence now
Thus long to some great purpose he obscurcs.
But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
My heart hath been a store-house long of things,
And sayings laid up, portending strange events.

Thus Mary, pond'ring oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:
The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,
Sole, but with holiest meditations fed,
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on earth, and mission high:
For Satan, with sly preface to return,
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
Up to the middle region of thick air,
Where all his potentates in council sat;
There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Solicitous and blank, he thus began:

'Monarchs, heav'n's ancient sons, ethereal thrones;
Demonian spirits now, from th' element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
Pow'rs of fire, air, water, and earth beneath
(So may we hold our place and these mild seats
Without new trouble), such an enemy
Is risen to invade us, who no less
Threatens than our expulsion down to hell;  
I, as I undertook, and with the vote  
Consenting in full frequence was impower'd,  
Have found him, view'd him, tasted him; but find  
Far other labour to be undergone  
Than when I dealt with Adam first of men,  
Though Adam by his wife's allurement fell,  
However to this man inferior far;  
If he be man by mother's side, at least  
With more than human gifts from heav'n adorn'd,  
Perfections absolute, graces divine,  
And amplitude of minds to greatest deeds.  
Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence  
Of my success with Eve in Paradise  
Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure  
Of like succeeding here: I summon all  
Rather to be in readiness, with hand  
Or counsel to assist; lest I, who erst  
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.'

So spake th' old serpent, doubting; and from all  
With clamour was assur'd their utmost aid  
At his command: when from amidst them rose  
Belial, the dissoluest spirit that fell,  
The sensuallest, and, after Asmodai,  
The fleshliest incubus; and thus advis'd:  
'Set women in his eye, and in his walk,  
Among daughters of men the fairest found:  
Many are in each region passing fair  
As the noon sky; more like to goddesses  
Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,  
Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues  
Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild  
And sweet allay'd, yet terrible t' approach,  
Skill'd to retire, and, in retiring, draw  
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.  
Such object hath the pow'r to soft'n and tame  
Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow;  
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,  
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead  
At will the manliest, resoluest breast,  
As the magnetic hardest iron draws.  
Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart  
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,  
And made him how, to the gods of his wives.'

To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd:  
'Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st  
All others by thyself; because of old  
Thou thyself doat'st on womankind, admiring  
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,  
None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.  
Before the flood thou with thy lusty crew,  
False-titled sons of God, roaming the earth,  
Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,  
And coupled with them, and begot a race.  
Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st,
In wood or grove, by mossy fountain-side,
In valley or green meadow, to way-lay 185
Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
Too long, then lay'st thy 'scapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan, 190
Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts
Delight not all; among the sons of men,
How many have with a smile made small account
Of beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
All her assaults, on worthier things intent! 195
Remember that Pellean conqueror,
A youth, how all the beauties of the East
He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd;
How he, surnam'd of Africa, dismiss'd,
In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid.
For Solomon, he liv'd at ease, and full 200
Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
Higher design than to enjoy his state;
Thence to the bait of women lay expos'd:
But he, whom we attempt, is wiser far,
Than Solomon, of more exalted mind!
Made and set wholly on th' accomplishment 205
Of greatest things. 'What woman will you find,
Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye
Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
As sitting queen ador'd on beauty's throne,
Descend with all her winning charms begirt
'T enamour, as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell;
How would one look from his majestic brow,
Seated as on the top of virtue's hill,
Discount'nance her despis'd, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe! for beauty stands
In th' admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abash'd.
Therefore with manlier objects we must try 220
His constancy; with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise,
Rocks whereon greatest men have oftest wreck'd;
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond;
And now I know he hangers, where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wilderness:
The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.' 230

He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of spirits, likest to himself in guile,
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active scene
Of various persons, each to know his part;
Then to the desert takes with these his flight;
Where, still from shade to shade, the Son of God
After forty days' fasting had remain'd,
Now hung'ring first, and to himself thus said:
'Where will this end? four times ten days I 've pass'd
Wand'ring this woody maze, and human food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast
To virtue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here; if nature need not,
Or God support nature without repast
Though needings, what praise is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
Can satisfy that need some other way,
Though hunger still remain: so it remain
Without this body's wasting, I content me,
And from the sting of famine fear no harm;
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
Me hung'ring more to do my Father's will.'
It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet:
Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing, ev'n and morn,
Though ravenous, taught t' abstain from what they brought:
He saw the prophet also, how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awak'd
He found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days:
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high tow'ring to descry
The morn's approach, and greet her with his song:
As lightly from his grassy couch up-rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.
Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd,
From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;
But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote, none he saw;
Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
With chant of tuneful birds resounding loud:
Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
To rest at noon, and enter'd soon the shade
High roof'd, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
That open'd in the midst a woody scene;
Nature's own work it seem'd (nature taught art),
And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt
Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs: he view'd it round,
When suddenly a man before him stood;
Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
As one in city, or court, or palace bred,
And with fair speech these words to him address'd:
'With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild solitude so long should hide,
Of all things destitute; and, well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of some note,
As story tells, have trod this wilderness;
The fugitive bond-woman, with her son,
Outcast Nebaioth, yet found here relief
By a providing angel; all the race
Of Israel here had famish'd, had not God
Rain'd from heav'n manna; and that prophet bold,
Native of Thebez, wand'reng here was fed
Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
Of thee these forty days none hath regard,
Forty and more deserted here indeed."
To whom thus Jesus: 'What conclu'dst thou hence?
They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none.'
'How hast thou hunger then?' Satan replied.
'Tell me, if food were now before thee set,
Wouldst thou not eat?' 'Thereafter as I like
The giver,' answer'd Jesus. 'Why should that
Cause thy refusal?' said the subtle fiend.
'Hast thou not right to all created things?
Owe not all creatures by just right to thee
Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,
But tender all their pow'r? Nor mention I
Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd first
To idols, those young Daniel could refuse;
Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who
Would scruple that, with want oppress'd? Behold,
Nature asham'd, or, better to express,
Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd
From all the elements her choicest store,
To treat thee, as beseems, and as her Lord,
With honour: only deign to sit and eat.'
He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld,
In ample space under the broadest shade,
A table richly spread, in regal mode,
With dishes pil'd, and meats of noblest sort
And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
In pastry built; or from the spit, or boil'd,
Gris-amber-steam'd; all fish, from sea or shore,
Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin,
And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.
(Alas, how simple, to these cates compar'd,
Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!)
And at a stately sideboard, by the wine
That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood
Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more
Under the trees now tripp'd, now solemn stood,
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades,
With fruits and flow'rs from Anathena's horn,
And ladies of the Hesperides, that seem'd
Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled since
Of faery damsels, met in forest wide
By knights of Logres, or of Lyonec,
Lancelot, or Pellaeas, or Pellenore.
And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chimes strings, or charming pipes; and winds
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fann'd
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.
Such was the splendour; and the tempter now
His invitation earnestly renew'd:
'What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
Defends the touching of these viands pure;
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
Hunger, with sweet restorative delight,
All these are spirits of air, and woods, and springs,
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord;
What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat.'
To whom thus Jesus temp'rately replied:
'Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
And who withholds my pow'r that right to use?
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command?
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of angels ministrant
Array'd in glory on my cup to attend:
Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.'
To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent:
'That I have also pow'r to give, thou seest:
If of that pow'r I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd,
And rather opportunely in this place
Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
Why shouldst thou not accept it? but I see
What I can do or offer is suspect;
Of these things others quickly will dispose,
Whose pains have earn'd the far-fet spoil.' With that
Both table and provision vanish'd quite
With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard:
Only th' impure temp'ter still remain'd,
And with these words his temptation purs'd:

'By hunger, that each other creature tames,
Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
Thy temperance invincible besides,
For no allurement yields to appetite;
And all thy heart is set on high designs,
High actions: but wherewith to be achiev'd?
Great acts require great means of enterprise;
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A carpenter thy father known, thyself
Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit:
Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire
To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?
What followers, what retinue, canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,
Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:
What rais'd Antipater the Edomite,
And his son Herod plac'd on Judah's throne,
Thy throne, but gold that giv'n him puissant friends?

Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap,
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me:
Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want.'

To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:
'Yet wealth, without these three, is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd.
Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
In hight of all their flowing wealth dissolv'd:
But men endued with these have oft attain'd
In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
Gideon; and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad
Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat
So many aye's, and shall yet regain
That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
Among the Heathen (for throughout the world
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy of memorial), canst thou not remember
Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
For I esteem those names of men so poor,
Who could do mighty things, and could contend
Riches, though offer'd from the hand of kings.
And what in me seems wanting, but that I
May also in this poverty as soon
Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?
Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's embrance, if not snare; more apt
To slacken virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and realms? yet not for that a crown, 460
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights,
To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
For therein stands the office of a king,
His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise.
That for the public all this weight he bears.
Yet he, who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains;
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,
Subject himself to anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.
But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly; this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which to a generous mind,
So reigning, can be no sincere delight,
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous than to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a scepter, oftest better miss'd.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, in a speech of much flattering commendation, endeavours to awaken in Jesus a passion for glory, by particularising various instances of conquests achieved, and great actions performed, by persons at an early period of life. Our Lord replies, by showing the vanity of worldly fame, and the improper means by which it is generally attained; and contrasts with it the true glory of religious patience and virtuous wisdom, as exemplified in the character of Job. Satan justifies the love of glory from the example of God himself, who requires it from all his creatures. Jesus detects the fallacy of this argument, by showing that, as goodness is the true ground on which glory is due to the great Creator of all things, sinful man can have no right whatever to it.—Satan then urges our Lord respecting his claim to the throne of David; he tells him that the kingdom of Judea, being at that time a province of Rome, cannot be got possession of without much personal exertion on his part, and presses him to lose no time in beginning to reign. Jesus refers him to the time allotted for this, as for all other things; and, after intimating somewhat respecting his own previous sufferings, asks Satan why he should be so solicitous for the exaltation of one, whose rising was destined to be his fall. Satan replies, that his own despicable state, by excluding all hope, leaves little room for fear; and that, as his own punishment was equally doomed, he is
not interested in preventing the reign of one, from whose apparent benevolence he might rather hope for some interference in his favour,— Satan still pursues his former inclinations; and supposing that the seeming reluctance of Jesus to be thus advanced might arise from his being unacquainted with the world and its glories, conveys him to the summit of a high mountain, and from thence shows him most of the kingdoms of Asia, particularly pointing out to his notice some extraordinary military preparations of the Parthians to resist the insurrections of the Scythians. He then informs our Lord, that he showed him this purposely that he might see how necessary military exertions are to retain the possession of kingdoms, as well as to subdue them at first, and advises him to consider how impossible it was to maintain Judea against two such powerful neighbours as the Romans and Parthians, and how necessary it would be to form an alliance with one or other of them. At the same time he recommends, and engages to secure to him, that of the Parthians; and tells him that by this means his power will be defended from any thing that Rome or Caesar might attempt against it, and that he will be able to extend his glory wide, and especially to accomplish what was particularly necessary to make the throne of Judea really the throne of David, the deliverance and restoration of the ten tribes, still in a state of captivity, Jesus, having briefly noticed the vanity of military efforts, and the weakness of the arm of flesh, says, that when the time comes for his ascending his allotted throne, he shall not be slack: he remarks on Satan's extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of the Israelites, to whom he had always showed himself an enemy, and declares their servitude to be the consequence of their idolatry; but adds, that at a future time it may perhaps please God to recall them, and restore them to their liberty and native land.

SO spake the Son of God; and Satan stood
A while as mute, confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted and convinced
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts:
'I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old,
Infallible; or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require the array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms.
These God-like virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness? wherefore deprive
All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The fame and glory, glory the reward
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and pow'r's all but the highest?
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe; the son
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held.
At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quell'd
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgement mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd
With glory, wept that he had liv'd so long
Ingloriously: but thou yet art not too late?
To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:
'Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd?
And what the people but a herd confus'd,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
Things vulgar, and, well weigh'd, scarce worth the praise?
They praise, and they admire, they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
To live upon their tongues, and be their talk,
Of whom to be disprai'd were no small praise?
His lot who dares be singularly good,
Th' intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
This is true glory and renown, when God,
Looking on th' earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through heaven
To all his angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises: thus he did to Job,
When to extend his fame through heav'n and earth,
As thou to thy reproach mayst well remember,
He ask'd thee, 'Hast thou seen my servant Job?'
Famous he was in heav'n, on earth less known;
Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.
They err, who count it glorious to subdue
By conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in fields great battles win,
Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable nations, neighbour or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy;
Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods,
Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
Worship with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
Till conqueror Death discover them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices and deform'd,  
Violent or shameful death their due reward.  
But if there be in glory aught of good,  
It may by means far different be attain'd,  
Without ambition, war, or violence;  
By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,  
By patience, temperance: I mention still  
Him, whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,  
Made famous in a land and times obscure;  
Who names not now with honour patient Job?  
Poor Socrates (who next more memorable?),  
By what he taught, and suffer'd for so doing,  
For truth's sake suffering death, unjust, lives now  
Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.  
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,  
Aught suffer'd; if young African for fame  
His wasted country freed from Punic rage;  
The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,  
And loses, though but verbal, his reward.  
Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek,  
Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his  
Who sent me; and thereby witness whence I am.'  

To whom the tempter murm'ring thus replied:  
'Think not so slight of glory; therein least  
Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,  
And for his glory all things made, all things  
Orders and governs; nor content in heaven  
By all his angels glorified, requires  
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,  
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;  
Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift,  
Glory he requires, and glory he receives,  
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,  
Or barbarous, nor exceptions hath declared;  
From us, his foes pronounc'd, glory he exacts.'  

To whom our Saviour fervently replied:  
'And reason; since his word all things produce,d,  
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,  
But to show forth his goodness, and impart  
His good communicable to every soul  
Freely; of whom what could he less expect  
Than glory and benediction, that is, thanks,  
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense  
From them who could return him nothing else,  
And, not returning that, would likeliest render  
Content instead, dishonour, obloquy?  
Hard recompense, unsuitable return  
For so much good, so much beneficence!  
But why should man seek glory, who of his own  
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs  
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?  
Who for so many benefits receiv'd  
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrane and false,  
And so of all true good himself despoil'd;  
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs:
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance.

So spake the Son of God; and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin; for he himself,
Insatiable of glory, had lost all;
Yet of another plea bethought him soon:

'Of glory, as thou wilt,' said he, 'so deem;
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To sit upon thy father David's throne,
By mother's side thy father; though thy right
Be now in pow'rful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms:
Judea now and all the promis'd land,
Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,
Obeys Tiberius; nor is always rule'd
With temp'rate sway; oft have they violated
The temple, oft the law, with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain
Thy right by sitting still, or thus retiring?
So did not Maccabeus: he indeed
Retir'd unto the desert, but with arms;
And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
That by strong hand his family obtain'd,
Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd,
With Modin and her surburbs one content.
If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty; zeal and duty are not slow,
But on occasion's forelock watchful wait:
They themselves rather are occasion best;
Zeal of thy father's house, duty to free
Thy country from her Heathen servitude.
So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
The prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
The happier reign, the sooner it begins:
Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?

To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd:

'All things are best fulfill'd in their due time;
And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:
If of my reign prophetic writ hath told,
That it shall never end, so, when begin,
The Father in his purpose hath decreed
He, in whose hand all times and reasons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulation, injuries, insults,
Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,
Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey? Who best
Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first
Well hath obey'd; just trial, ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee, when I begin
My everlasting kingdom? Why art thou
Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition?
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy destruction?

To whom the tempter, inly rack'd, replied:
'Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace: what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worst: worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose;
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever, for itself condemn'd;
And will alike be puni'd, whether thou
Reign, or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly could I fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aspect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil state,
Would stand between me and thy Father's ire
(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of hell),
A shelter, and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,
That thou, who worthiest art, shouldst be their king?
Perhaps thou linger'st, in deep thoughts detain'd
Of th' enterprise so hazardous and high!
No wonder; for though in thee be united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, consider,
Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,
And once a year Jerusalem, few days'
Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe?
The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
Best school of best experience, quickest insight
In all things that to greatest actions lead.
The wisest, unexperienced, will be ever
Timorous and lath, with novice modesty
(As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom),
Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous:
But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
The monarchies of th' earth, their pomp and state
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
And regal mysteries; that thou mayst know
How best their opposition to withstand.'
With that (such pow'r was giv'n him then), he took
The Son of God up to a mountain high.
It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd,
The' one winding, the' other straight, and left between
Fair champign with less rivers intervein'd,
Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea:
Fertile of corn the glebe of oil, and wine;
With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the
hills;
Huge cities and high tow'r'd, that well might seem
The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large
The prospect was, that here and there was room
For barren desert, fountainless and dry.
To this high mountain top the tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new train of words began:
'Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Forest and field and flood, temples and towers,
Cut shorter many a league; here thou beholdest
Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on
As far as Indus cast, Euphrates west,
And oft beyond: to south the Persian bay,
And, inaccessible, the Arabian drought:
Here Nineveh, of length within her wall
Several days journey, built by Nins old,
Of that first golden monarchy the seat,
And seat of Salmanassar, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns;
There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy father David's house
Led captive, and Jerusalem laid' waste,
Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,
His city, there thou seest, and Bactra there;
Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;
There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
The drink of none but kings; of later fame,
Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands,
The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
Turning with easy eye, thou mayst behold.
All these the Parthian (now some ages past,
By great Arsaces led, who founded first
That empire) under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious kings of Antioch won,
And just in time thou com'st to have a view
Of his great pow'r; for now the Parthian king
In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host
Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haste; see, though from far,
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms, 305
Of equal dread in flight or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
See how in warlike muster they appear,
In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings. 310
He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless
The city-gates out-pour'd, light-armed troops,
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prancing their riders bore, the flow'r and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound; 315
From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
And Margiana, to the Hycranian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
From Atropatia, and the neighbouring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the south
Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.
He saw them in their forms of battle rang'd,
How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy show'rs against the face
Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight; 325
The field all iron cast a gleaming brown:
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
Chariots, or elephants indors'd with towers
Of archers; nor of lab'ring pioneers
A multitude, with spades and axes arm'd
To lay hills plane, fell woods, or valleys fill,
Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,
And waggons, fraught with utensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphrone, from whence to win
The fairest of her sex Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowst knights,
Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
At sight whereof the fiend yet more presum'd,
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd:
'That thou mayst know, I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark,
To what end I have brought thee hither, and show
All this fair sight; thy kingdom though foretold
By prophet or by angel, unless thou
Endeavour as thy father David did,
Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means;
Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.
But, say thou wert possess'd of David's throne,
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope
Long to enjoy it, quiet and secure,
Between two such enclosing enemies,
Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own; the Parthian first
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy
Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,
Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,
Maugre the Roman: it shall be my task
To render thee the Parthian at dispose,
Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league:
By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly re-install thee
In David's royal seat, his true successor,
Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes
Whose offspring in his territory yet serve,
In Habor, and among the Medes dispers'd:
Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, last
Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt serv'd,
This offer sets before thee to deliver.
These if from servitude thou shalt restore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
From Egypt to Euphrates, and beyond,
Shalt reign, and Rome or Caesar need not fear,' 385
To whom our Saviour answer'd thus, unmov'd:
'Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
And fragile arms, much instrument of war,
Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battles and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth naught.
Means I must use, thou say'st, prediction else
Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne:
My time, I told thee (and that time for thee
Were better farthest off), is not yet come:
When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shown me, argument
Of human weakness rather than of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes
I must deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full scepter sway
To just extent over all Israel's sons.
But whence to thee this zeal? Where was it then
For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
Of numbr'ing Israel, which cost the lives
Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
By three days' pestilence? Such was thy zeal
To Israel then; the same that now to me!
As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worship calves, the deities
Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
And all th’ idolatries of heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heath’nish crimes;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought.
The God of their forefathers; but so died
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain;
And God with idols in their worship join’d,
Should I of these the liberty regard,
Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unform’d,
Headlong would follow; and to their gods perhaps
Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve
Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
Yet he at length (time to himself best known),
Rememb’ring Abraham, by some wondrous call
May bring them back repentant and sincere,
And at their passing cleave th’ Assyrian flood,
While to their native land with joy they haste;
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he e’er
When to the promis’d land their fathers pass’d:
To his due time and providence I leave them.'

So spake Israel’s true King, and to the fiend
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it, when with truth falsehood contends.

B O O K  I V.

T H E  A R G U M E N T.

Satan, persisting in the temptation of our Lord, shows him imperial Rome in its greatest pomp and splendour, as a power which he probably would prefer before that of the Persians; and tells him that he might with the greatest ease expel Tiberius, restore the Romans to their liberty, and make himself master not only of the Roman empire, but, by so doing, of the whole world, and inclusively of the throne of David. Our Lord, in reply, expresses his contempt of grandeur and worldly power, notices the luxury, vanity, and profiliety of the Romans, declaring how little they merits to be restored to that liberty which they had lost by their misconduct, and briefly refers to the greatness of his own future kingdom. Satan, now desperate, to enhance the value of his pref-
fered gifts, professes that the only terms, on which he will bestow them, are our Saviour’s falling down and worshipping him. Our Lord expresses a firm but temperate indignation at such a pro-
position, and rebukes the tempter by the title of ‘Satan for ever
damn’d.’ Satan, abashed, attempts to justify himself; he then as-
sumes a new ground of temptation, and proposing to Jesus the in-
tellectual gratifications of wisdom and knowledge, points out to
him the celebrated seat of ancient learning, Athens, its schools,
and other various resorts of learned teachers and their disciples:
accompanying the view with a highly finished panegyric on the Greek musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers of the different sects. Jesus replies, by showing the vanity and insufficiency of the boasted heathen philosophy; and prefers to the music, poetry, eloquence, and didactic policy of the Greeks, those of the inspired Hebrew writers. Satan, irritated at the failure of all his attempts, upbraids the indiscretion of our Saviour in rejecting his offers; and, having, in ridicule of his expected kingdom, foretold the sufferings that our Lord was to undergo, carries him back into the wilderness, and leaves him there. Night comes on: Satan raises a tremendous storm, and attempts further to alarm Jesus with frightful dreams, and terrific threatening spectres; which however have no effect upon him. A calm, bright, beautiful morning succeeds to the horrors of the night. Satan again presents himself to our blessed Lord, and, from noticing the storm of the preceding night as pointed chiefly at him, takes occasion once more to insult him with an account of the sufferings which he was certainly to undergo. This only draws from our Lord a brief rebuke. Satan, now at the heights of his desperation, confesses that he had frequently watched Jesus from his birth, purposely to discover if he was the true Messiah; and, collecting from what passed at the river Jordan that he most probably was so, he had from that time more assiduously followed him, in hopes of gaining some advantage over him, which would most effectually prove that he was not really that Divine Person destined to be his "fateful enemy." In this he acknowledges that he has hitherto completely failed; but still determines to make one more trial of him. Accordingly he conveys him to the temple at Jerusalem, and, placing him on a pointed eminence, requires him to prove his divinity either by standing there, or casting himself down with safety. Our Lord reproves the tempter, and at the same time manifests his own divinity by standing on this dangerous point. Satan, amazed and terrified, instantly falls; and repasts to his infernal companions to relate the bad success of his enterprise. Angels in the mean time convey our blessed Lord to a beautiful valley, and, while they minister to him a repast of celestial food, celebrate his victory in a triumphant hymn.

PERPLEX'D and troubled at his bad success
The tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope.
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve;
This far his over-match, who, self deceiv'd
And rash, beforehand had no better weigh'd
The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
But as a man, who had been matchless held
In cunning, over-reach'd where least he thought,
To salve his credit, and for every spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dash'd, th' assault renew
(Vain batt'ry!) and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er, though des'rate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
Wash'd by the southern sea, and, on the north,
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills
That screen'd the fruits of th' earth, and seats of men,30
From cold septentrion blasts; thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With tow'rs and temples proudly elevate
On sev'n small hills, with palaces adorn'd,
Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens and groves, presented to his eyes,
Above the highth of mountains interpos'd
(By what strange parallax, or optic skill
Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass
Of telescope, were curious to inquire):
And now the tempter thus his silence broke:
'The city which thou seest no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth,45
So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd
Of nations; there the Capitol thou seest,
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable; and there mount Palatine,
Th' imperial palace, compass huge, and high
The structure, skill of noblest architects,
With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
Turrets, and terraces, and glitt'ring spires:
Many a fair edifice besides, more like
Houses of gods (so well I have dispos'd
My aery microscope), thou mayst behold,
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers,
In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold.
Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or ent'ring in;
Praetors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings:
Or embassies from regions far remote,
In various habits, on the Appian road,
Or on th' Emilian; some from farthest south,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
Meroe, Nilotic isle; and, more to west,
The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea;
From th' Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
From India and the Golden Chersonese,
And utmost India isle Taprobane,
Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreath'd;
From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;
Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians, north
Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.
All nations now to Rome obedience pay;
To Rome's great emperor, whose wide domain,
In ample territory, wealth, and power,
Civility of manners, arts and arms,
And long renown; thou justly mayst prefer
Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,
85
The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd;
These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
This emp'rer hath no son, and now is old,
90
Old and lascivious, and from Rome retir'd
To Capreae, an island small, but strong,
On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;
Committing to a wicked favourite
95
All public cares, and yet of him suspicious,
Hated of all, and hating: With what case,
Endued with regal virtues, as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
Mightst thou expel this monster from his throne,
100
Now made a sty, and, in his place ascending,
A victor-people free from servile yoke!
And with my help thou mayst; to me the power
Is giv'n, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no less than all the world;
105
Aim at the highest: without the highest attain'd,
Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
On David's throne, be prophesied what will.'
To whom the Son of God, unmov'd, replied:

*Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show
110
Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to tell
Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
On citron tables or Atlantic stone
115
(For I have also heard, perhaps have read),
Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
Crystal, and myrrhine cups, emboss'd with gems
And studs of pearl; to me should'st tell, who thirst
120
And hunger still. Then embassies thou show'st
From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
So many hollow compliments and lies,
Outlandish flatt'ries? Then proceed'st to talk
125
Of th' emperor, how easily subdued,
How gloriously: I shall, thou say'st, expel
A brutal monster; what if I withdraw
Expel a devil who first made him such?
Let his tormentor conscience find him out;
130
For him I was not sent; nor yet to free
That people, victor once, now vile and base;
Deservedly made vassal; who, once just,
Frugal, and mild, and temp'rate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Piling their provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rape; first ambitious grown
Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their sports to blood incur'd
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd;
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily scene effeminate.
What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd?
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
Know therefore, when my season comes to sit
On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the earth;
Or as a stone, that shall to pieces dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world;
And of my kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this; but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.'
To whom the tempter, impudent, replied:
'I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valuest, because offer'd, and reject'st:
Nothing will please thee, difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:
On t'other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for naught;
All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give
(For given to me, I give to whom I please),
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition; if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior lord
(Easily done), and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?'
Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain:
'I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less;
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
Th' abominable terms, impious condition:
But I endure the time, till which expir'd
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,
The first of all commandments, Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accur'sd? now more accur'sd
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve,
And more blasphémous; which expect to rue.
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given?
Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd;
Other donation none thou canst produce,
If given, by whom but by the King of kings,
God over all supreme? If giv'n to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me the Son of God?
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God?
Get thee behind me; plain thou now appear'st
That evil one, Satan for ever damn'd.'

To whom the fiend, with fear abash'd, replied: 195
'Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
Though sons of God both angels are and men,
If I, to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
What both from men and angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth,
Nations beside from all the quarter'd winds,
God of this world invok'd, and world beneath:
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me most fatal, me it most concerns;
The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,
Rather more honour left and more esteem;
Me naught advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more
Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not.
And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclin'd
Than to a worldly crown; addicted more.
To contemplation and profound dispute,
As by that early action may be judg'd,
When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou wert'st
Alone into the temple, there wast found
Among the gravest rabbies, disputant
On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,
Teaching, not taught: The childhood shows the man,
As morning shows the day: be famous then
By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend.
All knowledge is not conch'd in Moses' law,
The Pentateuch, or what the prophets wrote;
The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach
To admiration, led by nature's light,
And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st;
Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
Error by his own arms is best evinc'd.

Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
Westward, much nearer by south-west, behold;
Where on the Aegean shore a city stands,
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil;
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City or suburban, studious walks and shades.
See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
There flow’ry hill Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees’ industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whisp’ring stream; within the walls then view
  The schools of ancient sages; his who bred
Great Alexander to subdue the world,
Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
There shalt thou hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand; and various-measur’d verse,
Acolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer call’d,
Whose poem Phoebus challeng’d for his own:
Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
In chorus or iambic, teachers best
Of moral prudence, with delight receiv’d
In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate, and chance, and change in human life,
High actions, and high passions best describing:
Thence to the famous orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded at will that fierce democracy,
Shook the arsenal, and fulmin’d over Greece
To Macedon and Artaxerxes’ throne:
To sage philosophy next lend thine ear,
From heav’n descended to the low-roof’d house
Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
Whom well inspir’d the oracle pronounc’d
Wiset of men; from whose mouth issued forth
Mellifluous streams, that water’d all the schools
Of Academics old and new, with those
Surnam’d Peripatetics, and the sect
Epicurian, and the Stoic severe;
These here revolve, or, as thou lik’st, at home,
I’ll time mature thee to a kingdom’s weight;
These rules will render thee a king complete
Within thyself, much more with empire join’d.’
  To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:
‘Think not but that I know these things; or think
I know them not; not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I ought: he, who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true;
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all profess’d
To know this only, that he nothing knew;
The next to fabling fell, and smooth conceits;
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
Others in virtue plac’d felicity,
But virtue join’d with riches and long life;
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;
The Stoic last, in philosophic pride,
By him call'd virtue; and his virtuous man,
    Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life, 305
Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas! what can they teach and not mislead,
    ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
    Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue; and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none;
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not; or, by delusion,
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
And empty cloud. However, many books,
    Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgement equal or superior
(And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?) 325
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep vers'd in books, and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.
330
Or, if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where so soon
As in our native language, can I find
That solace? All our law and story strew'd
With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscrib'd,
    Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
That pleas'd so well our victor's ear, declare
That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd;
Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
The vices of their deities, and their own,
    In fable, hymn, or strong, so personating
Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,
345
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and God-like men,
The holiest of holies, and his saints
(Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee),
    Unless were moral virtue is express'd
By light of nature, not in all quite lost.
Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
The top of eloquence; statist seems indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may seem;
But herein to our prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government,
In their majestic unaffected style,
Than all th' oratory of Greece and Rome.

In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,
What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;
These only with our law best form a king.

So spake the Son of God; but Satan, now
Quite at a loss (for all his darts were spent),
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied:
'Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught
By me propos'd in life contemplative
Or active, tended on by glory or fame,
What dost thou in this world? The wilderness
For thee is fittest place; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee; yet remember
What I foretell thee, soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
Nicely or cautiously, my offer'd aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season,
When prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
Now contrary, if I read aught in heaven,
Or heav'n write aught of fate, by what the stars
Voluminous, or single characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to spell,

Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate
Attend thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death;
A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
Real or allegoric, I discern not;
Nor when; eternal sure, as without end,
Without beginning, for no date prefix'd
Directs me in the starry rubric set.'

So saying, he took (for still he knew his power
Not yet expir'd), and to the wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
Feigning to disappear Darkness now rose,
As day-light suuk, and brought in lowering night,
Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,
Privation mere of light and absent day.

Our Saviour meek, and with untroubled mind
After his aery jaunt, though hurried sore,
Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
Wherever, under some concourse of shades,
Whose branching arms thick intertwin'd might shield
From dews and damp of night his shelter'd head;
But, shelter'd, slept in vain; for at his head
The tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturb'd his sleep. And other tropic now
Gan thunder, and both ends of heav'n; the clouds,
From many a horrid rift, abortive pour'd
Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire
In ruin reconcile'd: nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vex'd wilderness, whose tallest pines,
Though rooted deep as higl, and sturdiest oaks,
Bow'd their stiff necks, laden with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st
Unshaken! Nor yet staid the terror there;
Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round
Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd,
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace!
Thus pass'd the night so foul, till morning fair
Came forth with pilgrim steps, in amice gray;
Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
And grisly spectres, which the fiend had rais'd
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the sun with more effectual beams
Had cheer'd the face of earth, and dried the wet
From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,
Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
After a night of storms so ruinous,
Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
To gratulate the sweet return of morn.
Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,
Was absent, after all his mischief done
The prince of darkness: glad would also seem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;
Yet with no new device (they all were spent),
Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
Desp'rate of bett course, to vent his rage
And mad despite to be so oft repell'd.
Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
Back'd on the north and west by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
And in a careless mood thus to him said:
'Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
After a dismal night: I heard the wrack,
As earth and sky would mingle; but myself
Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them
As dang'rous to the pillar'd frame of heaven,
Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
Are to the main as inconsiderable
And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
To man's less universe, and soon are gone;
Yet, as being oft times noxious where they light
On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
Like turbulencies in th' affairs of men,
Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
They oft fore-signify and threaten ill:
This tempest at this desert most was bent:
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
The perfect season offer'd with my aid
To win thy destin'd seat, but will prolong
All to the push of fate, pursue thy way
Of gaining David's throne, no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told?
Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
For angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
The time and means. Each act is rightliest done,
Not when it must, but when it may be best:
If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
Ere thou of Israel's scepter get fast hold;
Whereof this ominous night, that clos'd thee round
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign:
So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus:
'Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
Those terrors, which thou speak'st of, did me none;
I never fear'd they could, though noiseing loud
And threat'ning nigh: what they can do as signs
Betokening, or ill-boding, I contemn
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I, accepting,
At least might seem to hold all pow'r of thee,
Ambitious spirit! and wouldst be thought my god;
And storm'st refuse'd, thinking to terrify
Me to thy will! Desist (thou art discern'd,
And toil'st in vain), nor me in vain molest.'
To whom the fiend, now swoln with rage, replied:
'Then hear, O son of David, virgin-born,
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt;
Of the Messiah I had heard foretold
By all the prophets; of thy birth at length,
Announce'd by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
And of th' angelic song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birth-night that sung thee Saviour-born.
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all
Flock to the Baptist, I, among the rest
(Though not to be baptiz'd), by voice from heaven
Heard thee pronounce'd the Son of God belov'd.
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God, which bears no single sense.
The son of God I also am, or was;
And if I was, I am; relation stands;
All men are sons of God; yet thee I thought.
I some respect far higher so declar'd:
Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild;
Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy:
Good reason then, if I beforehand seek
To understand my adversary, who
And what he is; his wisdom, pow'r, intent;
By parle or composition, truce or league,
To win him, or win from him what I can:
And opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
Proof against all temptation, as a rock
Of adamant, and, as a center, firm;
To th' utmost of mere man both wise and good,
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
Have been before contemn'd, and may again.
Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
Worth naming Son of God by voice from heaven,
Another method I must now begin,'
So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing
Of hippocrif, bore through the air sublime,
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
The holy city, lifted high her towers,
And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
There, on the highest pinnacle, he set
The Son of God; and added thus in scorn:
There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill; I to thy Father's house
Have brought thee, and highest plac'd: highest is best:
Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God:
For it is written, He will give command
Concerning thee to his angels, in their hands
They shall uplift thee, last at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone?
To whom thus Jesus: 'Also it is written,
Tempt not the Lord thy God.' He said, and stood:
But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
As when earth's son, Antaeus (to compare
Small things with greatest), in Irassa strove
With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foil'd, still rose,
Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,
Received from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,
Throttled at length in th' air, expir'd and fell;
So, after many a foil, the tempter proud,
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride,
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
And as that Theban monster, that propos'd
Her riddle, and him who solv'd it not devour'd,
That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spite
Cast herself headlong from th' Isemian steep;
PARADISE REGAINED. Book IV.

So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the fiend,
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
(Joyless triumphs of his hop'd success)
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God. 580
So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plumpy vans receiv'd him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air; 585
Then, in a flow'ry valley, set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine
Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink,
That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd
What hunger, if aught hunger, had impair'd,
Or thirst; and, as he fed, angelic quires
Sang heav'nly anthems of his victory.
Over temptation and the tempter proud:
'True image of the Father; whether thron'd
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or, remote from heav'n, enshrin'd
In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
Wand'ring the wilderness; whatever place,
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with God-like force endured
Against th' attempter of thy Father's throne,
And thief of Paradise! Him long of old
Thou didst debel, and down from heaven cast
With all his army; now thou hast aveng'd
Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
For, though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
A Saviour, art come down to re-install,
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
Of tempter and temptation without fear.
But thou, infernal serpent! shall not long
Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star
Or lightning, thou shalt fall from heav'n, trod down
Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'st
Thy wound (yet not thy last and deadliest wound),
By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in hell
No triumph: in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he, all unarm'd,
Shall chase thee, with the terror of his voice,
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,
Lest he command them down into the deep,
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan! on thy glorious work
Now enter; and begin to save mankind.

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and, from heav'nly feast refresh'd,
Brought on his way with joy; he, unobserv'd,
Home to his mother's house private return'd.
SAMSON AGONISTES,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

Samson, made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit a while and bewail his condition. Where he happens at length to be visited by certain friends and equals of his tribe, which make the Chorus, who seek to comfort him what they can; then by his old father Manoah, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistine lords for Samson’s redemption; who in the meanwhile is visited by other persons; and lastly by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence; he at first refuseth, dismissing the public officer with absolute denial to come; at length, persuaded inwardly that this was from God, he yields to go along with him, who came now the second time with great threatenings to fetch him: the Chorus yet remaining on the place, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his son’s deliverance: in the midst of which discourse an Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterward more distinctly, relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

Samson. Attendant leading him.

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade:
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin’d me,
Where I, a prisoner chain’d, scarce freely draw
The air imprison’d also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of heav’n fresh blowing, pure and sweet,
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.  
This day a solemn feast the people hold.  
To Dagon their sea-idol, and forbid  
Laborious works; unwillingly this rest  
Their superstition yields me; hence with leave  
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek  
This unfrequented place to find some ease,  
Ease to the body some, none to the mind  
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm  
Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone,  
But rush upon me thronging, and present  
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.  
O, wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold  
Twice by an angel, who at last in sight  
Of both my parents all in flames ascended  
From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,  
As in a fiery column charioting  
His God-like presence, and from some great act  
Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?  
Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd  
As of a person separate to God,  
Design'd for great exploits; if I must die  
Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,  
Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;  
To grind in brazen fetters under task  
With this heav'n-gifted strength? O glorious strength,  
Put to the labour of a beast, debas'd  
Lower than bond-slave! Promise was, that I  
Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;  
Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him  
Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,  
Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke.  
Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt  
Divine prediction; what if all foretold  
Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default,  
Whom have I to complain of but myself?  
Who this high gift of strength committed to me,  
In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,  
Under the seal of silence could not keep,  
But weakly to a woman must reveal it,  
O'ercome with importunity and tears,  
O impotence of mind, in body strong!  
But what is strength without a double share  
Of wisdom? vast, unwieldy, burdensome,  
 Proudly secure, yet liable to fall  
By weakest subtleties, not made to rule,  
But to subserve where wisdom bears command!  
God, when he gave me strength, to show withal  
How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.  
But peace! I must not quarrel with the will  
Of highest dispensation, which herein  
Haply had ends above my reach to know:  
Suffices that to me strength is my bane,  
And proves the source of all my miseries;  
So many, and so huge, that each apart
Would ask a life to wail; but chief of all,
O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annul'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
Inferior to the vilest now become
Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me;
They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, expos'd.
To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
In pow'r of others, never in my own;
Scarce half I seem to live, dead more then half.
O dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse
Without all hope of day!
O first created beam, and thou great Word,
'Let there be light,' and light was over all;
Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree?
The sun to me is dark
And silent as the moon,
When she deserts the night,
Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.
Since light so necessary is to life,
And almost life itself, if it be true
That light is in the soul,
She all in every part; why was the sight
To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
So obvious and so easy to be quench'd
And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,
That she might look at will through every pore?
Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
To live a life half dead, a living death,
And buried; but, O yet more miserable!
Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;
Buried, yet not exempt,
By privilege of death and burial,
From worst of other evils, pains and wrongs;
But made hereby obnoxious more
To all the miseries of life,
Life in captivity
Among inhuman foes.
But who are these? for with joint pace I hear
The tread of many feet steering this way;
Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare
At my affliction, and perhaps t' insult,
Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Enter Chorus.

Chor. This, this is he; softly a while,
Let us not break in upon him:
O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,
With languish'd head unpropt,
As one past hope abandon'd,
And by himself given over;
In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
O'er-worn and soil'd;
Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
That heroic, that renown'd,
Irresistible Samson? whom unarm'd
No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid;
Ran on embattled armies clad in iron;
And, weaponless himself,
Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass,
Chalybean-temper'd steel, and flock of mail
Adamantine proof?
But safest he who stood aloof,
When insupportably his foot advance'd,
In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite
Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turn'd
Their plated backs under his heel;
Or, grov'ling, soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.
Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
A thousand fore-skins fell, the flow'r of Palestine,
In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day.
Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders bore
The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar,
Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,
No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so;
Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up heaven.
Which shall I first bewail,
Thy bondage or lost sight,
Prison within prison
Inseparably dark?
Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
The dungeon of thyself; thy soul
(Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain),
Imprison'd now indeed,
In real darkness of the body dwells,
 Shut up from outward light
'T incorporate with gloomy night;
For inward light, alas!
Puts forth no visual beam.
O mirror of our fickle state,
Since man on earth unparallel'd!
The rarer thy example stands,
By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
Strongest of mortal men,
To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
For him I reckon not in high estate
Whom long descent of birth,
Or the sphere of fortune, raises;
But thee whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
Might have subdued the earth,
Universally crown'd with highest praises. 175

Samson. I hear the sound of words; their sense the air
Dissolves unjointed ere it reach my ear.

Chor. He speaks, let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,
The glory late of Israel, now the grief;
We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown, 180
From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,
To visit or bewail thee; or, if better,
Counsel or consolation we may bring,
Salve to thy sores; apt words have pow'r to swage
The tumours of a troubled mind, 185
And are as balm to fester'd wounds.

Samson. Your coming, friends, revives me; for I learn
Now of my own experience, not by talk,
How counterfeit a coin they are who friends
Bear in their superscription (of the most 190
I would be understood); in prosp'rous days
They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
Not to be found, though sought. Yet see, O friends,
How many evils have enclos'd me round;
Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me, 195
Blindness; for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwreck'd
My vessel trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear,
Fool! have divulg'd the secret gift of God
To a deceitful woman? Tell me, friends,
Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool
In every street? do they not say, how well
Are come upon him his deserts? Yet why?
Immeasurable strength they might behold
In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;
This with the other should at least have pair'd,
These two, proportion'd ill, drove me transverse.

Chor. Tax not divine disposal; wisest men
Have err'd, and by bad women been deceiv'd;
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise,
Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides:
Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder
Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

Samson. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleas'd
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed
The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
The marriage on; that by occasion hence
I might begin Israel's deliverance,
The work to which I was divinely call'd.
She proving false, the next I took to wife
(O that I never had! fond wish too late)

SAMSON AGONISTES.
Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
That specious monster, my accomplish’d snare.
I thought it lawful from my former act,
And the same end; still watching to oppress
Israel’s oppressors: of what now I suffer
She was not the prime cause, but I myself;
Who, vanquish’d with a peal of words (Oh weakness!)
Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.
Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke
The Philistine, thy country’s enemy,
Thou never wast amiss, I bear thee witness:
Yet Israel still serves with all his sons.
Sams. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
On Israel’s governors and heads of tribes,
Who, seeing those great acts which God had done
Singly by me against their conquerors,
Acknowleg’d not, or not at all consider’d,
Deliverance offer’d: I on th’ other side
Us’d no ambition to commend my deeds;
The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer:
But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
To count them things worth notice, till at length
Their lords the Philistines with gather’d pow’rs
Enter’d Judea seeking me, who then
Safe to the rock of Etham was retir’d;
Not flying, but forecasting in what place
To set upon them, what advantaged best.
Meanwhile the men of Judah; to prevent
The harass of their land, beset me round;
I willingly on some conditions came
Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
To the uncircumcis’d a welcome prey,
Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threads
Touch’d with the flame: on their whole host I flew
Unarm’d, and with a trivial weapon fell’d
Their choicest youth; they only liv’d who fled,
Had Judah that day join’d, or one whole tribe,
They had by this posses’d the tow’rs of Gath,
And lorded over them whom they now serve;
But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,
And by their vices brought to servitude,
Than to love bondage more than liberty,
Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty;
And to despise, or envy, or suspect,
Whom God hath of his special favour rais’d
As their deliverer? if he ought begin,
How frequent to desert him, and at last
To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?
Chor. Thy words to my remembrance bring
How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
Their great deliverer contemn’d,
The matchless Gideon, in pursuit
Of Madian, and her vanquish’d kings:
And how ingratitude Ephraim
Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,
Not worse than by his shield and spear,    285
Defended Israel from the Ammonite,      
Had not his prowess quell'd their pride
In that sore battle, when so many died
Without reprieve, adjudg'd to death,
For want of well pronouncing Shilboleth.  
Sams. Of such examples add me to the roll;   290
Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
But God's propos'd deliverance not so.

Chor. Just are the ways of God,
And justifiable to men;
Unless there be, who think not God at all:
If any be, they walk obscure;
For of such doctrine never was there school,
But the heart of the fool,
And no man therein doctor but himself.

Yet more there be, who doubt his ways not just,
As to his own edicts found contradicting,
Then give the reins to wand'ring thought,
Regardless of his glory's diminution;
Till by their own perplexities involv'd,
They ravel more, still less resolv'd,
But never find self-satisfying solution.
As if they would confine th' Interminable,
And tie him to his own prescript,
Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
And had full right t' exempt
Whom so it pleases him by choice
From national obstruction, without taint
Of sin, or legal debt;
For with his own laws he cad best dispense.
He would not else, who never wanted means,
Nor in respect of th' enemy just cause,
To set his people free,
Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
Against his vow of strictest purity,
To seek in marriage that fallacious bride,
Unclean, unchaste.

Down, reason, then; at least, vain reasonings, down;
Though reason here aver,
That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
Uncle in subsequent, her stain not his,
But see, here comes thy reverend sire
With careful step, locks white as down,
Old Manoah: advise
Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

Sams. Ay me! another inward grief, awak'd
With mention of that name, renews th' assault.

Enter Manoah.

Man. Brethren and men of Dan, for such ye seem,
Though in this unenouch place; if old respect,
As I suppose, towards your once gloried friend,
My son now captive, hither hath inform'd
Your younger feet, while mine cast back with age
Come lagging after; say if he be here.

Chor. As signal now in low dejected state,
As erst in highest, behold him where he lies.

Man. O miserable change! is this the man,
That invincible Samson, far renown'd,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to angels walk'd their streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duell'd their armies rank'd in proud array,
Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spear's length. O ever-failing trust
In mortal strength! and oh! what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good
Pray'd for, but often proves our bane?
I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a son,
And such a son as all men hail'd me happy;
Who would be now a father in my stead?
O wherefore did God grant me my request,
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd?
Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest pray'rs, then, giv'n with solemn hand
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind?
For this did th' Angel twice descend? for this
Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
Select, and sacred, glorious for a while,
The miracle of men; then in an hour
Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
Thy foes' derision, captive, poor, and blind,
Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves?
Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once
To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
Subject him to so foul indignities,
Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

Sams. Appoint not heav'nly disposition, father;
Nothing of all these evils hath befal'n me
But justly; I myself have brought them on,
Sole author I, sole cause; if aught seem vile,
As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
The mystery of God giv'n me under pledge
Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
A Canaanite, my faithless enemy.
This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,
But warn'd by oft experience: did not she
Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
The secret wrested from me in her highth
Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying if straight
To them who had corrupted her, my spies,
And rivals? In this other was there found
More faith, who also in her prime of love,
Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
Though offer'd only, by the scent conceiv'd
Her spurious first-born, treason against me?
Thrice she assay'd with flattering pray'rs and sighs,
And amorous reproaches, to win from me
My capital secret; in what part my strength
Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might
know;

Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
Her importunity, each time perceiving
How openly, and with what impudence
She purposed to betray me and (which was worse
Than undissembled hate), with what contempt
She sought to make me traitor to myself;
Yet the fourth time, when, must'ring all her wiles,
With blandish'd parlies, feminine assaults,
Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night
To storm me over-watch'd, and wearied out,
At times when men seek most repose and rest,
I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
Who, with a grain of manhood well resolv'd,
Might easily have shook off all her snares:
But foul effeminacy held me yok'd her bond-slave;
Indignity, blot to honour and religion!
Servile mind rewarded well with servile punishment!
The base degree to which I now am fall'n,
These rags, this grinding is not so base
As was my former servitude, ignoble,
Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.

Man. I cannot praise thy marriage-choices, son,
Rather approv'd them not; but thou didst plead
Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
Find some occasion to infest our foes.
I state not that; this I am sure, our foes
Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
Their captive, and their triumph; thou the sooner
Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms,
To violate the sacred trust of silence
Deposited within thee; which to have kept
Tacit, was in thy pow'r: true; and thou bare'st
Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,
That rigid scare. A worse thing yet remains:
This day the Philistines a popular feast
Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim
Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,
To Dagon, as their god who hath deliver'd
Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
So Dagon shall be magnified, and God,
Besides whom is no god, compar'd with idols,
Disglyrified, blasphem'd, and had in scorn
By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,
Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
could have befall’n thee and thy father’s house.

Sam. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
That I this honour, I this pomp, have brought
To Dagon, and advance’d his praises high
Among the heathen round; to God have brought
Dishonour, obloquy, and op’d the mouths
Of idolists and atheists; have brought scandal
To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
In feeble hearts, propense enough before
To waver, or fall off and join with idols;
Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
This only hope relives me, that the strife
With me hath end; all the contest is now
’Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presum’d,
Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
His deity comparing and preferring
Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
Will not connive, or linger, thus provok’d;
But will arise, and his great name assert:
Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
Of all these boasted trophies won on me,
And with confusion blank his worshippers.

Man. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
I as a prophecy receive; for God,
Nothing more certain, will not long defer
To vindicate the glory of his name
Against all competition, nor will long
Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord,
Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?
Thou must not, in the meanwhile here forgot,
Lie in this miserable loathsome plight,
Neglected. I already have made way
To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
About thy ransom: well they may by this
Have satisfied their utmost of revenge
By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted
On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

Sam. Spare that proposal, father; spare the trouble
Of that solicitation; let me here,
As I deserve, pay on my punishment;
And expiate, if possible, my crime,
Shameful garrulity. To have reveal’d
Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
Contempt and scorn of all, to be excluded
All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
The mark of fool set on his front! But I
God’s counsel have not kept, his holy secret
Presumptuously have publish’d, impiously,
Weakly at least, and shamefully; a sin
That Gentiles in their parables condemn
To their abyss and horrid pains confin'd.

Man. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite;
But act not in thy own affliction, son:
Repent the sin; but, if the punishment
Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;
Or th' execution leave to high disposal,
And let another hand, not thine, exact
Thy penal forfeit from thyself: perhaps
God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
Who ever more approves, and more accepts
(Best pleas'd with humble and filial submission),
Him who, imploring mercy, sues for life,
Than who, self-vigorous, chooses death as due;
Which argues over-just, and self-displeas'd
For self-offense, more than for God offended.
Reject not then what offer'd means; who knows
But God hath sent before us, to return thee
Home to thy country and his sacred house,
Where thou mayst bring thy offerings, to avert
His further ire, with pray'r and vows renew'd?

Sams. His pardon I implore; but as for life,
To what end should I seek it? When in strength
All mortals I excel'd, and great in hopes
With youthful courage and magnanimous thoughts
Of birth from heaven foretold, and high exploits,
Full of divine instinct, after some proof
Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,
Fearless of danger, like a petty god
I walk'd about, admire'd of all, and dreaded
On hostile ground, none daring my affront.
Then swell'n with pride, into the snare I fell
Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,
Soften'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;
At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge
Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me
Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,
Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,
Shav'n, and disarm'd among my enemies.

Chor. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,
Which many a famous warrior overturns,
Thou couldst repress; nor did the dancing ruby
Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavour, or the smell,
Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men,
Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

Sams. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd
Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure
With touch ethereal of heav'n's fiery rod,
I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying
Thirst, and refresh'd: nor envied them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Chor. O madness, to think use of strongest wines,
And strongest drinks, our chief support of health,
When God with these forbidden made choice to rear
His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Sams. But what avail'd this temp'rance, not complete
Against another object more enticing?
What boots it at one gate to make defence,
And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquish'd? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But to sit idle on the household hearth,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd,
But must secret passage find
To th' inmost mind,
There exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints, and limbs
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense.
My griefs not only pain me,
As a lingering disease,
But, finding no redress, ferment and rage;
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
To black mortification.
Thoughts, my tormentors, arm'd with deadly stings,
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can asswage,
Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.
Sleep hath forsook and giv'n me o'er
To death's benumbing opium as my only cure:
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of Heav'n's desertion.
I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
His destin'd from the womb, Promis'd by heav'nly message twice descending.
Under his special eye Abstemious I grew up, and thriv'd amain;
He led me on to mightiest deeds,
Above the nerve of mortal arm,
Against th' unincircumcis'd, our enemies:
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,
Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
Left me all helpless, with th' irreparable loss
Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated
The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless:
This one prayer yet remains, might I be heard,
No' long petition, speedy death,
The close of all my miseries, and the balm.
Chor. Many are the sayings of the wise,
In ancient and in modern books enroll'd,
Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;
And to the bearing well of all calamities,
All chances incident to man's frail life,
Consolatories writ
With studied argument, and much persuasion sought.
Lenient of grief and anxious thought:
But with th' afflicted in his pangs their sound
Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint;
Unless he feel within
Some source of consolation from above,
Secret refreshings, that repair his strength,
And fainting spirits uphold.
God of our fathers, what is man!
That thou towards him with hand so various,
Or might I say contrarious,
Temper'st thy providence through his short course,
Not ev'nly, as thou rul'st
Th' angelic orders, and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.

Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That, wand'ring loose about,
Grows up and perish, as the summer-fly,
Heads without name, no more remember'd,
To some great work, thy glory,
And people's safety, which in part they effect:
Yet toward these thus dignified, thou oft
Amidst their height of noon,
Change'st thy count'nance, and thy hand, with no regard
Of highest favours past
From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismissal,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high,
Unseemly falls in human eye,
Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd;
Or to th' unjust tribunals, under change of times,
And condemnation of th' ingrateful multitude.
If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deform'd,
In crude old age;
Though not disordinate, yet causeless suff'ring
The punishment of dissolute days: in fine,
Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion,
The image of thy strength, and mighty minister.
What do I beg? how hast thou dealt already?
Behold him in this state calamitous, and turn
His labours, for thou canst, to peaceful end.

But who is this, what thing of sea or land?
Female of sex it seems,
That so bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing,
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for th' isles
Of Javan or Gadire,
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
Courted by all the winds, that hold them play,
An amber scent of odorous perfume
Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
Some rich Philistian matron she may seem;
And now at nearer view, no other certain
Than Dalila thy wife.

Sams. My wife! my traitress: let her not come near me.

Chor. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fix’d,
About t’ have spoke; but now, with head declin’d,
Like a fair flow’r surcharg’d with dew,
She weeps, and words address’d seem into tears dissolv’d,
Wetting the borders of her silken veil:

But now again she makes address to speak.

Enter Dalila.

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,
Which to have merited, without excuse,
I cannot but acknowledge; yet, if tears
May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
In the perverse event than I foresaw),
My penance hath not slacken’d, though my pardon
No way assur’d. But conjugal affection,
Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt,
Hath led me on, desirous to behold
Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
If aught in my ability may serve
To lighten what thou suffer’st, and appease
Thy mind with what amends is in my power,
Though late, yet in some part to recompense
My rash, but more unfortunate misdeed.

Sams. Out, out, hyaena! these are thy wonted arts,
And arts of every woman false like thee,
To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray,
Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
And reconcilement move with feign’d remorse,
Confess, and promise wonders in her change;
Not truly penitent, but chief to try
Her husband, how far urg’d his patience bears,
His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
Then with more cautious and instructed skill
Again transgresses, and again submits;
That wisest and best men, full oft beguil’d,
With goodness principled not to reject
The penitent, but ever to forgive,
Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
Entangled with a pois’rous bosom-snake,
If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
As I by thee, to ages an example.

Dal. Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
To lessen or extenuate my offence,
But that on th’ other side, if it be weigh’d
By itself, with aggradations not surcharg’d,
Or else with just allowance counterpois’d,
I may, if possible, thy pardon find
The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
In me, but incident to all our sex,
Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
Of secrets, then with like infirmity
To publish them, both common female faults:
Was it not weakness also to make known
For importunity, that is, for naught,
Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety?
To what I did thou show'dst me first the way.
But I to enemies reveal'd, and should not:
Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:
Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
Let weakness then with weakness come to parle,
So near related, or the same of kind,
Thine forgive mine; that men may censure thine
The gentler, if severely thou exact not
More strength from me than in thyself was found
And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate,
The jealousy of love, pow'rfal of sway
In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
Cau'sd what I did? I saw thee mutable
Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou wouldst leave me
As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore
How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
No better way I saw than by importuning
To learn thy secrets, get into my power
Thy key of strength and safety. Thou wilt say,
Why then reveal'd? I was assur'd by those
Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd
Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
That made for me; I knew that liberty
Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
While I at home sat full of cares and fears,
Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed;
Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,
Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines',
Whole to myself, unhaunted abroad,
Fearless at home of partners in my love.
These reasons in love's law have past for good
Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps:
And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
Be not unlike all others, not austere
As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
In uncompassionate anger do not so.

Samson. How cunningly the sorceress displays
Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine!
That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither,
By this appears: I gave, thou say'st, th' example,
I led the way; bitter reproach, but true;
1 to myself was false, ere thou to me;
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou sees
Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
Confess it feign'd. Weakness is thy excuse,
And I believe it; weakness to resist
Philistian gold: if weakness may excuse,
What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
All wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore
With God or man will gain thee no remission.
But love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage
To satisfy thy lust: love seeks to have love;
My love how couldst thou hope, who took'st the way
To raise in me inexpiable hate,
Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd?
In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

Dal. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,
What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
Which might have aw'd the best-resolv'd of men,
The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
That wrought with me: thou know'st the magistrates
And princes of my country came in person,
Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urg'd,
Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil duty
And of religion, press'd how just it was,
How honourable, how glorious, to entrap
A common enemy, who had destroy'd
Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
Preaching how meritorious with the gods
It would be to ensnare an irreligious
Dishonourer of Dagon: what had I
To oppose against such pow'rful arguments?
Only my love of thee held long debate,
And combated in silence all these reasons
With hard contést: at length that grounded maxim
So rife and celebrated in the mouths
Of wisest men, that to the public good
Private respects must yield, with grave authority,
Took full possession of me, and prevail'd;
Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining.

Sams. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end;
In feign'd religion, smooth hypocrisy!
But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
I, before all the daughters of my tribe
And of my nation, chose thee from among
My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou know'st;
Too well; unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
Not out of levity, but over-power'd
By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then
SAMSON AGONISTES.

Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
Then, as since then, thy country's foe profess'd?

Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave
Parents and country; nor was I their subject,
Nor under their protection, but my own,
Thou mine, not theirs: if aught against my life
Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
Against the law of nature, law of nations;
No more thy country, but an impious crew
Of men conspiring to uphold their state
By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
For which our country is a name so dear;
Not therefore to be obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee;
To please thy gods thou didst it; gods, unable
To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
Of their own deity; gods cannot be:
Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd,
These false pretexts, and varnish'd colours, failing,
Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear?

Dal. In argument with men a woman ever
Goes by the worse whatever be her cause.

Sams. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath;
Witness when I was worried with thy peals.

Dal. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
In what I thought would have succeeded best.
Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson;
Afford me place to show what recompense
Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
Misguided; only what remains past care
Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
To afflict thyself in vain: though sight be lost,
Life yet hath many solaces, enjoy'd
Where other senses want not their delights
At home in leisure and domestic ease,
Exempt from many a care and chance, to which
Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
I to the lords will intercede, not doubting
Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
From forth this loathsome prison-house to abide
With me, where my redoubled love and care
With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
May ever tend about thee to old age,
With all things grateful cheer'd, and so supplied,
That, what by me thou hast lost, thou least shalt miss.

Sams. No, no; of my condition take no care;
If it fits not; thou and I long since are twain:
Nor think me so unwary or accurs'd,
To bring my feet again into the snare
Where once I have been caught: I know thy trains,
Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
 Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,
No more on me have pow'r; their force is null'd;
So much of adder's wisdom I have learn'd,
To fence my ear against thy sorceries.
If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone couldst hate me
Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me; 940
How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
Deceivable, in most things as a child
Helpless, thence easily conten'm'd, and scorn'd,
And last neglected? how wouldst thou insult,
When I must live uxorious to thy will
In perfect thraldom? how again betray me,
Hearing my words and doings to the lords
To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile?
This jail I count the house of liberty
To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.
950
Dal. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.
Sams. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
At distance I forgive thee; go with that;
Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works
It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
Among illustrious women, faithful wives!
Cherish thy hasten'd widowhood with the gold
Of matrimonial treason! so farewell.
955
Dai. I see thou art implacable, more deaf
To pray'r's than winds and seas; yet winds to seas
Are reconcil'd at length, and sea to shore:
Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,
Eternal tempest, never to be calm'd.
Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing
For peace, read nothing but repulse and hate;
Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
Of infamy upon my name denounce'd?
To mix with thy concernment I desist
Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.
Fame, if no double-fac'd, is double-mouth'd,
And with contrary blast proclaims most deeps;
On both his wings, one black, the other white,
Bears greatest names in his wild aery flight.
My name perhaps among the circumcis'd
In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
To all posterity may stand defam'd,
With malediction mention'd and the blot,
Of falsehood most unconjugal traduc'd,
But in my country, where I most desire,
965
In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
I shall be nam'd among the famousest
Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
Living and dead recorded, who, to save
Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
Above the faith of wedlock-bands; my tomb
With odours visited and annual flowers;
Rot less renown'd than in mount Ephraim
Jael, who with inhospitable guile
Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nail'd.
980
Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
The public marks of honour and reward,
Conferr’d upon me, for the piety
Which to my country I was judg’d to have shown.
At this whoever envies or repines;
I leave him to his lot, and like my own. [Exit.

Chor. She’s gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
Discover’d in the end, till now conceal’d.

Sams. So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed
To such a viper his most sacred trust
Of secrery, my safety, and my life.

Chor. Yet beauty, though injurious, hath strange power,
After offence returning, to regain
Love once possess’d, nor can be easily
Repuls’d without much inward passion felt,
And secret sting of amorous remorse.

Sams. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock-treachery endang’ring life.

Chor. It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit,
Strength, comeliness of shape, or ampest merit
That woman’s love can win, or long inherit;
But what it is, hard is to say,
Harder to hit
(Which way soever men refer it),
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or sev’n, though one should musing sit.
If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferr’d
Thy paramymph, worthless to thee compar’d,
Successor in thy bed,
Nor both so loosely disallied
Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.

Is it for that such outward ornament
Was lavish’d on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish’d, judgment scant,
Capacity not rais’d to apprehend
Or value what is best
In choice, but oft to affect the wrong?
Or was too much of self-love mix’d,
Of constancy no root infix’d,
That either they love nothing, or not long?

Whate’er it be, to wisest men and best
Seeming at first all heav’nly under virgin veil,
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once join’d, the contrary she proves, a thorn
Intestine, far within defensive arms
A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent; or by her charms
Draws him awry enslav’d
With dotage, and his sense deprav’d
To folly and shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck
Imbark’d with such a steers-mate at the helm?

Favour’d of Heav’n, who finds
One virtuous, rarely found,
That in domestic good combines:
Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
But virtue, which breaks through all opposition,
And all temptation can remove,
Most shines, and most is acceptable above.
   Therefore God's universal law
Gave to the man despotic power
Over his female in due awe,
Nor from that right to part an hour,
Smile she or sour:
So shall he least confusion draw
On his whole life, not sway'd
By female usurpation, or dismay'd.
   But had we best retire? I see a storm.
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less abstruse; my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
The bait of honey'd words; a rougher tongue
Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride,
The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.
Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither
I less conjecture, than when first I saw
The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:
   His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.
Sams. Or peace, or not, alike to me he comes.
Chor. His fraught we soon shall know, he now arrives.

Enter Harapha.

Har. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;
Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd
As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old
That Kiriathaim held; thou know'st me now
If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd,
Incredible to me, in this displeas'd
That I was never present on the place
Of those encounters, where we might have tried
Each other's force in camp or listed field;
And now am come to see of whom such noise
Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
If thy appearance answer loud report.

Sams. The way to know were not to see but taste.
Har. Dost thou already single me? I thought
Gyves and the mill had tam'd thee. O that fortune
Had brought me to the field, where thou art fam'd
To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw!
I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,
Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown:
So had the glory of prowess been recover'd
To Palestine, won by a Philistine,
From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st
The highest name for valiant acts; that honour,
Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.
Sams. Boast not of what thou wouldst have done, but do
What then thou wouldst; thou seest it in thy hand.
Har. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.
Sams. Such usage as your honourable lords
Afford me, assassinated and betray'd,
Who durst not with their whole united powers
In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
Nor in the house with chamber-ambushes
Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold,
Breaking her marriage-faith, to circumvent me.
Therefore, without feign'd shifts, let be assign'd
Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give thee,
Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon,
Vant-brace and greaves, and gauntlet, add thy spear,
A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield;
I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,
And raise such outrices on thy clatter'd iron,
Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
That in a little time, while breath remains thee,
Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath to boast
Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms,
Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,
Their ornament and safety, had not spells
And black enchantments, some magician's art,
Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from heaven
Feign'dst at thy birth was giv'n thee in thy hair,
Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
Were bristles rang'd like thistles that ridge the back
Of chief'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.

Sams. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;
My trust is in the living God, who gave me
At my nativity this strength, diffus'd
No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,
Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,
The pledge of my unviolated vow.
For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,
Go to his temple, invoke his aid
With solemnest devotion, spread before him
How highly it concerns his glory now
To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,
Which I to be the power of Israel's God
Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
Offering to combat thee his champion hold,
With th' utmost of his godhead seconded:
Then thou shalt see, or rather, to thy sorrow,
Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine. 1155

Har. Presume not on thy God, whate'er he be
Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
Quite from his people, and deliver'd up
Into thy enemies' hand, permitted them
To put out both thine eyes, and, fetter'd, send thee 1160
Into the common prison, there to grind
Among the slaves and asses thy comrades,
As good for nothing else; no better service
With those thy boast'drous locks, no worthy match
For valour to assail, nor by the sword 1165
Of noble warrior, so to stain his honour,
But by the barber's razor best subdued.

Sams. All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve, and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant:
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight, 1175
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thou dost thy God, in trusting
He will accept thee to defend his cause,
A murderer, a revoler, and a robber! 1180

Sams. Tongue-doughty giant, how dost thou prove
me these?

Har. Is not thy nation subject to our lords?
Their magistrates confess'd it when they took thee
As a league-breaker, and deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed
Notorious murder on those thirty men
At Ascalon, who never did thee harm,
Then like a robber stripp'd them of their robes?
The Philistines, when thou hadst broke the league,
Went up with armed powers thee only seeking,
To others did no violence nor spoil.

Sams. Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argued me no foe;
And in your city held my nuptial feast:
But your ill-meaning politician lords,
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who, threat'ning cruel death, constrain'd the bride
To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,
That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd. 1200
When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,
As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd,
I us'd hostility, and took their spoil,
To pay my underminers in their coin.
My nation was subjected to your lords; 1205
It was the force of conquest; force with force
Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.
But I a private person, whom my country
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd
Single rebellion, and did hostile acts.
I was no private, but a person rais'd
With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven,
To free my country; if their servile minds
Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,
But to their masters gave me up for naught,
Th' unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.
I was to do my part from Heav'n assign'd,
And had perform'd it, if my known offence
Had not disabled me, not all your force:
These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant,
Though by his blindness main'd for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce,
Har. With thee! a man condemn'd, a slave enroll'd,
Due by the law to capital punishment!
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.
Sams. Can'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer; part not hence so slight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee.
Har. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unus'd
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?
Sams. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free.
Har. This insolence other kind of answer fits.
Sams. Go, baffled coward! lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down,
To th' hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.
Har. By Astaroth, ere long thou shalt lament
These braves, in irons loaden on thee.
[Exit.
Chor. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fall'n,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe,
Sams. I dread him not, nor all his giant-brood,
Though fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantic size, Goliath chief.
Chor. He will directly to the lords, I fear,
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.
Sams. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept th' offer or not;
And, that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping
With no small profit daily to my owners.
But come what will, my deadliest foe will prove
My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence;
The worst that he can give, to me the best.
Yet so it may fall out, because their end
Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

Chor. Oh how comely it is, and how reviving
To the spirits of just men long oppress'd!

When God into the hands of their deliverer
Puts invincible might
To quell the mighty of the earth, th' oppressor,
The brute and boist'rous force of violent men,
Hardy and industrious to support
Tyrannic pow'r, but raging to pursue
The righteous and all such as honour truth;
He all their ammunition
And feats of war defeats,
With plain heroic magnitude of mind
And celestial vigour arm'd;
Their armouries and magazines contemns,
Readers them useless; while
With winged expedition,
Swift as the lightning glance, he executes
His errand on the wicked, who, surpris'd,
Lose their defence, distracted and amaz'd.

But patience is more oft the exercise
Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
Making them each his own deliverer,
And victor over all
That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
Either of these is in thy lot,
Samson, with might endued
Above the sons of men; but sight bereav'd
May chance to number thee with those
Whom patience finally must crown.

This idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
Labouring thy mind
More than the working day thy hands,
And yet perhaps more trouble is behind,
For I descry this way
Some other tending; in his hand
A scepter or quaint staff he bears,
Comes on amain, speed in his look.
By his habit I discern him now
A public officer, and now at hand;
His message will be short and voluble.

Enter Officer.

Off. Hebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.
Chor. His manacles remark him, there he sits.
Off. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say: 1310
This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,
With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games:
Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
And now some public proof thereof require
To honour this great feast, and great assembly;
Rise therefore with all speed, and come along,
Where I will see thee hearten'd and fresh clad, 
To appear as fits before th' illustrious lords.

\textit{Sams.} Thou know'st I am an Hebrew, therefore tell them, Our law forbids at their religious rites 1320
My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

\textit{Off.} This answer, be assur'd, will not content them.

\textit{Sams.} Have they not sword-players, and every sort Of gymnic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners, Jugglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics, 1325
But they must pick me out, with shackles tir'd, And over-labour'd at their public mill,
To make them sport with blind activity?
Do they not seek occasion for new quarrels
On my refusal to distress me more, 1330
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou earnest, I will not come.

\textit{Off.} Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.

\textit{Sams.} Myself? my conscience, and internal peace.
Can they think me so broken, so debas'd 1335
With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
Will condescend to such absurd commands?
Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester, And in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief
To show them feats, and play before their God, 1340
The worst of all indignities, yet on me
Join'd with extreme contempt? I will not come.

\textit{Off.} My message was impos'd on me with speed, Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?

\textit{Sams.} So take it with what speed thy message needs. 1345
\textit{Off.} I am sorry what this stoutness will produce. \textit{[Exit.}

\textit{Sams.} Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

\textit{Chor.} Consider, Samson; matters now are strain'd
Up to the highth, whether to hold or break:
He's gone, and who knows how he may report 1350
Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?
Expect another message more imperious, More lordly thund'ring than thou well wilt bear.

\textit{Sams.} Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair 1355
After my great transgression, so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols?
A Nazarite in place abominable
Vanish my strength in honour to their Dagon! 1360
Besides, bow vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
What act more execrably unclean, profane!

\textit{Chor.} Yet with this strength thou serv'st the Philistines,
Idolatrous, uncircumcised, unclean.

\textit{Sams.} Not in their idol-worship, but by labour 1365
Honest and lawful to deserve my food
Of those who have me in their civil power.

\textit{Chor.} Where the heart joins not, outwards acts defile not.

\textit{Sams.} Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds;
But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon, 1370
Not dragging? The Philistian lords command.

\textit{M 2}
Commands are no constraints. If I obey them, 
I do it freely, vent'ring to displease 
God for the fear of man, and man prefer, 
Set God behind: which in his jealousy 
Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness. 
Yet that he may dispense with me, or thee, 
Present in temples at idolatrous rites 
For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt. 
Chor. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my 
reach. 

Sams. Be of good courage; I begin to feel 
Some rousing motions in me, which dispose 
To something extraordinary my thoughts. 
I with this messenger will go along, 
Nothing to do, be sure, that may dishonour 
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite. 
If there be aught of presage in the mind, 
This day will be remarkable in my life 
By some great act, or of my days the last. 
Chor. In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns. 

Off. Sams. This second message from our lords 
To thee I am bid say. Art thou our slave, 
Our captive, at the public mill our drudge, 
And dar'st thou at our sending and command 
Dispute thy coming? come without delay; 
Or we shall find such engines to assail 
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force, 
Though thou wilt firmer last'd than a rock. 

Sams. I could be well content to try their art, 
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious. 
Yet, knowing their advantages too many, 
Because they shall not trail me through their streets 
Like a wild beast, I am content to go. 
Masters' commands come with a pow'r resistless 
To such as owe them absolute subjection; 
And for a life who will not change his purpose? 
(If mutable are all the ways of men), 
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply 
Scandalous or forbidden in our law. 

Off. I praise thy resolution: doff these links: 
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords 
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free. 

Sams. Brethren, farewell; your company along 
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them 
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight 
Of me, as of a common enemy, 
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them, 
I know not: lords are lordliest in their wine; 
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fir'd 
With zeal, if aught religion seem concern'd; 
No less the people, on their holy-days, 
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable: 
Happen what may, of me expect to hear 
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy 
Our God, our law, my nation, or myself,
The last of me or no, I cannot warrant. [Exit.

Chor. Go, and the Holy One
Of Israel be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
Great among the Heathen round;
Send thee the angel of thy birth, to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
Rode up in flames after his message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire; that spirit, that first rush'd on thee
In the camp of Dan,
Be efficacious in thee now at need,
For never was from heav'n imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen.
But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste
With youthful steps? much livelier than erewhile
He seems; supposing here to find his son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news.
Enter Manoah.

Man. Peace with you, brethren; my inducement
hither
Was not at present here to find my son,
By order of the lords now parted hence
To come and play before them at their feast.
I heard all as I came, the city rings,
And numbers thither flock: I had no will,
Lest I should see him fore'd to things unseemly.
But that, which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.

Chor. That hope would much rejoice us to partake
With thee; say, reverend sire, we thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the lords
Either at home, or through the high-street passing,
With supplication prone and father's tears,
T' accept of ransom for my son their pris'ner.

Some much averse I found, and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most reverenc'd Dagon and his priests:
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both god and state
They easily would set to sale: a third
More generous far and civil, who confess'd
They had enough reveng'd; having reduc'd
Their foe to misery beneath their fears,
The rest was magnanimity to remit,
If some convenient ransom were propos'd.

What noise or shout was that? it tore the sky.

Chor. Doubtless the people shouting to behold
Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,
Or at some proof of strength before them shown. 1475

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And number'd down: much rather I shall choose
To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
And he in that calamitous prison left.  
No, I am fix'd not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forego
And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Chor. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons,
Thou for thy son art bent to lay out all;
Sons wont to nurse their parents in old age,
Thou in old age car'st how to nurse thy son,
Made older than thy age through eye-sight lost.

Man. It shall be my delight to tend his eyes,
And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,
And on his shoulders waving down those locks
That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd;
And I persuade me, God hath not permitted
Her strength again to grow up with his hair,
Garrison'd round about him like a camp
Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
To use him further yet in some great service;
Not to sit idle with so great a gift
Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.
And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,
God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

Chor. Thy hopes are not ill-founded, nor seem vain,
Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon
Conceiv'd, agreeable to a father's love,
In both which we, as next, participate.

Man. I know your friendly minds and,—O what noise!—
Mercy of Heav'n, what hideous noise was that!
Horribly loud, unlike the former shout.

Chor. Noise call you it, or universal groan,
As if the whole inhabitation perish'd!
Blood, death, and deathful deeds, are in that noise,
Ruin, destruction of the utmost point.

Man. Of ruin, indeed, methought I heard the noise: 1515
Oh! it continues, they have slain my son.

Chor. Thy son is rather slaying them: that outcry
From slaughter of one foe could not ascend.

Man. Some dismal accident it needs must be;
What shall we do, stay here or run and see? 1520

Chor. Best keep together here, lest, running thither,
We unawares run into danger's mouth.
This evil on the Philistines is fall'n;
From whom could else a general cry be heard?
The sufferers then will scarce molest us here;
From other hands we need not much to fear.
What if, his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,
He now be dealing dole among his foes,
And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way? 1530

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
For his people of old; what hinders now?
Man. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will; 1535
Yet hope would fail subscribe, and tempts belief. A little stay will bring some notice hither. 1540

Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
For evil news rides post, while good news bates.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe. Enter Messenger.

Mess. O whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld, and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me. 1545
But Providence or instinct of nature seems,
Or reason though disturb'd, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horror,
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

Man. The accident was loud, and here before thee
With rueful cry, yet what it was we hear not;
No preface needs, thou seest we long to know.

Mess. It would burst forth, but I recover breath
And sense distract, to know well what I utter. 1555
Man. Tell us the sum, the circumstance defer.
Mess. Gaza yet stands, but all her sons are fall'n,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.

Man. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest, 1560
The desolation of a hostile city.
Mess. Feed on that first; there may in grief be surfeit.

Man. That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
Mess. Ah! Manoah, I refrain too suddenly
To utter what will come at last too soon;
Lest evil tidings with too rude irritation
Hitting thy aged ear should pierce too deep.

Man. Suspense in news is torture, speak them out.
Mess. Take then the worst in brief: Samson is dead. 1570
Man. The worst indeed! O all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceive'd
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins of grief, say first,
How died he; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell, thou say' st; by whom fell he? 1580
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?
Mess. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.
Man. Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.
Mess. By his own hands.
Man. Self-violence? what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself 1585
Among his foes?

Mess. Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy, and be destroy'd;
The edifice where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.

Man. O lastly over-strong against thyself!
A dreadful way thou took'st to thy revenge.
More than enough we know; but while things yet
Are in confusion, give us, if thou canst,
Eye-witness of what first or last was done,
Relation more particular and distinct.

Mess. Occasions drew me early to this city;
And, as the gates I enter'd with sun-rise,
The morning trumpets festival proclaim'd
Through each high street: little I had dispatch'd
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious theatre
Half-round, on two main pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the lords, and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand;
I among these aloof obscurely stood.
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought,
In their state livery clad; before him pipes,
And timbrels, on each side went armed guards,
Both horse and foot, before him and behind
Archers and slingers, cataphracts and spears.
At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamouring their god with praise,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He, patient, but undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place; and what was set before him,
Which without help of eye might he assay'd,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
All with incredible, stupendous force;
None daring to appear antagonist.
At length for intermission's sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As over't to let him lean a while
With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
That to the arched roof gave main support.
He, unsuspicious, led him; which when Samson
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd
And eyes fast fix'd he stood, as one who pray'd,
Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd:
At last with head erect thus cried aloud.

'Hitherto, lords, what your commands impos'd
I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
Not without wonder or delight beheld:
Now of my own accord such other trial
I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,
As with amaze shall strike all who behold.'

This utter'd, straining all his nerves, he bow'd,
As, with the force of winds and waters pent,
When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
With horrible convulsion to and fro
He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came,
And down the whole roof after them, with burst of thunder
Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
Their choice nobility and flow'r, not only
Of this, but each Philistian city round,
Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
Samson, with these immix'd, inevitably
Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
The vulgar only scap'd, who stood without.

Chor. O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious!
Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
The work for which thou wast foretold
To Israel, and now liest victorious
Among thy slain self-kill'd,
Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
Thee with thy slaughter'd foes, in number more
Than all thy life hath slain before.

1 Semichor. While their hearts were jocund and sublime,
Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine,
And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,
Canting their idol, and preferring
Before our living Dread who dwells
In Silo, his bright sanctuary;
Among them he a spirit of phrenzy sent,
Who hurt their minds,
And urg'd them on with mad desire
To call in haste for their destroyer;
They, only set on sport and play,
Unwittingly importun'd
Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
So fond are mortal men,
Fall'n into wrath divine,
As their own ruin on themselves t' invite,
Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
And with blindness internal struck.

2 Semichor. But he, though blind of sight,
Despis'd, and thought extinguish'd quite,
With inward eyes illuminated,
His fiery virtue rous'd
From under ashes into sudden flame,
And as an evening draggon came,
Assailant on the perched roosts  
And nests in order rang'd  
Of tame villatic fowl; but as an eagle  
His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads,  
So virtue, giv'n for lost,  
Depress'd, and overthrown, as seem'd,  
Like that self-begotten bird  
In the Arabian woods embost,  
That no second knows, nor third,  
And lay erewhile a holocaust,  
From out her ashy womb now teem'd,  
Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most  
When most unactive deem'd;  
And though her body die, her fame survives,  
A secular bird ages of lives.  

Man. Come, come; no time for lamentation now,  
Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself  
Like Samson, and heroically hath finish'd  
A life heroic, on his enemies  
Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,  
And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor  
Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel  
Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them  
Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;  
To himself and father's house eternal fame;  
And, which is best and happiest yet, all this  
With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,  
But favouring and assisting to the end.  
Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail  
Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,  
Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,  
And what may quiet us in a death so noble.  
Let us go find the body where it lies  
Soak'd in his enemies' blood; and from the stream  
With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off  
The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while (Gaza is not in plight to say us nay)  
Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,  
To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend  
With silent obsequy, and funeral train,  
Home to his father's house; there will I build him  
A monument, and plant it round with shade  
Of laurel ever green, and branching palm,  
With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd  
In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.  
Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,  
And from his memory inflame their breasts  
To matchless valour, and adventures high:  
The virgins also shall, on feastful days,  
Visit his tomb with flow'r's; only bewailing  
His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,  
From whence captivity and loss of eyes.  

Chor. All is best, though we oft doubt,  
What the unsearchable dispose  
Of highest Wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,
But unexpectedly returns,
And to his faithful champion hath in place
Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns,
And all that band them to resist
His uncontrollable intent;
His servants he, with new acquist
Of true experience, from this great event,
With peace and consolation hath dismiss,
And calm of mind, all passion spent.
LYCIDAS.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
And, with forc'd fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme
He must not float upon his watry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the spring.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:
So may some gentle muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn;
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose at evening bright,
Toward heav'n's descent had slop'd his west'ring wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th' oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damoetas lov'd to hear our song.

But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn:
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays,
As killing as the canker to the rose,
Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
Or frost to flow'rs, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherds' ear.

Where were ye, nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old Bards, the famous Lycidas, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream:

Ay me! I fondly dream,
Had ye been there: for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His goy visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?
Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with th' abhorred shears,
And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise,
Phoebus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil
Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heav'n expect thy meed."
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth-sliding Minucius, crown'd with vocal reeds!
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?
And question'd every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory:
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
' That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine howr inscrib'd with woe.

'Ah! who hath left,' quoth he, 'my dearest pledge?'
Last came, and last did go.'
The pilot of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain),
He shook his emitter's locks, and stern bespoke:
'How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,

Who, in so high a place, as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reck'ning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy hidden guest;
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdsman's art belongs!

What reck it them? What need they? they are sped,
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scarnel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,

But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing seel:
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.'

Return, Alphens, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flow'rets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the saunt star sparely looks;
Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the hontied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-tce, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansi freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attend woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureat horse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts daily with false surmise;
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old,
Where the great vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watry floor;
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves;
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozzy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and, singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes,
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay:
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn,
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
Find out some uncouth cell,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
And the night-raven sings;
   There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
   In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
   But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In heav'n yclep'd Euphrosyne,
   And by men, heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
   With two sister Graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
   Or whether (as some sager sing)
The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
   As he met her once a-Maying;
There on beds of violets blue,
   And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
   So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
   Jest, and youthful jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
   Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
   And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
   And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it, as you go,
   On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
   The mountain nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honour due,
   Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
   In unreproved pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
   And singing startle the dull night,
From his watch-tow'r in the skies,
   Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
   At my window bid good morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
   Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock, with lively din,
   Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
   Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
   Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
   Through the high wood echoing shrill.
   Some time walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
   Right against the eastern gate
Where the great sun begins his state,
   Rob'd in flames, and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveryes dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale,
Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The lab'ring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim with daisies pide,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:

The Cynosure of neighb'ring eyes.

Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thrisis met,
Are at their savoury dinner set
Of herbs, and other country messes;
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bow'r she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tann'd haycock in the mead.

Sometimes with secure delight
The upland hamlets will invite,
When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecks sound
To many a youth and many a maid,
Dancing in the checker'd shade;
And young and old come forth to play
On a sun-shine holy-day,
Till the live-long day-light fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How faery Mab the junkets eat;
She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she sed;
And he, by friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin swet
To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-lab'ringers could not end;
Then lies him down the lubbar fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.

Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lul'd asleep.
Tower'd cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend,
There let Hymen oft appear
In saffron robe, with taper clear,
And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream
On summer eves by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse;
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out,
With wanton heed and giddy cunning;
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head
From golden slumber on a bed
Of heap'd Elysian ilow'rs, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half regain'd Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

Hence, vain deluding joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay notes that people the sun-beams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail, thou goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
Overlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might becomen,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea-Nymphs, and their pow'rs offended:
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee, bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;
His daughter she; in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain:
Oft in glimmering bow'rs and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, steadfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of cypress lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait;
And looks commencing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing:
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure,
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The Cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hist along,
Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
While Cynthia, checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er th' accustom'd oak:
Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wand'ring moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heav'n's wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar:
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the belman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tow'r,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind that hath forcok
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
And of those demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose dower hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
But, O sad virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musaeus from his bower!
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made hell grant what love did seek!
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited morn appear,
Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves.
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Where the rude ax, with heaved stroke,
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with hontied thigh,
That at her flow'ry work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
Softly on my eye-iids laid.
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
Or th' unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloyster's pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voic'd quire below,
In service high and anthems clear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all heav'n before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heav'n doth shew;
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.
Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by some noble persons of her family; who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state with this song.

I. SONG.

LOOK, nymphs, and shepherds, look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook:
This, this is she
To whom our vows and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.

Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse
Of detraction from her praise;
Less than half we find express,
Envy bid conceal the rest.

Mark, what radiant state she spreads,
In circle round her shining throne,
Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,
Sitting like a goddess bright,
In the center of her light.

Might she the wise Latona be,
Or the tow'rd Cybele.
Mother of a hundred gods?
Juno dares not give her odds:
Who had thought this clime had held
A deity so unparallel'd?

As they come forward, the Genius of the wood appears,
and turning towards them, speaks:

Genius.

Stay, gentle swains; for, though in this disguise,
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alphens, who by secret sluice
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver-buskin'd nymphs, as great and good;
I know, this quest of yours, and free intent,
Was all in honour and devotion meant
To the great mistress of you princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine;
And, with all helpful service, will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity;
And lead ye, where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;
Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:
For know, by lot from Jove I am the power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton Avindings wove.
And all my plants I save from nightly ill
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill:
And from the boughs brush off the evil dew,
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground;
And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumb'ring leaves, or tassell'd horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless.
But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial Syrens' harmony,
That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
And turn the adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of gods and men is wound,
Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
To huff the daughters of necessity,
And keep unsteady nature to her law,
And the low world in measur'd motion draw
After the heav'nly tune, which none can hear
Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear;
And yet such music worthiest were to blaze
The peerless highth of her immortal praise,
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
If my inferior hand or voice could hit
Inimitable sounds: yet, as we go,
Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
I will assay, her worth to celebrate,
And so attend ye toward her glittering state;
Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'er the smooth enamell'd green
Where no print of step hath been,
Follow me, as I sing
And touch the warbled string,
Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof.
Follow me;  
I will bring you where she sits,  
Clad in splendor as befits  
Her deity.  
Such a rural queen  
All Arcadia hath not seen.  

III. SONG.  
Nymphs and shepherds, dance no more  
By sandy Ladon's lilled banks;  
On old Lycaeus, or Cyllene hoar,  
Trip no more in twilight ranks;  
Though Erymanth your loss deplore,  
A better soil shall give ye thanks.  
From the stony Maenalus  
Bring your flocks, and live with us;  
Here ye shall have greater grace,  
To serve the lady of this place.  
Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,  
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.  
Such a rural queen  
All Arcadia hath not seen.

COMUS,  
A MASK,  
PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634,  
BEFORE  
JOHN, EARL OF BRIDGEOFATER,  
Then President of Wales.  

THE PERSONS.  
The Attendant Spirit, afterwards in the habit of Thyrsis.  
Comus, with his crew.  
The Lady.  
First Brother.  
Second Brother.  
Sabrina, the Nymph.

The chief persons, who presented, were  
The Lord Brackley.  
Mr. Thomas Egerton, his brother.  
The Lady Alice Egerton.

The first Scene discovers a wild wood.  
The Attendant Spirit descends or enters.  
BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court  
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aereal spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth; and, with low-thoughted care
Confin'd and pester'd in this pindfold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants,
Amongst the enthron'd gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,
That opens the palace of eternity:
To such my errand is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,
That, like to rich and various gme, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep:
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents; but this isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring, nurs'd in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-entrusted scepter: but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drea wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wand'ring passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovran Jove
I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard:
And listen why; for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell (who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun? whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a groveling swine):
This nymph, that gaz'd upon his clust'ring locks
With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,
Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd:
Who, ripe and frolic of his full grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood;
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbow'r'd,
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
To quench the drought of Phoebus; which as they taste
(For most do taste through fond intemp'rate thirst),
Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance
Th' express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were;
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before;
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual stye.
Therefore when any, favour'd of high Jove,
Chances to pass through this advent'rous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heav'n, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do: but first I must put off
These my sky-robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch
Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

Comus enters with a charming rod in one hand, his glass
in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like
sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and
women, their apparel glistering; they come in making
a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.

Comus,
The star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heav'n doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the east.
Meanwhile, welcome Joy, and Feast,
Midnight Shout, and Revelry,
Tipsy Dance, and Jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,  
Dropping odours, dropping wine.  
Rigour now is gone to bed,  
And Advice with scrupulous head,  
Strict Age and sour Severity,  
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.  

We, that are of purer fire,  
Imitate the starry quire,  
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,  
Lead in swift round the months and years.  
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,  
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;  
And, on the tawny sands and shelves,  
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.

By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,  
The wood-nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim,  
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep;  
What hath night to do with sleep?  
Night hath better sweets to prove,  
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.

Come, let us our rites begin;  
'Tis only day-light that makes sin,  
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.  
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,  
Dark-veil'd Cotytto! t' whom the secret flame  
Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame,  
Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,  
And makes one blot of all the air;  
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,  
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend  
Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end  
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;  
Ere the blabbing eastern scout,  
The nice morn, on th' Indian steep  
From her cabin'd loop-hole peep,  
And to the tell-tale sun descry  
Our conceal'd solemnity.

Come, knit hands, and beat the ground  
In a light fantastic round.

The Measure.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace  
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.  
Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees;  
Our number may affright: some virgin sure  
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)  
Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,  
And to my wily trains; I shall ere long  
Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd  
About my mother Circe. This I hurl  
My dazzling spells into the spungy air.  
Of pow'r to cheat the eye with blear illusion,  
And give it false presentments, lest the place  
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsels to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that's against my course:
I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
And well- plac'd words of glozing courtesy
Baited with reasons not unpleasable,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thurst keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes; I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The Lady enters.

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now: methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
When for their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence,
Of such late wassailers; yet O! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
With this long way, resolving here to lodge
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stept, as they said, to the next thicket-side,
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phoebus' wain.
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
They had engag'd their wand'ring steps too far;
And envious darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me: else, O thievish night,
Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
That nature hung in heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my list'ning ear;
Yet naught but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,
And aery tongues that syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, Conscience.
O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
Thou hovering Angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe
That he, the Supreme Good, t' whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glist'ring guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err, there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove:
I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd spirits
Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen
Within thy aery shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Cans thou not tell me of a gentle pair
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flow'ry cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all heav'n's harmonies.

Enter Comus.

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven-down
Of darkness, till it smil'd! I have oft heard
My mother Circe with the Syrens three,
Amidst the flow'ry-kirtled Naiades,
Gulling their potent herbs and baleful drugs;
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lul'd the sense,
And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I 'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder! 265
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'est here with Pan, or Sylvan, by blest song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosp'rous growth of this tall wood. 270
Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is address'd to unattending ears;
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo 275
To give me answer from her mossy couch.
Comus. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?
Lady. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.
Comus. Could that divide you from near- ushering guides?
Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf. 280
Comus. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?
Lady. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly spring.
Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady? 285
Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.
Comus. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them. 285
Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
Lady. No less than if I should my Brothers lose.
Comus. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips. 290
Comus. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill, 295
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human as they stood:
I took it for a faery vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live, 300
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,
And, as I past, I worshipt; if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heaven,
To help you find them.
Lady. Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place? 305
Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.
Lady. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet. 310
Comus. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendants be yet lodg'd,
COMUS.

Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatch’d pallet rouse; if otherwise,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low,
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
And trust thy honest offer’d courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tap’stry halls
In courts of princes, where it first was nam’d,
And yet is most pretended: in a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.

Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion’d strength. Shepherd, lead on.

[Exeunt.

Enter the Two Brothers.

El. Br. Unmuffle, yet faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
That wont’st to love the traveller’s benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite damm’d up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long-levell’d rule of streaming light;
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. Br. Or, if our eyes
Be barr’d that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penn’d in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of past’ral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
’Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But, O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister!
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or ’gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillow’d head, fraught with sad fears.
What if in wild amazement and affright?
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

El. Br. Peace, Brother; be not over-exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils:
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or, if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!
I do not think my Sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude;
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.
He that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i' th' center, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

"Tis most true,
That musing meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence?
But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon-watch, with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms and defend her fruit
From the rash hand of bold incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
Of misers' treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wing on opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste,
Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that do them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch the person
Of our unowned Sister.

"I do not, Brother,
Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
Secure, without all doubt or controversy;
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate th' event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My Sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.

What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heav'n, if you mean that?
El. Br. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heav’n gave it, may be term’d her own:
’Tis chastity, my Brother, chastity:
She, that has that, is clad in complete steel;
And, like a quiver’d nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharbour’d heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity:
Yea there, where very desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagg’d with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblench’d majesty,
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say, no evil thing that walks by night
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meager hag, or stubborn unlaied ghost
That breaks his magic chains at Curfeu time,
No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,
Hath hurtful pow’r o’er true virginity,
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tam’d the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain-pard, but set at naught
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
Fear’d her stern frown, and she was queen o’ th’ woods,
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer’d virgin,
Wherewith she freez’d her foes to congeal’d stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace, that dash’d brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heav’n is saintly Chastity,
That when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
And, in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heav’nly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on th’ outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul’s essence,
Till all be made immortal: but when lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Ling’ring, and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it lov'd,  
And link'd itself by carnal sensuality  
To a degenerate and degraded state.  
     Sec. Br. How charming is divine philosophy!  
Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,  
But musical as in Apollo's lute,  
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,  
Where no crude surfeit reigns.  
     El. Br. List, list; I hear

Some far off halloo break the silent air.  
     Sec. Br. Methought so too; what should it be?  
     El. Br. For certain,
Either some one like us night-founder'd here,  
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber, calling to his fellows.  
     Sec. Br. Heav'n keep my Sister. Again, again, and near!  
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.  
     El. Br. I'll halloo:  
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,  
Defence is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

Enter the Attendant Spirit, habited like a shepherd.  
That halloo I should know; what are you? speak;  
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.  
     Spir. What voice is that? my young lord? speak again.  
     Sec. Br. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.  
     El. Br. Thyrsis? whose artful strains have oft delay'd  
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,  
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale?  
How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram  
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,  
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?  
How couldst thou find this dark sequester'd nook?  
     Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,  
I came not here on such a trivial toy  
As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth  
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth,  
That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought  
To this my errand, and the care it brought.  
But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?  
How chance she is not in your company?  
     El. Br. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame,  
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.  
     Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.  

     Spir. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous  
(Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance),  
What the sage poets, taught by th' heav'nly Muse,  
Storied of old in high immortal verse,  
Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,  
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to hell;  
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.  
Within the navel of this hideous wood,  
Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmooring reason's mintage
Character'd in the face: this have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts,
That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscure haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,
To inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honey-suckle, and began,
Wrap in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill; but, ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceas'd; and listen'd them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy flighted steeds,
That draw the litter of close-curtain'd Sleep;
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
Deny her nature, and be never more
Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of death: but, O! ere long,
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear Sister.
Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
And, O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place,
Where that damn'd wizard, hid in sly disguise
(For so by certain signs I knew), had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey,
Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not.

Sec. Br.  O night and shades!
How are ye join'd with hell in triple knot
Against th' unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, Brother?

El. Br.  Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:
Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
Surpris'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd;
Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; when at last
Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consum'd:
if this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rotteness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on.

Spir.  Alas! good vent'rous Youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms:
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

El. Br.  Why pr'ythee, Shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation?

Spir.  Care, and utmost shifts,
How to secure the Lady from surprisal,
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous plant, and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray:
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing;
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit and hearken ev'n to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he call'd me out;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flow'r, but not in this soil:
Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon:
And yet more med'cinal is it than that moly,
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
He call'd it Haemony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovran use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp,
Or ghastly furies' apparition.
I purs'd it up, but little reck'ning made,
Till now that this extremity compell'd:
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter though disguis'd,
Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off: if you have this about you,
(As I will give you when we go), you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood,
And brandish'd blade, rush on him; break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.
El. Br. Thyris, lead on apace, I'll follow thee;
And some good Angel bear a shield before us.

The scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. Comus appears with his raddle, and the Lady set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

**Comus.**

Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster;
And you a statue, or, as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lady. Fool, do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind*
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immannacl'd, while Heav'n sees good.

Comus. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: see, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first, behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mix'd:
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such pow'r to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you receiv'd on other terms;
Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.

Lady,
'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With visor'd falsehood and base forgery?
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With lickerish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banqueted,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none
But such as are good men can give good things;
And that, which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Comus. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Throngs the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,
To deck her sons; and that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch'd th' all-worship't ore and precious gems,
To store her children with: if all the world
Should in a pot of temp'rance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
Th' All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd,
Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth;
And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility;
Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with
plumes,
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'er-fraught would swell, and th' unsought dia-
monds
Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in th' enjoyment of itself;
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advis'd; you are but young yet.
Lady. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgement, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.
I hate when vice can bolt her arguments,
And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare temperance:
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit cumber'd with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thank'd,
His praise due paid: for swinish gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad pow'r of Chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion, and high mystery,
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinc'd:
Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, rear'd to high,
Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.
Comus. She fables not; I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold shudd'ring dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly. — Come, no more;
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon-laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the lees
And settlements of a melancholy blood:
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.

The Brothers rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass
out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in.
The Attendant Spirit comes in.

Spirit.

What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
And backward mutters of discovering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless:
Yet stay, be not disturb'd; now I betheath me,
Some other means I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Meliboeus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that c'er pip'd on plains.
There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the scepter from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The water-nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nerens' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd layers, strew'd with asphodel;
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made goddess of the river: still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elfe delights to make,
Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals;
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numming spell,
If she be right invok'd in warbled song;
For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need; this will I try,
And add the pow'r of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
Listen for dear honour's sake,
Goddess of the silver lake,
Listen and save.
Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus;
By th' earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace,
By hoary Nerens' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the songs of Syrens sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeping her soft alluring locks;
By all the nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head,
From thy coral-paven bed,
And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answer'd have.

Listen, and save.

Sabrina rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings.

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
Of turquis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel stray;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;
Gentle Swain, at thy request,
I am here.

Spir. Goddess dear,
We implore thy pow'rful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distrest,
Through the force and through the wile
Of unblest enchanter vile.

Sabr. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from my fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:
Now the spell hath lost his hold;
And I must haste, ere morning hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bow'r.

Sabrina descends, and the Lady rises out of her seat.

Spir. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drought, or singed air,
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crown'd
With many a tow'r and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.

Come, Lady, while Heav'n lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.

Not a waste or needless sound,
Till we come to holier ground;
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate

His wish'd presence; and beside
All the swains, that there abide,
With jigs and rural dance resort;
We shall catch them at their sport,
And or sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer;
Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the
President's castle; then come in country dancers, after
them the Attendant Spirit, with the Two Brothers and
the Lady.

SONG.

Spir. Back, Shepherds, back; enough your play,
Till next sun-shine holiday:
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing Dryades,
On the lawns, and 'on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight;
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own;
Heav'n hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly and intemperance.

The dances being ended, the Spirit epiloguizes.

Spir. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree:
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;
The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring;
There eternal Summer dwells,
And west-winds, with musky wing,
About the cedarn alleys fling
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purled scarf can shew;
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true),
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen:
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranc'd,
After her wand'ring labours long,
Till free consent the gods among
Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run,
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
Mortals that would follow me,
Love virtue; she alone is free:
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heav'n itself would stoop to her.
SONNETS.

I.

To the Nightingale.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hopes the lover’s heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
The liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo’s bill,
Portend success in love; O, if Jove’s will
Have link’d that amorous pow’r to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II.

On his being arrived to the Age of Twenty-three.

HOW soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
Stol’n on his wing my three and twentieth year!
My hasting days fly on with full career,
But my late spring no bud or blossom shew’th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
That I to manhood am arriv’d so near;
And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
That some more timely-happy spirits endu’t.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
It shall be still in strictest measure even
To that same lot, however mean or high,
Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven;
All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-master’s eye.

III.

When the Assault was intended to the City.

CAPTAIN, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
That call fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o’er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun’s bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses’ bower:
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple and tower
Went to the ground: and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

IV.

To a virtuous Young Lady.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunn'd the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labour up the hill with heav'ny truth,
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast; and they that overwean,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity and ruth.
Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Hast gain'd thy entrance, virgin wise and pure.

V.

To the Lady Margaret Ley.

DAUGHTER to that good Earl, once President
Of England's Council and her Treasury,
Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till sad the breaking of that parliament
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chaeronea, fatal to liberty,
Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.
Though later born than to have known the days,
Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
Madam, methinks, I see him living yet;
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true,
And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

VI.

On the Detraction which followed upon my writing certain Treatises.

A BOOK was writ of late, call'd Tetrachordon,
And woven close, both matter, form, and style;
The subject new: it walk'd the town a while,
Num'ring good intellects; now seldom por'd on.
Cries the stall-reader, 'Bless us! what a word on
A title-page is this!' And some in file
Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
End Green. Why is it harder, sirs, than Gordon,
Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?
Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek,
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.
SONNETS.

Thy age, like ours, O soul of Sir John Cheek,
Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
When thou taught'st Cambridge, and King Edward, Greek.

VII.

On the same.

I DID but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When straight a barbarous noise environs me
Of owl and cuckoo, asses, apes, and dogs:
As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs
Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny,
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
Licence they mean when they cry liberty;
For who loves that, must first be wise and good;
But from that mark how far they rove we see,
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

VIII.

To Mr. H. Lawes, on the publishing his Airs.

HARRY, whose tuneful and well-measur'd song
First taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent, not to scan
With Midas' ears, committing short and long;
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
With praise enough for Envy to look wan;
To after-age thou shalt be writ the man,
That with smooth air couldst humour best our tongue.
Thou honoun'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
To honour thee, the priest of Phoebus' quire,
That tur'st their happiest lines in hymn or story.
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
Than his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing
Met in the milder shades of purgatory.

IX.

On the religious Memory of Mrs. Catherine Thomson, my Christian Friend, deceased December 16, 1646.

WHEN faith and love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthy load
Of death, call'd life; which us from life doth sever.
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But, as faith pointed with her golden rod,
Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on, and faith, who knew them best
Thy hand-maids, clad them o'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so drest,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

X.

To the Lord General Fairfax.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
And all her jealous monarchs with amaze,
And rumours loud that daunt remotest kings;
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
Victory home, though new rebellions raise
Their Hydra heads, and the false North displays
Her broken league to imp their serpent-wings.
O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand
(For what can war, but endless war still breed?)
Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And public faith clear'd from the shameful brand
Of public fraud. In vain doth valour bleed,
While avarice and rapine share the land.

XI.

To the Lord General Cromwell.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
And on the neck of crowned fortune proud
Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbued,
And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
To conquer still; peace hath her victories
No less renown'd than war: new foes arise
Threat'ning to bind our souls with secular chains:
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hirpling wolves, whose Gospel is their maw.

XII.

To Sir Henry Vane, the Younger.

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repell'd
The fierce Epirot and the African bold;
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
The drift of hollow states hard to be spell'd;
Then to advise how war may, best upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage: besides to know
Both spiritual pow'r and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou hast learn'd, which few have done:
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
SONNETS.

Therefore on thy firm hand Religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

XIII.

On the late Massacre in Piemont.

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bone
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshipt stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piemontese that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all th' Italian fields, where still doth sway
A hundred fold, who having learn'd thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

XIV.

On his Blindness.

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he, returning, chide;
'Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?'
I fondly ask: but Patience, to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.'

XV.

To Mr. Lawrence.

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun,
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we my rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

XVI.

To Cyriack Skinner.

CYRIACK, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause,
Pronounc'd, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth that, after, no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.

To measure life learn thou betimes:,
And know Towards solid good what leads the nearest way;
For other things mild Heav'n a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

XVII.

To the same.

CYRIACK, this three years' day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heav'n's hand or will, nor hate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, friend, to have lost them overplied
In liberty's defence, my noble task,
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's
vain mask,
Content though blind, had I no better guide.

XVIII.

On his deceased Wife.

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the old law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in heav'n without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:
Her face was veil'd; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight.
ODES.

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST’S NATIVITY.

(1629)

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heav’n’s Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;

For so the holy sages once did sing,

That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he wont at heav’n’s high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,

He laid aside; and here with us to be,
Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heav’nly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,

Now while the heav’n, by the sun’s team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,

And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;

Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel quire,
From out his secret altar touch’d with hallow’d fire.

THE HYMN.

IT was the winter wild,
While the heav’n-born child
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him
Had’st off’d her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.
Only with speeches fair
She woos the gentle air
To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace;
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whisp'ring new joys to the mild ocean,
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds' of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze,
Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until then Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
The new-enlighten'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or e'er the point of dawn,
Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
As all their souls in blissful rapture took
The air, such pleasure loth to lose,
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heaving close.

Nature that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling;
To think her part was done,
And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all heav'n and earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
That with long beams the shamefac'd night array'd;
The helmed Cherubim,
And sworded Seraphim,
Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire,
With unexpressive notes, to Heav'n's new-born Heir.

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
And the well-balanc'd world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the welt'ring waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
If ye have pow'r to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
And let the base of heav'n's deep organ blow;
And, with your ninefold harmony,
Make up full concert to th' angelic symphony.

For, if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
And leprous sin will melt from earthly mould;
And hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.
Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Thron'd in celestial sheen,
With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
And heav'n, as at some festival,
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so,
The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That on the bitter cross
Must redeem our loss;

So both himself and us to glorify;
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep,
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep;

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang,
While the red fire and smouldring clouds out brake:
The aged Earth aghast,
With terror of that blast,
Shall from the surface to the center shake;
When, at the world's last session,
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne-And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
But now begins; for, from this happy day,
The old Dragon, under ground
In straiter limits bound,
Not half so far casts his usurped sway;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swindges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb,
No voice or hideous hum
Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetic cell.
The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale,
Edg'd with poplar pale,
The parting genius is with sighing sent;
With flow'r-inwoven tresses torn
The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
The Lars, and Lemures, moan with midnight plaint;
In urns, and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
Affrights the Flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
Which each peculiar pow'r foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Ba'alim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-batter'd God of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,

Heav'n's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapes'r holy shine;
The Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn,
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance about the furnace blue;
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

Nor is Osiris seen
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshow'r'd grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest
Within his sacred chest;
Naught but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eye;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.

So, when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to th' infernal jail,
Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted Fayes
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd maze.

But see, the Virgin blest
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
Time is, our tedious song should here have ending;
Heav'n's youngest-teemed star
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;
And all about the courtly stable
Bright-harness'd angels sit in order serviceable.
EREWHILE of music, and ethereal mirth,  
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,  
And joyous news of heav'ny Infant's birth,  
My muse with Angels did divide to sing;  
But headlong joy is ever on the wing,  
In wintry solstice like the shorten'd light,  
Soon swallow'd up in dark and long out-living night.  

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,  
And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,  
Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,  
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,  
Which he for us did freely undergo:  
Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight  
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

He, sovran priest, stooping his regal head,  
That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,  
Poor fleshy tabernacle entered,  
His starry front low-rooft beneath the skies:  
O, what a mask was there, what a disguise!  
Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide,  
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.  

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;  
To this horizon is my Phoebus bound:  
His god-like acts, and his temptations fierce,  
And former sufferings, other where are found;  
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound;  
Me softer airs besit, and softer strings  
Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.  

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief;  
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,  
And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,  
That heav'n and earth are colour'd with my woe;  
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:  
The leaves should all be black whereon I write,  
And letters, where my tears have wash'd, a wannish white.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,  
That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood;  
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,  
To bear me where the tow'rs of Salem stood,  
Once glorious tow'rs, now sunk in guiltless blood;  
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,  
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.  

Mine eye had found that sad sepulchral rock  
That was the casket of Heav'n's richest store,  
And here though grief my feeble hands up-lock,  
Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score  
My plaining verse as lively as before;  
For sure so well instructed are my tears,  
That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.
Or should I thence hurried on viewless wing
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild;
And I (for grief is easily beguil'd)
Might think th' infection of my sorrows loud
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the author finding to be above the years he
had, when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what
was begun, left it unfinished.

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

YE flaming pow'rs, and winged warriors bright,
That erst with music, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
Through the soft silence of the list'ning night;
Now mourn; and, if sad share with us to hear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Sens's wept from our deep sorrow:
He, who with all heav'n's heraldry whilere
Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease;
Alas, how soon our sin
Sore doth begin
His infancy to seize!
O more exceeding love, or law more just?
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!
For we, by rightful doom remediless,
Were lost in death, till he, that dwelt above
High-thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust
Emptied his glory, cv'n to nakedness;
And that great covenant which we still transgress
 Entirely satisfied;
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess;
And seals obedience first, with wounding smart,
This day; but, O! ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT.

Dying of a Cough.

(1625)

O FAIREST flow'r, no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasted
Bleak winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
For he, being amorous on that lovely dye
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But kill’d, alas! and then bewail’d his fatal bliss.

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
By boist’rous rape th’ Athenian damsel got,
He thought it touch’d his deity full near,
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away th’ infamous blot
Of long-uncoupled bed and childless old,
Which, ’mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach was held.

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car,
Through middle empire of the freezing air
He wander’d long, till thee he spied from far;
There ended was his quest, there ceas’d his care:
Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,
But, all unwares, with his cold-kind embrace
Unhous’d thy virgin soul from her fair hiding-place.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas’ strand,
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
But then transform’d him to a purple flower:
Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power!
Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth’s dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low-delved tomb;
Could Heav’n for pity thee so strictly doom?
Oh no! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that show’d thou wast divine.
Resolve me then, oh soul most surely blest!
(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear)
Tell me, bright spirit, where’er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in th’ Elysian fields (if such there were);
Oh say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?
Wert thou some star which from the ruin’d roof
Of shak’d Olympus by mischance didst fall;
Which careful Jove in nature’s true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?
Or did of late Earth’s sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny heav’n, and thou, some goddess fled,
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar’d head?
Or wert thou that just maid, who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And cam’st again to visit us once more?
Or wert thou that sweet-smiling youth?
Or that crown’d matron sage, white-rob’d Truth?
Or any other of that heav’ny brood
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?
Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures heav'n doth breed;
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto heav'n aspire?

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below
To bless us with thy heav'n-lov'd innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
Or drive away, "slaughtering pestilence,
To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent;
This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That till the world's last end shall make thy name to live.

ON TIME.

FLY, envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain!
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all thy greedy self consum'd,
Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him, t' whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heav'n-ly-guided soul shall clime,
Then, all this earthy grossness quit,
Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit,
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee,
O Time!

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of heav'n's joy,
Sphere-born, harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd pow'r employ
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce;
And to our high-rais'd phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concert,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To Him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow;
And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly:
That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sways
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O, may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with heav'n, till God ere long
To his celestial concert us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light!

AN EPITAPH ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.

THIS rich marble doth inter
The honour'd wife of Winchester,
A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth,
More than she could own from earth.
Summers three times eight save one
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death.
Yet had the number of her days
Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and Fate had had no strife
In giving limit to her life.
Her high birth and her graces sweet
Quickly found a lover meet;
The virgin quire for her request
The god that sits at marriage feast;
He at their invoking came,
But with a scarce well-litged flame;
And in his garland, as he stood,
Ye might discern a cypress bud.
Once had the early matrons run
To greet her of a lovely son,
And now with second hope she goes,  
And calls Lucina to her throes;  
But, whether by mischance or blame,  
Atropos for Lucina came;  
And with remorseless cruelty  
Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree:  
The hapless babe, before his birth,  
Had burial, yet not laid in earth;  
And the languish'd mothers' womb  
Was not long a living tomb.  
  
So have I seen some tender slip,  
Sav'd with care from winter's nip,  
The pride of her carnation train,  
Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,  
Who only thought to crop the flow'r  
New shot up from vernal show'r;  
But the fair blossom hangs the head  
Side-ways, as on a dying bed,  
And those pearls of dew she wears,  
Prove to be presaging tears,  
Which the sad morn had let fall  
On her hast'ning funeral.  
  
Gentle Lady, may thy grave  
Peace and quiet ever have;  
After this thy travail sore  
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,  
That, to give the world increase,  
Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.  
Here, besides the sorrowing  
That thy noble house doth bring,  
Here be tears of perfect moan  
Wept for thee in Helicon;  
And some flowers, and some bays,  
For thy hearse, to strew the ways,  
Sent thee from the banks of Came,  
Devoted to thy virtuous name;  
Whilst thou, bright Sant, high sitt'st in glory,  
Next her, much like to thee in story,  
That fair Syrian shepherdess,  
Who, after years of barrenness,  
The highly favour'd Joseph bore,  
To him that serv'd for her before,  
And at her next birth, much like thee,  
Through pangs fled to felicity,  
Far within the bosom bright  
Of blazing Majesty and Light:  
There with thee, new welcome Saint,  
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,  
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,  
No Marchioness, but now a Queen.  

SONG ON MAY MORNING.  

NOW the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her  
The flow'ry May, who from her green lap throws  
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.  
Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire  
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;  
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,  
Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.  
Thus we salute thee with our early song,  
And welcome thee, and wish thee long.  

MISCELLANIES.

ANNO AETATIS XIX.

At a Vacation Exercise in the College, part Latin, part English. The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began:

HAIL, native language, that by sinews weak  
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,  
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,  
Half-unpronounc'd, slide through my infant lips,  
Driving dumb silence from the portal door,  
Where he had mutely sat two years before:  
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,  
That now I use thee in my latter task:  
Small loss it is that hence can come unto thee,  
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee:  
Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,  
Believe me, I have thither pack'd the worst:  
And, if it happen as I did forecast,  
The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.  
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid,  
For this same small neglect that I have made:  
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,  
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,  
Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight  
Which takes our late fantasies with delight;  
But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire,  
Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire:  
I have some naked thoughts which rove about,  
And loudly knock to have their passage out;  
And, weary of their place, do only stay  
Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array;  
That so they may, without suspect or fears,  
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;  
Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,  
Thy service in some graver subject use,  
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,  
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:  
Such where the deep transported mind may soar.
Above the wheeling poles, and at heav'n's door
Look in, and see each blissful deity,
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
List'ning to what unshorn Apollo sings
To th' touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:
Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire,
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow, and lots of piled thunder,
May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,
In heav'n's defiance mustering all his waves;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldam Nature in her cradle was;
And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,
Such as the wise Demodocus once told
In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast,
While sad Ulysses' soul, and all the rest,
Are held, with his melodious harmony,
In willing chains and sweet captivity.
But fie, my wand'ring Muse, how thou dost stray!
Expectance calls thee now another way;
Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent
To keep in compass of thy predicament:
Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,
That to the next I may resign my room.

Then Ens is represented as father of the Predicaments his
two sons, whereof the eldest stood for Substance with his
canons, which Ens, thus speaking, explains:

GOOD luck befriend thee, Son; for, at thy Lifth,
The faery ladies danc'd upon the hearth;
Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
From eyes of mortals walk invisible:
Yet there is something that doth force my fear;
For once it was my dismal hap to hear
A Sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
That far events full wisely could presage,
And in tim' es long and dark prospective glass
Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
'Your son,' said she, 'nor can you it prevent)
Shall subject be to many an accident,
O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king,
Yet every one shall make him underling;
And those, that cannot live from him asunder,
Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under;
In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,
Yet, being above them, he shall be below them;
From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.
To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
And peace shall lull him in her flow'ry lap;
Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
Devouring war shall never cease to roar;
Yea, it shall be his natural property
To harbour those that are at enmity.
What pow'r, what force, what mighty spell, if not
Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?

The next Quantity and Quality spake in prose; then Re-
lation was called by his name.

RIVERS, arise; whether thou be the son
Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulfy Dun,
Or Trent, who, like some earth-born giant, spreads
His thirty arms along th' indented meads;
Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath;
Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee;
Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name;
Or Medway smooth, or royal-tower'd Thame.

[The rest was prose.]

AN EPITAPH
On the admirable Dramatic Poet, William Shakspeare.

WHAT needs my Shakspeare, for his honour'd bones,
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a star-pointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name!
Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
For whilst, to th' shame of slow-endavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart
Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took;
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And, so sepulcher'd, in such pomp dost lie,
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER,
Who sickened in the time of his vacancy, being forbid to
go to London, by reason of the plague.

HERE lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his girt,
And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;
Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one,
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.
'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known,
Death was half glad when he had got him down;
For he had, any time this ten years full,
Dodg'd with him betwixt Cambridge and The Bull.
And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd;
But lately finding him so long at home,
And thinking now his journey's end was come,
And that he had ta'en up his latest inn,
In the kind office of a chamberlin
Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,
Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light:
If any ask for him, it shall be said,
'Hobson has supt, and 's newly gone to bed.'

Another on the same.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move;
To hung his destiny, never to rot
While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.

Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time:
And, like an engine, mov'd with wheel and weight,
His principles being ceas'd, he ended straight.

Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death.
Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
Too long vacation hasten'd on his term.

Merely to drive the time away he sicken'd,
Faint'd, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd;
'Nay,' quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretch'd,
'If I mayn't carry, sure I 'll ne'er be fetch'd,
But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
For one carrier put down to make six bearers.'

Ease was his chief disease; and, to judge right,
He died for heaviness that his cart went light:
His leisure told him that his time was come,
And lack of load made his life burdensome,
That ev'n to his last breath (there be that say't),
As he were press'd to death, he cried, 'More weight,'
But, had his doings lasted as they were,
He had been an immortal carrier.

Obedient to the moon he spent his date
In course reciprocal, and had his fate
Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas,
Yet (strange to think) his wain was his increase:
His letters are deliver'd all and gone,
Only remains this superscription.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE,
Under the Long Parliament.

BECAUSE you have thrown off your Prelate lord,
And with stiff vows renounce'd his Liturgy.
To seize the widow’d whore Plurality
From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr’d;
Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword
To force our consciences that Christ set free,
And ride us with a classic hierarchy
Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford?
Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be nam’d and printed Heretics
By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d’ye call:
But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent.
That so the Parliament
May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
Clip your phylacteries, though bark your ears,
And succour our just fears,
When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large.

TRANSLATIONS.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, Lib. I.

WHAT slender youth, bedew’d with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
Pyrrha? For whom bind’st thou
In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
Rough with black winds, and storms
Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable,
Hopes thee, of flattering gales
Unmindful. Helpless they,
To whom thou untried seem’st fair! Me, in my vow’d
Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung
My dank and dropping weeds
To the stern god of sea.

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.

Brutus thus addresses Diana in the Country of Leogoeia.

GODDESS of shades, and huntress, who at will
Walk’st on the rolling spheres, and through the deep;
On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell
What land, what seat of rest, thou bidd’st me seek,
What certain seat, where I may worship thee
For aye, with temples vow’d and virgin quires.
To whom, sleeping before the Altar, Diana answers in a Vision the same Night.

BRUTUS, far to the west, in the ocean wide,
Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,
Sea-girt it lies, where giants dwelt of old;
Now void, it fits thy people: thither bend
Thy course; there shalt thou find a lasting seat;
There to thy sons another Troy shall rise,
And kings be born of thee, whose dreadful might
Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold.

FROM DANTE.

AH Constantine, of how much ill was cause,
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy pope receiv'd of thee!

FROM DANTE.

FOUNDED in chaste and humble poverty,
'Gainst them that rais'd thee dost thou lift thy horn?
Impudent whore, where hast thou placed thy hope?
In thy adulterers, or thy ill-got wealth?
Another Constantine comes not in haste.

FROM ARIOSTO.

THEN pass'd he to a flow'ry mountain green,
Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously:
This was the gift, if you the truth will have,
That Constantine to good Sylvester gave.

FROM HORACE.

WHOM do we count a good man? Whom but he
Who keeps the laws and statutes of the senate,
Who judges in great-suits and controversies,
Whose witness and opinion wins the cause?
But his own house, and the whole neighbourhood,
Sees his foul inside through his whited skin.

FROM EURIPIDES.

THIS is true liberty, when freeborn men,
Having t' advise the public, may speak free;
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise:
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace;
What can be juster in a state than this?

FROM HORACE.

LAUGHING, to teach the truth,
What hinders? As some teachers give to boys
Junkets and knacks, that they may learn apace.

FROM HORACE.

JOKING decides great things,
Stronger and better oft than earnest can.

FROM SOPHOCLES.

'Tis you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words.
FROM SENECa.

THERE can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable,
Than an unjust and wicked king.

PSALMS.

PSALM I.

(Done into verse 1653.)

BLESS'D is the man who hath not walk'd astray
In counsel of the wicked, and i' the way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorers hath not sat. But in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
And in his law he studies day and night.
He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By watery streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgement, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in the assembly of just men;
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

(Done August 8, 1653.)

Terzetti.

WHY do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations
Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand
With power, and princes in their congregations
Lay deep their plots together through each land
Against the Lord and his Messiah dear?
Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand
Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
Their twisted cords. He, who in heaven doth dwell,
Shall anguish; the Lord shall scoff them; then severe,
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
And fierce fire trouble them. But I, saith he,
Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
I will declare: the Lord to me hath said,
Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee
This day; ask of me, and the grant is made:
As thy possession I on thee bestow
The Heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,
Earth’s utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
With iron scepter bru.is’d, and them disperse
Like to a potter’s vessel shiver’d so.
And now be wise at length, ye kings averse,
Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear
Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
With trembling; kiss the Son, lest he appear
In anger, and ye perish in the way.
If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere,
Happy all those who have in him their stay.

PSALM III.
(August 9, 1653.)

When he fled from Absalom.

LORD, how many are my foes!
How many those
That in arms against me rise!

Many are they,
That of my life distrustfully thus say:
No help for him in God there lies.
But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,
Thee through my story,
The exalter of my head I count:
Aloud I cried
Unto Jehovah, he full soon replied,
And heard me from his holy mount.
I lay and slept; I wak’d again;
For my sustain
Was the Lord. Of many millions
The populous rout
I fear not, though, encamping round about,
They pitch against me their pavilions.
Rise, Lord; save me, my God; for Thou
Hast smote ere now
On the cheek-bone all my foes,
Of man abhor’d
Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord;
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV.
(August 10, 1653.)

ANSWER me when I call,
God of my righteousness;
In straits and in distress,
Thou didst me disenthral
And set at large; now spare,
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn?
How long be thus forborn
Still to love vanity?
To love, to seek, to prize,
Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?
Yet know, the Lord hath chose,
Chose to himself apart,
The good and meek of heart
(For whom to choose he knows);
Jehovah from on high
Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.
Be aw'd, and do not sin;
Speak to your hearts alone,
Upon your beds, each one,
And be at peace within.
Offer the offerings just
Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.
Many there be that say,
Who yet will show us good?
Talking like this world's brood;
But, Lord, thus let me pray:
On us lift up the light,
Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright.
Into my heart more joy
And gladness thou hast put,
Than when a year of glut
Their stores doth over-cloy,
And from their plenteous grounds
With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.
In peace at once will I
Both lay me down and sleep;
For thou alone dost keep
Me safe where'er I lie;
As in a rocky cell
Thou, Lord, alone, in safety makest me dwell.

**PSALM V.**

(August 12, 1653.)

Jehovah, to my words give ear,
My meditation weigh;
The voice of my complaining hear,
My King and God; for unto thee I pray.
Jehovah, thou my early voice
Shalt in the morning hear;
I' the morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight;
Evil with thee no biding makes;
Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.
All workers of iniquity
Thou hat'st; and them unblest
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie;
The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
But I will, in thy mercies dear,
Thy numerous mercies, go
Into thy house; I, in thy fear,
Will towards thy holy temple worship low.  
Lord, lead me in thy righteousness,  
Lead me, because of those
That do observe if I transgress;
Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
For, in his falt'ring mouth unstable,
No word is firm or sooth;
Their inside, troubles miserable;
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.
God, find them guilty, let them fall
By their own counsels quell’d;
Push them to their rebellions all
Still on; for against thee they have rebell’d.
Then all who trust in thee, shall bring
Their joy; while thou from blame
Defend’st them; they shall ever sing
And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name.
For thou, Jehovah, wilt be found
To bless the just man still;
As with a shield, thou wilt surround
Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

PSALM VI.  
(August 13, 1653.)

LORD, in thine anger do not reprehend me,  
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;  
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,  
And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
For all my bones, that even with anguish ake,  
Are troubled, yea, my soul is troubled sore,  
And thou, O Lord, how long? Turn, Lord; restore
My soul; O save me for thy goodness’ sake:
For in death no remembrance is of thee;  
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?  
Wearied I am with sighing out my days;
Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;  
My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
I’the midst of all mine enemies that mark.
Depart, all ye that work iniquity,
Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping
The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath heard my prayer;
My supplication with acceptance fair
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.
Mine enemies shall all be blank and dash’d
With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,
They shall return in haste the way they came,
And in a moment shall be quite abash’d.
PSALM VII.

(August 14, 1653.)

Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite against him.

LORD, my God, to thee I fly; 5
Save me and secure me under
Thy protection while I cry;
Lest, as a lion (and no wonder) 10
He haste to tear my soul asunder,
Tearing, and no rescue nigh.

Lord, my God, if I have thought 15
Or done this; if wickedness
Be in my hands; if I have wrought
Ill to him that meant me peace;
Or to him have render'd less, 20
And not freed my foe for naught;

Let the enemy pursue my soul, 25
And overtake it; let him tread
My life down to the earth, and roll
In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust; and there, out-spread, 30
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah, in thine ire, 35
Rouse thyself amidst the rage
Of my foes that urge like fire;
And wake for me, their fury asswage;
Judgement here thou didst engage 40
And command, which I desire.

So th' assemblies of each nation
Will surround thee, seeking right;
Thence to thy glorious habitation 45
Return on high, and in their sight.
Jehovah judgeth most upright
All people from the world's foundation.

Judge me, Lord; be judge in this 50
According to my righteousness,
And the innocence which is
Upon me: cause at length to cease
Of evil men the wickedness, 55
And their pow'r that do amiss.

But the just establish fast, 60
Since thou art the just God that tries
Hearts and reins. On God is cast
My defence, and in him lies, 65
In him who, both just and wise,
Saves th' upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe, 70
And God is every day offended;
If the unjust will not forbear, 75
His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death, that waits him near.
(His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute.) Behold;
He travels big with vanity;
Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old,
As in a womb; and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digg'd a pit, and delv'd it deep,
And fell into the pit he made;
His mischief, that due course doth keep,
Turns on his head; and his ill trade
Of violence will, undelay'd,
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise
According to his justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
Of Jehovah the Most High.

PSALM VIII.

(August 14, 1653.)

O JEHOVAH our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!
So as above the heav'ns thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou
Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
To stint th' enemy, and slack th' avenger's brow;
That bends his rage thy Providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heav'ns, thy fingers' art,
The moon and stars, which thou so bright hast set
In the pure firmament; then saith my heart,
O, what is man, that thou rememb'rest yet,
And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
That him thou visit'st, and of him art found!
Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot,
With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him lord,
Thou hast put all under his lordly feet;
All flocks and herds, by thy commanding word,
All beasts that in the field or forest meet,

Fowl of the heav'ns, and fish that through the wet
Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.
O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

(April, 1648. J. M.)

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all, but
what is in a different character, are the very words of
the text, translated from the original.
PSALM LXXX.

1 THOU, Shepherd, that dost Israel keep,
   Give ear in time of need;
Who leadest like a flock of sheep
   Thy loved Joseph's seed;
That sitt'st between the Cherubs bright,
   Between their wings out-spread;
Shine forth, and from thy cloud give light,
   And on our foes thy dread.

2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
   And in Manasse's sight,
Awake thy strength, come, and be seen
   To save us by thy might.

3 Turn us again, thy grace divine
   To us, O God, vouchsafe;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
   And then we shall be safe.

4 Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
   How long wilt thou declare
Thy smoking wrath, and angry brow
   Against thy people's prayer?

5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;
   Their bread with tears they eat;
And mak'st them largely drink the tears
   Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

6 A strife thou mak'st us and a prey
   To every neighbour foe;
Among themselves they laugh, they play,
   And flouts at us they throw.

7 Return us, and thy grace divine,
   O God of Hosts, vouchsafe;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
   And then we shall be safe.

8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
   Thy free love made it thine,
And drov'st out nations proud and haut,
   To plant this lovely vine.

9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
   And root it deep and fast,
That it began to grow apace,
   And fill'd the land at last.

10 With her green shade that cover'd all,
   The hills were over-spread;
Her boughs as high as cedars tall
   Advanc'd their lofty head.

11 Her branches on the western side
   Down to the sea she sent,
And upward to that river wide
   Her other branches went.

12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
   And broken down her fence,
That all may pluck her, as they go,
   With rudest violence?
13 The tusked boar out of the wood
   Up turns it by the roots;
Wild beasts there browse, and make their food
   Her grapes and tender shoots.

14 Return now, God of Hosts, look down
   From heav’n, thy seat divine;
Behold us, but without a frown,
   And visit this thy vine.

15 Visit this vine, which thy right hand
   Hath set, and planted long,
And the young branch, that for thyself
   Thou hast made firm and strong.

16 But now it is consum’d with fire,
   And cut with axes down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
   At thy rebuke and frown.

18 So shall we not go back from thee
   To ways of sin and shame;
Quicken us thou; then gladly we
   Shall call upon thy Name.

19 Return us, and thy grace divine,
   Lord God of Hosts, vouchsafe;
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
   And then we shall be safe.

PSALM LXXXI.

1 To God our strength sing loud, and clear,
   Sing loud to God our King;
To Jacob’s God, that all may hear,
   Loud acclamations ring.

2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
   The timbrel lither bring;
The cheerful psaltery bring along,
   And harp with pleasant string.

3 Blow, as is wont, in the new moon
   With trumpets’ lofty sound,
Th’ appointed time, the day whereon
   Our solemn feast comes round.

4 This was a statute giv’n of old
   For Israel to observe;
A law of Jacob’s God, to hold,
   From whence they might not swerve.

5 This he a testimony ordain’d
   In Joseph, not to change,
When, as he pass’d through Egypt land,
   The tongue I heard was strange.

6 From burden, and from slavish toil,
   I set his shoulder free:
His hands from pots, and miry soil,
   Deliver’d were by me.
When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call;
And I to free thee did not fail,
And led thee out of thrall.
I answer'd thee in thunder deep,
With clouds encompass'd round;
I tried thee at the water steep
Of Meriba renown'd.

Hear, O my people, hearken well;
I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,
If thou wilt list to me:
Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien god shall be,
Nor shalt thou to a foreign god
In honour bend thy knee.

I am the Lord thy God, which brought
Thee out of Egypt land;
Ask large enough, and I, besought,
Will grant thy full demand.
And yet my people would not hear,
Nor hearken to my voice;
And Israel, whom I lov'd so dear,
Mislik'd me for his choice.
Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wand'ring mind;
Their own conceits they follow'd still,
Their own devices blind.

O, that my people would be wise,
To serve me all their days!
And O, that Israel would advise
To walk my righteous ways!
Then would I soon bring down their foes,
That now so proudly rise;
And turn my hand against all those
That are their enemies.
Who hate the Lord should then be fain
To bow to him and bend;
But they, his people, should remain,
Their time should have no end.
And he would feed them from the shock
With flow'r of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey for their meat.

GOD in the great assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states;
Among the gods, on both his hands,
He judges and debates.

How long will ye pervert the right
With judgement false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked by your might,
Who thence grow bold and strong?
3 Regard the weak and fatherless,
   Dispatch the poor man's cause:
   And raise the man in deep distress
   By just and equal laws.
4 Defend the poor and desolate,
   And rescue from the hands
   Of wicked men the low estate
   Of him that help demands.
5 They know not, nor will understand,
   In darkness they walk on;
   The earth's foundations all are mov'd,
   And out of order gone.
6 I said that ye were gods, yea all
   The sons of God Most High;
7 But ye shall die like men, and fall
   As other princes die.
8 Rise, God; judge thou the earth in might,
   This wicked earth redress;
   For thou art he who shall by right
   The nations all possess.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1 Be not thou silent now at length,
   O God, hold not thy peace;
   Sit thou not still, O God of strength,
   We cry, and do not cease.
2 For lo, thy furious foes now swell,
   And storm outrageously;
   And they that hate thee, proud and fell,
   Exalt their heads full high.
3 Against thy people they contrive
   Their plots and counsels deep;
   Them to ensnare they chiefly strive,
   Whom thou dost hide and keep.
4 Come, let us cut them off, say they,
   Till they no nation be;
   That Israel's name for ever may
   Be lost in memory.
5 For they consult with all their might,
   And all, as one in mind,
   Themselves against thee they unite,
   And in firm union bind.
6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
   Of scornful Ishmael,
   Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
   That in the desert dwell,
7 Gebal and Ammon, there conspire,
   And hateful Amalec,
   The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
   Whose bounds the sea doth check.
8 With them great Ashur also bands,
   And doth confirm the knot:
   All these have lent their armed hands
   To aid the sons of Lot.
9 Do to them as to Midian bold,
That wasted all the coast;
To Sisera; and, as is told,
Thou didst to Jabin's host,
When, at the brook of Kishon old,
They were repuls'd and slain.

10 At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
As dung upon the plain.

11 As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
So let their princes speed;
As Zeba and Zalmunna bled,
So let their princes bleed.

12 For they amidst their pride have said,
By right now shall we seize
God's houses, and will now invade
Their stately palaces.

13 My God, oh make them as a wheel,
No quiet let them find;
Giddy and restless let them reel
Like stubble from the wind.

14 As when an aged wood takes fire
Which on a sudden strays,
The greedy flame runs higher and higher
Till all the mountains blaze;

15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase;

16 And, till they yield thee honour due,
Lord, fill with shame their face.

17 Asham'd, and troubled, let them be,
Troubled, and sham'd for ever;
Ever confounded, and so die
With shame, and scape it never.

18 Then shall they know, that Thou, whose Name
Jehovah is alone,
Art the Most High, and thou the same,
O'er all the earth art One.

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 HOW lovely are thy dwellings fair!
O Lord of Hosts, how dear
The pleasant tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near!

2 My soul doth long and almost die
Thy courts, O Lord, to see;
My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
O living God, for thee.

3 There ev'n the sparrow, freed from wrong,
Hath found a house of rest;
The swallow there, to lay her young
Hath built her brooding nest;
Ev'n by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode;
And home they fly from round the coasts
Toward thee, my King, my God.
4 Happy, who in thy house reside,
    Where thee they ever praise!
5 Happy, whose strength in thee doth hide,
    And in their hearts thy ways!
6 They pass through Baca's thirsty vale,
    That dry and barren ground;
As through a fruitful wat'ry dale,
    Where springs and show'rs abound.
7 They journey on from strength to strength
    With joy and gladsome cheer,
Till all before our God at length
    In Sion do appear.
8 Lord God of Hosts, hear now my prayer,
    O Jacob's God, give ear;
9 Thou, God, our shield, look on the face
    Of thy anointed dear.
10 For one day in thy courts to be,
    Is better, and more blest,
Than in the joys of vanity
    A thousand days at best.
I, in the temple of my God,
    Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, and rich abode,
    With sin for evermore.
11 For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
    Gives grace and glory bright;
No good from them shall be withheld
    Whose ways are just and right.
12 Lord God of Hosts, that reign'st on high,
    That man is truly blest,
Who only on thee doth rely,
    And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

1 THY land to favour graciously
    Thou hast not, Lord, been slack;
Thou hast from hard captivity
    Returned Jacob back.
2 Th' iniquity thou didst forgive
    That wrought thy people woe;
And all their sin, that did thee grieve,
    Hast hid where none shall know.
3 Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,
    And calmly didst return
From thy fierce wrath which we had prov'd
    Far worse than fire to burn.
4 God of our saving health and peace,
    Turn us, and us restore;
Thine indignation cause to cease
    Towards us, and chide no more.
5 Wilt thou be angry without end,
    For ever angry thus?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
    From age to age on us?
6 Wilt thou not turn and hear our voice,
   And us again revive,
That so thy people may rejoice
   By thee preserved alive?

7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord,
   To us thy mercy shew;
Thy saving health to us afford,
   And life in us renew.

8 And now, what God the Lord will speak,
   1 will go straight and hear,
For to his people he speaks peace,
   And to his saints full dear,
To his dear saints he will speak peace;
   But let them never more
Return to folly, but suceed
   To trespass as before.

9 Surely, to such as do him fear
   Salvation is at hand;
And glory shall ere long appear
   To dwell within our land.

10 Mercy and Truth that long were miss'd,
   Now joyfully are met;
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kissed,
   And hand in hand are set.

11 Truth from the earth, like to a flow'r,
   Shall bud and blossom then;
And Justice from her heav'nly bow'r
   Look down on mortal men.

12 The Lord will also then bestow
   Whatever thing is good;
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
   Her fruits to be our food.

13 Before him Righteousness shall go,
   His royal harbinger:
Then will he come, and not be slow,
   His footsteps cannot err.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1 THY gracious ear, O Lord, incline,
   O hear me, I thee pray;
For I am poor, and almost pine
   With need, and sad decay.

2 Preserve my soul; for I have trod
   Thy ways, and love the just;
Save thou thy servant, O my God,
   Who still in thee doth trust.

3 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
   I call; 4] O make rejoice
Thy servant's soul; for, Lord, to thee
   I lift my soul and voice.

4 For thou art good, thou, Lord, art prone
   To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou alone
   To them that on thee call.
6 Unto my supplication, Lord,  
   Give ear, and to the cry  
Of my incessant pray'rs afford  
   Thy hearing graciously.

7 I, in the day of my distress,  
   Will call on thee for aid;  
For thou wilt grant me free access,  
   And answer what I pray'd.

8 Like thee among the gods is none,  
   O Lord; nor any works  
Of all that other gods have done  
   Like to thy glorious works.

9 The nations all whom thou hast made  
   Shall come, and all shall frame  
To bow them low before thee, Lord,  
   And glorify thy name.

10 For great thou art, and wonders great  
   By thy strong hand are done;  
Thou, in thy everlasting seat,  
   Remainest God alone.

11 Teach me, O Lord, thy way most right;  
I in thy truth will bide;  
To fear thy name my heart unite,  
   So shall it never slide.

12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,  
   Thee honour and adore  
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad  
   Thy name for evermore.

13 For great thy mercy is tow'rd me,  
And thou hast freed my soul,  
Ev'n from the lowest hell set free,  
   From deepest darkness foul.

14 O God, the proud against me rise,  
   And violent men are met  
To seek my life, and in their eyes  
   No fear of thee have set.

15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,  
   Readiest thy grace to shew,  
Slow to be angry, and art styl'd  
   Most merciful, most true.

16 O turn to me thy face at length,  
   And me have mercy on;  
Unto thy servant give thy strength,  
   And save thy handmaid's son.

17 Some sign of good to me afford,  
   And let my foes then see,  
And be asham'd; because thou, Lord,  
   Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1 AMONG the holy mountains high  
   Is his foundation fast;  
There seated in his sanctuary,  
   His temple there is plac'd.
2 Sion's fair gates the Lord loves more
   Than all the dwellings fair.
   Of Jacob's land, though there be store,
   And all within his care.

3 City of God, most glorious things
   Of thee abroad are spoke;

4 I mention Egypt, where proud kings
   Did our forefathers yoke.
   I mention Babel to my friends,
   Philistia full of scorn;
   And Tyre with Ethiop's utmost ends,
   Lo this man there was born:

5 But twice that praise shall in our ear
   Be said of Sion last;
   This and this man was born in her;
   High God shall fix her fast.

6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll
   That ne'er shall be out-worn,
   When he the nations doth enroll,
   That this man there was born.

7 Both they who sing, and they who dance,
   With sacred songs are there;
   In thee fresh brooks and soft streams glance,
   And all my fountains clear.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

1 LORD God, that dost me save and keep,
   All day to thee I cry;
   And all night long before thee weep,
   Before thee prostrate lie.

2 Into thy presence let my pray'r
   With sighs devout ascend;
   And to my cries, that ceaseless are,
   Thine ear with favour bend.

3 For, cloy'd with woes and trouble store,
   Surcharg'd my soul doth lie;
   My life, at death's uncheerful door,
   Unto the grave draws nigh.

4 Reckon'd I am with them that pass
   Down to the dismal pit;
   I am a man, but weak, alas!
   And for that name unfit.

5 From life discharg'd and parted quite
   Among the dead to sleep;
   And like the slain in bloody fight,
   That in the grave lie deep.
   Whom thou rememberest no more,
   Dost never more regard,
   Them from thy hand deliver'd o'er,
   Death's hideous house hath barr'd.

6 Thou in the lowest pit profound
   Hast set me all forlorn,
   Where thickest darkness hovers round,
   In horrid deeps to mourn.
Thy wrath, from which no shelter saves,
    Full sore doth press on me;
Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
    And all thy waves break me.

Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
    And mak'st me odious,
Me to them odious, for they change,
    And I here pent up thus.

Through sorrow, and affliction great,
    Mine eye grows dim and dead;
Lord, all the day I thee entreat,
    My hands to thee I spread.

Wilt thou do wonders on the dead?
    Shall the deceas'd arise,
And praise thee from their loathsome bed
    With pale and hollow eyes?

Shall they thy loving kindness tell,
    On whom the grave hath hold?
Or they, who in perdition dwell,
    Thy faithfulness unfold?

In darkness can thy mighty hand
    Or wondrous acts be known?
Thy justice in the gloomy land
    Of dark oblivion?

But I to thee, O Lord, do cry,
    Ere yet my life be spent;
And up to thee my pray'r doth hie
    Each morn, and thee prevent.

Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
    And hide thy face from me,
That am already bruis'd, and shake
    With terror sent from thee?
Bruis'd and afflicted, and so low
    As ready to expire;
While I thy terrors undergo,
    Astonish'd with thine ire.

Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow;
    Thy threat'nings cut me through:
All day they round about me go,
    Like waves they me pursue.
Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
    And sever'd from me far:
They fly me now whom I have lov'd,
    And as in darkness are.

A PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV.

When the blest seed of Terah's faithful son,
After long toil, their liberty had won;
And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand;
Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,
His praise and glory was in Israel known.
That saw the troubled sea, and shivering fled,
And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foal.
The high huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
Amongst their ewes; the little hills, like lambs.
Why fled the ocean? And why skipt the mountains?
Why turned Jordan tow'rd his crystal fountains?
Shake, Earth; and at the presence be aghast
Of Him that ever was, and aye shall last;
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

**PSALM CXXXVI.**

LET us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind;
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.
Let us blaze his Name abroad,
For of gods he is the God.
For his, etc.
O, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell.
For his, etc.
Who, with his miracles, doth make
Amazed heav'n and earth to shake.
For his, etc.
Who, by his wisdom, did create
The painted heav'ns so full of state.
For his, etc.
Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watery plain.
For his, etc.
Who, by his all-commanding might,
Did fill the new-made world with light.
For his, etc.
And caus'd the golden-tressed sun
All the day long his course to run.
For his, etc.
The horned moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright.
For his, etc.
He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land.
For his, etc.
And, in despite of Pharaoh fell,
He brought from thence his Israel.
For his, etc.
The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythraean main.
For his, etc.
The floods stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass.
For his, etc.
But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power.

For his, etc.
His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness.

For his, etc.
In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown.

For his, etc.
He foil'd bold Seon and his host,
That rul'd the Amorrëan coast.

For his, etc.
And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew.

For his, etc.
And to his servant Israel
He gave their land, therein to dwell.

For his, etc.
He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery.

For his, etc.
And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy.

For his, etc.
All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need.

For his, etc.
Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth.

For his, etc.
That his mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye.

For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.
IOANNIS MILTONI,
LONDINENSIS,
P O E M A T A.
QUORUM PLEAQE INTRA ANNUM AETATIS
VIGESIMUM CONSCRIPSIT.

HÆC quae sequuntur de authore testimonia, tametsi ipse intelligebat non tam de se quam supra se esse dicta, eo quod praecelaro ingenio viri, nec non amici ita fere solent laudare, ut omnia suis potius virtutibus, quam veritati congruentia nimis cupidè affingant, noluit tamen horum egregiam in se voluntatem non esse notam; cum alii praesertim ut it faceret magnopere suaderent. Dum enim nimiae laudis invidiam totis ab se viribus amolitur, sibique quod plus aequo est nou attributum esse mavult, judicium interim hominum cordatorum atque illustrium quin summo sibi honorì ducat, negare non potest.

Ioannes Baptista Mansus, Marchio Villensis, Neapolitanus, ad Ioannem Miltonium, Angulum.

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

Ad Ioannem Miltonem, Angulum, triplici Poeseos Laurea coronandum, Graeca nimirum, Latina, atque Hebrusca, Epigramma Ioannis Salsilli, Romani.

CEDE Meles, cedat depressa Mincius urna;
Sebetus Tassium desinat usque loqui;
At Thamesis victor cunctis ferat altior undas,
Nam per te, Milto, par tribus unus erit.

Ad Ioannem Miltonum.

GRAECIA Maecidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem, Anglia Miltonum jactat utrique parem.

SELVAGGI.


ODE.

ERGIMI all' Etra è Clio
Perche di stelle intreccierò corona
Non piu del Biondo Dio
La Fronde eterna in Pindo, e in Elica
Diensi a merto maggior, maggiori i regi,
A' celeste virtù celesti regi.

Non po del tempo edace
Rimaner preda, eterno alto valore
Non po l' oblio rapace
Furar dalle memorie eccelso onore,
Su l' arco di mia ciera un dardo forte
Virtù m'adattai, e ferirò la morte.

Del Ocean profondo
Cinta dagli ampi gorghi Anglia resiede
Separata dal mondo,
Però che il suo valor l'umana eccede:
Questa seconda sà produrre Eroi,
Ch' hanno a ragion del sovruman tra noi.

Alla virtù sbandita
Danno ne i petti lor fido ricetto,
Quella gli è sol gradita,
Perche in lei san trovar gioia, e diletto;
Ridilllo tu, Giovanni, e mostra in tanto
Con tua vera virtù, vero il mio Canto.

Lungi dal Patrio lido
Spinse Zeusi l' industre ardente brama;
Ch' udio d'Helena il grido
Con aurca tromba rimbombar la fama,
E per poterla effigiare al paro
Dalle più belle Idee trasse il più raro.

Così l'Ape Ingegnosa
Trae con industria il suo liquor pregiato
Del giglio e dalla rosa,
E quanti vaghi fiori ornano il prato;
Formano un dolce suon diverse Chorde,
Fan varie voci melodia concorde.

Di bella gloria amenta
Milton dal Ciel natio per varie parti
Le peregrine piante
Volgesti a ricercar scienze, ed arti;
Del Gallo regnator vedesti i Regni,
E dell' Italia ancor gl' Eroi più degni.

Fabro quasi divino
Sol virtù rintracciando il tuo pensiero
Vide in ogni confino
Chi di nobil valor calca il sentiero;
L' ottimo dal miglior dopo scegliea
Per fabbricar d'ogni virtù l'Idea.

Quanti nacquero in Flora
O in lei del parlar Tosco appresar l'arte,
La cui memoria onora
Il mondo fatta eterna in dotte carte,
Volesti ricercar per tuo tesoro,
E parlasti con lor nell' opre loro.

Nell' altera Babelle
Per te il parlar confuse Giove in vano,
Che per varie favelle
Di se stessa trofeo cadde su ’l piano:
Ch’ Ode oltr’ all Anglia il suo piu degno Idioma
Spagna, Francia, Toscana, e Grecia, e Roma.

I più profondi arcani
Ch’ occulta la natura e in cielo e in terra
Ch’ à ingegni sovrumani
Troppo avaro tal’ hor gli chiude, e serra,
Chiaramente conosci, e giungi al fine
Della moral virtude al gran confine.

Non batta il tempo l’ ale,
Fermisi immoto, e in un fermin si gl’ anni,
Che di virtù immortale.
Scorron di troppo ingiuriosi a i danni;
Che s’opre degne di poema o storia
Furron gia, l’hai presenti alla memoria.

Dammi tua dolce Cetra
Se vuoi ch’io dica del tuo dolce canto,
Ch’ inalzandoti all’ Etra
Di farti huomo celeste ottiene il vanto,
Il Tamigi il dirà che gl’ e concesso
Per te suo cingo parreggiah Permesso.

Io o che in riva del Arno
Tento spiegar tuo merto alto, e preclaro
So che fatico indarno,
E ad ammirar, non a lodarlo imparo;
Freno dunque la lingua, e ascolto il core
Che ti prende a lodar con lo stupore.

Del Sig. Antonio Francini, Gentilhuomo Fiorentino.

---

IOANNI MILTONI
LONDINENSI

Juveni Patria, virtutibus eximio.

VIRO qui multa peregrinacione, studio cuncta orbis terrarum loca perspexit, ut novus Ulysses omnia ubique ab omnibus apprehenderet:

Polyglotto, in cujus ore linguae jam deperditae sic reviviscunt, ut idiomata omnia sint in ejus laudibus in facunda; Et jure ea percallet, ut admirationes et plausus populorum ab propria sapientia excitatos, intelligat:

Illi, cujus animi dotes corporisque sensus ad admiratio-nem commoveunt, et per ipsam motum cuique auferunt; cujus opera ad plausus hortantur, sed venestate vocem laudatoribus admun.

Cui in memoria totus orbis; in intellectu sapientia; in volunta ardor gloriae; in ore eloquentia; harmonicos coe-
POEMATA.

Iestium sphaerarum sonitus astronomiaduce audienti; characteres mirabilium naturae per quos Dei magnitudo descriptur magistra philosophia legenti; antiquitatum lattebras, vetustatis excidia, eruditionis ambages, comite assidua autorum lectione,

Exquirenti, restauranti, percurrenti.
At cur nitor in arduum?

Illi in cujus virtutibus evulgandis ora Famae non sufficient, nec hominum stupor in laudandis satis est, reverentiae et amoris ergo hoc ejus meritis debitum admirationis tributum offert Carolus Datus, Patricius Florentinus,

Tanto homini servus, tantae virtutis amator.

---

ELEGARIUM
LIBER PRIMUS.

ELEGIA PRIMA.

Ad Carolum Deodatum.

TANDEM, charae, tuae mihi pervenere tabellae,
   Pertulit et voce nuncia charta tuae;
   Pertulit occidua Devae Cestrensis ab ora
   Vergivium prono quâ petit amne salum.
Multum, credo, juvat terras aluisse remotas
   Pectus amans nostri, tamque fidele caput,
   Quodque mihi lepidum tellus longinquâ sodalem
   Debet, at unde brevi reddere jussa velit.
Me tenet urbs refluat quam Thanesiam alluit undâ,
   Meque nec invitus patria dulcis habet.
Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
   Nec dudum vetiti me laris angit amor.
Nuda nec arva placet, umbrasque negantia molles,
   Quam male Phoebicolis conventit ille locus!
Nec duri libet usque minas proferre magistri
   Caeteraque ingenio non subeunda mea.
Si sit hoc exilium patrios adisse penates,
   Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
Non ego vel proferi nomen sortemve recuso,
   Lactus et exili conditione fruor.
O utinam vates nunquam graviora tulisset
   Ille Tomitano febilis exul agro;
   Non tunc Ionio quicquam cessisset Homero,
   Neve foret victo Ians tibi prima Maro.
Tempora nam licet hic placidis dare libera Musis,
   Et totum rapiunt me mea vita libri.
Excipit hinc fessum sinuosi pompa theatri,
   Et vocat ad plausus garrula scena suos.
Seu catus auditur senior, seu prodigus haeres,
Seu procos, aut posita casside miles adest,
Sive decennali foecundus lite patronus
Detonat inculto barbarca verba foro!
Saepe vafer quato succurrit servus amanti,
Et nasum rigidum fallit ubique patriis;
Saepe novos illic virgo mirata calores
Quit sit amor nescit, dum quoque nescit, amant.
Sive crucentatum furiosa Tragoedia sceptrum
Quassat, et effusis crinibus ora rotat;
Et dolet et specto, juvat et spectasse dolcndo,
Interdura et lacrvinis dulcis amaror inest:
Seu puer infelix indelibata requit
Senmneret Pelopeia domus,
Seu nobilis hi,
Aut luit incestos aula Creontis avos.
Sed neque sub secto semper nec in urbe latemus,
Irrita nee nobid tempora veris eunt.
Nos quoque lucus habet vicinà consitius ulmo,
Atque suburbani nobilis umbra loci.
Saepe hic blandas spirantia sidera flammas
Virgineos videas praeteriisse choros.
Ah quoties dignae stupui miracula formae
Quae possit senium vel reparare Jovis!
Ah quoties vidi superantia lumina gemmas,
Atque faces quotquot volvit uteque polus;
Collique bis vivi Pelopis quae brachia vincent,
Quaeque fluit puro nectare tincta via,
Et decus eximium frontis, tremulosque capillos,
Aurec: quae fallax retia tendit Amor;
Pellacesque genas, ad quos hyacinthina sordet
Purpura, et ipse tui floris, Adoni, rubor!
Cedite laudateae toties Heroides olim,
Et quaecunque vagum cepit amica Jovem.
Cedite Achaeemaniae turrità fronte puellae,
Et quot Susa colunt, Memnoniamque Ninon.
Vos etiam Danae facies submittite Nymphae,
Et vos Iliaeae, Romuleaeque nurus.
Nec Pompecianas Tarpeia Musa columnas
Jactet, et Ausoniis plena theatra stolis.
Gloria Virginibus debetur prima Britannis,
Extera sat tibi sit foemina posse sequi.
Tuque urbs Dardanis Londoium structa colonis
Turrigerum latè consicienda caput,
Tu nimium felix intra tua moenia claudis
Quiquid formosi pendulus orbis habet.
Non tibi tot coela scintillant astra sereno
Endymionaeae turba ministra deae,
Quot tibi conspicueae formàque auróque puellae
Per medias radiant turba videnda vias.
Creditur hue genuinis venisse invecta columbis
Alma pharetragae militæ cincta Venus,
Huic Cnidon, et riguas Simontis flumine valles,
Huic Paphon, et roseam posthabitura Cypron.

Ast ego, dum pueri sinit indulgentia caeci,
Moenia quam subito linqere fausta pato;
Et vitare procul malefidae infamia Circes
Atria, divini Molyos usus ope.
Stat quoque juncoas Cami remeare paludes,
Atque iterum raueae murmure adire Scholae.
Interea fid parvum cape munus amici,
Paucaque in alternos verba coacta modos.

ELEGIA SECUNDA.
ANNO AETATIS 17.

In obitum Praeconis Academici Cantabrigiensis.

TE, qui conspicuus baculo fulgente solebas
Palladium toties ore ciere gregem,
Ultima praecoonum praecoonem te quoque saeva
Mors rapit, officio nec savet ipsa suo.
Candidiora licet fuerint tibi tempora plurnis
Sub quibus accipimus delituisse Joveum,
O dignus tamen Haemonio juvenescere succo,
Dignus in Aesonios vivere posse dies,
Dignus quem Stygiis medicâ revocaret ab undis
Arte Coronides, saepe rogante dea.
Tu si jussus eras acies accire togatas,
Et celer à Phoebu numtis ire tuo,
Talis in Illiacâ stabat Cyllenius aula
Alipes, aetherea missus ab arce Patris.
Talis et Eurybates ante ora furentis Achillei
Rettulit Atridae jussa severa ducis.
Magna sepulchorum regina, satelles Averni,
Saeva nimis Musis, Palladi saevâ nimis,
Quin illos rapias qui pondus inutil terraec!
Turba quidem est telis ista petenda tuais.
Vestibus hunc igitur pullis Academia luge,
Et madeant lachrymis nigra feretra tuais.
Fundat et ipsa modos querebunda Elegèia tristes,
Personet et totis naenia moesta scholis.

ELEGIA TERTIA.
ANNO AETATIS 17.

In obitum Praesulis Wintoniensis.

MOESTUS eram, et tacitus, nullo comitante, sedebam,
Haerebantque animo tristia plura meo,
Protinus en subiit funesteae clades imago
Fecit in Angliaco quam Libitina solo;
Dum procerum ingressa est splendentes marmore turres,
Dira sepulchrali mors metuenda face;
Pulsavitque auro gravidos et jaspite muros,
Nec metuit satrapum sternere falce greges.
Tunc memini clarique ducis, fratrisque verendi
Intempestivis ossa cremata regis:
Et memini Heroum quos vidit ad aethera raptos,
Flevit et amissos Belgia tota duces.
At te praecipue luxi dignissime Praesul,
Wintoniaeque olim gloria magna tuae;
Deliciu fletu, et tristi Sic ore querebat,
Mors fera Tartareo diva secunda Jovi,
Nonne satis quod sylva tuas persentiat iras,
Et quod in herbosos jus tibi detur agros,
Quodque afflata tuo marcescant lilia tabo,
Et cocus, et pulchrae Cypridi sacra rosa,
Nec simis, ut semper fluvio contermina quercus
Miretur lapsus praetereuntis aquae?
Et tibi succumbit liquido quae plurima coelo
Evehitur permis quamlibet augur avis,
Et quae mille nigris errant animalia sylvis,
Et quot alunt niutum Proteos antra pessus.
Invida, tanti tibi cum sit concessa potestas;
Quid juvat humana tingere caede manus?
Nobileque in pectus certas acuisse sagittas,
Semideamque animam sede fugasse sua?
Talia dum larcymans alto sub pectore volvo,
Roscidus occiduis Hesperus exit aquis,
Et Tartessiaco submerserat aequore currum
Phoebus, ab eoo littoro mensus iter.
Nec mora, membra cavo posui refovenda cubili,
Considerant oculos novisque soporque meos:
Cum mihi visus eram lato spatiarier agro,
Heu nequit ingenium visa referre meum.
Illic puniced radiabant omnia luce,
Ut matutino cum juga solo rubent.
Ac veluti cum pandit opes Thaumantia proles,
Vestitu nituit multicolore solum.
Non dea tam variis ornavit floribus hortos
Alcinoi, Zephyro Chloris amata levi.
Flumina vernantes lambunt argentea campos,
Difior Hesperio luctet arenae Tago.
Serpit odoriferas per opes levis aura Favoni,
Aure sub immematis humida nata rosis,
Talis in extremis terrae Gangetidis oris
Luciferi regis fingitur esse domus,
Ipse racemiferis dum densas vitibus umbras
Et pellucentes miror ubique locos,
Ecce mihi subito Praesul Wintonius aslat,
Sidercum nitido fulsit in ore jubarn;
Vestis ad auratos defluxit candida talos,
Infula divinum cinxerat alba caput.
Dumque senex tali incedit venerandus amictu,
Intremuit laeto florea terra sono.
Agnina gemmatis plandunt coelctin pennis,
Pura triumphali personat aethra tuba.
Quisque novum amplexu comitem cantuque salutat,
Hosque alquis plaedio misit ab ore sonos;
Nate veni, et patrii felix cape gaudia regni,
Semper abhinc duro, nate, labore vaca.
Dixit, et aligerae tetigerunt nablia turmae;
At mihi cum tenebris aurea pulsa quies.
Flebam turbatos Cephaleiá pellice somnos,
Talia contingent somnia saepe mihi.

ELEGIA QUARTA.
ANNO AETATIS 18.

Ad Thomam Innium, Praeceptorem suum, apud Mercatores Anglicos, Hamburgae agentes, Pastoris Munere fungentem.

CURRE per immensum subitó mea littera pontum,
I, pete Teutonicos laeve per aequor agros;
Segnis rumpe moras, et nil, precor, obtect cuni,
Et festinantis nil remoretur iter.
Ipse ego Siciano fraenantem carere ventos
Acolon, et virides sollicitabo Deos,
Caeruleanque suis comitatam Dorida Nyphilis,
Ut tibi dent placidam per sua regna viam.
At tu, si poteris, celeres tibi sume jugales,
Vecta quibus Colchis fugit ab ore viri;
Aut quœs Triptolemus Scythicas devenit in oras
Gratus Eleusiná missus ab urbe puér.

Atque ubi Germanas flavere videbis arenas
Ditis ad Hamburgae moenia flecte gradum,
Dicitur occiso quae ducere nomen ab Hauá
Cimbrica quem fertur clava dedisse neci.
Vivit ibi antiquae clarus pietatis honore
Praesul Christicolas pascere doctus ovés;
Ille quidem est animae plusquam pars alterae nostrae,
Dimidio vitae vivere cogor ego.

Hei mihi quot pelagi, quot montes interjecti
Me faciunt alía parte carere mei!
Charior ille mihi quàm tu doctissime Graium
Cliniadi, pronepos qui Telamonis erat;
Quamque Stagirites generoso magnus alumno,
Quem peperit Lybico Chaonis alma Jovi.
Qualis Amyntorides, qualis Philyreius Ileros
Myrmidonum regi, talis et ille mihi.
Primus ego Aonios illo præeceunte recessus
Lustrabam, et bifidi sacra virèta jugi,
Pieriosque hausi latices, Clique favente,
Castalia sparsi laeta ter ora mero.
Flammus at signum ter viderat arietis Aethon,
Induxitque auro lanea terga novo,
Bisque novo terram sparsisti Chlori senilém
Gramine, bisque tuas abstulit Auster opes:
Nec dum ejus licuit mihi lumina pascere vultu,
Aut linguae dulces aure bibisse sonos.
Vade igitur, cursuque Eurum praeverte sonorum,
Quam sit opus monitis res docet, ipsa vides.
Invenies dulci cum conjugé fortè sedentem,
Mulcentem gremio pignora chara suo,
Forsitan aut veterum praëlarga volumina patrum
Versantem, aut veri biblia sacra Dei,
Caelestive animas saturantem rore tenellas,
Grande salutiferae religionis opus.
Utque solet, multam sit dicere cura salutem,
Dicere quam decuit, si modo adesset, herum.
Haece quoque paulum oculos in humum defixa modestos
Verba verecundo sis memori ore loqui:
Haec tibi, si tencris vacat inter praelia Musis,
Mittit ab Angliaco littore fida manus.
Accipe sinceram, quamvis sit sera,
salutem; Fiat et hoc ipso gratior ilia tibi.
Sera quidem, sed vera fuit, quam casta rexit Icaris
a lento Penelopea Thros.
Ast ego quid volui manifestum tollere crimen,
Ipse quod ex omni parte levare nequit?
Arguitur tardus merito, noxamque fatetur,
Et pudet oiiicium descruisse suum.
Tu modò da veniam fasso, veniamque roganti,
Crimina diminui, quae pateuere, solent.
Non ferus in pavidos rictus diducit hiantes,
Vulnifico pronos nec rapit umbque leo.
Saepe sarissiferi crudelia pectora Thrasis
Supplicias ad moestas deliciere preces.
Extensaque manus avertunt fulminis ictus,
Placat et iratos hostia parva Deos.
Jamque diu scripsiisse tibi fuit impetus illi,
Neve moras ultra ducere passus Amor.
Nam vaga Fama refert, heu multia vera malorum!
In tibi finitimis bella tumere locis,
Teque tuamque urbem truculentu milite cingi,
Et iam Saxonicos arma parasse duces.
Te circum latè campos populatur Enyo,
Et sata carne virum jam erur arva rigat;
Germanisque suum concessit Thracia Martem,
Illuc Odrysios Mars pater egit eeous;
Perpetuoque comans jam deslorescit oliva,
Fugit et aerisonam Diva perosa tubam,
Fugit io terris, et jam non ultima virgo
Creditur ad superas justa volasse domos.
Te tamen interea belli circumsonant horror,
Vivis et ignoto solus inopsque solo;
Et, tibi quam patrii non exhibueris penates,
Sede peregrinâ quaeris eegenus opem.
Patria dura parent, et saxis saevior albis
Spumea quae pulsat litiuus unda tui,
Siccine te decess innocuos exponere foetus,
Siccine in externam ferren cogis humum,
Et sinis ut terris quacent alimenta remotis
Quos tibi prospeciens miserat ipse Deus,
Et qui laeta ferunt de coelo nuntia, quique
Quae via post cineres ducat ad astras, docent?
Digna quidem Stygiis quae vivas clausa tenebris,
Aeternâque animae digna perire fame!
Haud alter vates terrae Thesbitidis olim
Pressit inassueto devia tesqua pede,
Desertasque Arabum salebras, dum regis Achabi
Effugit atque tuas, Sidoni dira, manus.
Talis et horrisono laceratus membra flagello,
Paulus ab Aemathia pelitur urbe Cilix.
Piscosaeque ipsum Gergessae civis Icsum
Finibus ingratus jussit abide suis.
At tu sume animos, nec spes cadat anxia curis,
Nec tua concutiat decolor ossa metus.
Sis etenim quamvis fulgentibus obsitus armis,
Intententque tibi millia tela necem,
At nullis vel inerme latus violabitur armis,
Deque tuo cuspis nulla cruxere bibet.
Namque eris ipse Dei radiante sub aegide tutus,
Ille tibi custos, et pugil ille tibi;
Ille Sionaeae qui tot sub moenibus arcis
Assyrios fudit nocte silente viros;
Inque fugam vertit quos in Samaritidas oras
Misit ab antiquis prisca Damascus agris,
Terruit et densas pavido cum rege cohortes,
Acre dum vacuo buccina clara sonat,
Cornea pulvereum dum verberat ungula campum,
Currus arenosam dum quatit actus humum,
Auditurque hinnitus equorum ad bella ruentum,
Et strepitus ferri, murmuraque alta virüm.
Et tu (quod superest miseric) sperare memento,
Et tua magnanimo pectore vince mala;
Nec dubites quandoque frui melioribus annis,
Atque iterum patrios posse videre lares.

ELEGIA QUINTA.
ANNO AETATIS 20.

In adventum veris.

In se perpetuo Tempus revolubile gyro
Iam revocat Zephyros vere tepente novos;
Induiturque brevem Tellus reparata juventam,
Iamque soluta gelu dulce virescit humus,
Sallor? an et nobis redeunt in carmina vires,
Ingeniumque mihi munere veris adest?
Munere veris adest, iterumque vigescit ab illo
(Quis putet) atque aliqquad jam sibi poscit opus.
Castalis ante oculos, bifidumque cacumen oberrat,
Et mihi Pyrenen somnia nocte serunt;
Concitaque arcana fervent mihi pectora motu,
Et furor, et sonitus me sacer intùs agit.
Delius ipse venit, video Peneide lauro
Implicitos crines, Delius ipse venit.
Iam mihi mens liquidi raptatur in ardua coeli,
Perque vagas nubes corpore liber eo;
Perque umbras, perque antrea feror penetalia vatum,
Et mihi fana patent interiusa Deum;
Intuiturque animus tota quid agatur Olympo,
Nec fugiunt oculos Tartara caeca meos.
Quid tarn grande sonat distento spiritus ore?
Quid parit haec rabies, quid sacer iste furor?
Ver inilii, quod dedit ingenium, cantabitur illi;
Profuerint isto reddita dona mo.

lam Philomela tuos foliis adoperta novellis
Instituis modulos, dum silet omnem nemus:
Urbe ego, tu sylvæ simul incipiamus utrique,
Et simul adventum veris uterque canat.
Veris io rediere vices, celebremus honores
Veris, et hoc subeat Musa perennis opus.

lam sol Aethiopas fugiens Tithoniaque arvum,
Flectit ad Arctoas aurea lora plagas.
Est breve noctis iter, hic vig est mora nocte recessit,
Neve Giganteum Dii timuere scelus.
Forte aliquis scopuli recubans in vertice pastor,
Roscida cum primo sole rubescit humus,
Hac, ait, hac certè caruisti nocte puellâ
Phoebe tunâ, celeres quae retineret equos.
Laeta suas redempt ıulum quae retincrct equos.
Laeta suas redempt Cynthia, pharetramque resumit
Cynthia, Luciferas ut videt alta rotas,
Et tennes ponens radios gaudere videtur
Officium fieri tam breve fratris ope.
Desere, Phoebus ait, thalamos Aurora seniles,
Quid juvat effoeto pracoibusse toro?
Te manet Aeolides viridi venator in herba,
Surge, tuos ignes altus Hymettus habet.
Flava verecundo dea crimen in ore fatetur,
Et mutuimos ocibus urget equos.
Exuit invisam Tellus rediviva senectam,
Et cupit amplexus Phoebe subire tuos;
Et cupit, et digna est, quid enim formosius illâ,
Pandit ut omniferos luxuriosas sinus,
Atque Arabum spirat messes, et ab ore venusto
Mitia cum Paphiis fundit amona rosis!
Ecce coronatur sacro frons ardua luceo,
Cingit ut Idaeam pinea turris Opim;
Et vario madidos intexit flore capillos,
Floribus et visa est posse placere suis.
Floribus effusos ut crat redimita capillos
Tenario placuit diva Sicana Deo.
Aspice Phoebe tibi faciles hortantur amores,
Mellitasque movent flamina verna preces.
Cinnamæ Zephyrus leve plaudit odorifer aët
Blanditiasque tibi ferre videntur aëtes.
Nec sine dote tuos temeraria quaecriit amores
Terra, nec optatos poscit egena toros.
Alma salutiferum medicos tibi gramen in usus
Praebet, et hinc titulos adjuvat ipsa tuos.
Quod si te prætium, si te fulgentia tangunt
Munera, (innumeribus saepe coemptus Amor)
Illa tibi ostentat quascunque sub æquore vasto,
Et superinjectis montibus abdit opes.
Ali quoties cum tu clivoso tessus Olympo
In vespertinas praecipitaris aquas.
Cur te, inquit, cursu languament Phoebe diurno
Hesperis recipit Caerula mater aquis?
Quid tibi cum Tethys! Quid cum Tartesside lympahas.
Dia quid immundo perluis ora sola?
Frígore Phoebe meâ melius captabis in umbra
Huc ades, ardentès imbuc rore comas.
Mollior egelidâ veniet tibi somnus in herbâ,
Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
Quâque jaces circum mulcebit lenè susurrans
Aura per humentes corpora fusa rosas.
Nec me (crede mihi) terrrent Semellícia fata,
Nec Phaetonteo fumidus axis equo;
Cum tu Phoebe tuo sapiëntius uteris igni,
Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
Sic Tellus lasciva suos suspirat amores;
Matris in exemplum cactera turba ruunt.
Nunc etenim toto currít vagus orbe Capido,
Languentesque sovet solis ab igne faces.
Insonuere novis lethalia cornua nervis,
Triste micant ferro tela coruca novo.
Jamque vel invictam tentat superasse Dianam,
Quæque sedet sacro Vesta pudica foco.
Ipsa senescentem reparat Venus annua lormam,
Atque iterum tepido creditur orta mari.
Marmoreas juvenes clamant Hymenæce per urbes,
Littus io Hymen, et cava saxa sonant.
Cultior ille venit tunicisque decentior aptâ,
Punicum redolet vestis odora crocum.
Egregiutrace frequens ad amoeni gaudia veris
Virgineos auro cincta puella sinis.
Votum est cuique suum, votum est tamen omnibus uum,
Ut sibi quem cupiat, det Cytherea virum.
Nunc quoque septenâ modulator arundine pastor,
Et sua quæ jungat carmina Phyllis habet.
Navita nocturno placat sua sidera cantu,
Delphinasque leves ad vada summa vocat.
Jupiter ipse alto cum conjuge ludit Olympo,
Convocat et famulos ad sua festa Deos,
Nunc etiam Satyri cum sera crepuscula surgunt
Pervolitant celeri florea rura choro,
Sylvanusque suæ cyparissi fronte revinctus,
Semicaperque Deus, semidenumque caper.
Quaque sub arboribus Dryades latuere vetustis
Per juga, per solos expiantur agros.
Per sata luxuriat fruticetaque Maenalius Pan,
Vix Cybele mater, vix sibi tuta Ceres;
Atque aliquam cupidus praedatur Oreada Faunus,
Consult in trepidos dum sibi nympha pedes,
Jamque latet, latitasque cupit male tecta videri,
Et fugit, et fugiens pervelit ipsa capi.
Dii quoque non dubitant coelo praeponere sylvas
Et sua quisque sibi numina Incus habet,
Nee vos arborea dii precor ite domo.
Te referant miscri te Jupiter aurea terris
Saecla, quid ad nimbos aspere tela redes?
Tu saltum lentè rapidis age Phoebe jugales
Qua potes, et sensim tempora veris cant;
Brumaque productas tardè ferat hispida noctes,
Ingruat et nostro senior umbra polo.

**ELEGIA SEXTA.**

*Ad Carolum Deodatum, ruri commorantem,*

qui cum Idibus Decemb. scriptisset, et sua carmina excusari postulasset, si solito minus essent bona, quod inter lauitias, quibus erat ab amicis exceptus, haud satis felicem operam Musis dare se posse affirmabat, hoc habuit responsum.

MITTO tibi sanam non pleno ventre salutem,
ae tua distento fortè carere potes.
At tua quid nostram prolectat Musa camoenam,
Nec sitis optatas posse sequi tenebras?
Carmine scire velis quàm te redamenque colamque,
Crede mihi, vix hoc carmine scire queas,
Nam neque noster amor modulis includitur arctis,
Nec venit ad claudos integer ipsae pedes.
Quàm bene solennes epulas, bilaremque Decembrim,
Festaque coecilifugam quae coluere Deam,
Deliciasque refers, hyberni gaudia ruris,
Haustaque per tepidos Gallica musta focos!
Quid quereris refugam vino dapibusque poesin?
Carmen amat Bacchum, carmina Bacchus amat.
Nec puduit Phocum virides gestasse cymbos,
Atque hederam lauro praecopuisse suae.
Saepius Aoniis clamavit collibus Euoe
Mista Thyoneo turba novena choro.
Naso Corallaeis mala carmina misit ab agris:
Non illic eipulae, non sata vidis erat.
Quid usi vina, rosesque racemiferumque Lyaeum
Cantavit brevibus Tēia Musa modis?
Pindaricosque inflat numeros Teunesius Enan,
Et redolet sumptam pagina quaque merum;
Dum gravis everso currus crepat axe supinus,
   Et volat Eleo pulvere fuscus eques.
Quadrinoque madens Lyricen Romanus Iuccho
Dulce canit Glyceran, flavicomamque Chloen.
Jam quoque lauta tibi generoso mensa paratu
   Mentis alit vires, ingeniumque fovet.
Massica foecundum despumant pacula venam,
   Fundis et ex ipso condita metra cado.
Addimus his arces, fusunque per intima Phoebum
Corda, favent uni Bacchus, Apollo, Ceres.
Scilicet haud mirum tam dulcia carmina per te
   Numine composito tres peperisse Deos.
Nunc quoque Thressa tibi caelato barbitos auro
   Insonat argutit mollkerj:ta; manu;
Auditurque chelys suspensa tapetia circum,
   Virgineos tremula quae regat arte pedes.
Illa tuas saltem teneant spectacula Musas,
   Et revocent, quantum crapula pellit iners.
Crede milii, dum psallit ebur, comitataque plectrum
   Implet odoratos festa chorea tholos,
Percipies taciturn per pectora serpere Phoebum,
   Quale permeat ossa calor,
Perque puellares oculos digitumque sonantem
   Irruet in totos lapsa Tialia sinis.
Namque Elegia levis multorum cura Deorum est,
   Et vocat ad numeros quemlibet illa suos;
Liber adest, elegis, Eratoque, Ceresque, Venusque,
   Et cum purpurea matre tenellus Amor,
Talibus inde licent convivia larga poetis,
   Saepius et veteri commaduisse mero.
At qui bella refert, et adulto sub Jove coelum,
   Heroasque pios, semideosque duces,
Et nunc sancta canit superum consulta deorum,
   Nunc latrata fero regna profundae cane.
Ille quidem parcé Samii pro more magistri
   Vivat, et innocuos praebet herba cibos;
Stet prope fagineo pellucida lympha catillo,
   Sobriaque e puro pacula fonte bibat.
Additur huic scelerisque vacans, et casta juventus,
   Et rigidí more, et sine labe manus.
Quafis veste nitens sacrâ, et lustralibus undis
   Surgis ad infensos augur iture Deos.
Hoc ritu vixisse ferunt post rapta sagacem
   Lumina Tiresian, Ogygiumque Linon,
Et lare devoto profugum Calchanta, senemque
   Orpheon edomitis sola per antra feris;
Sic dapis exiguus, sic rivi potor Homerus
   Dulichium vexit per freta longa virum.
Et per monstrificam Perseiae Phoebados aulam,
   Et vada foemineis insidiosa sonis,
Perque tuas rex ime domos, ubi sanguine nigro
   Dicitur umbrarum deiniisse greges.
Diis etenim sacer est vates, divûmque sacerdos,
   Spirat et occultum pectus, et ora Jovem.
At tu siquid agam scitabere (si modò saltem)
Elegia Septima, 
Anno Aetatis 19.

Nondum blanda tuas leges Amathusia nōram, 
Et Paphio vacuum pectus ab igne fuit, 
Saepe cupidineas, puerilia tela, sagittas, 
Attque tuum sprevi maxime numen Amor. 
Tu puer imbelles dixi transfige columbas, 
Conveniunt tenero mollia bella duci. 

At de passeribus tūmidos age, parve, triumphos, 
Hacc sunt militiae digna trophaeae tuae. 

In genus humanum quid inania dirigis arma? 
Non valet in fortēs ista pharetra viros. 

Nonulius ad Promptior) et duplici jam ferus igne calet. 
Ver erat, et summae radians per culmina villae 
Attulerat primam lux tibi Maie diem: 
At mihi adhuc refugant, quaerentiam lumine noctem, 
Nec matutinum sustinuere jubar. 

Astat Amor lecto, pictis amor impiger alis, 
Prodidit astantem mota pharetra Deum: 
Addideratque iras, sed et has decuisse putares, 
Et quicquid puero dignum et Amore fuit. 

Talis in aeterno juvenis Sigeius Olympo 
Miscet amatori pocula plena Jovi; 
Aut qui formosas pellexit ad oscula nymphas 
Thiodamantaeus Naiae raptus Hylas. 

Addideratque iras, sed et has decuisse putares, 
Addideratque truces, nec sine felle minas, 
Et miser exemplo saquisses tultis, inquit, 
Nunc mea quid possit dextera testis eris, 
Inter et expertos vires numerabere nostras, 
Et faciam vero per tua damna fidem. 

Ipse ego si nescis strato Pythone superbum 
Edomui Phoebum, cessit et ille mihi; 
Et quoties meminit Pencidos, ipse fatetur 
Certius et gravius tela nocere mea. 
Me nequit adductum curvare peritius arcem, 
Qui post terga solet vincere Parthius eques:
Cydonusque mihi cedit venator, et ille
Ineius uxori qui nescis author erat.
Est etiam nobis ingens quoque victus Orion,
Herculeaque manus, Herculeusque comes.
Jupiter ipse licet sua fulmina torquet in me,
Haecrubet lateri spicula nostra Jovis.
Cactera quaeb dubitas meius mea tela docebunt,
Et tua non leviter corda petenda mihi,
Nec te stulte tuae poterunt defendere Musae,
Nec tibi Phoebaeus porriget anguis ope.
Dixit, et aura to quatiens mucrone sagittam,
Evolat in tepidos Cypridos ille sinus.
At mihi risuro tonuit ferus ore minaci,
Et mihi de puero non metus ullus erat.
Et modo quae nostri spatiantur in urbe Quirites,
Et modo villarum proxima rura placet.
Turba frequens, facieque simillima turba dearuin
Splendida per medias itque redietque rias.
Auctaque luce dies gemino fulgore coruscat,
Fallor? an et radios hinc quoque Phoebus habet.
Haec ego non fugi spectacula grata severus,
Impetus quo me fert juvenilis, agr.
Lumina luminibus malè providus obvia misi,
Neve oculos potui continuissere meos.
Unum forte alius supereminiisse notaham,
Principium nostri lux erat illa mali.
Sie Venus optaret mortalibus ipsa videri,
Sie regina Deum conspicienda fuit.
Hanc memor objectit nobis malus ille Cupido,
Solus et hos nobis texuit autè dolos.
Nec procul ipse vafer latuit, multaque sagittae,
Et facis à tergo grande pependit onus.
Nec mora, nunc ciliis haesit, nunc virgini orii,
Insilt hinc labiis, insidet inde genis:
Et quascunque agilis partes jaculator oberrat,
Hei mihi, mille locis pectus inerrae ferit.
Protinus insoliti subierunt corda furores,
Uror amans intus, flammaque totus eram.
Interea misero quae jam mihi sola placebat,
Ablata est oculis non reditura meis.
Ast ego progreedior tacite querelundus, et excors,
Et dubius volui saepe referre pedem.
Findor, et haec remanet, sequitur pars altera votum,
Raplaque tam subiti gaudia flere juvat.
Sic dolet amissum proles Junonia caelu,
Inter Lemniacos praecipitata focus.
Talis et abreptum solem respebit, ad Orcum
V vectus ab attonitis Amphiaraus equis.
Quid faciam infelix, et luctu victus? amores
Nec licet inceptos ponere, neve sequi.
O utinam spectare semel mihi detur amatos
Vultus, et coram tristia verba loqui;
Forsitan et duro non est adamaunte creata,
Fortec nec ad nostras surdeat illa preces.
Crede mihi nullus sic infeliciter ars,
Ponar in exemplo primus et unus ego.
Parce precor teneri cum sis Deus ales amoris,
Pugnent officio nec tua facta tuo.
Jam tuus O certè est mihi formidabilis arcus,
Nate dea, jaculis nec minus igne potens.
Et tua fumabunt nostris altaria donis,
Solus, et in superis tu mihi summus eris.
Deme meos tandem, verum nec deme suores,
Nescio cur, miser est suaviter omnis amans:
Tu modo da facilis, posthaec mea sita futura est,
Cuspis amatuos figat ut una dos.

HAEC ego mente olim laevà, studioque supino
Nequitiae posui vana trophaea meae.
Scilicet abreptum sic me mala impulit error,
Indolibilese actas prava magistra fuit.
Donec Socraticos umbrosa Academia rivos
Praebuit, admissum dedocuitque jugum.
Protinus extinctis ex illo tempore flammos,
Cingta rigent mulo pectora nostra gelu,
Unde suis frigus metuit puer ipse sagittis,
Et Diomedem vim timet ipsa Venus.

---

IN PRODITIONEM BOMBARDICAM.

CUR simul in regem nuper satrapasque Britannos
Ansus es infandum perfide Fauxe nefas,
Fallor? an et mittis voluisti ex parte videri,
Et pensare malà cum pietate seleus?
Scilicet hos alti missurus ad atria coeli,
Sulphured curru flammivilisque rotis.
Qualiter ille feris caput inviolabile Parcis
Liquit Iordanios turbine raptus agros.

---

IN EANDEM.

SICCINE tentasti coelo donasse Iacolum
Quae septemgmino Bellua monte lates?
Ni meliora tuum poterit dare munera numen,
Parce precor donis insidiosa tuis:
Ille quidem sine te consortia serus adivit
Astra, nec inferni pulviris usus ope.
Sic potius foedos in coelum pelle cucullos,
Et quot habet brutos Roma profana Deos,
Namque hac aut aili nisi quemque adjuveris arte,
Crede mihi coeli vix bene scandet iter.

---

IN EANDEM.

PURGATOREM animae derisit Iacobus ignem,
Et sine quo superum non adeunda domus.
Frenduit hoc trinā monstrum Latiale carōna,  
Movit et horrīficum cornua dēna minax.  
Et nec ānultus āit temnes mēa sacra Britanne,  
Supplīcium spreta relīgione dabīs.  
Et si stellīgeras uñquam penetraverīs arces,  
Non nisi per flammās triste patebit iter.  
O quām funestō cecinstī proxima vero,  
Verbaque ponderibus vīx carītura suīs!  
Nam prope Tartareō sublime rotatus ab igni  
Ibat ad aetherae umbra perusta plagas.

---

IN E ANDEM.

QUEM modō Roma suís devovertat impia diris,  
Et Styge damnārāt Taenariōque simū,  
Hunc vicē mutātā jam tollere gestīt ad astra,  
Et cupid ad superos evehere usque Deos.

---

IN INVENTOREM BOMBARDÆ.

IAPETΙΟΝΙDEM laudavit caeca vetustas,  
Qui tūtī aethereum solis ab axe facēm:  
At mihi major erit, qui lurīda credītur arna,  
Et trīsidum fulmen surripuisse Jovi.

---

AD

LEONORAM ROMÆ CANΕNTEM.

ANGELUS unīcūique suūs (sic credīte gentes)  
Obtigitt aethereis ales ab ordīnibus.  
Quid mirum? Leonora tībī si gloria major,  
Nam tua præsentem vox sonat ipsa Deum.  
Aut Deus, aut vacui certē mens teritia coelī  
Per tua secretō guttura serpīt agens;  
Serpīt agens, facilisquē docet mortaliō cordā  
Sensim immortaliō assuescere posse sono.  
Quōd si cuncta quidem Deus est, per cunctaquē fūsus,  
In te unā loquitur, caetera mutus habet.

---

AD E ANDEM.

ALТЕRA Torquatum cepit Leonora poētam,  
Cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.  
Ah miser ille tuo quantō felicīūs aevō  
Perdītus, et propter te Leonora foret!  
Et te Pieriā sensisset voce canentem  
Aurea maternae filae movere lyrāc,  
Quamvis Dircaeō tōrisset lumīna Peanthōe  
Saevior, aut totus desipuisset inerō.
Tu tamen errantes caecà vertigine sensus
Voce cadem poteras composuisse tuà;
Et poteras aegro spirans sub corde quietem
Flexanimo cantu restituisse sibi.

A D E A N D E M.

CREDULA quid liquidam Sirena Neapoli jactas,
Claraque Parthenopes fana Acheloïados,
Littoreamque tuà defunctam Naïda rapà
Corporce Chalcidico sacra dedisse rogo?
illa quidem viviique, et amoenà Tibidis undà
Mutavit rauci murmura Pausilipi.
Illic Romulidùm studìis ornàta secundìs,
Atque homìnes cantu detìnet atque Deòs.

APOLOGUS DE RUSTICO ET HERO.

RUSTICUS ex malo sapidissima poma quotannis
Legit, et urbano lecta dedit Domino:
Hinc incredibili fructus dulcedine captus
Malum ipsam in propriis transtulit areolas,
Hactenus illa ferax, sed longo debilis aevò;
Mota solo assueto, proterviis aëri insers.
Quod tandem ut patuir Domino, spe lusus inani,
Dannavit celeres in sua damna manus.
Atque ait, heu quantò satius fuit illa Colonì
(Parva licet) grato donà tulisse animò!
Possem ego avarìtiam fraenare, gaulìque vorarem:
Nunc periere mihi et foetus et ipse parent.

ELEGIARUM FINIS.

S Y L V A R U M L I B E R.

ANNO AETATIS 16.

IN

OBITUM PROCANCELLARII MEDICI.

PARERE fatti discite legibus,
Manusque Parcae jam date supplices,
Qui pendulum telluris orbein
Iæpeti colitis nepotes.
Vos ei relicto mors vaga Taenaro
Semel vocárit flebilis, heu morae
Tentantur incassium dolique;
Per tenebras Stygis ire certum est.
Si destinatam pellere dextera
Mortem valeret, non ferus Hercules
Nessi venenatus cruore
Aemathia jacuisset Oeta.

Nec fraude turpi Palladis invidiae
Vidisset occisum Ilion Hectora, aut
Quem larva Peldis peremit
Ense Locro, Jove lacrymante.

Si triste fatum verba Hecatæia
Fugare possint, Telegoni pares
Vixisset infamis, potentique
Aegiali soror usa virgâ.

Numenque trinum fallere si queant
Artes medentûm, ignotaque gramina,
Non gnarus herbarum Machaon
Eurypylæ cecidisset hastâ.

Laesisset et nce te Philyreie
Sagitta echidnaæ perlita sanguine,
Nec tela te fulmenque avitum
Caeso puer-genetricis alvo.

Tuque, O alumno major Apolline,
Gentis togatae cui regimen datum,
Frondosa quem nunc Cirrha luget,
Et mediis Helicos in undis,

Jam praefuisses Palladio gregi
Laetus, superstes, nce sine gloria,
Nec puppe lustrasses Charoutis
Horribiles barathri recessus.

At fila rupit Persephone tua
Irata, cum te viderit artibus
Succoque pollenti tot atris
Faucibus eripuisse mortis.

Colende Praeses, membra precor tua
Mollî quiescantis cespite, et ex tuo
Crescant rosae, calthaque busto,
Purpureoque hyacinthus ore.

Sit mitë de te judicium Acaci,
Subrideatque Actnæa Proserpina,
Interque felices perennis
Elysio spatiere campo.

IN QUINTUM NOVEMBRIS,
ANNO AETATIS 17.
Pacificusque novo felix divesque sedebat
In solio, occulte doli securus et hostis;
Cum ferus ignifluo regnas Acheronte tyrannus,
Eumenidum pater, aethereo vagus exul Olympo,
Forte per immensum terrarum erraverat orhem,
Dinumerans sCELERIS socios, vernasque fideles,
Participes regni post funera moesta futuros;
His tempestates medio ciet æcre diras,
Illic unanimes odiostrut inter amicos,
Armat et invictas in mutua viscera gentes;
Regnaque olivifera vertit florentia pace,
Et quoscunque videt purae virtutis amantes,
Nos cupit adjicere imperio, fraudumque magister
Tentat inaccessum sceleri corrupere pectus,
Insidiasque locat tacitas, casseisque latentes
Tendit, ut incautos rapiat, seu Caspia Tigris
Insequitur trepidam deserta per avia praedam
Nocte sub illuni, et somno nictantibus astris.
Talibus infestat populos, et urbam
Cinctus caeruleae fumanti turbinem
Janique ilucetis albitis, et erva
Cui nomen dederat quondam Neptunia proles,
Amphitryoniad qui non dubitavit atrocam
Aequore tranato furiali poscere bello,
Ante expugnata crudelia saecla Troiae.
At simul hanc operaque et festa pace beatam
Aspicit, et pingues donis Cerealibus agris,
Quodque magis doluit, venerantem numina veri
Sancta Dei populum, tandem suspuria rupit
Tartareos ignes et luridum olentia sulphur;
Qualia Trinacria trux ab Jove clausus in Aetna
Effasset tabifico monstrum ob ore Tiphoeus.
Ignescunt oculi, stridctque adamantinus ordo
Dentis, ut armorum fragor, ictaque cuspide cuspis.
Atque pererrato solum hoc lacrymabile mundo
Invenit, dixit, gens haec mihi sola rebellis,
Contemtrixque jugi, nostraque potentior arte.
Hec tamen, mea si quicquam tentamina possunt,
Non feret hoc impune diu, non itib inulta.
Hactenus, et pictes liquido natae æcre pennis;
Qua volat, adversi praeccursant agrime venti,
Densantur nubes, et crebra tonitru fulgent.
Janque pruinosas velox superaverat Alpes,
Et tenet Ausoniae fines, a parte sinistra
Nimbifer Apenninus erat, priscique Sabini,
Dextra veneficiis infamis Heturia, nec non
Te fertua Tbris Thetidi videt oscula dantem;
Hinc Mavortigenae consistit in acre Quirini.
Reddiderant dubiam jam sera crepuscula lucem,
Cum circumcrediditur totam Tricoroniur urbem,
Panificosque Deos portat, scapulisque virorum
Evehitur, praeceunt submissio poplite reges,
Et mendicantium series longissima fratrum;
Cereaque in manibus gestant funalia caeci,
Cimmeriis nati in tenebris, vitamque trahentes.  
Templa dein multís subeunt Incensíta taedis  
(Vesper erat sacer iste Petro) fremitusque canentum  
Saepe thulos implet vacnos, et inane locorum.  
Quaíter exulatul Bromius, Bromiique caterva,  
Orgia cantantes in Echionio Aracyntho,  
Dum tremit attonitus vitreis Asopus in undis,  
Et procul ipse cavá respondat rupe Cíthaeoron.  

Hís igitur tandem solenní more peractís,  
Nox senís amplexus Erebi taciturna reliquit,  
Praecipitesque impellit equós stimulante flagello,  
Captum oculís Typhlonta, Melanchætæque feroxem,  
Atque Acherontae prógnatam patre Siopen  
Torpidam, et hirsutís horrentem Phrica capillis.  

Interíæ regum domitor, Phlegetontius haeres  
Ingreditur taliacos (neque enim secretus adulter  
Producit steriles mollí sine pellice noctes)  
At vix composites somnus claudebat ocellos,  
Cum niger umbrarum dominus, rectorque silentum,  
Praedatórque homínum falsâ sub imagine tectus  
Astitit, assumptís tempora canis,  
Barba sinús promisses tegit, cineracea longo  
Vertice de raso, et ne quicquam desit ad artes,  
Barba sinus promises tegit, cineracea longo  
Syrmate vertit humum vestis, pendetque cucullus  
Cujus gaudebant soleis dare basia reges.  

quam equitátem Christi, sseit,  
Irritus ille labor, tu callidus utere fraude,  
Virtute scriptórum veritatem maníbit.
Quaelibet haereticis disponere retia fas est;
Jamque ad consilium extremis rex magnus ab oris
Patricios vocat, et procurum de stirpe creatos,
Grandaeosque patres trabed, canisque verendos;
Hos tu membratim poteris consupegere in auras,
Atque dare in cineres, nitrati pulveris igne
Aedibus injecto, quâ convenere, sub imis.
Profinus ipse igitur quoscunque habet Anglia fidos
Propositi, factique mone, quisquamne tuorum
Audebit summi non jussa facessere Papae?
Perculosque melu subito, castique stupentes
Invadat vel Gallus atrox, vel saevus Iberus.
Saeula sic illic tandem Mariana redibunt,
Tuque in belligeros iterum dominaberis Anglos.
Atque dare in cinere, nitrati pulveris igne
Aedibus injecto, quâ convenere, sub imis.
Frotinus ipse igitur quoscunque habet Anglia lidos
Propositi, faetique mone, quisquamne tuorum
Audebit summi non jussa facessere Papae?
Perculosque melu subito, castique stupentes
Invadat vel Gallus atrox, vel saevus Iberus.
Saecula sic illic tandem Mariana redibunt,
Tuque in belligeros iterum dominaberis Anglos.
Et ne quid timeas, divos divasque secundas
Accipe, quotque tuis celebrantur nuinina fastis.
Dixit et adscitos ponens malefidus amictus
Fugit ad infandam, regum illnetabilc, Lethen.
Jam rosea Eoas pandens Titbonia portas
Vestit inauratas redeunt terras;
Moenataque adhue nigrni deplorant funera nati
Irrigat ambrosiia inontana cacumina guttis;
Cum somnos pepult stellatae janitor aulae,
Nocturnos visus, et somnia grata revolvens.
Est locus acternii septus calagine noctis,
Vasta ruinosi quondam fundamina tecti,
Nunc torvi spelunca Phoni, Prodotaecque bilinguis,
Effera quos uno peperit Discordia partu.
Hic inter caementa jacent praeruptaque saxa,
Ossa inhumata virium, et trajecta cadavera ferro;
Hic Dolus intortis semper sedet ater ocellis,
Jurgiaque, et stimuliit armata Calumnia fauces,
Et Furor, atque viae moriendi mille videntur,
Et Timor, exanguisque locum circumvolat Horror,
Perpetuoque leves per muta silentia Manes
Exululant, tellus et sanguine conscia stagnat.
Ipsi etiam pavidis latitant penetrabiliis anti
Et Phonos, et Prodotes, nulloque sequente per antrum,
Antrum horrens, scopulosum, atrum feralibus umbris
Diffugient santes, et retrô lumina vertunt,
Hos pugiles Romae per saeula longe sdeles
Evocat antistes Babylonius, atque ita fatur.
Finibus occiduis circumfusum incolit aequor
Gens exosa mihi, prudens natura negavit
Indignam penitus nostro conjungere mundo:
Iluc, sic jubeo, celeri contenditie greusu,
Tartareoque leves diffientur pulvere in auras
Et rex et pariter satrapae, scelerata propaganda,
Et quotquot sdele canule cupidiue verae
Consili socios adhibete, operisque ministros.
Finierat, rigidi cupidé parucre gemelli.
Interea longo flectens curvamine coelus
Despicit aetherca dominus qui fulgurat arce,
Vanaque perversae ridet conamina turbae,
Atque sti causam populi volet ipse tueri.
Esse ferunt spatium, qua distat ab Aside terra
Fertilis Europe, et spectat Mareotidas undas;
Hic turris posita est Titanidos ardua Famae
Aerea, lata, sonans, rutilis vicinior astris
Quam superimpositum vel Athos vel Pelion Ossae.
Mille fores aditusque patent, totidemque fenestrae,
Amplaque per tenues translucent atria muros:
Ipse quidem summa sedet ultrix matris in arce,
Auribus innumeris cinctum caput sentinet olis,
Quibus sonitus exiguum trahit, atque levissima captat
Murmura, ab extremis patuli confinibus orbis.
Nec tot, Aristoride servator inique juvenae
Isidos, innimii volvebas lumina vultu,
Lumina non unquam tacito mutantia somno,
Lumina subjectas late spectantia terras.
Istis ilia solet loca luce carentia saepe
Perlustrare, etiam radiante impervia soli:
Millenisque loquax auditaque visque linguis
Culibet effundit temeraria, veraque mendax
Nunc minuit, modo conflictis sermonibus auget.
Sed tamen a nostro meruisti carmine laudes
Fama, bonum quo non alius veracius ulum,
Nobis digna cani, nec te memorasse pigebit
Carmine tam longo, servati scilicet Angli
Officiis vaga diva tuis, tibi reddimus aqua.
Te Deus, aeternos motu qui temperat ignes,
Fulmine praemisso alloquitur, terraque tremente:
Fama siles? an te latet impia Papistarum
Conjurata cohors in meque meosque Britannos,
Et nova sceptri gerdo caedes meditata fisco?
Nec plura, illa statim sensit mandata Tonantis,
Et satis ante fugax stridentes induit alas,
Induit et variis exilia corpora plumis;
Dextra tubam gestat Teneaeo ex aere sonorum.
Nec mora jam pennis cedentes remigat auras,
Atque parum est cursu celestium praevertere nubes;
Jam ventos, jam solis equos post terga reliquit:
Et primo Anglicas solito de per urbes
Ambiguae voces, incertaque murmura spargit,
Mox arguta dolos, et detestabile vulgar
Proditionis opus, nec non facta horrida dictu,
Authoresque addit sceleris, nec garrula caecis
Insidias loca structa sileat; stupnere relatis,
Et pariter juvenes, pariter tremerue puellae,
Effctisque senes pariter, tanaque ruinae
Sensus ad acutem subito penetraverat omenm.
Attamen interea populi miserescit ab alto
Aethericus pater, et crudelibus obstitit ausis
Papicolum; capti poenas raptantur ad acres;
At pia thura Deo, et grati solvuntur honores;
Compita laeta focis genialibus omnia fumant;
Turba choros juvenilis agit: Quintoque Novembris Nulla dies toto occurrit celebrator anno.

ANNO AETATIS 17.
IN OBITUM PRAESULIS ELIENSIS.

ADHUC madentes rore squalebant genae,
Et sicca nondum lumina
Adhuc liquentis imbre turgebant salis,
Quem nuper effudi pius,
Dum maesta charo justa persolvi rogo
Wintoniensis Praesulis.
Cum centilinguis Fama (proh semper mali
Cladisque vera nuntia)
Spargit per urbes divitis Britanniae,
Populosque Neptuno satos,
Cessisse morti, et ferreis sororibus
Te generis humani decus,
Qui rex sacrorum ilhi fuisti in insulâ
Quae nomen Anguillae tenet.
Tunc inquietum pectus irâ protinus
Ebullifiebat fervida,
Tumulis potentem saepe devovcns deam:
Nec vota Naso in Hilda
Concepit alto diriora pectore,
Graiasque vates parcius
Turpem Lycambis exccratus est dolum,
Sponsamque Neobolen suain.
At ecce diras ipse dum fundo graves,
Et imprecor neci necem,
Audisse tales videor attonitus sonos
Leni, sub aurâ, flame:
Caecos fuores pon, ponc vitream
Bilemque et irritas minas,
Quid temere violas non nocenda numina,
Subitoque ad iras percita?
Non est, ut arbitraris elusus miser,
Mors atra Noctis filia,
Erobâve patre creta, sive Erinnye,
Vastove nata sub Chaos.
Ast illa coelo missa stellato, Dei
Messes ubique colligit;
Animasque mole carnea reconditas
In lucem et auras evocat;
Ut cum fugaces exiitque Horae diem
Themidos Jovisque filiae;
Et sempiterni ducit ad ultus patris;
At justa raptat impios
Sub regna furvi luctuosa Tartari,
Sedessque subterraneas.
Hanc ut vocantem laetus audivi, cito
Foedum reliqui carcerem,
Volatilesque faustus inter millites.
Ad astra sublimes feror:
Vates ut olim raptus ad coelum senex
Auriga currus ignei.

Non me Bootis terruere lucidi
Sarraca tarda frigore, aut
Formidolosi Scorpionis brachia,
Non ensis Orion tuus.

Praetervolavi fulgidi solis globum,
Longèque sub pedibus deam
Vidi triformem, dum coèrcebat suos
Fraenis draones aureis.

Erraticorum siderum per ordines,
Per lacteas vehor plagas,
Velocitatem saepe miratus novani,
Donee nitentes ad feres
Ventum est Olympi, et regiam crystallinam, et
Stratum smaragdis atrum.

Sed hic tacebo, nam quis effari queat
Oriundus humano patre
Amoenitates illius loci? mihi
Sat est in aeternum frui.

---

NATURAM NON PATI SENIUM.

HEU quàm perpetuis erroribus acta fatiscit
Avia mens hominum, tenebrisque immersa profundis
Oedipodioniam volvit sub pectore noctem!
Quae vesana suis metiri facta deorum
Audet, et incisas leges adamante pf-renni
Assimilare suis, nulloque solubile saeclo
Consiliyum fati perituris alligat horis.

Ergone marcescet sulcantibus obsita rugis
Naturae facies, et rerum publica mater
Omiparum contracta uterum steriliscet ab acvo?
Et se fassa senem malè certis passibus ibit
Sidereum tremebunda caput? num tetra vetustas
Annorumque aeterna fames, squalorque situsque
Sidera vexabunt? an et insatiabile Tempus
Esuriet Coelum, rapietque in viscera patrem?
Hoc contra munisse nefas, et Temporis isto
Exemisse malo, gyrosque dedisse perennes?
Ergo erit ut quandoque sono dilapsa tremendo
Convexi tabulata ruant, atque obvius ictu
Stridat uteque polus, superàque ut Olympius aulæ
Decidat, horribilisque retectâ Gorgone Pallas;
Qualis in Aegeam proles Junonia Lemnon
Deturbata sacro cecidit de limine coeli?
Tu quoque, Phoebe, tuï casus imitabere nati
Praecepit currus, subitâque ferere ruinâ
Pronus, et extinctâ fumabit lampade Nereus,
Et dabit attonito feralia sibila ponto.
Tunc etiam aèrei divulsis sedibus Haëmi
DE IDEA PLATONICA QUEMADMODUM ARISTOTELES INTELLEXIT.

DICITE sacrorum praesides nemorum deae,
Tuque O noventi perbeata numinis
Memoria mata, quaeque in immenso procul
Antro recumbis otiosa Aeternitas,
Monumenta servans, et ratas leges Jovis,
Coelique fastos atque ephemeridas Deum,
Quis ille primus ejus ex imagine
Natura solers fixit humanum genus,
Aeternus, incorruptus, aqueaeus polo,
Unusque et universus, exemplar Dei?
Haud ille Palladis gemellus innubae
Interna proles insidet menti Jovis:
Sed quamlibet natura sit communior,
Tamen seorsus extat ad morem unius,
Et, mira, certo stringitur spatio loci;
Seu sempiternus illo siderum comes
Coeli pererrat ordines decemplicis,
Cititumnve terris incolit lunae globum:
Sive inter animas corpus adituras sedens
Obliviosas torpet ad Lethes aquas:
Sive in remotâ forte terrarum plaga
Incedet ingens hominis archetypus gigas,
Et ipsius tremendus erigit celsum caput,
Atlante major portitore siderum.

Non cui profundum caecitas lumen dedit
Dirceu augur vidit hunc alto sinu;
Non hunc silenti nocte Pleiones nepos
Vatum sagaci praepes ostendit choro;
Non hunc sacerdos novit Assyrius, licet
Longos vetusti commemoret atavos Nini,
Priscumque Belon, inelatumque Osiridem.
Non ille trino gloriosus nomine
Ter magnus Hermes (ut sit arcani sciens)
Talem reliquit Isidiis cultoribus.

At tu perenne ruris Academi decus
(Haec monstra si tu primus induxit scholis)
Jam jam poetas urbis exules time
Revocabis, ipse fabulator maximus,
Aut institutor ipse migrabis foras.

AD PATREM.

NUNC mea Pierios cupiam per pectora fontes
Irriguas torquere vias, totumque per ora
Volvere laxatum gemino de vertice rivum:
Ut tenues obrita sonos audacibus alis
Surgat in officium venerandi Musa parentis.

Hoc utcumque tibi gratum, pater optime, carmen
Exiguum meditatur opus, nec novimus ipsi
Aptius a nobis quae possint munera donis
Respondere tuuis, quamvis nec maxima possint
Respondere tuuis, nedum ut par gratia donis
Esse queat, vacuis quae redditur arida verbis.

Sed tamen haec nostros ostendit pagina census,
Et quod habemus opum chartâ numerat:imus istâ,
Quae mihi sunt nullae, nisi quas dedit aurea Clio,
Quas mihi somo somni peperere sub antro,
Et nemoris laurea sacri Parnassides umbrae.

Nec tu vatis opus divinum despice carmen,
Quo nilih aesthereos ortus, et semina coeli,
Nil magis humanam commendat origine mentem,
Sancta Prometheae retinens vestigia flammeae.

Carmen amant superi, tremebundaque Tartara
carmen

Q 3
Ima ciere valet, divosque ligare profundos,
Et triplici durus Manes adamante coercet.
Carmine sepositi retegunt arcana futuri
Phoebades, et tremulae pallentes ora Sibyllae;
Carmina sacrificiis sollemnis pangit ad aras,
Aurea seu sternit motantem cornua taurum;
Seu cum fata sagax fumantibus albita fibris
Consulit, et tepidis Parcam scrutatur in extis.
Nos etiam patrium tunc cum repetemus Olympum,
Aeternaeque morae stabunt immobile aevi,
Officium chari commune parentis,
Me poscunt majora, tuo, pater optime, sumpta
Cum mihi Romuleae patuit facundia linguae,
Et Latii veneres, et quae Jovis ora deebant
Grandia magniloquis elata vocabula Grais,
Addere suasisti quos jactat Gallia flores,
Et quam degeneri novus Italus ore loquelam
Fundit, barbaricos testatus voce tumultus,
Quaeque Palaestinus loquitur mysteria vates,
Denique quicquid habet coelum, subjectaque coelo
Terra parens, terraque et coelo interfusus aer,
Quicquid et unde tegit, pontique agitabile marmor,
Per te nosse licet, per te, si nosse libebit.

I nunc, confer opes quisquis malesanus avitas
Austriaci gazas, Peruanaque regna praecptas
Quae potuit majora pater tribuisse, vel ipse
Jupiter, excepto, donasset ut omnia, coelo?
Non potiora dedit, quamviae et tuta fuissent,
Publica qui juveni commisit lamina nato
Atque Hyperionios currus, et fraena diei,
Et circum undatem radiat lucre faram.

Ergo ego jam doctae pars quamlibet ina catervae
Victrices hederas inter laurosque sedebi,
Jamque nec obscurus populo miscebor inerti,
Vitabunte oculos vestigia nostra profanos,
Este procul vigiles curae, postquam non aqua merenti
Posse referre datur, nec dona rependere factis,
Sit memorasse satis, repetitaque munera gratos
Pectora, vipero gradior sublimis ab ictu.

At tibi, chara pater, postquam non aqua merenti
Posse referre datur, nec dona rependere factis,
Sit memorasse satis, repetitaque munera gratos
Percensere animo, fidaeque reponere menti.

Et vos, O nostri, juvenilia carmina, lusus,
Si modo perpetuos sperare audebitis annos,
Et domini superesse rego, lucemque tueri,
Nec spissos rapient oblivia nigra sub Orco,
Forsitan has laudes, decantatumque parentis
Nomen, ad exemplum, sero servabitis aevo.

---

PSALM CXIV.

Iσραηλ άτε παιδες, άτ ογιαδ φυλ Ιακωβου
Αυγύπτουν λιπε άθυν, άτεχθυ, βασιλαρφωνων,
Δή τοτε μοινον αεν οαιν γενος νιοι λουσα:
Έν δι άτος λαοι ι μηγα καιοιν βαοιηεν:
Ειδε, και ευτοπηδην φυγαδ έξωαηε, οταλαοα
Κυματι ελυμενη δοτηρ, δη άφ εντυφελγη
Philosophus ad regem quendam, qui cum ignotum et in-sentem inter reos forte captum inscius dannaverat, et si

IN EFFIGIEI EJUS SCULPTOREM.

AD SALSILLLUM POETAM ROMANUM AEGRO-
TANTEM.

S C A Z O N T E S.

O MUSA gressum quae volens trahis claudum,
Vulcanioque tarda gaudes incessu,
Nec sensis illud in loco minus gratum,
Quam cum decentes flava Déciope suras
Alternat aureum ante Junonis lection,
Adesdem et haec verba pausa Salillo
Refer, Camoena nostra cui tantum est cordi,
Quamque ille magnis praetulit immerito divis.
Haec ergo alumnus ille Londini Milto,
Diebus hisce qui summ linguens nimum
Poliqute tractum, (pessimus ubi ventorum,
Insanientis impotentisque pulnonis
Pernix anhela sub Jove exercet flabra)
Venit ferasces Itali soli ad glenas,
Visum superbá cognitas urbes fama
Virose doctaeque indolem juventutis,
Tibi óptat idem hic fausta multa, Salsille,
Habitumque fesso corpori penitús sanum;
Cui nunc profunda bìlis intestat renes,
Praecordisque fixa damnosum spirat.
Nec id pepercit impia quod tu Romano
Tam cultus ore Lesbium condis melos.
O dulce divum munus, O salus Hebes
Germana! Tuque, Phoebè, morborum terror
Pythone caeso, sive tu magis Paean
Libenter andis, hic tuus sacerdos est.
Querceta Fauni, vosque rore vinoso
Colles benigni, mitis Evandri sedes,
Si quid salubre vallibus frondet vestris,
Levamen aegro ferte certatim vati.
Sic ille charis redditus rursum Muis
Victina dulci prata mulcebit cantu.
Ipse inter atros emirabitur lucos
Numa, ubi beatum degit otium aeternum,
Suam reclinis semper Aegeriam spectans.
Tumidusque et ipse Tibris hinc delinitus
Spei favebit annuae colonorum:
Nec in sepulchris ibit obcessum reges
Nimium sinistro laxus irruces loro:
Sed fraena melius temperabit undarum,
Adusque curvi salsa regna Portunni.

MANSUS.

Joannes Baptista Mansus, Marchio Villensis, vir ingeni, tum litterarum studio, nec non et bellica virtute apud Italos clarus in primis est. Ad quem Torquati Tassi dialogus extat de Amicitia scriptus; crat enim Tassi amicissimi; ab quo etiam inter Campaniae principes celebratur, in illo poemate, cui titulus Gerusalemm Conquistata, lib. 20.

Fra cavalier magnanimi, è cortesi
Risplende il Manso . . .

Is authorem Ncapolì commorantem summae benevolentid prosecutus est, multaque ei dutiit humanitatis officia. Ad hunc itaque hospes ille antequam ab ea urbe discederet, ut ne ingratum se ostenderet, hoc Carmen misit.

HAEC quoque, Manse, tuac meditantur carmina laudi
Pierides, tibi, Manse, choro notissime Phoebi,
Quandoquidem ille alium laudaeque est dignatus honore,
Post Galli cineres, et Maecenatis Hetruscì.
Tu quoque, si nostrae tantum valet aura Camoenae,
Victrices hederas inter laurosque sedebris.
Te prudem magno felix concordia Tasso
Junxit, et aeternis inscripti nomine chartis.
Mox tibi dulcioloquum non inscia Musa Marimum
Tradidit, illum tuum dici se gaudeat alumnun,
Dum canit Assyrios divum prolaxis amores:
Mollis et Ausonia stupfecit carmine nymphas.
Ille ifidem moriens tibi soli debita vates
Ossa tibi soli, supremaque vota reliquit.
Nec manes pietas tua chara fefellit amici,
Vidimus arrendent operoso ex aere poetam.
Nec satis hoc visum est in utrumque, et nec pia cessant
Officia in tumulo, cupis integros rapere Orco,
Qua potes, atque avaras Parcarum eludere leges:
Amborum genus, et varia sub sorte peractam
Describits ritam, moresque, et dona Minervae;
Aemulus illius Mycalen, qui natus ad altam
Rettulit Aeolii vitam facultum Homerii.
Ergo ego te Clitus et magni nomine Phoebi,
Manse pater, jubeo longuui salvere per aevum
Missus Hyperborce juvenis peregrinus ab axe.
Nec tu longinquum bonus aspernahare Musam,
Quae nuper gelidà vix exùtrita sub Arecto
Imprudent Italas ausa est violentare per urbes.
Nos etiam in nostro modulantes flamine cygnos
Credimus obscuras noctis sensisse per umbras,
Qua Thamesis late puris argenteus umbis
Oceani glaucos perfundit gurgite crines.
Quin et in has quondam pervenit Titivus oras.
Sed neque nos genus incultum, nec inutile Phoebo,
Quà plaga septeno mundi sulcata Trione
Bramalem patitur longà sub nocte Boöten.
Nos etiam colimus Phoebum, nos munera Phoebo
Flaventes spicas, et lutea mala
Halantemque croorum (perhibet nisi vana vetustas)
Misimus, et lectas Druidum de gente choreas,
(Gens Druides antiqua sacris operata deorum
Heroum laudes imitandaque gesta canebat)
Huc quoties festo cingunt altaria cantu
Delo in herbosâ Graiae de more puellâ
Carminibus laetis memorant Corineida Loxo,
Fatidicamque Upin, cum flavicomâ Hecaëgre,
Nuda Caledonio variatas pectora fucò.
Fortunate senex, ergo quacunque per orbem
Torquati decus, et novem celebrabantur ingenis,
Claraque perpetui succrescet fama Marini,
Tu quoque in ora frequens venies plausuque virorum,
Et parili carpes in mortalitate volatu.
Dicetur tuiu sponte tuos habitasse penates
Cynthis, et famulas venisse ad limina Musas:
At non sponte domum tamen idem, et regis adivit
Rura Phereciadæ caelo fugitivus Apollo;
Ille licet magnum Alciden susceperat hospes;
Tantum ubi clamosus placuit vitare bubulos,
Nobile mansueti cessit Chironis in antrum,
Irrignos inter saltus respsecei Chironis in antrum,
Pencium prope rivum: ibi saepe sub illic nigrâ
Ad citharae strepitum blandâ prece victus amici
Exilii duros lenibat voce labores.
Tum neque ripa suo, barathro nec fixa sub imo
Saxa stetere loco, nutat Trachinia rupe,
Nec sentit solitas, immania pondera, silvas,
Emotaque suis propeant de collibus orni,
Mulcenturque novo maculosi carmine lynces.
Dis, dilecte senex, te Jupiter aequus oportet
Nascentem, et miti lustrarit lumine Phoebus,
Atlantisque nepos; neque enim nisi charus ab ortu
Dis superis poterit magno favisse poetae.
Hine longaeva tibi lento sub flore
sclectus Vernat, et Aesonios lucratur vivida fusos,
Nondum deciduos servans tibi frontis honoros.
Ingeniumque vigens, ct adultum mentis acumen.
O miles si mea sors talem concedat amicum
Phoebeos decorasse viros qui tam bene nortit,
Si quando indigenas revocabo in carmina reges,
Arturumque etiam sub terris bella moventem;
Aut dicam invictae socialis foedere mensae
Magnanimos Heros, ct (O modo spiritus adsi)
Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges.
Tandem ubi non tacitae permensus tempora vitae,
Annorumque satur cineri sua jura relinquam,
Ille mihi lecto madidis astarct ocellis,
Astanti sat erit, si dicam, sim tibi curae;
Ille meos artus liventi morte solutos
Curaret parva componi molliter urna.
Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
Nectens aut Paphia aut Parnasside lauri
Fronde comas, at ego secura pace quiescam.
Tum quoque, si qua fides, si praemia certe honorum,
Ipse ego coelicolum semotus in aethera divum,
Quò labor et mens pura vehunt, atque ignea virtus,
Secreti laec et alicja mundi de parte videbo
(Quantum fata sinunt) et tota mente serenum
Ridens purpurco suffundar lumine vultus,
Et simul aetherco plandam mihi lactus Olympo.

EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS.

ARGUMENTUM.

Thyris et Damon ejusdem viciniac pastores, eadem studia sequunt a pueritii amici erant, ut qui plurimum, Thyris animi causæ factus peregrè de obitu Damonis nuncum accept. De
dum postea reversus, et rem ita esse comperiens, se suamque
solitudinem hoc carmine deplorat. Damonis autem sub personal
hic intelligitur Carolus Deodatus ex urbe Hetruiae Luca paterno
genere oriundus, caetera Angliae; ingeni, doctrinâ, clarissimi
ceteris virtutibus, dum vivere, juvenis egregius.

HIMERIDES nymphae (nam vos et Daphnim et Hylan,
Et plorata diu meminiusti fata Bionis)
Dicite Sicelicum Thamesina per oppida carmen:
Quas miser effudit voces, quae murmura Thyris,
Et quibus assiduis exercuit antra querelas,
Fluminaque, fontesque vagos, nemorumque recessus,
Dum sibi praercetum queritur Damona, neque altam
Lucibus exenit noctem loca sola pererrans.
Et jam bis viridi surgebat culmus arista,
Et totidem flavas numerabant horrea messes.
Ex quo summa dies tulerat Damona sub umbras,
Nec dum aderat Thyris; pastorem scilicet illum
Dulcis amor Musae Thusea reificat in urbe.
Ast ubi mens explata domum, pectorisque relieti
Cura vocat, simul assuetæ sedectque sub ulmo,
Tum verò amissum tum denique sentit amicum,
Coepit et inmensum sic exonerare dolorem:

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Hei mihi! quae terris, quae dicam numina coelo,
Postquam te immitti raperunt funere, Damon!
Siccine nos linquis, tua sic sine nomine virtus
Ibit, et obscuris numero sociabitur umbra?
At non ille, animas virgâ qui dividit aureà,
Ista velit, dignumque tui te ducat in agmen,
Ignavumque procul pecus arceat ommne silentium.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Quicquid crit, certe nisi me lupus antè videbit,
Indeplorato non comminuere sepulcro,
Constatique tuus tibi honos, longumque vigebit
Inter pastores; illi tibi vota secundo
Solvere post Daphnium, post Daphnium dicere laudes,
Gaudebunt, dum rura Pales, dum Faunus amabit:
Si quid id est, priscamque fidem coluisse, piúmque,
Palladisque artes, sociumque habuisse canorum.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Haec tibi certa manent, tibi erunt haec praemia, Damon,
At mihi quid tandem fiet modo? quis mihi fidus
Haeredit lateri comes, ut tu saepe solebas
Frigeribus duris, et per loca foeta pruninis
Aut rapido sub sole, siti morientibus herbis?
Sive opus in magnos fuit eunmis irre leones,
Aut avidos terrere lupos praescipibus altis;
Quis fando sopire diem, cantuque solebit?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Pectora cui credam? quis me lenire docebit
Mordaces curas, quis longam fallere noctem
Dulcisibus alloquis, grato eum sibilat igni
Molle pyrum, et nucibus strepitat focus, at malus auster
Miscet cuncta fores, et desuper intonat ulmo?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Aut acatesta, dies medio dum vertitur axe,
Cum Pan aesculeà somnum capiti abditus umbra,
Et repetunt sub aquis sibi nota sedilia nymphae,
Pastoresque latent, stertit sub sepe colonos;
Quis mihi blanditiasque tuas, quis tum mihi risus,
Cecropiosque sales referat, cultosque lepores?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
At jam solus agros, jam pascua solus obernro,
Sicubi ramosae densantur vallibus umbrae,
Hic serum expecto, supra caput imber et Eurus
Triste sonant, fractaeque agitata crepuscula sylvae.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Heu quam culta mihi prius arva procaciibus herbis
Involvuntur, et ipsa sicut seges alta fatiscit!
Innuba neglecto marcescit et uva racemo,
Nec myrteta juvant; ovium quoque taedet, at illae
Moerent, inque suum convertunt ora magistrum.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Tityrus ad corylos vocat, Alphesiboeus ad ornos,
Ad salices Aegon, ad flamina pulcher Amyntas.
"Hic gelidi fontes, hic illita gramina musco,
Hic Zephyri, hic placidas interstrepit arbutus undas;"
Ista canunt surdo, frutices ego nactus abibam.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Mopsus ad haec, nam me redecuntem forte notaratum,
(Ex callebat avum linguas, et sidera Mopsus)
Thyrsi quid hoc? dixit, quae te coquitt improba bilis?
Aut te perdit amor, aut te malè fanciat astrum,
Saturni grave saepe fuit pastoribus astrum,
Intimaque obliquo situs prae cordia plumbo.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Mirantur nymphae, et quid te, Thyrsi, futurum est?
Quid tibi vis? aiunt, non haec solet esse juventae
Nubila frons, oculique truces, vultusque severi,
Ilia choros, lususque leves, et semper amorem
Jure petit; bis ille miser, qui serus amavit.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Venit Hyas, Dryopéque, et filia Baucidis Aegle,
Docta modos, citharaeque seciens, sed perdita fastu,
Venit Idumani Chloris vicina fluenti!
Nil me blanditiae, nil me solantia verba,
Nil me, si quid adest, movet, aut spes ulla futuri.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Heu mihi quam similes ludunt per prata juveni,
Omnès unanimi secum sibi leges sodales!
Nec magis hunc alio quisquam secernit amicum
De grege, sic densi veniant ad pabula thoes,
Inque vicem hirsuti paribus junguntur onagri;
Lex cadem pelagi, deserto in littore Proteus
Agmina Phocarum numerat, vilesque volucrum
Passer habet semper quicum sit, et omnia circum
Ferra libens voltat, sero sua tecta revisens,
Quem si sors letho objectit, seu milvis adunco
Fata tuit rostro, seu stravit arundine fossor,
Protinus ille alium soció petit inde volatu.
Nos durum genús, et diris exercita saís
Gens hominés aliena animís, et pectore discors,
Vix sibi quisque parem de millibus inventit unum,
Aut si sors dederit tandem non aspera votís,
Illum inopina dies, quá non speraveris horá
Surripit, aeternum lingues in saecula damnum.
Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Heu quis me ignotas traxit vagus error in oras
Ire per æreas rupes, Alpemque nivosam!
Ecquid erat tanti Romam vidisse sepultam,
(Quanvis illa foret, qualen dum viseret olim,
Tityrus ipse suas et oves et rura reliquit;) 
Ut te tam dulci possem caruisse sodale,
Possem et maria alta, tot interponere montes,
Tot sylvas, tot saxa tibi, flaviosque sonantes!
Ah certe extremum licisset tangere dextram,
Et bene compositos placide morientis ocellos,
Et dixisse, "vale, nostri membr ibis ad astra."

Ita domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Quamquam etiam vestri nuncum meminisse pigebit,
Pastores Thusi, Musis operata juvenus,
Hic Charis, atque Lepos; et Thuscus tu quoque Damon,
Antiquà genus unde petis Lucumonis ab urbe.
O ego quantus eram, gelidi cum stratus ad Arni
Murmura, populecumque nemus, qua mollior herba,
Carpere nunc violas, nunc summas carpere myrtos,
Et potui Lycidae certantem audire Menalcam.
Ipse etiam tentare ausus sum, nec puto multum
Displicui, nam sunt et apud me munera vestra
Fiscellae, calathique, et cerea vinela cicuta;
Quin et nostra suas docuerunt nomina fagos
Et Datis, et Francinus, erant et vocibus ambo
Et studiis noti, Lydorum sanguinis ambo.

Ita domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Iacc milii tum lacto dictabit roseida luna,
Dum solus tenebras cladebant cratibus hoedos.
Ah quoties dixi, cùm te cinis ater habebat,
Nunc canit, aut lepori nunc tendit retia Damon,
Vimina nunc texit, varios sibi quod sit in usus!
Et quae tum facili sperabam mente futura
Arripui voto levis, et praesentia finxi,
Heus bone, numquid agis? nisi te quid forte retardat,
Imus? et argutâ paulum recubamus in umbra,
Aut ad aquas Colni, aut ubi jugera Cassibelauini?
Tu mihi percerres medicos, tua gramina, succos,
Helleborumque,ulumisque crocos, foliumque hyacinthi,
Quasque habet ista palus herbas, artesque medentum.
Ah percant herbae, percant artesque medentum,
Gramina, postquam ipsi nil profecerè magistro.
Ipse etiam, nam nescio quid mihi grande sonabat
Fistula, ab undecimâ jam lux est altera nocte,
Et tum forte novis adhòram labra cicitus,
Dissiluerè tamen raptà compage, nec ultra
Ferre graves potuere sonos, dubito quoque, ne sim
Turgidulus, tamen et referam, vos cede, sylvac.

Ita domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Ipse ego Dardanias Rutupina per aequora puppes
Dicam, et Pandarisod regnum vetus Inogeniae,
Brennûmque Arvigarumque duces, priscumque Belimum,
Et tandem Armoricos Britonum sub lege colonos;
Tum gravidam Arturo fatali fraude logernen,
Mendaces vultus, assumptaque Gorlois arma,
Merlini dulus. O mihi tum si vita supersit,
Tu procul annosa pendebis, fistula, pinu
Multum oblita mihi, aut patriis mutata Camoenis
Brittonicum strides, quid enim? omnia non licet uni,
Non sperasse uni licet omnia, mi satis ampla
Merces, et mihi grande decus (sim ignotus in aevum
Tum licet, externo penitusque inglorius orbì)
Si me flava comas legat USA, et poter Alani,
Vorticibusque frequens Abra, et nemus omne Treantae,
Et Thanesis meus ante omnes, et fusca metallis
Tamarâ, et extremis me discant Orcades undis.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Haec tibi servabam lenta sub cortice laurì,
Haec, et plura simul, turn quae mihi pocula Mansus,
Mansus, Chalcidicae non ultima gloria ripae,
Bina dedit, mirum artis opus, mirandus et ipse,
Et circum gemino caelaverat argumento:
In medio rubri maris unda, et odoriferum ver,
Littora longa Arabum, et sudantes balsama sylvae,
Has inter Phoenix, divina avis, unica terris
Caeruleum fulgens diversicoloribus alis
Auroram vitreis surgentem respicit undis.

Parte alia polus omnipatens, et magnus Olympus,
Quis putet? hic quoque Amor, pictaæque in nube pharetrae,
Arma corusca faces, et spicula tincta pyropo;
Nec tenues animas, vectûsque ignobile vulgi
Hinc ferit, at circum flammantia lumina torquens,
Semper in erectum spargit sua tela per orbes
Impiger, et pronos nunquam collimat ad ictus,
Hinc mentes ardere sacrae, formæque deorum.

Tu quoque in his, nec me fallit speculæ, Damon,
Tu quoque in his certé es, nam quò tua dulcis abiret
Sanctiæque simplicitas, nam quò tua candida virtus?
Nec te Lethaæo fas quaesivisse sub orco,
Nec tibi convenient lacrymæ, nec flebimus utrâ
Ite procul lacrymæ, purum colít aethera Damon,
Aethera purus habet, pluvium pede repullen arcum;
Heroumque animas inter, divòsque perennes,
Aethereos haurit latices et gaudia potat
Ore sacro. Quin tu, coeli post jura recepta,
Dexter ades, placidûsque fave quicunque vocari,
Seu tu noster eris Damon, sive aequior undis
Diodotus, quo te divino nomine sancti
Coelicolae nõrint, sylvisque vocabere Damon.
Quod tibi purpœuse pudor, et sine labè juvenus
Grata fuit, quod nulla tori libata voluptas,
En etiam tibi virginei servantur honores;
Ipse caput nîtûm cinctus rutilante corona,
Laetique frondentis gestans umbracula palmæ
Aeternum perages immortalæ hymenaeos;
Cantus ubi, choreisque furit lyra mista beatis,
Festa Sionæo bacchantur et Orgia Thyro.
Jan. 23, 1646.

Ad Joannem Rousium, Oxoniensis Academiae Bibliothecarium.

De libro poematum amissos, quem ille sibi denuo mitti postulabat, ut cum aliis nostris in Bibliotheca publica reponeret, ode.

Strophe I.

Gemelle cultu simplici gaudens liber,
Fronde licet gemina, Munditiéque nitens non operosa,
Quam manus attulit Juvenilis olim,
Sedula tamen haud nimii poetae;
Dum vagus Ausonias nunc per umbras,
Nunc Britannica per vieta lusit
Insous populi barbitóque devius
Indulsit patrio, mox itidem pectine Daunio
Longinquum intonuit melos
Vicinis, et humnum vix tetigit pede:

Antistrophe.

Quis te, parve liber, quis te fratribus
Subduxit reliquis dolo?
Cum tu missus ab urbe,
Docto jugiter obscurante amico,
Illustré tendebas iter
Thamesis ad incunabula
Caerulei patris, Fontes ubi limpidi
Aonidum, thyasusque sacer
Orbis notus per immensos
Temporum lapsus redeunte coelo,
Celeberque futurus in aevum.

Strophe II.

Modò quis deus, aut editus deo
Pristinam gentis miseratus indolem
(Si satis noxas luimus priores,
Mollique luxu degener atium)
Tollat nefandos civium tumultus,
Almaque revocet studia sanctus,
Et relegatas sine sede Musas
Jam penè totis finibus Angligenum;
Immundasque volucres
Unguibus imminentes
Figat Apollineá pharetrá,
Phinéamque abigit pestem procul amne Pegaséo,

Antistrophe.

Quin tu, libelle, nuntii licet malá
Fide, vel oscitantia
Semel erraveris agmine fratrum,
Sen quis te teneat specus,
Seu qua te latebra, forsan unde vili
Callo terceris institoris insulis,
Laetare felix, en iterum tibi
Specs nova fulget, posse profundam
Fugere Lethen, vehique superam
In Jovis aulam, remige pennâ:

STROPHE III.

Nam te Rouiusi sui
Optat peculi, numeroque justo
Sibi pollicitum queritur abesse,
Rogatque venias ille, cujus inclyta
Sunt data virûm monumenta curae:
Têque adytis etiam sacris
Voluit reponi, quibus et ipse praesidet
Aeternorum operum custos fidelis,
Quae torque gaza nobiliors,
Quam cui praesuit Iôn,
Clarus Erechtheides,
Opulenta dei per templâ parentis,
Fulvosque tripodas, donaque Delphica,
Iôn Actaeà genitus Creusa.

ANTISTRÔPHÆ.

Ergo, tu visere lucos
Musarum ibis amoenos;
Diamque Phoebi rursus ibis in domum
Oxonià quam valle colit
Delo posthabita,
Bifidoque Parnassi jugo:
Ibis honestus,
Postquam egregiam tu quoque sortem
Nactus abis, dextri prece sollicitatus amici,
Illic legéris inter alta nomina
Authorum, Graiae simul et Latinae
Antiqua gentis lumina, et verum decus.

EPÓDOS.

Vos tandem hand vacui mei labores,
Quiquid hoc sterile fudit ingenium,
Jam serô placidam sperare jubeo
Perfunctam invidiâ requiem, sedesque beatas
Quas bonus Hermes,
Et tutela dabít solera Roui,
Quo neque lingua procax vulgî penetrabit, atque longê
Turba legentum prava facesset;
At ulîmi nepotes,
Et cordatior actas
Judicia rebus aequiora forsitan
Adhibit integro sinu.
Tum, livore sepulto,
Si quid meremur sana posteritas sciet
Rouię favente.
Ode tribus constat Strophis; totidemque Antistrophis, unà demum Epodo clausis, quas, tametsi omnes nec versuum numero, nec certis ubique colis exactè respondent, ita tamen secuimus, commodè legendi potius, quàm ad antiquos concinendi modos rationem spectantes. Alioquin hoc genus rectius fortasse dici monostrophicum debuerat. Metra partim sunt ματὰ σχέδια, partim ἀπολεκυμένα. Phaleucia quae sunt, Spondaeum tertio loco bis admittunt, quod idem in secundo loco Catullus ad libitum fecit.

AD
CHRISTINAM,
SUECORUM REGINAM NOMINE CROMWELLI.

Bellipotens Virgo, septem Regina Trionum,
Christiana, Arctoi lucida stella poli,
Cernis, quas merui dura sub casside rugas,
Utque senex armis impiger ora tere;
Invia fatorum dum per vestigia nitor,
Exequor et populi fortia jussa manu.
Ast tibi submitit frontem reverentior umbra;
Nec sunt hi vultus Regibus usque truces.
ITALIAN POEMS.

I.

DONNA leggiadra il cui bel nome honora
L'herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco,
Bene è colui d'ogni valore scarco
Qual tuo spiro gentil non innamora,
Che dolcemente mostra si di fuora
De sui atti soavi gianmai parco,
E i don', che son d'amor sacette ed arco,
La onde l' alta tua virtù s'infiora.
Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti
Che mover possa duro alpestre legno
Guardi ciascun a gli occhi, ed a gli orecchi
L'entrata, che di te si truova indegno;
Gratia sola di su gli vaglia, inanti
Che 'l disio amoroso al cuor s'invecchi.

II.

Qual in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera
L'avezza giovinetta pastorella
Va bagnando 'l herbetta strana e bella
Che mal si spande a disusata spera
Fuir di sua natia alma primaveria,
Così Amor meco insì la lingua snella
Desta il fior novo di strania favella,
Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera,
Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso
E 'l bel Tamigi cangio col bel Arno.
Amor lo volse, ed io a l'altrui peso
Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno.
Deh! foss' il mio cuor lento e 'l duro seno
A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

CANZONE.

RIDONSI donne e giovani amorosi
M' accostandosi attorno, e perchè scrivi,
Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
Verseggiando d' amor, e come t'osi?
Dinne, se la tua speme sia mai vana,
E de pensierilo miglior t' arrivi;
Così mi van burlando, altri rivi
Altri lidi t'aspettian, ed altre onde
Nelle cui verdi sponde
Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a la tua chioma
L' immortal guiderdon d' eterne frondi
Perche alle spalle tue soverchia somia?
Canzon dirotti, e tu per me rispondi
Dice mia Donna, e 'l suo dir, e il mio cuore
Questa e lingua di cui si vanta Amore.
III.

Diodati, e te 'l dirò con maraviglia,
Quel ritroso io ch' amor spreggiar sola
È de suoi lacci spesso mi ridea
Già caddi, ov' huom dabben talhor s'impiglia.
Ne trecce d' oro, ne guancia vermeiglia
M' abbagliai si, ma sotto nova idea
Pellegrina bellezza che 'l cuor bea,
Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia
Quel sereno fulgor d' amabil nero,
Parole adorne di lingua più d'una
E 'l cantar che di mezzo l'insieme
Traviar ben può la faticosa Luna,
E degli occhi suoi auventa si gran fuoco
Che l'incerar gli orecchi mi fa poco.

IV.

Per certo i bei vostri occhi, Donna mia
Esser non può che non sian lo mio sole
Si mi percuoton forte, come 'l suole
Per l'arenè di Libia chi s'invia,
Mentre un caldo vapor (ne senti prìa)
Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,
Che forse amanti nelle lor parole
Chiaman sospir; io non so che si sia:
Parte rinchiusa, e turbida si cela
Scosso mi il petto, e poi 'n uscendo poco
Quivi d'attorno o s'agghiaccia, o s'ingiela;
Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco
Tutte le notti a me suol far pióvore
Finche mia Alba rivien colma di rose.

V.

Giovanè piano, e semplicetto amante
Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,
Madonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono
Farò divoto; io certo a prove tante
L'hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
S'arma di se, e d' intero diamante,
Tanto del forse, e d' invidia sicuro,
Di timori, e speranze al popol use
Quanto d'ingegno, e d'alto valor vago,
E di cetra sonora, e delle muse:
Sol troverete in tal parte men duro
Ove Amor mise l'insanabil ago.