
Paradise Lost



by John Milton

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BOOK I

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

Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful
seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the
secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the
chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens
and earth
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill¹⁰
Delight thee more, and Siloa's
brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous
song,
That with no middle flight intends
to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it

pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or
rhyme.

And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that
dost prefer
Before all temples th' upright heart
and pure,
Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou
from the first 20
Wast present, and, with mighty
wings outspread,
Dove-like sat'st brooding on the
vast Abyss,
And mad'st it pregnant: what in
me is dark
Illumine, what is low raise and
support;
That, to the height of this great ar-

gument,
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to
men.

Say first—for Heaven hides nothing
from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell—say first
what cause 30
Moved our grand parents, in that
happy state,
Favoured of Heaven so highly, to
fall off
From their Creator, and transgress
his will
For one restraint, lords of the
World besides.

Who first seduced them to that foul
revolt?

Th' infernal Serpent; he it was
 whose guile,
Stirred up with envy and revenge,
 deceived
The mother of mankind, what time
 his pride
Had cast him out from Heaven,
 with all his host 40
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, as-
 piring
To set himself in glory above his
 peers,
He trusted to have equalled the
 Most High,
If he opposed, and with ambitious
 aim
Against the throne and monarchy
 of God,
Raised impious war in Heaven and

battle proud,
With vain attempt. Him the
Almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th'
ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combus-
tion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to
dwell 50
In adamantinè 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
Reserved him to more wrath; for
now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting
pain
Torments him: round he throws his
baleful eyes, 60
That witnessed huge affliction and
dismay,
Mixed with obdurate pride and
steadfast hate.

At once, as far as Angels ken, he
views
The dismal situation waste and
wild.

A dungeon horrible, on all sides

round,
As one great furnace flamed; yet
from those flames
No light; but rather darkness visi-
ble
Served only to discover sights of
woe, 70
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades,
where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope
never comes
That comes to all, but torture with-
out end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur uncon-
sumed.

Such place Eternal Justice has pre-
pared

For those rebellious; here their
 prison ordained
In utter darkness, and their portion
 set,
As far removed from God and light
 of Heaven 80
As from the centre thrice to th' ut-
 most pole.

Oh how unlike the place from
 whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall,
 o'erwhelmed
With floods and whirlwinds of
 tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and, weltering
 by his side,
One next himself in power, and
 next in crime,

Long after known in Palestine, and
named
Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-
Enemy,
And thence in Heaven called Sa-
tan, with bold words 90
Breaking the horrid silence, thus
began:—
"If thou beest he—but O how fallen!
how changed
From him who, in the happy
realms of light
Clothed with transcendent bright-
ness, didst outshine
Myriads, though bright!—if he
whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels,
equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enter-

prise
Joined with me once, now misery
hath joined
In equal ruin; into what pit thou
seest
From what height fallen: so much
the stronger proved 100
He with his thunder; and till then
who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet
not for those,
Nor what the potent Victor in his
rage
Can else inflict, do I repent, or
change,
Though changed in outward lus-
tre, that fixed mind,
And high disdain from sense of in-
jured merit,

That with the Mightiest raised me
to contend,
And to the fierce contentions
brought along
Innumerable force of Spirits
armed,
That durst dislike his reign, and,
me preferring, 110
His utmost power with adverse
power opposed
In dubious battle on the plains of
Heaven,
And shook his throne. What
though the field be lost?
All is not lost—the unconquerable
will,
And study of revenge, immortal
hate,
And courage never to submit or

yield:
And what is else not to be overcome?
That glory never shall his wrath or
 might
Extort from me. To bow and sue for
 grace
With suppliant knee, and deify his
 power 120
Who, from the terror of this arm, so
 late
Doubted his empire—that were low
 indeed;
That were an ignominy and shame
 beneath
This downfall; since, by fate, the
 strength of Gods,
And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;

Since, through experience of this
 great event,
In arms not worse, in foresight
 much advanced,
We may with more successful hope
 resolve
To wage by force or guile eternal
 war,
Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,¹³⁰
Who now triumphs, and in th' ex-
 cess of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of
 Heaven."
So spake th' apostate Angel,
 though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but racked with
 deep despair;
And him thus answered soon his
 bold compeer:—

"O Prince, O Chief of many
throned Powers
That led th' embattled Seraphim to
war
Under thy conduct, and, in dread-
ful deeds
Fearless, endangered Heaven's
perpetual King,
And put to proof his high
supremacy, 140
Whether upheld by strength, or
chance, or fate,
Too well I see and rue the dire
event
That, with sad overthrow and foul
defeat,
Hath lost us Heaven, and all this
mighty host
In horrible destruction laid thus

low,
As far as Gods and heavenly
Essences
Can perish: for the mind and spirit
remains
Invincible, and vigour soon re-
turns,
Though all our glory extinct, and
happy state
Here swallowed up in endless mis-
ery. 150

But what if he our Conqueror
(whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no
less
Than such could have o'erpowered
such force as ours)
Have left us this our spirit and

strength entire,
Strongly to suffer and support our
pains,
That we may so suffice his venge-
ful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his
thralls
By right of war, whate'er his busi-
ness be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in
fire, 160
Or do his errands in the gloomy
Deep?
What can it the avail though yet we
feel
Strength undiminished, or eternal
being
To undergo eternal punishment?"
Whereto with speedy words th'

Arch-Fiend replied:—
"Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure—
To do 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 ofttimes may succeed so as

perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and
disturb
His inmost counsels from their des-
tined aim.

But see! the angry Victor hath re-
called
His ministers of vengeance and
pursuit 180
Back to the gates of Heaven: the
sulphurous hail,
Shot after us in storm, o'erblown
hath laid
The fiery surge that from the
precipice
Of Heaven received us falling; and
the thunder,
Winged with red lightning and im-

petuous 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. 190

Seest thou yon dreary plain, for-
lorn 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 re-
pair, 200
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain
from hope,
If not, what resolution from de-
spair."
Thus Satan, talking to his nearest
mate,
With head uplift above the wave,
and eyes
That sparkling blazed; his other

parts besides
Prone on the flood, extended long
and large,
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk
as huge
As whom the fables name of mon-
strous size,
Titanian or Earth-born, that warred
on Jove, 210
Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-
beast
Leviathan, which God of all his
works
Created hugest that swim th'
ocean-stream.

Him, haply slumbering on the
Norway foam,

The pilot of some small night-
foundered skiff,
Deeming some island, oft, as sea-
men tell,
With fixed anchor in his scaly rind,
Moors by his side under the lee,
while night 220
Invests the sea, and wished morn
delays.

So stretched out huge in length the
Arch-fiend lay,
Chained on the burning lake; nor
ever thence
Had risen, or heaved his head, but
that the will
And high permission of all-ruling
Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark

designs,
That with reiterated crimes he
might
Heap on himself damnation, while
he sought
Evil to others, and enraged might
see 230
How all his malice served but to
bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace, and
mercy, shewn
On Man by him seduced, but on
himself
Treble confusion, wrath, and
vengeance poured.

Forthwith upright he rears from off
the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand

the flames
Driven backward slope their point-
ing spires, and rolled
In billows, leave i' th' midst a hor-
rid vale.

240

Then with expanded wings he
steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
That felt unusual weight; till on
dry land
He lights—if it were land that ever
burned
With solid, as the lake with liquid
fire,
And such appeared in hue as when
the force
Of subterranean wind transports a
hill

Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered
side
Of thundering Etna, whose com-
bustible
And fuelled entrails, thence con-
ceiving fire, 250
Sublimed with mineral fury, aid
the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all in-
volved
With stench and smoke. Such rest-
ing found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him followed his
next mate;
Both glorying to have scaped the
Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recov-
ered strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal

Power.

"Is this the region, this the soil, the
clime,"
Said then the lost Archangel, "this
the seat 260
That we must change for Heaven?—
this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so,
since he
Who now is sovereign can dispose
and bid
What shall be right: farthest from
him is best
Whom reason hath equalled, force
hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy
fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail,

horrors! hail,
Infernal world! and thou, pro-
foundest Hell,
Receive thy new possessor—one
who brings
A mind not to be changed by place
or time. 270

The mind is its own place, and in
itself
Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell
of Heaven.

What matter where, if I be still the
same,
And what I should be, all but less
than he
Whom thunder hath made greater?
Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath

not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us
hence:
Here we may reign secure; and, in
my choice, 280
To reign is worth ambition, though
in Hell:
Better to reign in Hell than serve in
Heaven.

But wherefore let we then our
faithful friends,
Th' associates and co-partners of
our loss,
Lie thus astonished on th' obli-
vious pool,
And call them not to share with us
their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once

more
With rallied arms to try what may
be yet
Regained in Heaven, or what more
lost in Hell?" 290
So Satan spake; and him Beelzebub
Thus answered:—"Leader of those
armies bright
Which, but th' Omnipotent, none
could have foiled!
If once they hear that voice, their
liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers—
heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the per-
ilous edge
Of battle, when it raged, in all as-
saults
Their surest signal—they will soon

resume

New courage and revive, though
now they lie

Groveling and prostrate on yon
lake of fire, 300

As we erewhile, astounded and
amazed;

No wonder, fallen such a pernicious
height!"

He scare had ceased when the superior
Fiend

Was moving toward the shore; his
ponderous shield,

Ethereal temper, massy, large, and
round,

Behind him cast. The broad circumference

Hung on his shoulders like the
moon, whose orb

Through optic glass the Tuscan
artist views
At evening, from the top of Fesole,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new
lands, 310
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty
globe.

His spear—to equal which the
tallest pine
Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be
the mast
Of some great ammiral, were but a
wand—
He walked with, to support uneasy
steps
Over the burning marl, not like
those steps
On Heaven's azure; and the torrid

clime

Smote on him sore besides, vaulted
with fire.

320

Nathless he so endured, till on the
beach

Of that inflamed sea he stood, and
called

His legions—Angel Forms, who lay
entranced

Thick as autumnal leaves that
strow the brooks

In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian
shades

High over-arched embower; or
scattered sedge

Afloat, when with fierce winds
Orion armed

Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast,

whose waves o'erthrew
Busiris and his Memphian
chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they
pursued 330
The sojourners of Goshen, who be-
held
From the safe shore their floating
carcasses
And broken chariot-wheels. So
thick bestrown,
Abject and lost, lay these, covering
the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous
change.

He called so loud that all the hol-
low deep
Of Hell resounded:—"Princes, Po-

tentates,
Warriors, the Flower of Heaven—
once yours; now lost,
If such astonishment as this can
seize 340
Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen
this place
After the toil of battle to repose
Your wearied virtue, for the ease
you find
To slumber here, as in the vales of
Heaven?
Or in this abject posture have ye
sworn
To adore the Conqueror, who now
beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the
flood
With scattered arms and ensigns,

till anon
His swift pursuers from Heaven-
gates discern
Th' advantage, and, descending,
tread us down 350
Thus drooping, or with linked
thunderbolts
Transfix us to the bottom of this
gulf?
Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!"
They heard, and were abashed,
and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont
to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom
they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere
well awake.

Nor did they not perceive the evil
 plight
In which they were, or the fierce
 pains not feel; 360
Yet to their General's voice they
 soon obeyed
Innumerable. As when the potent
 rod
Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil
 day,
Waved round the coast, up-called a
 pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern
 wind,
That o'er the realm of impious
 Pharaoh hung
Like Night, and darkened all the
 land of Nile;
So numberless were those bad An-

gels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope
of Hell,
'Twixt upper, nether, and sur-
rounding fires; 370
Till, as a signal given, th' uplifted
spear
Of their great Sultan waving to di-
rect
Their course, in even balance down
they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all
the plain:
A multitude like which the popu-
lous North
Poured never from her frozen loins
to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her bar-
barous sons

Came like a deluge on the South,
and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan
sands.

380

Forthwith, form every squadron
and each band,
The heads and leaders thither haste
where stood
Their great Commander-godlike
Shapes, and Forms
Excelling human; princely Dignities;
And Powers that erst in Heaven sat
on thrones,
Though on their names in Heavenly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and
raised

By their rebellion from the Books of
Life.

Nor had they yet among the sons
of Eve 390
Got them new names, till, wander-
ing 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 for-
sake
God their Creator, and th' invisible
Glory of him that made them to
transform
Oft to the image of a brute,
adorned
With gay religions full of pomp

and gold,
And devils to adore for deities:
Then were they known to men by
various names, 400
And various idols through the hea-
then world.

Say, Muse, their names then
known, who first, who last,
Roused from the slumber on that
fiery couch,
At their great Emperor's call, as
next in worth
Came singly where he stood on the
bare strand,
While the promiscuous crowd
stood yet aloof?
The chief were those who, from the
pit of Hell

Roaming to seek their prey on
Earth, durst fix
Their seats, long after, next the seat
of God, 410
Their altars by his altar, gods
adored
Among the nations round, and
durst abide
Jehovah thundering out of Sion,
throned
Between the Cherubim; yea, often
placed
Within his sanctuary itself their
shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed
things
His holy rites and solemn feasts
profaned,
And with their darkness durst af-

front his light.

First, Moloch, horrid king, be-
smeared with blood 420
Of human sacrifice, and parents'
tears;
Though, for the noise of drums and
timbrels loud,
Their children's cries unheard that
passed through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Am-
monite
Worshiped in Rabba and her wa-
tery 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 430
On that opprobrious hill, and
made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom,
Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called, the
type of Hell.

Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of
Moab's sons,
From Aroar to Nebo and the wild
Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
And Horonaim, Seon's real, be-
yond
The flowery dale of Sibma clad

with vines,
And Eleale to th' Asphaltic Pool:
440
Peor his other name, when he en-
ticed
Israel in Sittim, on their march
from Nile,
To do him wanton rites, which cost
them woe.

Yet thence his lustful orgies he en-
larged
Even to that hill of scandal, by the
grove
Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by
hate,
Till good Josiah drove them thence
to Hell.

With these came they who, from

the bordering flood 450
Of old Euphrates to the brook that
parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had
general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth—those
male,
These feminine. For Spirits, when
they please,
Can either sex assume, or both; so
soft
And uncompounded is their
essence pure,
Not tried or manacled with joint or
limb,
Nor founded on the brittle strength
of bones,
Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what
shape they choose,

Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
460
Can execute their airy purposes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.

For those the race of Israel oft forsook
Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To bestial gods; for which their heads as low
Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
Of despicable foes. With these in troop
Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians called
470

Astarte, queen of heaven, with
 crescent horns;
To whose bright image nightly by
 the moon
Sidonian virgins paid their vows
 and songs;
In Sion also not unsung, where
 stood
Her temple on th' offensive moun-
 tain, built
By that uxorious king whose heart,
 though large,
Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next
 behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon
 allured
The Syrian damsels to lament his
 fate

480

In amorous ditties all a summer's
day,
While smooth Adonis from his na-
tive rock
Ran purple to the sea, supposed
with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the
love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like
heat,
Whose wanton passions in the sa-
cred porch
Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision
led,
His eye surveyed the dark idola-
tries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourned in earnest, when the
captive ark

490

Maimed his brute image, head and
hands lopt off,
In his own temple, on the grunsel-
edge,
Where he fell flat and shamed his
worshippers:
Dagon his name, sea-monster, up-
ward man
And downward fish; yet had his
temple high
Reared in Azotus, dreaded
through the coast
Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
And Accaron and Gaza's frontier
bounds.

Him followed Rimmon, whose de-
lightful seat 500
Was fair Damascus, on the fertile

banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid
streams.

He also against the house of God
was bold:

A leper once he lost, and gained a
king—

Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom
he drew

God's altar to disparage and dis-
place

For one of Syrian mode, whereon
to burn

His odious offerings, and adore the
gods

Whom he had vanquished. After
these appeared 510

A crew who, under names of old

renown—
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train—
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused
Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek
Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
Th' infection, when their borrowed gold composed
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox— 520
Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed

From Egypt marching, equalled
with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her
bleating gods.

Belial came last; than whom a
Spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more
gross to love
Vice for itself. To him no temple
stood
Or altar smoked; yet who more oft
than he
In temples and at altars, when the
priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who
filled 530
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 540
Exposed a matron, to avoid worse
rape.

These were the prime in order and
in might:
The rest were long to tell; though
far renowned
Th' Ionian gods—of Javan's issue
held
Gods, yet confessed later than
Heaven and Earth,
Their boasted parents;—Titan,
Heaven's first-born,
With his enormous brood, and
birthright seized
By younger Saturn: he from might-
ier Jove,
His own and Rhea's son, like mea-
sure found; 550
So Jove usurping reigned. These,
first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the

snowy top
Of cold Olympus ruled the middle
air,
Their highest heaven; or on the
Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the
bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn
old
Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian
fields,
And o'er the Celtic roamed the ut-
most Isles.

All these and more came flocking;
but with looks 560
Downcast and damp; yet such
wherein appeared
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 counte-
nance cast
Like doubtful hue. But he, his
wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high
words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance,
gently raised
Their fainting courage, and dis-
pelled their fears.

Then straight commands that, at
the warlike sound 570
Of trumpets loud and clarions, be
upreared
His mighty standard. That proud

honour claimed
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:
Who forthwith from the glittering
staff unfurled
Th' imperial ensign; which, full
high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to
the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich
emblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies; all the
while
Sonorous metal blowing martial
sounds:
At which the universal host up-
sent 580
A shout that tore Hell's concave,
and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old

Night.

All in a moment through the gloom
were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the
air,
With orient colours waving: with
them rose
A forest huge of spears; and
thronging helms
Appeared, and serried shields in
thick array
Of depth immeasurable. Anon
they move
In perfect phalanx to the Dorian
mood 590
Of flutes and soft recorders—such
as raised
To height of noblest temper heroes

old
Arming to battle, and instead of
rage
Deliberate valour breathed, firm,
and unmoved
With dread of death to flight or foul
retreat;
Nor wanting power to mitigate
and swage
With solemn touches troubled
thoughts, and chase
Anguish and doubt and fear and
sorrow and pain
From mortal or immortal minds.
Thus they,
Breathing united force with fixed
thought, 600
Moved on in silence to soft pipes
that charmed

Their painful steps o'er the burnt
soil. And now
Advanced in view they stand—a
horrid front
Of dreadful length and dazzling
arms, in guise
Of warriors old, with ordered
spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their
mighty Chief
Had to impose. He through the
armed files
Darts his experienced eye, and
soon traverse
The whole battalion views—their
order due,
Their visages and stature as of
gods; 610
Their number last he sums. And

now his heart
Distends with pride, and, harden-
ing in his strength,
Glories: for never, since created
Man,
Met such embodied force as,
named with these,
Could merit more than that small
infantry
Warred on by cranes—though all
the giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' heroic race
were joined
That fought at Thebes and Ilium,
on each side
Mixed with auxiliar gods; and
what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
620

Begirt with British and Armoric
knights;
And all who since, baptized or in-
fidel,
Jousted in Aspramont, or Montal-
ban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Tre-
bisonde,
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric
shore
When Charlemain with all his
peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these be-
yond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet
observed
Their dread Commander. He,
above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly emi-

nent, 630
Stood like a tower. His form had
yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor ap-
peared
Less than Archangel ruined, and
th' excess
Of glory obscured: as when the sun
new-risen
Looks through the horizontal
misty air
Shorn of his beams, or, from be-
hind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight
sheds
On half the nations, and with fear
of change
Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so,
yet shone

Above them all th' Archangel: but
his face 640
Deep scars of thunder had in-
trenched, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under
brows
Of dauntless courage, and consid-
erate pride
Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but
cast
Signs of remorse and passion, to
behold
The fellows of his crime, the fol-
lowers rather
(Far other once beheld in bliss),
condemned
For ever now to have their lot in
pain—
Millions of Spirits for his fault

amerced
Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung 650
For his revolt—yet faithful how they stood,
Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire
Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
With all his peers: attention held them mute.

Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in
 spite of scorn, 660
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 power of
 mind,
Forseeing or presaging, from the
 depth
Of knowledge past or present,

could have feared
How such united force of gods,
how such 670
As stood like these, could ever
know repulse?
For who can yet believe, though af-
ter loss,
That all these puissant legions,
whose exile
Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to
re-ascend,
Self-raised, and repossess their na-
tive seat?
For me, be witness all the host of
Heaven,
If counsels different, or danger
shunned
By me, have lost our hopes. But he
who reigns

Monarch in Heaven till then as one
secure
Sat on his throne, upheld by old re-
pute, 680
Consent or custom, and his regal
state
Put forth at full, but still his
strength concealed—
Which tempted our attempt, and
wrought our fall.

Henceforth his might we know,
and know our own,
So as not either to provoke, or
dread
New war provoked: our better part
remains
To work in close design, by fraud
or guile,

What force effected not; that he no
less
At length from us may find, who
overcomes 690
By force hath overcome but half his
foe.

Space may produce new Worlds;
whereof so rife
There went a fame in Heaven that
he ere long
Intended to create, and therein
plant
A generation whom his choice re-
gard
Should favour equal to the Sons of
Heaven.

Thither, if but to pry, shall be per-
haps

Our first eruption—thither, or else-
where; 700
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
despaired;
For who can think submission?
War, then, war
Open or understood, must be re-
solved."
He spake; and, to confirm his
words, outflew
Millions of flaming swords, drawn
from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden

blaze

Far round illumined Hell. Highly
they raged 710
Against the Highest, and fierce
with grasped arms
Clashed on their sounding shields
the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault
of Heaven.

There stood a hill not far, whose
grisly top
Belched fire and rolling smoke; the
rest entire
Shone with a glossy scurf—
undoubted sign
That in his womb was hid metallic
ore,
The work of sulphur. Thither,

winged with speed,
A numerous brigade hastened: as
when bands 720
Of pioneers, with spade and pick-
axe armed,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a
field,
Or cast a rampart. Mammon led
them on—
Mammon, the least erected Spirit
that fell
From Heaven; for even in Heaven
his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, ad-
miring more
The riches of heaven's pavement,
trodden gold,
Than aught divine or holy else en-
joyed

In vision beatific. By him first
Men also, and by his suggestion
 taught, 730
Ransacked the centre, and with im-
 pious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother
 Earth
For treasures better hid. Soon had
 his crew
Opened into the hill a spacious
 wound,
And digged out ribs of gold. Let
 none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that soil
 may best
Deserve the precious bane. And
 here let those
Who boast in mortal things, and
 wondering tell

Of Babel, and the works of Mem-
phian kings,
Learn how their greatest monu-
ments of fame 740
And strength, and art, are easily
outdone
By Spirits reprobate, and in an
hour
What in an age they, with incessant
toil
And hands innumerable, scarce
perform.

Nigh on the plain, in many cells
prepared,
That underneath had veins of liq-
uid fire
Sluiced from the lake, a second
multitude

With wondrous art founded the
massy ore,
Severing each kind, and scummed
the bullion-dross. 750

A third as soon had formed within
the ground
A various mould, and from the
boiling cells
By strange conveyance filled each
hollow nook;
As in an organ, from one blast of
wind,
To many a row of pipes the sound-
board breathes.

Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Rose like an exhalation, with the
sound
Of dulcet symphonies and voices

sweet- 760
Built like a temple, where pilasters
round
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave; nor did
there want
Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculp-
tures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not
Babylon
Nor great Alcairo such magnifi-
cence
Equalled in all their glories, to en-
shrine
Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat
Their kings, when Egypt with As-
syria strove
In wealth and luxury. Th' ascend-
ing pile 770

Stood fixed her stately height, 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 naptha and asphaltus,
yielded light
As from a sky. The hasty multitude
Admiring entered; and the work
some praise,
And some the architect. His hand
was known 780

In Heaven by many a towered
structure high,
Where sceptred Angels held their
residence,
And sat as Princes, whom the
supreme King
Exalted to such power, and gave to
rule,
Each in his Hierarchy, the Orders
bright.

Nor was his name unheard or un-
adored
In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian
land
Men called him Mulciber; and how
he fell
From Heaven they fabled, thrown
by angry Jove 790

Sheer o'er the crystal battlements:
 from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy
 eve,
A summer's day, and with the set-
 ting sun
Dropt from the zenith, like a falling
 star,
On Lemnos, th' Aegaeon isle. Thus
 they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious
 rout
Fell long before; nor aught availed
 him now
To have built in Heaven high tow-
 ers; nor did he scape
By all his engines, but was head-
 long sent,
With his industrious crew, to build

in Hell.

800

Meanwhile the winged Heralds, by
command
Of sovereign power, with awful
ceremony
And trumpet's sound, throughout
the host proclaim
A solemn council forthwith to be
held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his peers. Their sum-
mons called
From every band and squared reg-
iment
By place or choice the worthiest:
they anon
With hundreds and with thou-
sands trooping came 810

Attended. All access was
thronged; the gates
And porches wide, but chief the
spacious hall
(Though like a covered field, where
champions bold
Wont ride in armed, and at the Sol-
dan's chair
Defied the best of Paynim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with
lance),
Thick swarmed, both on the
ground and in the air,
Brushed with the hiss of rustling
wings. As bees
In spring-time, when the Sun with
Taurus rides.

820

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 rubbed with balm, expatiate,
and confer
Their state-affairs: so thick the airy
crowd
Swarmed and were straitened; till,
the signal given,
Behold a wonder! They but now
who seemed
In bigness to surpass Earth's giant
sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in
narrow room 830

Throng numberless—like that pyg-
mean 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 overhead
the Moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the
Earth
Wheels her pale course: they, on
their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund music charm
his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart
rebounds.

840

Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest
forms
Reduced their shapes immense,
and were at large,
Though without number still,
amidst the hall
Of that infernal court. But far
within,
And in their own dimensions like
themselves,
The great Seraphic Lords and
Cherubim
In close recess and secret conclave
sat,
A thousand demi-gods on golden
seats,
Frequent and full. After short si-
lence then,
And summons read, the great con-

sult began.

850

BOOK II

High on a throne of royal state,
 which far
Outshone the wealth or Ormus and
 of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with
 richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric

pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and, from
despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope,
aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pur-
sue
Vain war with Heaven; and, by
success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus
displayed:— 10
"Powers and Dominions, Deities of
Heaven!—
For, since no deep within her gulf
can hold
Immortal vigour, though op-
pressed and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost: from

this descent
 Celestial Virtues rising will appear
 More glorious and more dread
 than from no fall,
 And trust themselves to fear no
 second fate!–
 Me though just right, and the fixed
 laws of Heaven,
 Did first create your leader–next,
 free choice
 With what besides in council or in
 fight 20
 Hath been achieved of merit–yet
 this loss,
 Thus far at least recovered, hath
 much more
 Established in a safe, unenvied
 throne,
 Yielded with full consent. The hap-

pier state
In Heaven, which follows dignity,
 might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who
 here
Will envy whom the highest place
 exposes
Foremost to stand against the
 Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to
 greatest share
Of endless pain? Where there is,
 then, no good 30
For which to strive, no strife can
 grow up there
From faction: for none sure will
 claim in Hell
Precedence; none whose portion is
 so small

Of present pain that with ambi-
 tious mind
 Will covet more! With this advan-
 tage, then,
 To union, and firm faith, and firm
 accord,
 More than can be in Heaven, we
 now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old,
 Surer to prosper than prosperity
 Could have assured us; and by
 what best way, 40
 Whether of open war or covert
 guile,
 We now debate. Who can advise
 may speak."
 He ceased; and next him Moloch,
 sceptred king,
 Stood up—the strongest and the

fiercest Spirit
That fought in Heaven, now fiercer
by despair.

His trust was with th' Eternal to be
deemed
Equal in strength, and rather than
be less
Cared not to be at all; with that care
lost
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell,
or worse, 50
He recked not, and these words
thereafter spake:—
"My sentence is for open war. Of
wiles,
More unexpert, I boast not: them
let those
Contrive who need, or when they

need; not now.

For, while they sit contriving, shall
the rest—
Millions that stand in arms, and
longing wait
The signal to ascend—sit lingering
here,
Heaven's fugitives, and for their
dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den
of shame, 60
The prison of his tyranny who
reigns
By our delay? No! let us rather
choose,
Armed with Hell-flames and fury,
all at once
O'er Heaven's high towers to force

resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid
arms
Against the Torturer; when, to
meet the noise
Of his almighty engine, he shall
hear
Infernal thunder, and, for light-
ning, see
Black fire and horror shot with
equal rage
Among his Angels, and his throne
itself 70
Mixed 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 as-
cend
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 80
Insulting, and pursued us through
the Deep,
With what compulsion and labori-
ous flight
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is

easy, then;
Th' event is feared! Should we
again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his
wrath may find
To our destruction, if there be in
Hell
Fear to be worse destroyed! What
can be worse
Than to dwell here, driven out
from bliss, condemned
In this abhorred deep to utter woe!
Where pain of unextinguishable
fire 90
Must exercise us without hope of
end
The vassals of his anger, when the
scourge
Inexorably, and the torturing hour,

Calls us to penance? More de-
stroyed than thus,
We should be quite abolished, and
expire.

What fear we then? what doubt we
to incense
His utmost ire? which, to the
height enraged,
Will either quite consume us, and
reduce
To nothing this essential—happier
far 100
Than miserable to have eternal
being!—
Or, if our substance be indeed di-
vine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at
worst

On this side nothing; and by proof
we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his
Heaven,
And with perpetual inroads to
alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal
throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet re-
venge."
He ended frowning, and his look
denounced
Desperate revenge, and battle dan-
gerous 110
To less than gods. On th' other side
up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and hu-
mane.

A fairer person lost not Heaven; he
seemed
For dignity composed, and high
exploit.

But all was false and hollow;
though his tongue
Dropped manna, and could make
the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and
dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts
were low— 120
To vice industrious, but to nobler
deeds
Timorous and slothful. Yet he
pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus
began:—

"I should be much for open war, O
Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was
urged
Main reason to persuade immedi-
ate 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 130
Mistrustful, grounds his courage
on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire re-
venge.

First, what revenge? The towers of
Heaven are filled
With armed watch, that render all
access
Impregnable: oft on the bordering
Deep
Encamp their legions, or with ob-
scure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm
of Night,
Scorning surprise. Or, could we
break our way 140
By force, and at our heels all Hell
should rise
With blackest insurrection to con-
found
Heaven's purest light, yet our great
Enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his

throne
Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal
mould,
Incapable of stain, would soon ex-
pel
Her mischief, and purge off the
baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our fi-
nal hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
Th' Almighty Victor to spend all
his rage; 150
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 intellec-
tual being,
Those thoughts that wander

through eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and
lost
In the wide womb of uncreated
Night,
Devoid of sense and motion? And
who knows,
Let this be good, whether our an-
gry Foe
Can give it, or will ever? How he
can
Is doubtful; that he never will is
sure. 160

Will he, so wise, let loose at once
his ire,
Belike through impotence or un-
aware,
To give his enemies their wish, and

end
Them in his anger whom his anger
saves
To punish endless? "Wherefore
cease we, then?"
Say they who counsel war; "we are
decreed,
Reserved, and destined to eternal
woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suf-
fer more,
What can we suffer worse?" Is this,
then, worst— 170
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus
in arms?
What when we fled amain, pur-
sued and struck
With Heaven's afflicting thunder,
and besought

The Deep to shelter us? This Hell
then seemed
A refuge from those wounds. Or
when we lay
Chained on the burning lake? That
sure was worse.

What if the breath that kindled
those grim fires,
Awaked, should blow them into
sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames; or
from above 180
Should intermitted vengeance arm
again
His red right hand to plague us?
What if all
Her stores were opened, and this
firmament

Of Hell should spout her cataracts
of fire,
Impendent horrors, threatening
hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we
perhaps,
Designing or exhorting glorious
war,
Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be
hurled,
Each on his rock transfixed, the
sport and prey
Or racking whirlwinds, or for ever
sunk 190
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in
chains,
There to converse with everlasting
groans,
Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,

Ages of hopeless end? This would
be worse.

War, therefore, open or concealed,
alike

My voice dissuades; for what can
force or guile

With him, or who deceive his
mind, whose eye

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

All these our motions vain sees and
derides, 200

Not more almighty to resist our
might

Than wise to frustrate all our plots
and wiles.

Shall we, then, live thus vile—the
race of Heaven

Thus trampled, thus expelled, to
suffer here
Chains and these torments? Better
these than worse,
By my advice; since fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent de-
cree,
The Victor's will. To suffer, as to
do,
Our strength is equal; nor the law
unjust 210
That so ordains. This was at first
resolved,
If we were wise, against so great a
foe
Contending, and so doubtful what
might fall.

I laugh when those who at the

spear are bold
And venturous, if that fail them,
shrink, and fear
What yet they know must follow—
to endure
Exile, or igominy, or bonds, or
pain,
The sentence of their Conqueror.
This is now
Our doom; which if we can sustain
and bear, 220
Our Supreme Foe in time may
much remit
His anger, and perhaps, thus far re-
moved,
Not mind us not offending, satis-
fied
With what is punished; whence
these raging fires

Will slacken, if his breath stir not
their flames.

Our purer essence then will over-
come
Their noxious vapour; or, inured,
not feel;
Or, changed at length, and to the
place conformed
In temper and in nature, will re-
ceive 230
Familiar the fierce heat; and, void
of pain,
This horror will grow mild, this
darkness light;
Besides what hope the never-
ending flight
Of future days may bring, what
chance, what change

Worth waiting—since our present
lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not
worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more
woe."
Thus Belial, with words clothed in
reason's garb,
Counselled ignoble ease and
peaceful sloth,
Not peace; and after him thus
Mammon spake:— 240
"Either to disenthroned the King of
Heaven
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost. Him to un-
throned we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate
shall yield

To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge
the strife.

The former, vain to hope, argues as
vain

The latter; for what place can be for
us

Within Heaven's bound, unless
Heaven's Lord supreme

We overpower? Suppose he
should relent 250

And publish grace to all, on
promise made

Of new subjection; with what eyes
could we

Stand in his presence humble, and
receive

Strict laws imposed, to celebrate
his throne

With warbled hymns, and to his
 Godhead sing
Forced hallelujahs, while he lordly
 sits
Our envied sovereign, and his altar
 breathes
Ambrosial odours and ambrosial
 flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be
 our task
In Heaven, this our delight. How
 wearisome 260
Eternity so spent in worship paid
To whom we hate! Let us not then
 pursue,
By force impossible, by leave ob-
 tained
Unacceptable, though in Heaven,
 our state

Of splendid vassalage; but rather
seek
Our own good from ourselves, and
from our own
Live to ourselves, though in this
vast recess,
Free and to none accountable, pre-
ferring
Hard liberty before the easy yoke
Of servile pomp. Our greatness
will appear 270
Then most conspicuous when
great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of
adverse,
We can create, and in what place
soe'er
Thrive under evil, and work ease
out of pain

Through labour and endurance.
This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft
amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth
Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unob-
scured,
And with the majesty of darkness
round
Covers his throne, from whence
deep thunders roar. 280

Mustering their rage, and Heaven
resembles Hell!
As he our darkness, cannot we his
light
Imitate when we please? This
desert soil

Wants not her hidden lustre, gems
and gold;
Nor want we skill or art from
whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can
Heaven show more?
Our torments also may, in length of
time,
Become our elements, these pierc-
ing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper
changed 290
Into their temper; which must
needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things in-
vite
To peaceful counsels, and the set-
tled state
Of order, how in safety best we

may
Compose our present evils, with
regard
Of what we are and where, dis-
missing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what
I advise."
He scarce had finished, when such
murmur filled
Th' assembly as when hollow rocks
retain
The sound of blustering winds,
which all night long 300
Had roused the sea, now with
hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose
bark by chance
Or pinnacle, anchors in a craggy
bay

After the tempest. Such applause
was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sen-
tence pleased,
Advising peace: for such another
field
They dreaded worse than Hell; so
much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of
Michael
Wrought still within them; and no
less desire
To found this nether empire, which
might rise, 310
By policy and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.

Which when Beelzebub perceived—
than whom,

Satan except, none higher sat—with
grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising
seemed
A pillar of state. Deep on his front
engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face
yet shone,
Majestic, though in ruin. Sage he
stood 320
With Atlantean shoulders, fit to
bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies;
his look
Drew audience and attention still
as night
Or summer's noontide air, while
thus he spake:—

"Thrones and Imperial Powers,
 Offspring of Heaven,
Ethereal Virtues! or these titles
 now
Must we renounce, and, changing
 style, be called
Princes of Hell? for so the popular
 vote
Inclines—here to continue, and
 build up here
A growing empire; doubtless!
 while we dream, 330
And know not that the King of
 Heaven hath doomed
This place our dungeon, not our
 safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live ex-
 empt
From Heaven's high jurisdiction,

in new league
Banded against his throne, but to
remain
In strictest bondage, though thus
far removed,
Under th' inevitable curb, reserved
His captive multitude. For he, to
be sure,
In height or depth, still first and
last will reign
Sole king, and of his kingdom lose
no part 340
By our revolt, but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron sceptre
rule
Us here, as with his golden those in
Heaven.

What sit we then projecting peace

and war?
War hath determined us and foiled
with loss
Irreparable; terms of peace yet
none
Vouchsafed or sought; for what
peace will be given
To us enslaved, but custody severe,
And stripes and arbitrary punish-
ment 350
Inflicted? and what peace can we
return,
But, to our power, hostility and
hate,
Untamed reluctance, and revenge,
though slow,
Yet ever plotting how the Con-
queror least
May reap his conquest, and may

least rejoice
In doing what we most in suffering
feel?
Nor will occasion want, nor shall
we need
With dangerous expedition to in-
vade
Heaven, whose high walls fear no
assault or siege,
Or ambush from the Deep. What if
we find 360
Some easier enterprise? There is a
place
(If ancient and prophetic fame in
Heaven
Err not)—another World, the happy
seat
Of some new race, called Man,
about this time

To be created like to us, though less
In power and excellence, but
favoured more
Of him who rules above; so was his
will
Pronounced among the Gods, and
by an oath
That shook Heaven's whole cir-
cumference confirmed.

370

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 of subtlety. Though

Heaven be shut,
And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit
secure
In his own strength, this place may
lie exposed,
The utmost border of his kingdom,
left
To their defence who hold it: here,
perhaps,
Some advantageous act may be
achieved 380
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 re-
penting hand
Abolish his own works. This
would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt
his joy
In our confusion, and our joy up-
raise
In his disturbance; when his dar-
ling sons, 390
Hurled 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

States, and joy
Sparkled in all their eyes: with full
assent
They vote: whereat his speech he
thus renews:—
"Well have ye judged, well ended
long debate,
Synod of Gods, and, like to what ye
are,
Great things resolved, which from
the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spite
of fate, 410
Nearer our ancient seat—perhaps in
view
Of those bright confines, whence,
with neighbouring arms,
And opportune excursion, we may
chance

Re-enter Heaven; or else in some
mild zone
Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's
fair light,
Secure, and at the brightening ori-
ent beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft deli-
cious 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 420
Sufficient? who shall tempt with
wandering feet
The dark, unbottomed, infinite
Abyss,
And through the palpable obscure

find out
His uncouth way, or spread his 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 430
All circumspection: and we now
no less
Choice in our suffrage; for on
whom we send
The weight of all, and our last
hope, relies."

This said, he sat; and expectation
held
His look suspense, awaiting who
appeared
To second, or oppose, or undertake
The perilous attempt. But all sat
mute,
Pondering the danger with deep
thoughts; and each
In other's countenance read his
own dismay,
Astonished. None among the
choice and prime 440
Of those Heaven-warring champi-
ons could be found
So hardy as to proffer or accept,
Alone, the dreadful voyage; till, at
last,
Satan, whom now transcendent

glory raised
Above his fellows, with monarchal
pride
Conscious of highest worth, un-
moved thus spake:—
"O Progeny of Heaven! Empyreal
Thrones!
With reason hath deep silence and
demur
Seized us, though undismayed.
Long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up
to light. 450

Our prison strong, this huge con-
vex of fire,
Outrageous to devour, immures us
round
Ninefold; and gates of burning

And this imperial sovereignty,
adorned
With splendour, armed with
power, if aught proposed
And judged of public moment in
the shape
Of difficulty or danger, could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do
I assume 470
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 honoured sits? Go, therefore,
mighty Powers,

Terror of Heaven, though fallen; in-
tend 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 480
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 de-
struction seek
Deliverance for us all. This enter-
prise
None shall partake with me." Thus

saying, rose
The Monarch, and prevented all re-
ply;
Prudent lest, from his resolution
raised,
Others among the chief might offer
now,
Certain to be refused, what erst
they feared, 490
And, so refused, might in opinion
stand
His rivals, winning cheap the high
repute
Which he through hazard huge
must earn. But they
Dreaded not more 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 Highest in
 Heaven. 500

Nor failed they to express how
 much they praised
That for the general safety he de-
 spised
His own: for neither do the Spirits
 damned
Lose all their virtue; lest bad men
 should boast
Their specious deeds on earth,
 which glory excites,

Or close ambition varnished o'er
with zeal.

Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchless
Chief: 510
As, when from mountain-tops the
dusky clouds
Ascending, while the north wind
sleeps, o'erspread
Heaven's cheerful face, the louring
element
Scowls o'er the darkened landscape
snow or shower,
If chance the radiant sun, with
farewell sweet,
Extend his evening beam, the fields
revive,

The birds their notes renew, and
bleating herds
Attest their joy, that hill and valley
rings.

O shame to men! Devil with devil
damned 520
Firm concord holds; men only disagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heavenly grace, and, God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife
Among themselves, and levy cruel wars
Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
As if (which might induce us to ac-

cord)
Man had not hellish foes enow be-
sides,
That day and night for his destruc-
tion wait!
The Stygian council thus dissolved;
and forth 530
In order came the grand infernal
Peers:
Midst came their mighty
Paramount, and seemed
Alone th' antagonist of Heaven,
nor less
Than Hell's dread Emperor, with
pomp supreme,
And god-like imitated state: him
round
A globe of fiery Seraphim enclosed
With bright emblazonry, and hor-

rent arms.

Then of their session ended they
bid cry

With trumpet's regal sound the
great result: 540

Toward the four winds four speedy
Cherubim

Put to their mouths the sounding
alchemy,

By herald's voice explained; the
hollow Abyss

Heard far and wide, and all the
host of Hell

With deafening shout returned
them loud acclaim.

Thence more at ease their minds,
and somewhat raised

By false presumptuous hope, the

ranged Powers
Disband; and, wandering, each his
several way
Pursues, as inclination or sad
choice 550
Leads him perplexed, where he
may likeliest find
Truce to his restless thoughts, and
entertain
The irksome hours, till his great
Chief return.

Part on the plain, or in the air sub-
lime,
Upon the wing or in swift race con-
tend,
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 560
Waged in the troubled sky, and
armies rush
To battle in the clouds; before each
van
Prick forth the airy knights, and
couch their spears,
Till thickest legions close; with
feats of arms
From either end of heaven the
welkin burns.

Others, with vast Typhoean rage,
more fell,
Rend up both rocks and hills, and

ride the air
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the
wild uproar:—
As when Alcides, from Oechalia
crowned 570
With conquest, felt th' envenomed
robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Thes-
salian 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 hap-
less fall
By doom of battle, and complain

that Fate
Free Virtue should enthral to Force
or Chance.

580

Their song was partial; but the har-
mony
(What could it less when Spirits
immortal sing?)
Suspended Hell, and took with
ravishment
The thronging audience. In dis-
course more sweet
(For Eloquence the Soul, Song
charms the Sense)
Others apart sat on a hill retired,
In thoughts more elevate, and rea-
soned high
Of Providence, Foreknowledge,
Will, and Fate—

Fixed fate, free will, foreknowl-
edge absolute,
And found no end, in wandering
mazes lost. 590

Of good and evil much they ar-
gued 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 ex-
cite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' ob-
dured breast
With stubborn patience as with

triple steel.

600

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 dis-
gorge
Into the burning lake their baleful
streams—
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly
hate;
Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and

deep;
Cocytus, named of lamentation
loud 610
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce
Phlegeton,
Whose waves of torrent fire in-
flame with rage.

Far off from these, a slow and silent
stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof
who drinks
Forthwith his former state and be-
ing forgets—
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure
and pain.

Beyond this flood a frozen conti-
nent 620

Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail, which
on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and
ruin seems
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow
and ice,
A gulf profound as that Serbonian
bog
Betwixt Damiata and Mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk:
the parching air
Burns froze, and cold performs th'
effect of fire.

Thither, by harpy-footed Furies
haled, 630

At certain revolutions all the
damned
Are brought; and feel by turns the
bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by
change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire to starve
in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and
there to pine
Immovable, infixed, and frozen
round
Periods of time,—thence hurried
back to fire.

They ferry over this Lethean sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to
augment, 640
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 op-
pose 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 confused march forlorn, th' ad-
venturous bands, 650
With shuddering horror pale, and

eyes aghast,
Viewed first their lamentable lot,
and found
No rest. Through many a dark and
dreary vale
They passed, and many a region
dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery
alp,
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, 660
Obominable, inutterable, and

worse
Than fables yet have feigned or
fear conceived,
Gorgons, and Hydras, and
Chimeras dire.

Meanwhile the Adversary of God
and Man,
Satan, with thoughts inflamed of
highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and toward
the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight: some-
times
He scours the right hand coast,
sometimes the left;
Now shaves with level wing the
deep, then soars 670
Up to the fiery concave towering

high.

As when far off at sea a fleet de-
scried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial
winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the
isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence
merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trad-
ing flood,
Through the wide Ethiopian to the
Cape,
Ply stemming nightly toward the
pole: so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend. At last ap-
pear 680
Hell-bounds, high reaching to the

horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates;
three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine
rock,
Impenetrable, impaled with cir-
cling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates
there sat
On either side a formidable Shape.

The one seemed woman to the
waist, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly
fold,
Voluminous and vast—a serpent
armed 690
With mortal sting. About her mid-
dle round

A cry of Hell-hounds never-
ceasing barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full
loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list,
would creep,
If aught disturbed their noise, into
her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still
barked and howled
Within unseen. Far less abhorred
than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea
that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Tri-
nacrian shore;
Nor uglier follow the night-hag,
when, called 700
In secret, riding through the air she

comes,
Lured with the smell of infant
blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the
labouring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other
Shape—
If shape it might be called that
shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint,
or limb;
Or substance might be called that
shadow seemed,
For each seemed either—black it
stood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart: what
seemed his head 710
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 admired—

Admired, not feared (God and his
Son except,

Created thing naught valued he
nor shunned),

And with disdainful look thus first
began:—

720

"Whence and what art thou, exe-
crable Shape,

That dar'st, though grim and terri-

ble, advance
Thy miscreated front athwart my
way
To yonder gates? Through them I
mean to pass,
That be assured, without leave
asked 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, 730
Who first broke peace in Heaven
and faith, till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious

arms
Drew after him the third part of
Heaven's sons,
Conjured against the Highest—for
which both thou
And they, outcast from God, are
here condemned
To waste eternal days in woe and
pain?
And reckon'st thou thyself with
Spirits of Heaven
Hell-doomed, and breath'st defi-
ance here and scorn,
Where I reign king, and, to enrage
thee more,
Thy king and lord? Back to thy
punishment, 740
False fugitive; and to thy speed
add wings,

Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
Thy lingering, or with one stroke of
this dart
Strange horror seize thee, and
pangs unfelt before."
So spake the grisly Terror, and in
shape,
So speaking and so threatening,
grew tenfold,
More dreadful and deform. On th'
other side,
Incensed with indignation, Satan
stood
Unterrified, and like a comet
burned,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus
huge 750
In th' arctic sky, and from his hor-

rid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at
the head
Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal
hands
No second stroke intend; and such
a frown
Each cast at th' other as when two
black clouds,
With heaven's artillery fraught,
came 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.

760

So frowned the mighty combatants

that Hell
Grew darker at their frown; so
 matched they stood;
For never but once more was
 wither like
To meet so great a foe. And now
 great deeds
Had been achieved, whereof all
 Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky Sorceress, that
 sat
Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal
 key,
Risen, and with hideous outcry
 rushed between.

"O father, what intends thy hand,"
 she cried, 770
"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, ordained his drudge to ex-
ecute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls
justice, bids—
His wrath, which one day will de-
stroy ye both!"
She spake, and at her words the
hellish Pest
Forbore: then these to her Satan
returned:—
"So strange thy outcry, and thy
words so strange 780

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-
formed, 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:— 790

"Hast thou forgot me, then; and do
I seem
Now in thine eye so foul?—once
deemed so fair
In Heaven, when at th' assembly,
and in sight
Of all the Seraphim with thee com-
bined
In bold conspiracy against
Heaven's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surprised thee, dim thine eyes and
dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames
thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side
opening wide,
Likest to thee in shape and counte-
nance bright, 800

Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,
Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized
All th' host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid
At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign
Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
I pleased, and with attractive graces won
The most averse—thee chiefly, who, full oft
Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st enamoured; and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret that my womb

conceived 810
A growing burden. Meanwhile
war arose,
And fields were fought in Heaven:
wherein remained
(For what could else?) to our
Almighty Foe
Clear victory; to our part loss and
rout
Through all the Empyrean. Down
they fell,
Driven headlong from the pitch of
Heaven, down
Into this Deep; and in the general
fall
I also: at which time this powerful
key
Into my hands was given, with
charge to keep

Transformed: but he my inbred en-
emy 830
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal
dart,
Made to destroy. I fled, and cried
out Death!
Hell trembled at the hideous name,
and sighed
From all her caves, and back re-
sounded Death!
I fled; but he pursued (though
more, it seems,
Inflamed with lust than rage), and,
swifter far,
Me overtook, his mother, all dis-
mayed,
And, in embraces forcible and foul
Engendering with me, of that rape
begot

set them on, 850
And me, his parent, would full
soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he
knows
His end with mine involved, and
knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and
his bane,
Whenever that shall be: so Fate
pronounced.

But thou, O father, I forewarn thee,
shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly
hope
To be invulnerable in those bright
arms,
Through tempered heavenly; for

house of pain 870
Both him and thee, and all the
heavenly host
Of Spirits that, in our just pretences
armed,
Fell with us from on high. From
them I go
This uncouth errand sole, and one
for all
Myself expose, with lonely steps to
tread
Th' unfounded Deep, and through
the void immense
To search, with wandering quest, a
place foretold
Should be—and, by concurring
signs, ere now
Created vast and round—a place of
bliss

In the purlieus of Heaven; and
 therein placed 880
A race of upstart creatures, to sup-
 ply
Perhaps our vacant room, though
 more removed,
Lest Heaven, surcharged with po-
 tent multitude,
Might hap to move new broils. Be
 this, or aught
Than this more secret, now de-
 signed, 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, em-

These adamantine gates; against
all force 900
Death ready stands to interpose his
dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatched by liv-
ing might.

But what owe I to his commands
above,
Who hates me, and hath hither
thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus pro-
found,
To sit in hateful office here con-
fined,
Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly
born—
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours

compassed round 910
Of mine own brood, that on my
bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my au-
thor, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should
I obey
But thee? whom follow? Thou wilt
bring me soon
To that new world of light and
bliss, among
The gods who live at ease, where I
shall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as
beseems
Thy daughter and thy darling,
without end."
Thus saying, from her side the fatal
key,

Sad instrument of all our woe, she
took; 920
And, towards the gate rolling her
bestial train,
Forthwith the huge portcullis high
up-drew,
Which, but herself, not all the Sty-
gian Powers
Could once have moved; 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 bot-
tom shook 930
Of Erebus. She opened; but to shut
Excelled her power: the gates wide
open stood,
That with extended wings a ban-
nered host,
Under spread ensigns marching,
might pass through
With horse and chariots ranked in
loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a
furnace-mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and
ruddy flame.

Before their eyes in sudden view
appear
The secrets of the hoary Deep—a

dark 940
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension; where length,
breadth, and height,
And time, and place, are lost;
where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature,
hold
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion
stand.

For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four
champions fierce,
Strive here for mastery, and to bat-
tle bring
Their embryon atoms: they around
the flag 950
Of each his faction, in their several

clans,
Light-armed or heavy, sharp,
smooth, swift, or slow,
Swarm populous, unnumbered as
the sands
Of Barca or 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, 960
The womb of Nature, and perhaps

her grave,
Of neither sea, nor shore, nor air,
nor fire,
But all these in their pregnant
causes mixed
Confusedly, and which thus must
ever fight,
Unless 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
looked a while,
Pondering his voyage; for no nar-
row frith
He had to cross. Nor was his ear
less pealed 970

With noises loud and ruinous (to
compare
Great things with small) than when
Bellona storms
With all her battering engines, bent
to rase
Some capital city; or less than if this
frame
Of Heaven were falling, and these
elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The steadfast Earth. At last his sail-
broad vans
He spread for flight, and, in the
surging smoke
Uplifted, spurns the ground;
thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, ascending
rides 980

Audacious; but, that seat soon fail-
ing, 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 tumul-
tuous cloud,
Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried
him
As many miles aloft. That fury
stayed—
Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, nei-
ther sea,
Nor good dry land—nigh
foundered, on he fares, 990

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 Arimasgian, who by
 stealth
Had from his wakeful custody pur-
 loined
The guarded gold; so eagerly the
 Fiend
O'er bog or steep, through strait,
 rough, dense, or rare,
With head, hands, wings, or feet,
pursues his way, 1000

And swims, or sinks, or wades, or
creeps, or flies.

At length a universal hubbub wild
Of stunning sounds, and voices all
confused,
Borne through the hollow dark, as-
saults his ear
With loudest vehemence. Thither
he plies
Undaunted, to meet there what-
ever Power
Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss
Might in that noise reside, of
whom to ask
Which way the nearest coast of
darkness lies 1010
Bordering on light; when straight
behold the throne

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

1020

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 dis-
 turb
The secrets of your realm; but, by
 constraint
Wandering this darksome desert,
 as my way
Lies through your spacious empire
 up to light,
Alone and without guide, half lost,
 I seek,
What readiest path leads where
 your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heaven; or, if some
 other place, 1030
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 expelled, re-
duce
To her original darkness and your
sway
(Which is my present journey), and
once more
Erect the standard there of ancient
Night.

1040

Yours be th' advantage all, mine
the revenge!"
Thus Satan; and him thus the An-

arch old,
With faltering speech and visage
incomposed,
Answered: "I know thee, stranger,
who thou art—
That mighty leading Angel, who of
late
Made head against Heaven's King,
though overthrown.

I saw and heard; for such a numer-
ous host
Fled not in silence through the
frighted Deep,
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
1050
Confusion worse confounded; and
Heaven-gates
Poured out by millions her victori-

ous bands,
Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep residence; if all I can will
serve
That little which is left so to de-
fend,
Encroached on still through our in-
testine broils
Weakening the sceptre of old
Night: first, Hell,
Your dungeon, stretching far and
wide beneath;
Now lately Heaven and Earth, an-
other world
Hung o'er my realm, linked in a
golden chain 1060
To that side Heaven from whence
your legions fell!
If that way be your walk, you have

not far;
So much the nearer danger. Go,
and speed;
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my
gain."
He ceased; and Satan stayed not to
reply,
But, glad that now his sea should
find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force re-
newed
Springs upward, like a pyramid of
fire,
Into the wild expanse, and through
the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides
round 1070
Environed, wins his way; harder
beset

And more endangered than when
Argo passed
Through Bosphorus betwixt the
justling rocks,
Or when Ulysses on the larboard
shunned
Charybdis, and by th' other
whirlpool steered.

So he with difficulty and labour
hard
Moved on, with difficulty and
labour he;
But, he once passed, soon after,
when Man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death
amain, 1080
Following his track (such was the
will of Heaven)

Paved after him a broad and beaten
way
Over the dark Abyss, whose boil-
ing gulf
Tamely endured a bridge of won-
drous 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.

1090

But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the

walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim
Night
A glimmering dawn. Here Nature
first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to
retire,
As from her outmost works, a bro-
ken foe,
With tumult less and with less hos-
tile din;
That Satan with less toil, and now
with ease,
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubi-
ous light,
And, like a weather-beaten vessel,
holds 1100
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 Heaven, extended wide
In circuit, undetermined square or
round,
With opal towers and battlements
adorned
Of living sapphire, once his native
seat;
And, fast by, hanging in a golden
chain,
This pendent World, in bigness as
a star
Of smallest magnitude close by the
moon. 1110

Thither, full fraught with mis-
chievous revenge,
Accursed, and in a cursed hour, he
hies.

BOOK III

Hail, holy Light, offspring of
Heaven firstborn,
Or of the Eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee unblam'd?
since God is light,
And never but in unapproach'd
light

Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in
thee
Bright effluence of bright essence
increate.

Or hear'st thou rather pure ethe-
real stream,
Whose fountain who shall tell? be-
fore the sun,
Before the Heavens thou wert, and
at the voice 10
Of God, as with a mantle, didst in-
vest
The rising world of waters dark
and deep,
Won from the void and formless in-
finite.

Thee I re-visit 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 the Or-
 phean lyre
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
 20
Taught by the heavenly Muse to
 venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-
 ascend,
Though hard and rare: Thee I re-
 visit safe,
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but
 thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in

vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find
no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath
quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the
more
Cease I to wander, where the
Muses haunt,
Clear spring, or shady grove, or
sunny hill, 30
Smit with the love of sacred song;
but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks
beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and
warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes for-
get

So were I equall'd with them in
renown,
Thy sovran command, that Man
should find grace;
Blind Thamyris, and blind
Maeonides,
And Tiresias, and Phineus,
prophets old:
Then feed on thoughts, that volun-
tary move
Harmonious numbers; as the
wakeful bird 40
Sings darkling, and in shadiest
covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus
with the year
Seasons return; but not to me re-
turns
Day, or the sweet approach of even

or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or sum-
mer'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 knowl-
edge fair
Presented with a universal blank⁵⁰
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 the Almighty Father
from above, 60
From the pure empyrean where he
sits
High thron'd above all highth, bent
down his eye
His own works and their works at
once to view:
About him all the Sanctities of
Heaven
Stood thick as stars, and from his

sight receiv'd
Beatitude past utterance; on his
right
The radiant image of his glory sat,
His only son; on earth he first be-
held
Our two first parents, yet the only
two
Of mankind in the happy garden
plac'd 70
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and
love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blissful solitude; he then sur-
vey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Sa-
tan there
Coasting the wall of Heaven on
this side Night

In the dun air sublime, and ready
now
To stoop with wearied wings, and
willing feet,
On the bare outside of this world,
that seem'd
Firm land imbosom'd, without fir-
mament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
80

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 90
On desperate revenge, that shall re-
dound
Upon his own rebellious head.
And now,
Through all restraint broke loose,
he wings his way
Not far off Heaven, in the precincts
of light,
Directly towards the new created
world,
And man there plac'd, with pur-

pose 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 com-
mand, 100
Sole pledge of his obedience: So
will fall
He and his faithless progeny:
Whose fault?
Whose but his own? ingrate, he
had of me
All he could have; I made him just
and right,
Sufficient to have stood, though
free to fall.

Such I created all the ethereal Pow-
ers
And Spirits, both them who stood,
and them who fail'd;
Freely they stood who stood, and
fell who fell.

110

Not free, what proof could they
have given sincere
Of true allegiance, constant faith or
love,
Where only what they needs must
do appear'd,
Not what they would? what praise
could they receive?
What pleasure I from such obedi-
ence paid,
When will and reason (reason also
is choice)

Useless and vain, of freedom both
despoil'd,
Made passive both, had serv'd ne-
cessity,
Not me. They therefore, as to right
belong'd,
So were created, nor can justly ac-
cuse 120
Their Maker, or their making, or
their fate,
As if predestination over-rul'd
Their will dispos'd by absolute de-
cree
Or high foreknowledge they them-
selves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I
foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence
on their fault,

Which had no less proved certain
unforeknown.

So without least impulse or
shadow of fate,

Or aught by me immutably fore-
seen, 130

They trespass, authors to them-
selves in all

Both what they judge, and what
they choose; for so

I form'd them free: and free they
must remain,

Till they enthrall themselves; I else
must change

Their nature, and revoke the high
decree

Unchangeable, eternal, which or-
dain'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 140

By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,

The other none: In mercy and justice both,

Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel;

But Mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd

All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect

Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.

Beyond compare the Son of God
was seen 150

Most glorious; in him all his Father
shone

Substantially express'd; and in his
face

Divine compassion visibly ap-
pear'd,

Love without end, and without
measure grace,

Which uttering, thus he to his Fa-
ther spake.

O Father, gracious was that word
which clos'd

Thy sovran command, that Man
should find grace;

For which both Heaven and earth

shall high extol
Thy praises, with the innumerable
 sound 160
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 judgest

only right.

170

Or shall the Adversary thus obtain
His end, and frustrate thine? shall
he fulfill

His malice, and thy goodness bring
to nought,

Or proud return, though to his
heavier doom,

Yet with revenge accomplish'd,
and to Hell

Draw after him the whole race of
mankind,

By him corrupted? or wilt thou
thyself

Abolish thy creation, and unmake
For him, what for thy glory thou
hast made?

So should thy goodness and thy

greatness both 180
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 effec-
tual might,

All hast thou spoken as my
thoughts are, all

As my eternal purpose hath de-
creed; 190

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 powers, 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 fallen condition is, and to me
owe
All his deliverance, and to none
but me. 200

Some I have chosen of peculiar
grace,

Elect above the rest; so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft
 be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease
 betimes
The incensed Deity, while offer'd
 grace
Invites; for I will clear their senses
 dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony
 hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedi-
 ence due.

210

To prayer, repentance, and obedi-
 ence due,
Though but endeavour'd with sin-
 cere 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 ar-
rive.

This my long sufferance, and my
day of grace, 220
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 dis-
obeying,
Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of
Heaven,
Affecting God-head, and, so losing
all,
To expiate his treason hath nought
left, 230
But to destruction sacred and de-
vote,
He, with his whole posterity, must
die,
Die he or justice must; unless for
him
Some other able, and as willing,
pay

The rigid satisfaction, death for
death.

Say, heavenly Powers, where shall
we find such love?

Which of you will be mortal, to re-
deem

Man's mortal crime, and just the
unjust to save?

Dwells in all Heaven charity so
dear? 240

He ask'd, but all the heavenly quire
stood mute,

And silence was in Heaven: on
Man's behalf

Patron or intercessour none ap-
pear'd,

Much less that durst upon his own
head draw

The deadly forfeiture, and ransom
set.

And now without redemption all
mankind

Must have been lost, adjudg'd to
Death and Hell

By doom severe, had not the Son of
God,

In whom the fulness dwells of love
divine, 250

His dearest mediation thus re-
new'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 mes-
sengers,

To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd,
unsought?

Happy for Man, so coming; he her
aid

Can never seek, once dead in sins,
and lost;

Atonement for himself, or offering
meet, 260

Indebted and undone, hath none to
bring;

Behold me then: me for him, life
for life

I offer: on me let thine anger fall;
Account me Man; I for his sake will
leave

Thy bosom, and this glory next to
thee

Freely put off, and for him lastly

die

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

Under his gloomy power I shall not
long

Lie vanquished. Thou hast given
me to possess 270

Life in myself for ever; by thee I
live;

Though now to Death I yield, and
am his due,

All that of me can die, yet, that debt
paid,

Thou wilt not leave me in the loath-
some grave

His prey, nor suffer my unspotted
soul

For ever with corruption there to

dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and sub-
 due
My vanquisher, spoiled of his
 vaunted spoil.

Death his death's wound shall then
 receive, and stoop 280
Inglorious, of his mortal sting dis-
 armed;
I through the ample air in triumph
 high
Shall lead Hell captive maugre
 Hell, and show
The powers of darkness bound.
 Thou, at the sight
Pleased, out of Heaven shalt look
 down and smile,
While, by thee raised, I ruin all my

foes;
Death last, and with his carcase
glut the grave;
Then, with the multitude of my re-
deemed,
Shall enter Heaven, long absent,
and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no
cloud 290
Of anger shall remain, but peace
assured
And reconcilment: wrath shall be
no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence
joy entire.

His words here ended; but his
meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breathed im-

mortal love
To mortal men, above which only
shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offered, he attends the
will
Of his great Father. Admiration
seized 300
All Heaven, what this might mean,
and whither tend,
Wondering; but soon th' Almighty
thus replied:
O thou in Heaven and Earth the
only peace
Found out for mankind under
wrath, O thou
My sole complacence! Well thou
know'st how dear
To me are all my works; nor Man

the least,
Though last created, that for him I
spare
Thee from my bosom and right
hand, to save,
By losing thee a while, the whole
race lost.

310

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 re-
stored

As many as are restored, without
thee none. 320

His crime makes guilty all his sons;
thy merit,

Imputed, shall absolve them who
renounce

Their own both righteous and un-
righteous deeds,

And live in thee transplanted, and
from thee

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

Shall satisfy for Man, be judged
and die,

And dying rise, and rising with

him raise

His brethren, ransomed with his
own dear life.

330

So heavenly love shall outdo
hellish hate,

Giving to death, and dying to re-
deem,

So dearly to redeem what hellish
hate

So easily destroyed, and still de-
stroys

In those who, when they may, ac-
cept not grace.

Nor shalt thou, by descending to
assume

Man's nature, lessen or degrade
thine own.

Because thou hast, though throned
 in highest bliss 340
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; be-
 cause in thee
Love hath abounded more than
 glory abounds;
Therefore thy humiliation shall ex-
 alt
With thee thy manhood also to this
 throne:

Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here
 shalt reign 350
Both God and Man, Son both of
 God and Man,
Anointed universal King; all
 power
I give thee; reign for ever, and as-
 sume
Thy merits; under thee, as head
 supreme,
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Do-
 minions, I reduce:
All knees to thee shall bow, of them
 that bide
In Heaven, or Earth, or under Earth
 in Hell.

When thou, attended gloriously
 from Heaven,

Shalt in the sky appear, and from
thee send 360
The summoning Arch-Angels to
proclaim
Thy dread tribunal; forthwith from
all winds,
The living, and forthwith the cited
dead
Of all past ages, to the general
doom
Shall hasten; such a peal shall
rouse their sleep.

Then, all thy saints assembled,
thou shalt judge
Bad Men and Angels; they, ar-
raigned, shall sink
Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her
numbers full,

Thenceforth shall be for ever shut.

Mean while 370

The world shall burn, and from her
ashes spring

New Heaven and Earth, wherein
the just shall dwell,

And, after all their tribulations
long,

See golden days, fruitful of golden
deeds,

With joy and peace triumphing,
and fair truth.

Then thou thy regal 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; 380
Adore the Son, and honour him as
me.

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

With solemn adoration down they
cast 390
Their crowns inwove with amarant
and gold;
Immortal amarant, a flower which
once
In Paradise, fast by the tree of life,
Began to bloom; but soon for man's
offence
To Heaven removed, where first it
grew, there grows,
And flowers aloft shading the
fount of life,
And where the river of bliss
through midst of Heaven
Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her am-
ber stream;
With these that never fade the Spir-
its elect

Bind their resplendent locks in-
wreathed with beams; 400
Now in loose garlands thick
thrown off, the bright
Pavement, that like a sea of jasper
shone,
Impurpled with celestial roses
smiled.

Then, crowned again, their golden
harps they took,
Harps ever tuned, that glittering
by their side
Like quivers hung, and with
preamble sweet
Of charming symphony they intro-
duce
Their sacred song, and waken rap-
tures high;

No voice exempt, no voice but well
could join 410
Melodious part, such concord is in
Heaven.

Thee, Father, first they sung Om-
nipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; the Author of all be-
ing,
Fountain of light, thyself invisible
Amidst the glorious brightness
where thou sit'st
Throned inaccessible, but when
thou shadest
The full blaze of thy beams, and,
through a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a ra-
diant shrine, 420

Dark with excessive bright thy
skirts appear,
Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest
Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings
veil their eyes.

Thee next they sang of all creation
first,
Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
In whose conspicuous counte-
nance, without cloud
Made visible, the Almighty Father
shines,
Whom else no creature can behold;
on thee
Impressed the effulgence of his
glory abides, 430
Transfused on thee his ample Spirit

rests.

He Heaven of Heavens and all the
Powers therein
By thee created; and by thee threw
down
The aspiring Dominations: Thou
that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder
didst not spare,
Nor stop thy flaming chariot-
wheels, that shook
Heaven's everlasting frame, while
o'er the necks
Thou drovest of warring Angels
disarrayed.

440

Back from pursuit thy Powers with
loud acclaim

Thee only extolled, Son of thy Fa-
ther's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his
foes,
Not so on Man: Him through their
malice fallen,
Father of mercy and grace, thou
didst not doom
So strictly, but much more to pity
incline:
No sooner did thy dear and only
Son
Perceive thee purposed not to
doom frail Man
So strictly, but much more to pity
inclined,
He to appease thy wrath, and end
the strife 450
Of mercy and justice in thy face

discerned,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he
sat
Second to thee, offered himself to
die
For Man's offence. O unexampled
love,
Love no where to be found less
than Divine!
Hail, Son of God, Saviour of Men!
Thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my
song
Henceforth, and never shall my
heart thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's
praise disjoin.

460

Thus they in Heaven, above the

starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and
hymning spent.

Mean while upon the firm opacous
globe
Of this round world, whose first
convex divides
The luminous inferiour orbs, en-
closed
From Chaos, and the inroad of
Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks: A globe far
off
It seemed, now seems a boundless
continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the
frown of Night 470
Starless exposed, and ever-

threatening storms
Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky;
Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,
Though distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air less vexed with tempest loud:
Here walked the Fiend at large in spacious field.

As when a vultur on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dislodging from a region scarce of prey 480
To gorge the flesh of lambs or yearling 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 Chinese drive
With sails and wind their cany
waggon light:
So, on this windy sea of land, the
Fiend
Walked up and down alone, bent
on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this
place,
Living or lifeless, to be found was
none; 490
None yet, but store hereafter from
the earth

Up hither like aerial vapours flew
Of all things transitory and vain,
 when sin
With vanity had filled the works of
 men:
Both all things vain, and all who in
 vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or
 lasting fame,
Or happiness in this or the other
 life;
All who have their reward on
 earth, the fruits
Of painful superstition and blind
 zeal,
Nought seeking but the praise of
 men, here find 500
Fit retribution, empty as their
 deeds;

All the unaccomplished works of
Nature's hand,
Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly
mixed,
Dissolved on earth, fleet hither,
and in vain,
Till final dissolution, wander here;
Not in the neighbouring moon as
some have dreamed;
Those argent fields more likely
habitants,
Translated Saints, or middle Spirits
hold
Betwixt the angelical and human
kind.

510

Hither of ill-joined sons and
daughters born
First from the ancient world those

giants came
With many a vain exploit, though
then renowned:
The builders next of Babel on the
plain
Of Sennaar, and still with vain de-
sign,
New Babels, had they where-
withal, would build:
Others came single; he, who, to be
deemed
A God, leaped fondly into Aetna
flames,
Empedocles; and he, who, to enjoy
Plato's Elysium, leaped into the
sea, 520
Cleombrotus; and many more too
long,
Embryos, and idiots, eremites, and

friars

White, black, and gray, with all
their trumpery.

Here pilgrims roam, that strayed
so far to seek

In Golgotha him dead, who lives in
Heaven;

And they, who to be sure of Par-
adise,

Dying, put on the weeds of Do-
minick,

Or in Franciscan think to pass dis-
guised;

They pass the planets seven, and
pass the fixed, 530

And that crystalline sphere whose
balance weighs

The trepidation talked, and that

first moved;
And now Saint Peter at Heaven's
wicket seems
To wait them with his keys, and
now at foot
Of Heaven's ascent they lift their
feet, when lo
A violent cross wind from either
coast
Blows them transverse, ten thou-
sand leagues awry
Into the devious air: Then might ye
see
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with
their wearers, tost
And fluttered into rags; then
reliques, beads, 540
Indulgences, dispenses, pardons,
bulls,

The sport of winds: All these, up-
whirled aloft,
Fly o'er the backside of the world
far off
Into a Limbo large and broad, since
called
The Paradise of Fools, to few un-
known
Long after; now unpeopled, and
untrod.

All this dark globe the Fiend found
as he passed,
And long he wandered, till at last a
gleam
Of dawning light turned thither-
ward in haste 550
His travelled steps: far distant he
descries

Ascending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heaven a structure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich,
appeared
The work as of a kingly palace-
gate,
With frontispiece of diamond and
gold
Embellished; thick with sparkling
orient gems
The portal shone, inimitable on
earth
By model, or by shading pencil,
drawn.

560

These stairs were such as whereon
Jacob saw
Angels ascending and descending,

bands
Of guardians bright, when he from
Esau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz
Dreaming by night under the open
sky
And waking cried, This is the gate
of Heaven.

Each stair mysteriously was meant,
nor stood
There always, but drawn up to
Heaven sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright
sea flowed 570
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl,
whereon
Who after came from earth, failing
arrived

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 aggra-
vate
His sad exclusion from the doors of
bliss:
Direct against which opened from
beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Par-
adise, 580
A passage down to the Earth, a
passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-
times

metropolis
With glistening spires and pinna-
cles adorned,
Which now the rising sun gilds
with his beams:
Such wonder seised, though after
Heaven seen,
The Spirit malign, but much more
envy seised,
At sight of all this world beheld so
fair.

Round he surveys (and well might,
where he stood 610
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 Atlantick seas

Beyond the horizon; then from
pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without
longer pause
Down right into the world's first
region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds
with ease
Through the pure marble air his
oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that
shone 620
Stars distant, but nigh hand
seemed other worlds;
Or other worlds they seemed, or
happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens
famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and

flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles; but who dwelt
happy there
He staid not to inquire: Above
them all
The golden sun, in splendour likest
Heaven,
Allured his eye; thither his course
he bends
Through the calm firmament, (but
up or down,
By center, or eccentric, hard to
tell, 630
Or longitude,) where the great lu-
minary
Aloof the vulgar constellations
thick,
That from his lordly eye keep dis-
tance due,

Dispenses light from far; they, as
they move
Their starry dance in numbers that
compute
Days, months, and years, towards
his all-cheering lamp
Turn swift their various motions,
or are turned
By his magnetick beam, that gently
warms
The universe, and to each inward
part
With gentle penetration, though
unseen, 640
Shoots invisible virtue even to the
deep;
So wonderously was set his station
bright.

There lands the Fiend, a spot like
which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glazed optick tube yet
never saw.

The place he found beyond expres-
sion bright,
Compared with aught on earth,
metal or stone;
Not all parts like, but all alike in-
formed 650
With radiant light, as glowing iron
with fire;
If metal, part seemed gold, part sil-
ver clear;
If stone, carbuncle most or chryso-
lite,
Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that

shone
In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone
besides
Imagined rather oft than elsewhere
seen,
That stone, or like to that which
here below
Philosophers in vain so long have
sought,
In vain, though by their powerful
art they bind
Volatile Hermes, and call up un-
bound 660
In various shapes old Proteus from
the sea,
Drained through a limbeck to his
native form.

What wonder then if fields and re-

gions here
Breathe forth Elixir pure, and
rivers run
Potable gold, when with one virtu-
ous touch
The arch-chemick sun, so far from
us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humour
mixed,
Here in the dark so many precious
things
Of colour glorious, and effect so
rare? 670
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 the equator, as
they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no
way round
Shadow from body opaque can
fall; and the air,
No where so clear, sharpened his
visual ray
To objects distant far, whereby he
soon
Saw within ken a glorious Angel
stand, 680
The same whom John saw also in
the sun:
His back was turned, but not his
brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden

tiar

Circled his head, nor less his locks
behind

Illustrious on his shoulders fledge
with wings

Lay waving round; on some great
charge employed

He seemed, or fixed in cogitation
deep.

Glad was the Spirit impure, as now
in hope

To find who might direct his wan-
dering flight 690

To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,
His journey's end and our begin-
ning woe.

But first he casts to change his
proper shape,

Which else might work him danger
or delay:
And now a stripling Cherub he ap-
pears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his
face
Youth smiled celestial, and to every
limb
Suitable grace diffused, so well he
feigned:
Under a coronet his flowing hair
700
In curls on either cheek played;
wings he wore
Of many a coloured plume, sprin-
kled with gold;
His habit fit for speed succinct, and
held
Before his decent steps a silver

wand.

He drew not nigh unheard; the An-
gel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant vis-
age turned,
Admonished by his ear, and
straight was known
The Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the
seven
Who in God's presence, nearest to
his throne, 710
Stand ready at command, and are
his eyes
That run through all the Heavens,
or down to the Earth
Bear his swift errands over moist
and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus

accosts.

Uriel, for thou of those seven Spir-
its that stand
In sight of God's high throne, glo-
riously bright,
The first art wont his great au-
thentick will
Interpreter through highest
Heaven to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy at-
tend; 720
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 wonderous works, but
chiefly Man,
His chief delight and favour, him
for whom
All these his works so wonderous
he ordained,
Hath brought me from the quires
of Cherubim
Alone thus wandering. Brightest
Seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs
hath Man 730
His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath
none,
But all these shining orbs his choice
to dwell;
That I may find him, and with se-
cret gaze
Or open admiration him behold,

On whom the great Creator hath
bestowed
Worlds, and on whom hath all
these graces poured;
That both in him and all things, as
is meet,
The universal Maker we may
praise;
Who justly hath driven out his
rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and, to repair that
loss, 740
Created this new happy race of
Men
To serve him better: Wise are all his
ways.

So spake the false dissembler un-
perceived;

For neither Man nor Angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through
Heaven and Earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake,
suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
750
Resigns her charge, while goodness
thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: Which now for
once beguiled
Uriel, though regent of the sun,
and held
The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in
Heaven;
Who to the fraudulent impostor

foul,
In his uprightness, answer thus re-
turned.

Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends
to know
The works of God, thereby to glo-
rify
The great Work-master, leads to no
excess 760
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 com-
prehend
Their number, or the wisdom infi-
nite 770
That brought them forth, but hid
their causes deep?
I saw when at his word the form-
less mass,
This world's material mould, came
to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and
wild uproar

Stood ruled, stood vast infinitude
 confined;
Till at his second bidding Darkness
 fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder
 sprung:
Swift to their several quarters
 hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth,
 flood, air, fire;
And this ethereal quintessence of
 Heaven 780
Flew upward, spirited with various
 forms,
That rolled orbicular, and turned to
 stars
Numberless, as thou seest, and
 how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each

his course;
The rest in circuit walls this uni-
verse.

Look downward on that globe,
whose hither side
With light from hence, though but
reflected, shines;
That place is Earth, the seat of Man;
that light
His day, which else, as the other
hemisphere, 790
Night would invade; but there the
neighbouring moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her
aid
Timely interposes, and her
monthly round
Still ending, still renewing,

through mid Heaven,
With borrowed light her counte-
nance triform
Hence fills and empties to en-
lighten the Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks
the night.

That spot, to which I point, is Par-
adise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades,
his bower. 800

Thy way thou canst not miss, me
mine requires.

Thus said, he turned; and Satan,
bowing low,
As to superiour Spirits is wont in
Heaven,
Where honour due and reverence

none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of
earth beneath,
Down from the ecliptick, sped with
hoped success,
Throws his steep flight in many an
aery wheel;
Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he
lights. 810

BOOK IV

O, for that warning voice, which
he, who saw
The Apocalypse, heard cry in
Heaven aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to sec-
ond rout,
Came furious down to be revenged

on men,
Woe to the inhabitants on earth!
that now,
While time was, our first parents
had been warned
The coming of their secret foe, and
'scaped,
Haply so 'scaped his mortal snare:
For now
Satan, now first inflamed with
rage, came down,
The tempter ere the accuser of
mankind, 10
To wreak on innocent frail Man his
loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to
Hell:
Yet, not rejoicing in his speed,
though bold

Far off and fearless, nor with cause
to boast,
Begins his dire attempt; which
nigh the birth
Now rolling boils in his tumul-
tuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back re-
coils
Upon himself; horror and doubt
distract
His troubled thoughts, and from
the bottom stir
The Hell within him; for within
him Hell 20
He brings, and round about him,
nor from Hell
One step, no more than from him-
self, can fly
By change of place: Now con-

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

Sometimes towards Eden, which
now in his view
Lay pleasant, his grieved look he
fixes sad;
Sometimes towards Heaven, and
the full-blazing sun, 30
Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
Then, much revolving, thus in
sighs began.

O thou, that, with surpassing glory

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

Ah, wherefore! he deserved no
such return
From me, whom he created what I
was
In that bright eminence, and with
his good
Upbraided none; nor was his ser-
vice hard.

What could be less than to afford
him praise,
The easiest recompence, and pay
him thanks, 50
How due! yet all his good proved
ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up
so high
I 'sdeined subjection, and thought
one step higher

Would set me highest, and in a mo-
ment quit
The debt immense of endless grati-
tude,
So burdensome still paying, still to
owe,
Forgetful what from him I still re-
ceived,
And understood not that a grateful
mind
By owing owes not, but still pays,
at once
Indebted and discharged; what
burden then 60
O, had his powerful destiny or-
dained
Me some inferiour Angel, I had
stood
Then happy; no unbounded hope

had raised
Ambition! Yet why not some other
Power
As great might have aspired, and
me, though mean,
Drawn to his part; but other Pow-
ers as great
Fell not, but stand unshaken, from
within
Or from without, to all temptations
armed.

Hadst thou the same free will and
power to stand? 70
Thou hadst: whom hast thou then
or what to accuse,
But Heaven's free love dealt
equally to all?
Be then his love accursed, since

love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay, cursed be thou; since against
his thy will
Chose freely what it now so justly
rues.

Me miserable! which way shall I
fly
Infinite wrath, and infinite de-
spair? 80
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am
Hell;
And, in the lowest deep, a lower
deep
Still threatening to devour me
opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a
Heaven.

O, then, at last relent: Is there no
place
Left for repentance, none for par-
don left?
None left but by submission; and
that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread
of shame
Among the Spirits beneath, whom
I seduced 90
With other promises and other
vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could
subdue
The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little
know
How dearly I abide that boast so
vain,
Under what torments inwardly I

groan,
While they adore me on the throne
of Hell.

With diadem and scepter high ad-
vanced,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery: Such joy ambition finds.
100

But say I could repent, and could
obtain,
By act of grace, my former state;
how soon
Would highth recall high thoughts,
how soon unsay
What feigned submission swore?
Ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and
void.

For never can true reconcilment
grow,
Where wounds of deadly hate
have pierced so deep:
Which would but lead me to a
worse relapse 110
And heavier fall: so should I pur-
chase dear
Short intermission bought with
double smart.

This knows my Punisher; therefore
as far
From granting he, as I from beg-
ging, peace;
All hope excluded thus, behold, in-
stead
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new de-
light,

Mankind created, and for him this
world.

So farewell, hope; and with hope
farewell, fear; 120

Farewell, remorse! all good to me
is lost;

Evil, be thou my good; by thee at
least

Divided empire with Heaven's
King I hold,

By thee, and more than half per-
haps will reign;

As Man ere long, and this new
world, shall know.

Thus while he spake, each passion
dimmed his face

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

Which marred his borrowed vis-
age, and betrayed
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
130

For heavenly minds from such dis-
tempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon
aware,
Each perturbation smoothed with
outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practised falsehood under
saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couched
with revenge:
Yet not enough had practised to de-
ceive
Uriel once warned; whose eye pur-

sued him down

The way he went, and on the As-
syrian mount 140

Saw him disfigured, more than
could befall

Spirit of happy sort; his gestures
fierce

He marked and mad demeanour,
then alone,

As he supposed, all unobserved,
unseen.

So on he fares, and to the border
comes

Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her en-
closure green,

As with a rural mound, the cham-
paign head

Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy
sides 150
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 the-
atre
Of stateliest view. Yet higher than
their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up-
sprung;
Which to our general sire gave

prospect large
Into his nether empire neighbour-
ing round. 160

And higher than that wall a cir-
cling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with
fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of
golden hue,
Appeared, with gay enamelled
colours mixed:
On which the sun more glad im-
pressed his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or hu-
mid bow,
When God hath showered the
earth; so lovely seemed
That landskip: And of pure now

purer air
Meets his approach, and to the
 heart inspires 170
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 fail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and
 now are past
Mozambick, off at sea north-east
 winds blow
Sabean odours from the spicy
 shore
Of Araby the blest; with such delay

Well pleased they slack their
course, and many a league 180
Cheered with the grateful smell old
Ocean smiles:

So entertained those odorous
sweets the Fiend,

Who came their bane; though with
them better pleased

Than Asmodeus with the fishy
fume

That drove him, though enam-
oured, from the spouse

Of Tobit's son, and with a
vengeance sent

From Media post to Egypt, there
fast bound.

Now to the ascent of that steep sav-
age hill

Satan had journeyed on, pensive
and slow; 190
But further way found none, so
thick entwined,
As one continued brake, the under-
growth
Of shrubs and tangling bushes had
perplexed
All path of man or beast that
passed that way.

One gate there only was, and that
looked east
On the other side: which when the
arch-felon saw,
Due entrance he disdained; and, in
contempt,
At one flight bound high over-
leaped all bound

tiles:

So clomb this first grand thief into
God's fold; 210
So since into his church lewd
hirelings climb.

Thence up he flew, and on the tree
of life,
The middle tree and highest there
that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true
life
Thereby regained, but sat devising
death
To them who lived; nor on the
virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only
used
For prospect, what well used had

been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows 220
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 ex-
posed,
In narrow room, Nature's whole
wealth, yea more,
A Heaven on Earth: For blissful
Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in
the east
Of Eden planted; Eden stretched

her line 230
From Auran eastward to the royal
towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian
kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long be-
fore
Dwelt in Telassar: In this pleasant
soil
His far more pleasant garden God
ordained;
Out of the fertile ground he caused
to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight,
smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of
life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial
fruit

Of vegetable gold; and next to life,
240

Our death, the tree of knowledge,
grew fast by,
Knowledge of good bought dear
by knowing ill.

Southward through Eden went a
river large,
Nor changed his course, but
through the shaggy hill
Passed underneath ingulfed; for
God had thrown
That mountain as his garden-
mould high raised
Upon the rapid current, which,
through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst
up-drawn,

of gold,
With mazy error under pendant
shades 260
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and
fed
Flowers worthy of Paradise, which
not nice Art
In beds and curious knots, but Na-
ture boon
Poured forth profuse on hill, and
dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first
warmly smote
The open field, and where the un-
pierced shade
Imbrownd the noontide bowers:
Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view;
Groves whose rich trees wept

odorous gums and balm,
Others whose fruit, burnished with
golden rind, 270
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 in-
terposed,
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery
lap
Of some irriguous valley spread
her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without
thorn the rose:
Another side, umbrageous grots
and caves

Of cool recess, o'er which the
 mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and
 gently creeps 280
Luxuriant; mean while murmuring
 waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispersed, or
 in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myr-
 tle crowned
Her crystal mirrour holds, unite
 their streams.

The birds their quire apply; airs,
 vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and
 grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while uni-
 versal Pan,

Knit with the Graces and the Hours
in dance,
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that
fair field 290
Of Enna, where Proserpine gather-
ing flowers,
Herself a fairer flower by gloomy
Dis
Was gathered, which cost Ceres all
that pain
To seek her through the world; nor
that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and the in-
spired
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
300
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame
Rhea's eye;
Nor where Abassin kings their is-
sue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by
some supposed
True Paradise under the Ethiop
line
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shin-
ing rock,
A whole day's journey high, but
wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where
the Fiend

Saw, undelighted, all delight, all
kind
Of living creatures, new to sight,
and strange
Two of far nobler shape, erect and
tall, 310
Godlike erect, with native honour
clad
In naked majesty seemed lords of
all:
And worthy seemed; for in their
looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker
shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe
and pure,
(Severe, but in true filial freedom
placed,)
Whence true authority in men;

though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal
seemed;
For contemplation he and valour
formed;
For softness she and sweet attrac-
tive grace; 320
He for God only, she for God in
him:
His fair large front and eye sublime
declared
Absolute rule; and hyacinthine
locks
Round from his parted forelock
manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his
shoulders broad:
She, as a veil, down to the slender
waist

Her unadorned golden tresses
wore
Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets
waved
As the vine curls her tendrils,
which implied
Subjection, but required with gentle
sway, 330
And by her yielded, by him best re-
ceived,
Yielded with coy submission, mod-
est pride,
And sweet, reluctant, amorous de-
lay.

Nor those mysterious parts were
then concealed;
Then was not guilty shame, dis-
honest shame

Of nature's works, honour dishon-
ourable,
Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all
mankind
With shows instead, mere shows of
seeming pure,
And banished from man's life his
happiest life, 340
Simplicity and spotless innocence!
So passed they naked on, nor
shunned the sight
Of God or Angel; for they thought
no ill:
So hand in hand they passed, the
loveliest pair,
That ever since in love's embraces
met;
Adam the goodliest man of men
since born

His sons, the fairest of her daughters
Eve.

Under a tuft of shade that on a
green

Stood whispering soft, by a fresh
fountain side 350

They sat them down; and, after no
more toil

Of their sweet gardening labour
than sufficed

To recommend cool Zephyr, and
made ease

More easy, wholesome thirst and
appetite

More grateful, to their supper-
fruits they fell,

Nectarine fruits which the compli-
ant boughs

Yielded them, side-long as they sat
recline
On the soft downy bank damasked
with flowers:
The savoury pulp they chew, and
in the rind,
Still as they thirsted, scoop the
brimming stream; 360
Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing
smiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as
beseems
Fair couple, linked in happy nup-
tial league,
Alone as they. About them frisking
played
All beasts of the earth, since wild,
and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or

den;
Sporting the lion ramped, and in
his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers,
ounces, pards,
Gambolled before them; the un-
wieldy elephant,
To make them mirth, used all his
might, and wreathed 370
His lithe proboscis; close the ser-
pent sly,
Insinuating, wove with Gordian
twine
His braided train, and of his fatal
guile
Gave proof unheeded; others on
the grass
Couched, and now filled with pas-
ture gazing sat,

Or bedward ruminating; for the
sun,
Declined, was hasting now with
prone career
To the ocean isles, and in the as-
cending scale
Of Heaven the stars that usher
evening rose:
When Satan still in gaze, as first he
stood, 380
Scarce thus at length failed speech
recovered sad.

O Hell! what do mine eyes with
grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high ad-
vanced
Creatures of other mould, earth-
born perhaps,

Not Spirits, yet to heavenly Spirits
bright
Little inferiour; whom my
thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so
lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and
such grace
The hand that formed them on
their shape hath poured. 390

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

Long to continue, and this high
 seat your Heaven
Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out
 such a foe
As now is entered; yet no purposed
 foe
To you, whom I could pity thus for-
 lorn, 400
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 re-
ceive 410
Your numerous offspring; if no bet-
ter place,
Thank him who puts me loth to
this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him
who wronged.

And should I at your harmless in-
nocence
Melt, as I do, yet publick reason

just,
Honour and empire with revenge
enlarged,
By conquering this new world,
compels me now
To do what else, though damned, I
should abhor.

420

So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
The tyrant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.

Then from his lofty stand on that
high tree
Down he alights among the sport-
ful herd
Of those four-footed kinds, himself
now one,

Now other, as their shape served
best his end
Nearer to view his prey, and, un-
spied,
To mark what of their state he more
might learn,
By word or action marked. About
them round 430
A lion now he stalks with fiery
glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath
spied
In some purlieu two gentle fawns
at play,
Straight couches close, then, rising,
changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who
chose his ground,
Whence rushing, he might surest

seize them both,
Griped in each paw: when, Adam
first of men
To first of women Eve thus moving
speech,
Turned him, all ear to hear new ut-
terance flow.

440

Sole partner, and sole part, of all
these joys,
Dearer thyself than all; needs must
the Power
That made us, and for us this am-
ple world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;
That raised us from the dust, and
placed us here
In all this happiness, who at his

hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Aught whereof he hath need; he
who requires
From us no other service than to
keep 450
This one, this easy charge, of all the
trees
In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taste that only
tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree
of life;
So near grows death to life,
whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt; for
well thou knowest
God hath pronounced it death to

taste that tree,
The only sign of our obedience left,
Among so many signs of power
and rule
Conferred upon us, and dominion
given 460
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.

470

To whom thus Eve replied. O thou
for whom
And from whom I was formed,
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. 480

That day I oft remember, when
from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself
reposed
Under a shade on flowers, much
wondering where
And what I was, whence thither
brought, and how.

Not distant far from thence a mur-
muring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and
spread
Into a liquid plain, then stood un-
moved
Pure as the expanse of Heaven; I

thither went 490
With unexperienced thought, and
laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the
clear
Smooth lake, that to me seemed an-
other sky.

As I bent down to look, just oppo-
site
A shape within the watery gleam
appeared,
Bending to look on me: I started
back,
It started back; but pleased I soon
returned,
Pleased it returned as soon with
answering looks
Of sympathy and love: There I had

fixed 500
Mine eyes till now, and pined with
vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warned me;
"What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair Crea-
ture, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but fol-
low me,
And I will bring thee where no
shadow stays
Thy coming, and thy soft em-
braces, he
Whose image thou art; him thou
shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine, to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence
be called
Mother of human race." What

could I do, 510
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 amiably
mild,
Than that smooth watery image:
Back I turned;
Thou following cryedst aloud, "Re-
turn, fair Eve;
Whom flyest thou? whom thou fly-
est, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee be-
ing I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my
heart,

Substantial life, to have thee by my
side 520

Henceforth an individual solace
dear;

Part of my soul I seek thee, and
thee claim

My other half:" With that thy gentle
hand

Seised mine: I yielded; and from
that time see

How beauty is excelled by manly
grace,

And wisdom, which alone is truly
fair.

So spake our general mother, and
with eyes

Of conjugal attraction unreproved,
And meek surrender, half-

embracing leaned 530
On our first father; half her
swelling breast
Naked met his, under the flowing
gold
Of her loose tresses hid: he in de-
light
Both of her beauty, and submissive
charms,
Smiled with superiour love, as
Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns
the clouds
That shed Mayflowers; and
pressed her matron lip
With kisses pure: Aside the Devil
turned
For envy; yet with jealous leer ma-
lign

Eyed them askance, and to himself
thus plained. 540

Sight hateful, sight tormenting!
thus these two,
Imparadised in one another's
arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their
fill
Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am
thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but
fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the
least,
Still unfulfilled with pain of long-
ing pines.

Yet let me not forget what I have
gained 550

From their own mouths: All is not
theirs, it seems;
One fatal tree there stands, of
knowledge called,
Forbidden them to taste: Knowl-
edge 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 560
With more desire to know, and to
reject
Envious commands, invented with
design
To keep them low, whom knowl-
edge might exalt
Equal with Gods: aspiring to be
such,
They taste and die: What likelier
can ensue
But first with narrow search I must
walk round
This garden, and no corner leave
unspied;
A chance but chance may lead
where I may meet
Some wandering Spirit of Heaven
by fountain side,

Or in thick shade retired, from him
to draw 570
What further would be learned.
Live while ye may,
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are
to succeed!
So saying, his proud step he scorn-
ful turned,
But with sly circumspection, and
began
Through wood, through waste,
o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam
Mean while in utmost longitude,
where Heaven
With earth and ocean meets, the
setting sun
Slowly descended, and with right
aspect

Against the eastern gate of Par-
adise 580

Levelled his evening rays: It was a
rock

Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one
ascent

Accessible from earth, one en-
trance high;

The rest was craggy cliff, that over-
hung

Still as it rose, impossible to climb.

Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel
sat,

Chief of the angelick guards,
awaiting night;

About him exercised heroick
games 590

The unarmed youth of Heaven, but
nigh at hand
Celestial armoury, shields, helms,
and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming,
and with gold.

Thither came Uriel, gliding
through the even
On a sun-beam, swift as a shooting
star
In autumn thwarts the night, when
vapours fired
Impress the air, and shows the
mariner
From what point of his compass to
beware
Impetuous winds: He thus began
in haste. 600

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

This day at highth of noon came to
my sphere
A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to
know
More of the Almighty's works, and
chiefly Man,
God's latest image: I described his
way
Bent all on speed, and marked his
aery gait; 610
But in the mount that lies from
Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon dis-

cerned his looks
Alien from Heaven, with passions
foul obscured:
Mine eye pursued him still, but un-
der shade
Lost sight of him: One of the ban-
ished crew,
I fear, hath ventured from the deep,
to raise
New troubles; him thy care must
be to find.

To whom the winged warrior
thus returned.

620
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect
sight,
Amid the sun's bright circle where
thou sitst,

See far and wide: In at this gate
 none pass
The vigilance here placed, but such
 as come
Well known from Heaven; and
 since meridian hour
No creature thence: If Spirit of
 other sort,
So minded, have o'er-leaped these
 earthly bounds
On purpose, hard thou knowest it
 to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal
 bar.

630

But if within the circuit of these
 walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of
 whom

Thou tellest, by morrow dawning I
shall know.

So promised he; and Uriel to his
charge
Returned on that bright beam,
whose point now raised
Bore him slope downward to the
sun now fallen
Beneath the Azores; whether the
prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither
rolled
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth,
640
By shorter flight to the east, had left
him there
Arraying with reflected purple and
gold

The clouds that on his western
throne attend.

Now came still Evening on, and
Twilight gray
Had in her sober livery all things
clad;

Silence accompanied; for beast and
bird,

They to their grassy couch, these to
their nests

Were slunk, all but the wakeful
nightingale;

She all night long her amorous des-
cant sung; 650

Silence was pleased: Now glowed
the firmament

With living sapphires: Hesperus,
that led

The starry host, rode brightest, till
the moon,
Rising in clouded majesty, at
length
Apparent queen unveiled her peer-
less light,
And o'er the dark her silver mantle
threw.

When Adam thus to Eve. Fair Con-
sort, the hour
Of night, and all things now retired
to rest,
Mind us of like repose; since God
hath set 660
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, unemployed, and less
need rest;
Man hath his daily work of body or
mind
Appointed, which declares his dig-
nity,
And the regard of Heaven on all
his ways;
While other animals unactive
range,
And of their doings God takes no
account. 670

To-morrow, ere fresh morning
streak the east

bids us rest.

To whom thus Eve, with perfect
 beauty adorned

My Author and Disposer, what
 thou bidst

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; 690

All seasons, and their change, all
 please alike.

Sweet is the breath of Morn, her ris-
 ing sweet,

With charm of earliest birds: pleas-
 ant the sun,

fruit, flower,
Glistering with dew; nor fragrance
after showers;
Nor grateful Evening mild; nor
silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, nor walk
by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without
thee is sweet.

But wherefore all night long shine
these? for whom 710
This glorious sight, when sleep
hath shut all eyes?
To whom our general ancestor
replied.

Daughter of God and Man, accom-
plished Eve,
These have their course to finish

round the earth,
By morrow evening, and from land
to land
In order, though to nations yet un-
born,
Ministring light prepared, they set
and rise;
Lest total Darkness should by
night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish
life 720
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 re-
ceive
Perfection from the sun's more po-
tent ray.

These then, though unbeheld in
deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think,
though men were none, 730
That Heaven would want specta-
tors, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk
the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and
when we sleep:
All these with ceaseless praise his
works behold

Both day and night: How often
 from the steep
Of echoing hill or thicket have we
 heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to others
 note,
Singing their great Creator? oft in
 bands
While they keep watch, or nightly
 rounding walk, 740
With heavenly touch of instrumen-
 tal sounds
In full harmonick number joined,
 their songs
Divide the night, and lift our
 thoughts to Heaven.

Thus talking, hand in hand alone

they passed
On to their blissful bower: it was a
place
Chosen by the sovran Planter,
when he framed
All things to Man's delightful use;
the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven
shade
Laurel and myrtle, and what
higher grew 750
Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either
side
Acanthus, and each odorous bushy
shrub,
Fenced up the verdant wall; each
beauteous flower,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Reared high their flourished heads

between, and wrought
Mosaick; underfoot the violet,
Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich in-
lay
Broidered the ground, more
coloured than with stone
Of costliest emblem: Other crea-
ture here,
Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst
enter none, 760
Such was their awe of Man. In
shadier bower
More sacred and sequestered,
though but feigned,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor
Nymph
Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in
close recess,
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-

smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve decked first her
nuptial bed;
And heavenly quires the hy-
menaeon sung,
What day the genial Angel to our
sire
Brought her in naked beauty more
adorned,
More lovely, than Pandora, whom
the Gods 770
Endowed with all their gifts, and
O! too like
In sad event, when to the unwiser
son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she
ensnared
Mankind with her fair looks, to be
avenged

On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus, at their shady lodge arrived,
both stood,

Both turned, and under open sky
adored

The God that made both sky, air,
earth, and heaven,

Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe, 780

And starry pole: Thou also madest
the night,

Maker Omnipotent, and thou the
day,

Which we, in our appointed work
employed,

Have finished, happy in our mutual help

And mutual love, the crown of all
our bliss
Ordained by thee; and this deli-
cious place
For us too large, where thy abun-
dance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the
ground.

But thou hast promised from us
two a race 790
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 in-
most bower
Handed they went; and, eased the
putting off
These troublesome disguises
which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid; nor
turned, I ween, 800
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve
the rites
Mysterious of connubial love re-
fused:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity, and place, and inno-
cence,
Defaming as impure what God de-
clares

Pure, and commands to some,
leaves free to all.

Our Maker bids encrease; who bids
abstain

But our Destroyer, foe to God and
Man?

Hail, wedded Love, mysterious
law, true source 810

Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise of all things common
else!

By thee adulterous Lust was driven
from men

Among the bestial herds to range;
by thee

Founded in reason, loyal, just, and
pure,

Relations dear, and all the charities

Of father, son, and brother, first
were known.

Far be it, that I should write thee
sin or blame,
Or think thee unbecoming holiest
place, 820
Perpetual fountain of domestick
sweets,
Whose bed is undefiled and chaste
pronounced,
Present, or past, as saints and pa-
triarchs used.

Here Love his golden shafts em-
ploys, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his
purple wings,
Reigns here and revels; not in the
bought smile

Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unen-
deared,
Casual fruition; nor in court-
amours,
Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or
midnight ball, 830
Or serenate, which the starved
lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with
disdain.

These, lulled by nightingales, em-
bracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flow-
ery roof
Showered roses, which the morn
repaired. Sleep on,
Blest pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye
seek

No happier state, and know to
know no more.

Now had night measured with her
shadowy cone 840

Half way up hill this vast sublunar
vault,

And from their ivory port the
Cherubim,

Forth issuing at the accustomed
hour, stood armed

To their night watches in warlike
parade;

When Gabriel to his next in power
thus spake.

Uzziel, half these draw off, and
coast the south

With strictest watch; these other
wheel the north;

Our circuit meets full west. As
flame they part,
Half wheeling to the shield, half to
the spear. 850

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

Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged
speed
Search through this garden, leave
unsearched no nook;
But chiefly where those two fair
creatures lodge,
Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of
harm.

This evening from the sun's de-
cline arrived, 860

Who tells of some infernal Spirit
seen
Hitherward bent (who could have
thought?) escaped
The bars of Hell, on errand bad no
doubt:
Such, where ye find, seise fast, and
hither bring.

So saying, on he led his radiant
files,
Dazzling the moon; these to the
bower direct
In search of whom they sought:
Him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of
Eve,
Assaying by his devilish art to
reach 870

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

Him thus intent Ithuriel with his
 spear 880

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

890

Back stept those two fair Angels,
 half amazed
So sudden to behold the grisly
 king;
Yet thus, unmoved with fear, ac-
 cost him soon.

Which of those rebel Spirits ad-
 judged to Hell
Comest thou, escaped thy prison?
 and, transformed,
Why sat'st thou like an enemy in
 wait,
Here watching at the head of these
 that sleep?
Know ye not then said Satan, filled
 with scorn,
Know ye not me? ye knew me once
 no mate

900

For you, there sitting where ye
durst not soar:
Not to know me argues yourselves
unknown,
The lowest of your throng; or, if ye
know,
Why ask ye, and superfluous begin
Your message, like to end as much
in vain?
To whom thus Zephon, answering
scorn with scorn.

Think not, revolted Spirit, thy
shape the same,
Or undiminished brightness to be
known,
As when thou stoodest in Heaven
upright and pure; 910
That glory then, when thou no

more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou re-
semblest 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 920
Invincible: Abashed the Devil
stood,
And felt how awful goodness is,

and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely;
saw, and pined
His loss; but chiefly to find here ob-
served
His lustre visibly impaired; yet
seemed
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 930
Single against thee wicked, and
thence weak.

The Fiend replied not, overcome
with rage;
But, like a proud steed reined,
went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: To strive
or fly
He held it vain; awe from above
had quelled
His heart, not else dismayed. Now
drew they nigh
The western point, where those
half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in
squadron joined,
A waiting next command. To
whom their Chief, 940
Gabriel, from the front thus called
aloud.

O friends! I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon through the shade;
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendour wan; who by his gait
And fierce demeanour seems the Prince of Hell,
Not likely to part hence without contest;
Stand firm, for in his look defiance
lours. 950

He scarce had ended, when those two approached,

And brief related whom they
brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and
posture couched.

To whom with stern regard thus
Gabriel spake.

Why hast thou, Satan, broke the
bounds prescribed

To thy transgressions, and dis-
turbed the charge

Of others, who approve not to
transgress 960

By thy example, but have power
and right

To question thy bold entrance on
this place;

Employed, it seems, to violate
sleep, and those

Whose dwelling God hath planted
here in bliss!
To whom thus Satan with con-
temptuous brow.

Gabriel? thou hadst in Heaven the
esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this ques-
tion asked
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who
loves his pain!
Who would not, finding way,
break loose from Hell, 970
Though thither doomed! Thou
wouldst thyself, no doubt
And boldly venture to whatever
place
Farthest from pain, where thou
mightst hope to change

Torment with ease, and soonest
recompense
Dole with delight, which in this
place I sought;
To thee no reason, who knowest
only good,
But evil hast not tried: and wilt ob-
ject
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 asked. 980

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

Thus he in scorn. The warlike An-
gel moved,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus
replied.

O loss of one in Heaven to judge of
wise
Since Satan fell, whom folly over-
threw,
And now returns him from his
prison 'scaped, 990
Gravely in doubt whether to hold
them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness
brought him hither
Unlicensed from his bounds in
Hell prescribed;
So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to 'scape his punish-

ment!
So judge thou still, presumptuous!
till the wrath,
Which thou incurrest by flying,
meet thy flight
Sevenfold, and scourge that wis-
dom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better,
that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provoked.
1000

But wherefore thou alone? where-
fore with thee
Came not all hell broke loose? or
thou than they
Less hardy to endure? Courageous
Chief!
The first in flight from pain! hadst

thou alleged
To thy deserted host this cause of
flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole
fugitive.

To which the Fiend thus answered,
frowning stern.

1010

Not that I less endure, or shrink
from pain,
Insulting Angel! well thou know-
est I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy
aid
The blasting vollied thunder made
all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded
spear.

But still thy words at random, as
before,
Argue thy inexperience what be-
hoves
From hard assays and ill successes
past
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
1020
Through ways of danger by him-
self 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 1030
High up in Heaven, with songs to
hymn his throne,
And practised distances to cringe,
not fight,
To whom the warrior Angel soon
replied.

To say and straight unsay, pretend-
ing first
Wise to fly pain, professing next
the spy,

Argues no leader but a liar traced,
Satan, and couldst thou faithful
add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness pro-
faned!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious
crew? 1040
Army of Fiends, fit body to fit
head.

Was this your discipline and faith
engaged,
Your military obedience, to dis-
solve
Allegiance to the acknowledged
Power supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite, who now
wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than

thou
Once fawned, and cringed, and
servilely adored
Heaven's awful Monarch? where-
fore, but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to
reign? 1050
But mark what I arreed thee now,
Avant;
Fly neither whence thou fledst! If
from this hour
Within these hallowed limits thou
appear,
Back to the infernal pit I drag thee
chained,
And seal thee so, as henceforth not
to scorn
The facile gates of Hell too slightly
barred.

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

1060

Then when I am thy captive talk of
chains,
Proud liminary Cherub! but ere
then
Far heavier load thyself expect to
feel
From my prevailing arm, though
Heaven's King
Ride on thy wings, and thou with
thy compeers,
Us'd to the yoke, drawest his tri-
umphant wheels
In progress through the road of
Heaven star-paved.

While thus he spake, the angelick
squadron bright
Turned fiery red, sharpening in
mooned horns 1070
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 plowman
doubting stands,
Left on the threshing floor his
hopeless sheaves
Prove chaff. On the other side, Sa-
tan, alarmed,
Collecting all his might, dilated

stood,
Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:
His stature reached the sky, and on
his crest 1080
Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted
in his grasp
What seemed both spear and
shield: Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensued, nor only Par-
adise
In this commotion, but the starry
cope
Of Heaven perhaps, or all the ele-
ments
At least had gone to wrack, dis-
turbed and torn
With violence of this conflict, had
not soon
The Eternal, to prevent such horrid

fray,
Hung forth in Heaven his golden
scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion
sign, 1090
Wherein all things created first he
weighed,
The pendulous round earth with
balanced air
In counterpoise, now ponders all
events,
Battles and realms: In these he put
two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of
fight:
The latter quick up flew, and
kicked the beam,
Which Gabriel spying, thus be-
spoke the Fiend.

Satan, I know thy strength, and
thou knowest mine;
Neither our own, but given: What
folly then 1100
To boast what arms can do? since
thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine,
though doubled now
To trample thee as mire: For proof
look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial
sign;
Where thou art weighed, and
shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. The Fiend looked up,
and knew
His mounted scale aloft: Nor more;
but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the

shades of night.

BOOK V

Now Morn, her rosy steps in the
 eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with
 orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so custom'd;
 for his sleep
Was aery-light, from pure diges-

tion bred,
And temperate vapours bland,
 which the only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Au-
 rora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill
 matin song
Of birds on every bough; so much
 the more
His wonder was to find unwak-
 ened Eve
With tresses discomposed, and
 glowing cheek, 10
As through unquiet rest: He, on his
 side
Leaning half raised, with looks of
 cordial love
Hung over her enamoured, and be-
 held

Beauty, which, whether waking or
asleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces; then
with voice
Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora
breathes,
Her hand soft touching, whispered
thus. Awake,
My fairest, my espoused, my latest
found,
Heaven's last best gift, my ever
new delight!
Awake: The morning shines, and
the fresh field 20
Calls us; we lose the prime, to mark
how spring
Our tender plants, how blows the
citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what

the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colours,
how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid
sweet.

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

O sole in whom my thoughts find
all repose, 30
My glory, my perfection! glad I see
Thy face, and morn returned; for I
this night
(Such night till this I never passed)
have dreamed,
If dreamed, not, as I oft am wont,
of thee,

Works of day past, or morrow's
next design,
But of offence and trouble, which
my mind
Knew never till this irksome night:
Methought,
Close at mine ear one called me
forth to walk
With gentle voice; I thought it
thine: It said,
"Why sleepest thou, Eve? now is
the pleasant time, 40
The cool, the silent, save where si-
lence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that
now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-laboured
song; now reigns
Full-orbed the moon, and with

more pleasing light
Shadowy sets off the face of things;
in vain,
If none regard; Heaven wakes with
all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, Nature's
desire?
In whose sight all things joy, with
ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to
gaze."
I rose as at thy call, but found thee
not; 50
To find thee I directed then my
walk;
And on, methought, alone I passed
through ways
That brought me on a sudden to
the tree

Of interdicted knowledge: fair it
seemed,
Much fairer to my fancy than by
day:
And, as I wondering looked, be-
side it stood
One shaped and winged like one of
those from Heaven
By us oft seen; his dewy locks dis-
tilled
Ambrosia; on that tree he also
gazed;
And "O fair plant," said he, "with
fruit surcharged, 60
Deigns none to ease thy load, and
taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge
so despised?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to

taste?

Forbid who will, none shall from
me withhold

Longer thy offered good; why else
set here?"

This said, he paused not, but with
venturous arm

He plucked, he tasted; me damp
horror chilled

At such bold words vouched with
a deed so bold:

But he thus, overjoyed; "O fruit di-
vine,

Sweet of thyself, but much more
sweet thus cropt, 70

Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
For Gods, yet able to make Gods of
Men:

And why not Gods of Men; since

good, the more
Communicated, more abundant
grows,
The author not impaired, but hon-
oured more?
Here, happy creature, fair angelick
Eve!
Partake thou also; happy though
thou art,
Happier thou mayest be, worthier
canst not be:
Taste this, and be henceforth
among the Gods
Thyself a Goddess, not to earth
confined, 80
But sometimes in the air, as we,
sometimes
Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine,
and see

What life the Gods live there, and
such live thou!"
So saying, he drew nigh, and to me
held,
Even to my mouth of that same
fruit held part
Which he had plucked; the pleas-
ant savoury smell
So quickened appetite, that I,
methought,
Could not but taste. Forthwith up
to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath
beheld
The earth outstretched immense, a
prospect wide 90
And various: Wondering at my
flight and change
To this high exaltation; suddenly

My guide was gone, and I,
methought, sunk down,
And fell asleep; but O, how glad I
waked
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve
her night
Related, and thus Adam answered
sad.

Best image of myself, and dearer
half,
The trouble of thy thoughts this
night in sleep
Affects me equally; nor can I like
100
This uncouth dream, of evil
sprung, I fear;
Yet evil whence? in thee can har-
bour none,

Created pure. But know that in the
soul
Are many lesser faculties, that
serve
Reason as chief; among these
Fancy next
Her office holds; of all external
things
Which the five watchful senses rep-
resent,
She forms imaginations, aery
shapes,
Which Reason, joining or disjoin-
ing, frames
All what we affirm or what deny,
and call 110
Our knowledge or opinion; then
retires
Into her private cell, when nature

rests.

Oft in her absence mimick 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, me-
thinks, I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this
thy dream, 120
But with addition strange; yet be
not sad.

Evil into the mind of God or Man
May come and go, so unreprieved,
and leave

No spot or blame behind: Which
gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst ab-
hor to dream,
Waking thou never will consent to
do.

Be not disheartened then, nor
cloud those looks,
That wont to be more cheerful and
serene, 130
Than when fair morning first
smiles on the world;
And let us to our fresh employ-
ments rise
Among the groves, the fountains,
and the flowers
That open now their choisest bo-
somed smells,

Reserved from night, and kept for
thee in store.

So cheered he his fair spouse, and
she was cheered;

But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wiped them
with her hair;

Two other precious drops that
ready stood, 140

Each in their crystal sluice, he ere
they fell

Kissed, as the gracious signs of
sweet remorse

And pious awe, that feared to have
offended.

So all was cleared, and to the field
they haste.

But first, from under shady ar-

borous 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, 150
Shot parallel to the earth his dewy
ray,
Discovering in wide landskip all
the east
Of Paradise and Eden's happy
plains,
Lowly they bowed adoring, and
began
Their orisons, each morning duly
paid
In various style; for neither various
style

Nor holy rapture wanted they to
praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
Flowed from their lips, in prose or
numerous verse, 160
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 wonderous fair; Thyself how
wonderous then!

Unspeakable, who sitst above
these heavens
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these
declare
Thy goodness beyond thought,
and power divine. 170

Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons
of light,
Angels; for ye behold him, and
with songs
And choral symphonies, day with-
out night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in
Heaven
On Earth join all ye Creatures to ex-
tol
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, 180
Sure pledge of day, that crownest
the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him
in thy sphere,
While day arises, that sweet hour
of prime.

Thou Sun, of this great world both
eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater;
sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when
thou climbest,
And when high noon hast gained,

and when thou fallest.

Moon, that now meetest the orient
sun, now flyest, 190
With the fixed Stars, fixed in their
orb that flies;
And ye five other wandering Fires,
that move
In mystick dance not without song,
resound
His praise, who out of darkness
called up light.

Air, and ye Elements, the eldest
birth
Of Nature's womb, that in quater-
nion run
Perpetual circle, multiform; and
mix
And nourish all things; let your

ceaseless change

Vary to our great Maker still new
praise. 200

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 Au-
thor rise;

Whether to deck with clouds the
uncoloured 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, 210
Breathe soft or loud; and, wave
your tops, ye Pines,
With every plant, in sign of wor-
ship 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 as-
cend,
Bear on your wings and in your
notes his praise.

220
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that
walk

wonted calm.

On to their morning's rural work
they haste,
Among sweet dews and flowers;
where any row
Of fruit-trees over-woody reached
too far
Their pampered boughs, and
needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces: or they led the
vine
To wed her elm; she, spoused,
about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with
him brings 240
Her dower, the adopted clusters, to
adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus em-

ployed beheld
With pity Heaven's high King, and
to him called
Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that
deigned
To travel with Tobias, and secured
His marriage with the seventimes-
wedded maid.

Raphael, said he, thou hearest
what stir on Earth
Satan, from Hell 'scaped through
the darksome gulf,
Hath raised in Paradise; and how
disturbed 250
This night the human pair; how he
designs
In them at once to ruin all
mankind.

Go therefore, half this day as friend
with friend
Converse with Adam, in what
bower or shade
Thou findest him from the heat of
noon retired,
To respite his day-labour with
repast,
Or with repose; and such discourse
bring on,
As may advise him of his happy
state,
Happiness in his power left free to
will, 260
Left to his own free will, his will
though free,
Yet mutable; whence warn him to
beware
He swerve not, too secure: Tell him

withal
His danger, and from whom; what
enemy,
Late fallen himself from Heaven, is
plotting now
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 pre-
tend
Surprisal, unadmonished, unfore-
warned. 270

So spake the Eternal Father, and
fulfilled
All justice: Nor delayed the

winged Saint
After his charge received; but from
among
Thousand celestial Ardours, where
he stood
Veiled with his gorgeous wings, up
springing light,
Flew through the midst of Heaven;
the angelick quires,
On each hand parting, to his speed
gave way
Through all the empyreal road; till,
at the gate
Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-
opened wide 280
On golden hinges turning, as by
work
Divine the sovran Architect had
framed.

From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
Star interposed, however small he sees,
Not unconformed to other shining globes,
Earth, and the garden of God, with cedars crowned
Above all hills. As when by night the glass
Of Galileo, less assured, observes
Imagined lands and regions in the moon: 290
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 towering eagles, to all the fowls
he seems
A phoenix, gazed by all as that sole
bird,
When, to enshrine his reliques in
the Sun's 300
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes
he flies.

At once on the eastern cliff of Par-
adise
He lights, and to his proper shape

returns

A Seraph winged: Six wings he
wore, to shade

His lineaments divine; the pair that
clad

Each shoulder broad, came
mantling o'er his breast

With regal ornament; the middle
pair

Girt like a starry zone his waist,
and round

Skirted his loins and thighs with
downy gold 310

And colours dipt in Heaven; the
third his feet

Shadowed from either heel with
feathered mail,

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

And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of Angels under watch; and to his state,
And to his message high, in honour rise;
For on some message high they guessed him bound.

Their glittering tents he passed,
and now is come 320
Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
And flowering odours, cassia,
nard, and balm;
A wilderness of sweets; for Nature
here

Wanted as in her prime, and
played at will
Her virgin fancies pouring forth
more sweet,
Wild above rule or art, enormous
bliss.

Him through the spicy forest on-
ward come
Adam discerned, as in the door he
sat
Of his cool bower, while now the
mounted sun 330
Shot down direct his fervid rays to
warm
Earth's inmost womb, more
warmth than Adam needs:
And Eve within, due at her hour
prepared

For dinner savoury fruits, of taste
to please
True appetite, and not disrelish
thirst
Of nectarous draughts between,
from milky stream,
Berry or grape: To whom thus
Adam called.

Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy
sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what
glorious shape 340
Comes this way moving; seems an-
other morn
Risen on mid-noon; some great be-
hest 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 re-
ceive
Our heavenly stranger: Well we
may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and
large bestow
From large bestowed, where Na-
ture multiplies
Her fertile growth, and by disbur-
thening grows 350
More fruitful, which instructs us
not to spare.

To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's
hallowed mould,

Of God inspired! small store will
serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on
the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firm-
ness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist
consumes:
But I will haste, and from each
bough and brake,
Each plant and juciest gourd, will
pluck such choice
To entertain our Angel-guest, as he
360
Beholding shall confess, that here
on Earth
God hath dispensed his bounties as
in Heaven.

So saying, with dispatchful looks
in haste
She turns, on hospitable thoughts
intent
What choice to choose for delicacy
best,
What order, so contrived as not to
mix
Tastes, not well joined, inelegant,
but bring
Taste after taste upheld with
kindest change;
Bestirs her then, and from each ten-
der stalk 370
Whatever Earth, all-bearing
mother, yields
In India East or West, or middle
shore
In Pontus or the Punick coast, or

where
Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds,
in coat
Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded
husk, or shell,
She gathers, tribute large, and on
the board
Heaps with unsparing hand; for
drink the grape
She crushes, inoffensive must, and
meaths
From many a berry, and from
sweet kernels pressed
She tempers dulcet creams; nor
these to hold 380
Wants her fit vessels pure; then
strows the ground
With rose and odours from the
shrub unfumed.

Mean while our primitive great
sire, to meet
His God-like guest, walks forth,
without more train
Accompanied than with his own
complete
Perfections; in himself was all his
state,
More solemn than the tedious
pomp that waits
On princes, when their rich retinue
long
Of horses led, and grooms be-
smeared with gold, 390
Dazzles the croud, and sets them
all agape.

Nearer his presence Adam, though
not awed,

est bears
To sit and taste, till this meridian
heat
Be over, and the sun more cool de-
cline.

Whom thus the angelick Virtue an-
swered mild.

Adam, I therefore came; nor art
thou such
Created, or such place hast here to
dwell, 410
As may not oft invite, though Spir-
its of Heaven,
To visit thee; lead on then where
thy bower
O'ershades; for these mid-hours,
till evening rise,
I have at will. So to the sylvan

lodge
They came, that like Pomona's ar-
bour smiled,
With flowerets decked, and fra-
grant smells; but Eve,
Undecked save with herself, more
lovely fair
Than Wood-Nymph, or the fairest
Goddess feigned
Of three that in mount Ida naked
strove,
Stood to entertain her guest from
Heaven; no veil 420
She needed, virtue-proof; no
thought infirm
Altered her cheek. On whom the
Angel Hail
Bestowed, the holy salutation used
Long after to blest Mary, second

Eve.

Hail, Mother of Mankind, whose
fruitful womb
Shall fill the world more numerous
with thy sons,
Than with these various fruits the
trees of God
Have heaped this table!—Raised of
grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats
had round, 430
And on her ample square from side
to side
All autumn piled, though spring
and autumn here
Danced hand in hand. A while dis-
course they hold;
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus

began
Our author. Heavenly stranger,
please to taste
These bounties, which our Nour-
isher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasured out,
descends,
To us for food and for delight hath
caused
The earth to yield; unsavoury food
perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I
know, 440
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, 450
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.

For know, whatever was created,
needs
To be sustained and fed: Of ele-
ments
The grosser feeds the purer, earth

the sea,
Earth and the sea feed air, the air
those fires
Ethereal, and as lowest first the
moon;
Whence in her visage round those
spots, unpurged
Vapours not yet into her substance
turned. 460

Nor doth the moon no nourish-
ment exhale
From her moist continent to higher
orbs.

The sun that light imparts to all, re-
ceives
From all his alimetal recompence
In humid exhalations, and at even
Sups with the ocean. Though in

Heaven the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and
vines
Yield nectar; though from off the
boughs each morn 470
We brush mellifluous dews, and
find the ground
Covered with pearly grain: Yet
God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new de-
lights,
As may compare with Heaven; and
to taste
Think not I shall be nice. So down
they sat,
And to their viands fell; nor seem-
ingly
The Angel, nor in mist, the com-
mon gloss

Of Theologians; but with keen dis-
patch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate: What re-
dounds, transpires 480
Through Spirits with ease; nor
wonder; if by fire
Of sooty coal the empirick al-
chemist
Can turn, or holds it possible to
turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect
gold,
As from the mine. Mean while at
table Eve
Ministered naked, and their flow-
ing cups
With pleasant liquours crowned: O
innocence

their being
Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far; whose
radiant forms, 500
Divine effulgence, whose high
power, so far
Exceeded human; and his wary
speech
Thus to the empyreal minister he
framed.

Inhabitant with God, now know I
well
Thy favour, in this honour done to
Man;
Under whose lowly roof thou hast
vouchsafed
To enter, and these earthly fruits to

taste,
Food not of Angels, yet accepted
so,
As that more willingly thou
couldst not seem 510
At Heaven's high feasts to have
fed: yet what compare
To whom the winged Hierarch
replied.

O Adam, One Almighty is, from
whom
All things proceed, and up to him
return,
If not depraved from good, created
all
Such to perfection, one first matter
all,
Endued with various forms, vari-

ous degrees
Of substance, and, in things that
live, of life;
But more refined, more spiritous,
and pure, 520
As nearer to him placed, or nearer
tending
Each in their several active spheres
assigned,
Till body up to spirit work, in
bounds
Proportioned to each kind. So from
the root
Springs lighter the green stalk,
from thence the leaves
More aery, last the bright consum-
mate flower
Spirits odorous breathes: flowers
and their fruit,

Man's nourishment, by gradual
scale sublimed,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and
sense, 530
Fancy and understanding; whence
the soul
Reason receives, and reason is her
being,
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
Is ofttest yours, the latter most is
ours,
Differing but in degree, of kind the
same.

Wonder not then, what God for
you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you
To proper substance. Time may

come, when Men
With Angels may participate, and
find 540
No inconvenient diet, nor too light
fare;
And from these corporal nutri-
ments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to
spirit,
Improved by tract of time, and,
winged, ascend
Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice,
Here or in heavenly Paradises
dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Mean
while enjoy
Your fill what happiness this

happy state 550
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, 560
What meant that caution joined, If
ye be found

Obedient? Can we want obedience
then
To him, or possibly his love desert,
Who formed us from the dust and
placed us here
Full to the utmost measure of what
bliss
Human desires can seek or apprehend?
To whom the Angel. Son of
Heaven and Earth,
Attend! That thou art happy, owe
to God;
That thou continuest such, owe to
thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein
stand. 570

This was that caution given thee;

be advised.

God made thee perfect, not im-
mutable;

And good he made thee, but to per-
severe

He left it in thy power; ordained
thy will

By nature free, not over-ruled by
fate

Inextricable, or strict necessity:

Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with
him 580

Finds no acceptance, nor can find;
for how

Can hearts, not free, be tried
whether they serve

Willing or no, who will but what

they must
By destiny, and can no other
choose?
Myself, and all the angelick host,
that stand
In sight of God, enthroned, our
happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obe-
dience 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: 590
And some are fallen, to disobedi-
ence fallen,
And so from Heaven to deepest
Hell; O fall

From what high state of bliss, into
what woe!
To whom our great progenitor. Thy
words
Attentive, and with more de-
lighted ear,
Divine instructor, I have heard,
than when
Cherubick songs by night from
neighbouring hills
Aereal musick send: Nor knew I
not
To be both will and deed created
free;
Yet that we never shall forget to
love 600
Our Maker, and obey him whose
command
Single is yet so just, my constant

thoughts
Assured me, and still assure:
 Though what thou tellest
Hath passed in Heaven, some
 doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou
 consent,
The full relation, which must needs
 be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be
 heard;
And we have yet large day, for
 scarce the sun
Hath finished half his journey, and
 scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of
 Heaven. 610

Thus Adam made request; and

Raphael,
After short pause assenting, thus
began.

High matter thou enjoimest me, O
prime of men,
Sad task and hard: For how shall I
relate
To human sense the invisible ex-
ploits
Of warring Spirits? how, without
remorse,
The ruin of so many glorious once
And perfect while they stood? how
last unfold 620
The secrets of another world, per-
haps
Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy
good

This is dispensed; and what sur-
mounts 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 a shadow of Heaven, and
things therein
Each to other like, more than on
earth is thought?
As yet this world was not, and
Chaos wild
Reigned where these Heavens now
roll, where Earth now rests 630
Upon her center poised; when on a
day
(For time, though in eternity, ap-

plied
To motion, measures all things
durable
By present, past, and future,) on
such day
As Heaven's great year brings
forth, the empyreal host
Of Angels by imperial summons
called,
Innumerable before the Almighty's
throne
Forthwith, from all the ends of
Heaven, appeared
Under their Hierarchs in orders
bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns
high advanced, 640
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt
van and rear

Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of
light,
Thrones, Dominations, Prince-
doms, Virtues, Powers;
Hear my decree, which unrevoked
shall stand.

This day I have begot whom I de-
clare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now
behold
At my right hand; your head I him
appoint; 660
And by myself have sworn, to him
shall bow
All knees in Heaven, and shall con-
fess him Lord:
Under his great vice-gerent reign

abide

United, as one individual soul,
For ever happy: Him who dis-
obeys,
Me disobeys, breaks union, and
that day,
Cast out from God and blessed vi-
sion, falls
Into utter darkness, deep ingulfed,
his place
Ordained without redemption,
without end.

670

So spake the Omnipotent, and with
his words
All seemed well pleased; all
seemed, but were not all.

That day, as other solemn days,

they spent
In song and dance about the sacred
hill;
Mystical dance, which yonder
starry sphere
Of planets, and of fixed, in all her
wheels
Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
Then most, when most irregular
they seem; 680
And in their motions harmony di-
vine
So smooths her charming tones,
that God's own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now
approached,
(For we have also our evening and
our morn,

to rest;
Wide over all the plain, and wider
far
Than all this globous earth in plain
outspread,
(Such are the courts of God) the an-
gelick throng,
Dispersed in bands and files, their
camp extend
By living streams among the trees
of life, 710
Pavilions numberless, and sudden
reared,
Celestial tabernacles, where they
slept
Fanned with cool winds; save
those, who, in their course,
Melodious hymns about the
sovrان throne

Alternate all night long: but not so
waked
Satan; so call him now, his former
name
Is heard no more in Heaven; he of
the first,
If not the first Arch-Angel, great in
power,
In favour and pre-eminence, yet
fraught
With envy against the Son of God,
that day 720
Honoured by his great Father, and
proclaimed
Messiah King anointed, could not
bear
Through pride that sight, and
thought himself impaired.

Of yesterday, so late hath passed
the lips
Of Heaven's Almighty. Thou to me
thy thoughts
Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont
to impart;
Both waking we were one; how
then can now
Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou
seest imposed;
New laws from him who reigns,
new minds may raise 740
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, 750
The great Messiah, and his new
commands,
Who speedily through all the hier-
archies
Intends to pass triumphant, and
give laws.

So spake the false Arch-Angel, and
infused
Bad influence into the unwary
breast
Of his associate: He together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent
Powers,
Under him Regent; tells, as he was
taught,
That the Most High commanding,
now ere night, 760
Now ere dim night had disincum-
bered 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 obeyed
The wonted signal, and superiour
voice
Of their great Potentate; for great
indeed
His name, and high was his degree
in Heaven;
His countenance, as the morning-
star that guides
The starry flock, allured them, and
with lies 770
Drew after him the third part of
Heaven's host.

Mean while the Eternal eye, whose
sight discerns
Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his
holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps

that burn
Nightly before him, saw without
their light
Rebellion rising; saw in whom,
how spread
Among the sons of morn, what
multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high
decree;
And, smiling, to his only Son thus
said. 780

Son, thou in whom my glory I be-
hold
In full resplendence, Heir of all my
might,
Nearly it now concerns us to be
sure
Of our Omnipotence, and with

what arms
We mean to hold what anciently
we claim
Of deity or empire: Such a foe
Is rising, who intends to erect his
throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spa-
cious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought
to try 790
In battle, what our power is, or our
right.

Let us advise, and to this hazard
draw
With speed what force is left, and
all employ
In our defence; lest unawares we
lose

This our high place, our sanctuary,
our hill.

To whom the Son with calm aspect
and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou
thy foes 800
Justly hast in derision, and, secure,
Laughst at their vain designs and
tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their
hate
Illustrates, when they see all regal
power
Given me to quell their pride, and
in event
Know whether I be dextrous to
subdue

Thy rebels, or be found the worst
in Heaven.

So spake the Son; but Satan, with
his Powers,
Far was advanced on winged
speed; an host 810
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or stars of morning, dew-drops,
which the sun
Impearls on every leaf and every
flower.

Regions they passed, the mighty
regencies
Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and
Thrones,
In their triple degrees; regions to
which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no

more
Than what this garden is to all the
earth,
And all the sea, from one entire
globose 820
Stretched into longitude; which
having passed,
At length into the limits of the
north
They came; and Satan to his royal
seat
High on a hill, far blazing, as a
mount
Raised on a mount, with pyramids
and towers
From diamond quarries hewn, and
rocks of gold;
The palace of great Lucifer, (so call
That structure in the dialect of men

Interpreted,) which not long after,
he
Affecting all equality with God,⁸³⁰
In imitation of that mount whereon
Messiah was declared in sight of
Heaven,
The Mountain of the Congregation
called;
For thither he assembled all his
train,
Pretending so commanded to con-
sult
About the great reception of their
King,
Thither to come, and with calum-
nious art
Of counterfeited truth thus held
their ears.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedom,
 Virtues, Powers; 840
If these magnifick titles yet remain
Not merely titular, since by decree
Another now hath to himself engrossed
All power, and us eclipsed under
 the name
Of King anointed, for whom all
 this haste
Of midnight-march, and hurried
 meeting here,
This only to consult how we may
 best,
With what may be devised of honours
 new,
Receive him coming to receive
 from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostra-

tion vile! 850
Too much to one! but double how
endured,
To one, and to his image now pro-
claimed?
But what if better counsels might
erect
Our minds, and teach us to cast off
this yoke?
Will ye submit your necks, and
choose to bend
The supple knee? Ye will not, if I
trust
To know ye right, or if ye know
yourselves
Natives and sons of Heaven pos-
sessed before
By none; and if not equal all, yet
free,

Equally free; for orders and de-
grees 860
Jar not with liberty, but well con-
sist.

Who can in reason then, or right,
assume
Monarchy over such as live by
right
His equals, if in power and splen-
dour less,
In freedom equal? or can introduce
Law and edict on us, who without
law
Err not? much less for this to be our
Lord,
And look for adoration, to the
abuse
Of those imperial titles, which as-

sert 870
Our being ordained to govern, not
to serve.

Thus far his bold discourse with-
out controul
Had audience; when among the
Seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with
more zeal adored
The Deity, and divine commands
obeyed,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal se-
vere
The current of his fury thus op-
posed.

O argument blasphemous, false,
and proud! 880
Words which no ear ever to hear in

Heaven
Expected, least of all from thee, In-
grate,
In place thyself so high above thy
peers.

Canst thou with impious obloquy
condemn
The just decree of God, pro-
nounced and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right en-
dued
With regal scepter, every soul in
Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that
honour due
Confess him rightful King? unjust,
thou sayest, 890
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the

free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucceeded
power.

Shalt thou give law to God? shalt
thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who
made
Thee what thou art, and formed the
Powers of Heaven
Such as he pleased, and circum-
scribed their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we
know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
900
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 angelick nature joined in
one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by
whom,
As by his Word, the Mighty Father
made
All things, even thee; and all the
Spirits of Heaven 910
By him created in their bright de-
grees,
Crowned them with glory, and to

their glory named
Thrones, Dominations, Prince-
doms, Virtues, Powers,
Essential Powers; nor by his reign
obscured,
But more illustrious made; since he
the head
One of our number thus reduced
becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to
him done
Returns our own. Cease then this
impious rage,
And tempt not these; but hasten to
appease
The incensed Father, and the in-
censed Son, 920
While pardon may be found in
time besought.

So spake the fervent Angel; but his
zeal
None seconded, as out of season
judged,
Or singular and rash: Whereat re-
joiced
The Apostate, and, more haughty,
thus replied.

That we were formed then sayest
thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task trans-
ferred
From Father to his Son? strange
point and new! 930
Doctrine which we would know
whence learned: who saw
When this creation was? remem-
berest thou

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

Our puissance is our own; our own
right hand 940
Shall teach us highest deeds, by
proof to try
Who is our equal: Then thou shalt
behold

Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt the
almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This re-
port,
These tidings carry to the anointed
King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.

He said; and, as the sound of wa-
ters deep,
Hoarse murmur echoed to his
words applause 950
Through the infinite host; nor less
for that
The flaming Seraph fearless,
though alone
Encompassed round with foes,
thus answered bold.

O alienate from God, O Spirit ac-
cursed,
Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
Determined, and thy hapless crew
involved
In this perfidious fraud, contagion
spread
Both of thy crime and punishment:
Henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit
the yoke 960
Of God's Messiah; those indulgent
laws
Will not be now vouchsafed; other
decrees
Against thee are gone forth with-
out 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 970
His thunder on thy head, devour-
ing fire.

Then who created thee lamenting
learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou
shalt know.

So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faith-
ful found
Among the faithless, faithful only
he;
Among innumerable false, un-
moved,
Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his
zeal; 980
Nor number, nor example, with
him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his
constant mind,
Though single. From amidst them
forth he passed,
Long way through hostile scorn,
which he sustained
Superiour, nor of violence feared
aught;

And, with retorted scorn, his back
he turned
On those proud towers to swift de-
struction doomed.

BOOK VI

All night the dreadless Angel, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champain held his way; till Morn,
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand
Unbarred the gates of light. There

is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by
his throne,
Where light and darkness in per-
petual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns,
which makes through Heaven
Grateful vicissitude, like day and
night;
Light issues forth, and at the other
door
Obsequious darkness enters, till
her hour 10
To veil the Heaven, though dark-
ness there might well
Seem twilight here: And now went
forth the Morn
Such as in highest Heaven arrayed
in gold

Empyrean; from before her van-
ished Night,
Shot through with orient beams;
when all the plain
Covered with thick embattled
squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and
fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met
his view:
War he perceived, war in procinct;
and found
Already known what he for news
had thought 20
To have reported: Gladly then he
mixed
Among those friendly Powers,
who him received
With joy and acclamations loud,

that one,
That of so many myriads fallen, yet
one
Returned not lost. On to the sacred
hill
They led him high applauded, and
present
Before the seat supreme; from
whence a voice,
From midst a golden cloud, thus
mild was heard.

Servant of God. Well done; well
hast thou fought 30
The better fight, who single hast
maintained
Against revolted multitudes the
cause
Of truth, in word mightier than

they in arms;
And for the testimony of truth hast
borne
Universal reproach, far worse to
bear
Than violence; for this was all thy
care
To stand approved in sight of God,
though worlds
Judged thee perverse: The easier
conquest now
Remains thee, aided by this host of
friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to
return, 40
Than scorned thou didst depart;
and to subdue
By force, who reason for their law
refuse,

Right reason for their law, and for
their King
Messiah, who by right of merit
reigns.

Go, Michael, of celestial armies
prince,
And thou, in military prowess
next,
Gabriel, lead forth to battle these
my sons
Invincible; lead forth my armed
Saints,
By thousands and by millions,
ranged for fight, 50
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 60
In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames,
the sign
Of wrath awaked; nor with less
dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan

blow:
At which command the Powers
militant,
That stood for Heaven, in mighty
quadrate joined
Of union irresistible, moved on
In silence their bright legions, to
the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that
breathed
Heroick ardour to adventurous
deeds
Under their God-like leaders, in
the cause 70
Of God and his Messiah. On they
move
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor straitening vale, nor wood,
nor stream, divides

Their perfect ranks; for high above
the ground
Their march was, and the passive
air upbore
Their nimble tread; as when the to-
tal kind
Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summoned over Eden to re-
ceive
Their names of thee; so over many
a tract
Of Heaven they marched, and
many a province wide, 80
Tenfold the length of this terrene:
At last,
Far in the horizon to the north ap-
peared
From skirt to skirt a fiery region,
stretched

In battailous aspect, and nearer
view
Bristled with upright beams innu-
merable
Of rigid spears, and helmets
thronged, and shields
Various, with boastful argument
portrayed,
The banded Powers of Satan hast-
ing on
With furious expedition; for they
weened
That self-same day, by fight or by
surprise, 90
To win the mount of God, and on
his throne
To set the Envier of his state, the
proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts proved

fond and vain
In the mid way: Though strange to
us it seemed
At first, that Angel should with
Angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who
wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great
Sire,
Hymning the Eternal Father: But
the shout
Of battle now began, and rushing
sound 100
Of onset ended soon each milder
thought.

High in the midst, exalted as a
God,

The Apostate in his sun-bright
chariot sat,
Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
With flaming Cherubim, and
golden shields;
Then lighted from his gorgeous
throne, for now
'Twixt host and host but narrow
space was left,
A dreadful interval, and front to
front
Presented stood in terrible array
110
Of hideous length: Before the
cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battle ere it
joined,
Satan, with vast and haughty
strides advanced,

Came towering, armed in adamant
and gold;
Abdiel that sight endured not,
where he stood
Among the mightiest, bent on
highest deeds,
And thus his own undaunted heart
explores.

O Heaven! that such resemblance
of the Highest
Should yet remain, where faith and
reality 120
Remain not: Wherefore should not
strength and might
There fail where virtue fails, or
weakest prove
Where boldest, though to fight un-
conquerable?

His puissance, trusting in the
Almighty's aid,
I mean to try, whose reason I have
tried
Unsound and false; nor is it aught
but just,
That he, who in debate of truth
hath won,
Should win in arms, in both dis-
putes alike
Victor; though brutish that contest
and foul,
When reason hath to deal with
force, yet so 130
Most reason is that reason over-
come.

So pondering, and from his armed
peers

Who out of smallest things could,
without end,
Have raised incessant armies to de-
feat
Thy folly; or with solitary hand
Reaching beyond all limit, at one
blow,
Unaided, could have finished thee,
and whelmed
Thy legions under darkness: But
thou seest
All are not of thy train; there be,
who faith 150
Prefer, and piety to God, though
then
To thee not visible, when I alone
Seemed in thy world erroneous to
dissent
From all: My sect thou seest; now

learn too late
How few sometimes may know,
when thousands err.

Whom the grand foe, with scornful
eye askance,
Thus answered. Ill for thee, but in
wished hour
Of my revenge, first sought for,
thou returnest
From flight, seditious Angel! to re-
ceive 160
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provoked, since
first that tongue,
Inspired with contradiction, durst
oppose
A third part of the Gods, in synod
met

rather serve,
Ministring Spirits, trained up in
feast and song!
Such hast thou armed, the min-
strelsy of Heaven,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compared this
day shall prove.

To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern
replied. 180

Apostate! still thou errest, nor end
wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth re-
mote:
Unjustly thou depravest it with the
name
Of servitude, to serve whom God
ordains,

Or Nature: God and Nature bid the
same,
When he who rules is worthiest,
and excels
Them whom he governs. This is
servitude,
To serve the unwise, or him who
hath rebelled
Against his worthier, as thine now
serve thee, 190
Thyself not free, but to thyself en-
thralled;
Yet lewdly darest our ministring
upbraid.

Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom;
let me serve
In Heaven God ever blest, and his
divine

Behests obey, worthiest to be
obeyed;
Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect:
Mean while
From me returned, as erst thou
saidst, from flight,
This greeting on thy impious crest
receive.

200

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 recoiled; the tenth on
 bended knee
His massy spear upstaid; as if on
 earth
Winds under ground, or waters
 forcing way,
Sidelong had pushed a mountain
 from his seat,
Half sunk with all his pines.
 Amazement seised 210
The rebel Thrones, but greater
 rage, to see
Thus foiled their mightiest; ours
 joy filled, and shout,
Presage of victory, and fierce desire
Of battle: Whereat Michael bid
 sound
The Arch-Angel trumpet; through
 the vast of Heaven

It sounded, and the faithful armies
 rung
Hosanna to the Highest: Nor stood
 at gaze
The adverse legions, nor less
 hideous joined
The horrid shock. Now storming
 fury rose,
And clamour such as heard in
 Heaven till now 220
Was never; arms on armour clash-
 ing brayed
Horrible discord, and the madding
 wheels
Of brazen chariots raged; dire was
 the noise
Of conflict; over head the dismal
 hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming vollies

flew,
And flying vaulted either host with
fire.

So under fiery cope together
rushed
Both battles main, with ruinous as-
sault
And inextinguishable rage. All
Heaven 230
Resounded; and had Earth been
then, all Earth
Had to her center shook. What
wonder? when
Millions of fierce encountering An-
gels fought
On either side, the least of whom
could wield
These elements, and arm him with

the force
Of all their regions: How much
more of power
Army against army numberless to
raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and
disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy
native seat;
Had not the Eternal King Omnipotent,
240
From his strong hold of Heaven,
high over-ruled
And limited their might; though
numbered such
As each divided legion might have
seemed
A numerous host; in strength each
armed hand

A legion; led in fight, yet leader
seemed
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn
the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to
close
The ridges of grim war: No
thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming
deed 250
That argued fear; each on himself
relied,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory: Deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite; for wide
was spread
That war and various; sometimes

on firm ground
A standing fight, then, soaring on
main wing,
Tormented all the air; all air
seemed then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even
scale
The battle hung; till Satan, who
that day
Prodigious power had shown, and
met in arms 260
No equal, ranging through the dire
attack
Of fighting Seraphim confused, at
length
Saw where the sword of Michael
smote, and felled
Squadrons at once; with huge two-
handed sway

Brandished aloft, the horrid edge
came down
Wide-wasting; such destruction to
withstand
He hasted, and opposed the rocky
orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample
shield,
A vast circumference. At his ap-
proach
The great Arch-Angel from his
warlike toil 270
Surceased, and glad, as hoping
here to end
Intestine war in Heaven, the arch-
foe subdued
Or captive dragged in chains, with
hostile frown
And visage all inflamed first thus

began.

Author of evil, unknown till thy re-
vult,
Unnamed in Heaven, now plen-
teous as thou seest
These acts of hateful strife, hateful
to all,
Though heaviest by just measure
on thyself,
And thy adherents: How hast thou
disturbed 280
Heaven's blessed peace, and into
nature brought
Misery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion! how hast thou in-
stilled
Thy malice into thousands, once
upright

And faithful, now proved false!
But think not here
To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts
thee out
From all her confines. Heaven, the
seat of bliss,
Brooks not the works of violence
and war.

Hence then, and evil go with thee
along, 290
Thy offspring, to the place of evil,
Hell;
Thou and thy wicked crew! there
mingle broils,
Ere this avenging sword begin thy
doom,
Or some more sudden vengeance,
winged from God,

Precipitate thee with augmented
pain.

So spake the Prince of Angels; to
whom thus

The Adversary. Nor think thou
with wind

Of aery threats to awe whom yet
with deeds

Thou canst not. Hast thou turned
the least of these 300

To flight, or if to fall, but that they
rise

Unvanquished, easier to transact
with me

That thou shouldst hope, imperi-
ous, and with threats

To chase me hence? err not, that so
shall end

Of Angels, can relate, or to what
things
Likened on earth conspicuous, that
may lift
Human imagination to such highth
Of Godlike power? for likest Gods
they seemed,
Stood they or moved, in stature,
motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great
Heaven. 320

Now waved their fiery swords,
and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad
suns their shields
Blazed opposite, while Expectation
stood
In horreur: From each hand with

speed retired,
Where erst was thickest fight, the
angelick 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, 330
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-lifted imminent, one stroke
they aimed
That might determine, and not
need repeat,
As not of power at once; nor odds
appeared
In might or swift prevention: But
the sword
Of Michael from the armoury of
God 340
Was given him tempered so, that
neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it
met
The sword of Satan, with steep
force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer;
nor staid,
But with swift wheel reverse, deep

entering, shared
All his right side: Then Satan first
knew pain,
And writhed him to and fro con-
volved; so sore
The griding sword with discontin-
uous wound
Passed through him: But the ethe-
real substance closed,
Not long divisible; and from the
gash 350
A stream of necturous humour is-
suing flowed
Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits
may bleed,
And all his armour stained, ere
while so bright.

Forthwith on all sides to his aid

was run
By Angels many and strong, who
interposed
Defence, while others bore him on
their shields
Back to his chariot, where it stood
retired
From off the files of war: There
they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite,
and shame, 360
To find himself not matchless, and
his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far
beneath
His confidence to equal God in
power.

Yet soon he healed; for Spirits that

live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In entrails, heart of head, liver or
reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal
wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid
air: 370
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, con-
dense or rare.

Mean while in other parts like

deeds deserved
Memorial, where the might of
Gabriel fought,
And with fierce ensigns pierced the
deep array
Of Moloch, furious king; who him
defied,
And at his chariot-wheels to drag
him bound 380
Threatened, nor from the Holy One
of Heaven
Refrained his tongue blasphemous;
but anon
Down cloven to the waist, with
shattered arms
And uncouth pain fled bellowing.
On each wing
Uriel, and Raphael, his vaunting
foe,

Though huge, and in a rock of dia-
mond armed,
Vanquished Adramelech, and As-
madai,
Two potent Thrones, that to be less
than Gods
Disdained, but meaner thoughts
learned in their flight,
Mangled with ghastly wounds
through plate and mail. 390

Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to an-
noy
The atheist crew, but with redou-
bled 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
Angels, contented with their fame
in Heaven,
Seek not the praise of men: The
other sort, 400
In might though wonderful and in
acts of war,
Nor of renown less eager, yet by
doom
Cancelled from Heaven and sacred
memory,
Nameless in dark oblivion let them
dwell.

For strength from truth divided,
and from just,
Illaudable, nought merits but dis-

praise

And ignominy; yet to glory aspires
Vain-glorious, and through infamy
seeks fame:

Therefore eternal silence be their
doom. 410

And now, their mightiest quelled,
the battle swerved,

With many an inroad gored; de-
formed rout

Entered, and foul disorder; all the
ground

With shivered armour strown, and
on a heap

Chariot and charioteer lay over-
turned,

And fiery-foaming steeds; what
stood, recoiled

O'er-wearied, through the faint Sa-
tanick host
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear
surprised,
Then first with fear surprised, and
sense of pain, 420
Fled ignominious, to such evil
brought
By sin of disobedience; till that
hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.

Far otherwise the inviolable Saints,
In cubick phalanx firm, advanced
entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably armed;
Such high advantages their inno-
cence
Gave them above their foes; not to

have sinned,
Not to have disobeyed; in fight
they stood 430
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be
pained
By wound, though from their place
by violence moved,
Now Night her course began, and,
over Heaven
Inducing darkness, grateful truce
imposed,
And silence on the odious din of
war:
Under her cloudy covert both re-
tired,
Victor and vanquished: On the
foughten field
Michael and his Angels prevalent
Encamping, placed in guard their

watches round,
Cherubick waving fires: On the
other part, 440
Satan with his rebellious disap-
peared,
Far in the dark dislodged; and,
void of rest,
His potentates to council called by
night;
And in the midst thus undismayed
began.

O now in danger tried, now known
in arms
Not to be overpowered, Compan-
ions dear,
Found worthy not of liberty alone,
Too mean pretence! but what we
more affect,

Honour, dominion, glory, and
renown; 450
Who have sustained one day in
doubtful fight,
(And if one day, why not eternal
days?)
What Heaven's Lord had power-
fullest to send
Against us from about his throne,
and judged
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so: Then fallible, it
seems,
Of future we may deem him,
though till now
Omniscient thought. True is, less
firmly armed,
Some disadvantage we endured
and pain,

Till now not known, but, known, as
soon contemned; 460
Since now we find this our
empyrean form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable, and, though pierced
with wound,
Soon closing, and by native vigour
healed.

Of evil then so small as easy think
The remedy; perhaps more valid
arms,
Weapons more violent, when next
we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse
our foes,
Or equal what between us made
the odds, 470

In nature none: If other hidden
cause
Left them superiour, while we can
preserve
Unhurt our minds, and under-
standing sound,
Due search and consultation will
disclose.

He sat; and in the assembly next
upstood
Nisroch, of Principalities the
prime;
As one he stood escaped from cruel
fight,
Sore toiled, his riven arms to hav-
ock hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answer-
ing spake. 480

Deliverer from new Lords, leader
to free
Enjoyment of our right as Gods;
yet hard
For Gods, and too unequal work
we find,
Against unequal arms to fight in
pain,
Against unpained, impassive;
from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue; for what
avails
Valour or strength, though match-
less, quelled with pain
Which all subdues, and makes re-
miss the hands
Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we
may well 490
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.

500

Whereto with look composed Sa-
tan replied.

Not uninvented that, which thou
aright
Believest so main to our success, I
bring.

Which of us who beholds the
bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon
we stand,
This continent of spacious Heaven,
adorned
With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial,
gems, and gold;
Whose eye so superficially surveys
510
These things, as not to mind from
whence they grow
Deep under ground, materials
dark and crude,

Of spiritous and fiery spume, till
touched
With Heaven's ray, and tempered,
they shoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambi-
ent light?
These in their dark nativity the
deep
Shall yield us, pregnant with infer-
nal flame;
Which, into hollow engines, long
and round,
Thick rammed, at the other bore
with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send
forth 520
From far, with thundering noise,
among our foes
Such implements of mischief, as

shall dash
To pieces, and o'erwhelm what-
ever stands
Adverse, that they shall fear we
have disarmed
The Thunderer of his only dreaded
bolt.

Nor long shall be our labour; yet
ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Mean
while revive;
Abandon fear; to strength and
counsel joined
Think nothing hard, much less to
be despaired. 530

He ended, and his words their
drooping cheer
Enlightened, and their languished

hope revived.

The invention all admired, and
each, how he
To be the inventor missed; so easy
it seemed
Once found, which yet unfound
most would have thought
Impossible: Yet, haply, of thy race
In future days, if malice should
abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or in-
spired 540
With devilish machination, might
devise
Like instrument to plague the sons
of men
For sin, on war and mutual slaugh-
ter bent.

Forthwith from council to the work
they flew;
None arguing stood; innumerable
hands
Were ready; in a moment up they
turned
Wide the celestial soil, and saw be-
neath
The originals of nature in their
crude
Conception; sulphurous and ni-
trous foam 550
They found, they mingled, and,
with subtle art,
Concocted and adusted they re-
duced
To blackest grain, and into store
conveyed:
Part hidden veins digged up (nor

hath this earth
Entrails unlike) of mineral and
stone,
Whereof to found their engines
and their balls
Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
Provide, pernicious with one touch
to fire.

So all ere day-spring, under con-
scious night, 560
Secret they finished, and in order
set,
With silent circumspection, un-
spied.

Now when fair morn orient in
Heaven appeared,
Up rose the victor-Angels, and to
arms

The matin trumpet sung: In arms
they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
Soon banded; others from the
dawning hills
Look round, and scouts each coast
light-armed scour,
Each quarter to descry the distant
foe, 570
Where lodged, or whither fled, or
if for fight,
In motion or in halt: Him soon they
met
Under spread ensigns moving
nigh, in slow
But firm battalion; back with
speediest sail
Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest
wing,

Came flying, and in mid air aloud
thus cried.

Arm, Warriours, arm for fight; the
foe at hand,

Whom fled we thought, will save
us long pursuit

This day; fear not his flight; so
thick a cloud 580

He comes, and settled in his face I
see

Sad resolution, and secure: Let
each

His adamantine coat gird well, and
each

Fit well his helm, gripe fast his
orbed shield,

Borne even or high; for this day
will pour down,

If I conjecture aught, no drizzling
shower,
But rattling storm of arrows barbed
with fire.

So warned he them, aware them-
selves, and soon
In order, quit of all impediment;⁵⁹⁰
Instant without disturb they took
alarm,
And onward moved embattled:
When behold!
Not distant far with heavy pace the
foe
Approaching gross and huge, in
hollow cube
Training his devilish enginery, im-
paled
On every side with shadowing

squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview
both stood
A while; but suddenly at head ap-
peared
Satan, and thus was heard com-
manding loud.

600

Vanguard, to right and left the
front unfold;
That all may see who hate us, how
we seek
Peace and composure, and with
open breast
Stand ready to receive them, if they
like
Our overture; and turn not back
perverse:
But that I doubt; however witness,

Heaven!
Heaven, witness thou anon! while
we discharge
Freely our part: ye, who appointed
stand
Do as you have in charge, and
briefly touch
What we propound, and loud that
all may hear! 610
So scoffing in ambiguous words,
he scarce
Had ended; when to right and left
the front
Divided, and to either flank retired:
Which to our eyes discovered, new
and strange,
A triple mounted row of pillars
laid
On wheels (for like to pillars most

they seemed,
Or hollowed bodies made of oak or
fir,
With branches lopt, in wood or
mountain felled,)
Brass, iron, stony mould, had not
their mouths
With hideous orifice gaped on us
wide, 620
Portending hollow truce: At each
behind
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a
reed
Stood waving tipt with fire; while
we, suspense,
Collected stood within our
thoughts amused,
Not long; for sudden all at once
their reeds

Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appeared,
From those deep-throated engines belched, whose roar
Embowelled with outrageous noise the air, 630
And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail
Of iron globes; which, on the victor host
Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote,
That, whom they hit, none on their

feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks, but
down they fell
By thousands, Angel on Arch-
Angel rolled;
The sooner for their arms; un-
armed, they might
Have easily, as Spirits, evaded
swift
By quick contraction or remove;
but now 640
Foul dissipation followed, and
forced rout;
Nor served it to relax their serried
files.

What should they do? if on they
rushed, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow

Doubled, would render them yet
more despised,
And to their foes a laughter; for in
view
Stood ranked of Seraphim another
row,
In posture to displode their second
tire
Of thunder: Back defeated to re-
turn 650
They worse abhorred. Satan be-
held their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision
called.

O Friends! why come not on these
victors proud
Ere while they fierce were coming;
and when we,

To entertain them fair with open
front
And breast, (what could we more?)
propounded terms
Of composition, straight they
changed their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries
fell,
As they would dance; yet for a
dance they seemed 660
Somewhat extravagant and wild;
perhaps
For joy of offered peace: But I sup-
pose,
If our proposals once again were
heard,
We should compel them to a quick
result.

To whom thus Belial, in like game-
some mood.

Leader! the terms we sent were
terms of weight,

Of hard contents, and full of force
urged home;

Such as we might perceive amused
them all, 670

And stumbled many: Who re-
ceives them right,

Had need from head to foot well
understand;

Not understood, this gift they have
besides,

They show us when our foes walk
not upright.

So they among themselves in
pleasant vein

Stood scoffing, hightened in their
thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory: Eternal Might
To match with their inventions
they presumed
So easy, and of his thunder made a
scorn, 680
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 An-

gels placed!)
Their arms away they threw, and to
the hills
(For Earth hath this variety from
Heaven
Of pleasure situate in hill and
dale,) 690
Light as the lightning glimpse they
ran, they flew;
From their foundations loosening
to and fro,
They plucked the seated hills, with
all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the
shaggy tops
Up-lifting bore them in their
hands: Amaze,
Be sure, and terrour, seized the
rebel host,

When coming towards them so
dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains up-
ward turned;
Till on those cursed engines' triple-
row
They saw them whelmed, and all
their confidence 700
Under the weight of mountains
buried deep;
Themselves invaded next, and on
their heads
Main promontories flung, which in
the air
Came shadowing, and oppressed
whole legions armed;
Their armour helped their harm,
crushed in and bruised
Into their substance pent, which

wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous
groan;
Long struggling underneath, ere
they could wind
Out of such prison, though Spirits
of purest light,
Purest at first, now gross by sin-
ning grown. 710

The rest, in imitation, to like arms
Betook them, and the neighbour-
ing hills uptore:
So hills amid the air encountered
hills,
Hurled to and fro with jaculation
dire;
That under ground they fought in
dismal shade;

Infernal noise! war seemed a civil
game
To this uproar; horrid confusion
heaped
Upon confusion rose: And now all
Heaven
Had gone to wrack, with ruin over-
spread; 720
Had not the Almighty Father,
where he sits
Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven
secure,
Consulting on the sum of things,
foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, ad-
vised:
That his great purpose he might so
fulfil,
To honour his anointed Son

avenged
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All power on him transferred:
Whence to his Son,
The Assessour of his throne, he
thus began.

730
Effulgence of my glory, Son
beloved,
Son, in whose face invisible is be-
held
Visibly, what by Deity I am;
And in whose hand what by decree
I do,
Second Omnipotence! two days
are past,
Two days, as we compute the days
of Heaven,
Since Michael and his Powers went

forth to tame
These disobedient: Sore hath been
their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such
foes met armed;
For to themselves I left them; and
thou knowest, 740
Equal in their creation they were
formed,
Save what sin hath impaired;
which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their
doom;
Whence in perpetual fight they
needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be
found:
War wearied hath performed what
war can do,

And to disordered rage let loose
the reins
With mountains, as with weapons,
armed; which makes
Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous
to the main.

750

Two days are therefore past, the
third is thine;
For thee I have ordained it; and
thus far
Have suffered, that the glory may
be thine
Of ending this great war, since
none but Thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue
and grace
Immense I have transfused, that all
may know

In Heaven and Hell thy power
above compare;
And, this perverse commotion
governed thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be
Heir
Of all things; to be Heir, and to be
King 760
By sacred unction, thy deserved
right.

Go then, Thou Mightiest, in thy Fa-
ther's might;
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid
wheels
That shake Heaven's basis, bring
forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty
arms

Gird on, and sword upon thy puis-
sant thigh;
Pursue these sons of darkness,
drive them out
From all Heaven's bounds into the
utter deep:
There let them learn, as likes them,
to despise 770
God, and Messiah his anointed
King.

He said, and on his Son with rays
direct
Shone full; he all his Father full ex-
pressed
Ineffably into his face received;
And thus the Filial Godhead an-
swering spake.

O Father, O Supreme of heavenly

Thrones,
First, Highest, Holiest, Best; thou
always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
780
As is most just: This I my glory ac-
count,
My exaltation, and my whole de-
light,
That thou, in me well pleased, de-
clarest thy will
Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my
bliss.

Scepter and power, thy giving, I as-
sume,
And gladlier shall resign, when in
the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee

For ever; and in me all whom thou
lovest:
But whom thou hatest, I hate, and
can put on 790
Thy terrours, as I put thy mildness
on,
Image of thee in all things; and
shall soon,
Armed with thy might, rid Heaven
of these rebelled;
To their prepared ill mansion
driven down,
To chains of darkness, and the
undying worm;
That from thy just obedience could
revolt,
Whom to obey is happiness entire.

Then shall thy Saints unmixed, and

from the impure
Far separate, circling thy holy
mount, 800
Unfeigned Halleluiahs 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 Heaven. Forth
rushed with whirlwind sound
The chariot of Paternal Deity,
Flashing thick flames, wheel
within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with Spirit, but con-

voyed 810
By four Cherubick shapes; four
faces each
Had wonderful; as with stars,
their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes;
with eyes the wheels
Of beryl, and careering fires be-
tween;
Over their heads a crystal firma-
ment,
Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid
with pure
Amber, and colours of the showery
arch.

He, in celestial panoply all armed
Of radiant Urim, work divinely
wrought, 820

Ascended; at his right hand Victory
Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung
his bow
And quiver with three-bolted
thunder stored;
And from about him fierce effusion
rolled
Of smoke, and bickering flame,
and sparkles dire:
Attended with ten thousand thou-
sand Saints,
He onward came; far off his com-
ing shone;
And twenty thousand (I their num-
ber heard)
Chariots of God, half on each hand,
were seen;
He on the wings of Cherub rode
sublime 830

On the crystalline sky, in sapphire
throned,
Illustrious far and wide; but by his
own
First seen: Them unexpected joy
surprised,
When the great ensign of Messiah
blazed
Aloft by Angels borne, his sign in
Heaven;
Under whose conduct Michael
soon reduced
His army, circumfused on either
wing,
Under their Head imbodyed all in
one.

Before him Power Divine his way
prepared; 840

At his command the uprooted hills
retired
Each to his place; they heard his
voice, and went
Obsequious; Heaven his wonted
face renewed,
And with fresh flowerets hill and
valley smiled.

This saw his hapless foes, but stood
obdured,
And to rebellious fight rallied their
Powers,
Insensate, hope conceiving from
despair.

In heavenly Spirits could such per-
verseness dwell? 850
But to convince the proud what
signs avail,

Or wonders move the obdurate to
relent?
They, hardened more by what
might most reclaim,
Grieving to see his glory, at the
sight
Took envy; and, aspiring to his
highth,
Stood re-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, disdaining
flight, 860
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 armed; this day from
battle rest:
Faithful hath been your warfare,
and of God
Accepted, fearless in his righteous
cause;
And as ye have received, so have
ye done,
Invincibly: But of this cursed crew
The punishment to other hand be-
longs; 870
Vengeance is his, or whose he sole
appoints:
Number to this day's work is not
ordained,

Nor multitude; stand only, and behold
God's indignation on these godless
poured
By me; not you, but me, they have
despised,
Yet envied; against me is all their
rage,
Because the Father, to whom in
Heaven s'preme
Kingdom, and power, and glory
appertains,
Hath honoured me, according to
his will.

880

Therefore to me their doom he hath
assigned;
That they may have their wish, to
try with me

With dreadful shade contiguous,
and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with
the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous
host.

He on his impious foes right on-
ward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burn-
ing wheels
The stedfast empyrean shook
throughout, 900
All but the throne itself of God.
Full soon
Among them he arrived; in his
right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders,
which he sent

Before him, such as in their souls
infix'd
Plagues: They, astonished, all resis-
tance 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. 910

Nor less on either side tempestu-
ous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-
visaged Four

Distinct with eyes, and from the
 living wheels
Distinct alike with multitude of
 eyes;
One Spirit in them ruled; and every
 eye
Glared lightning, and shot forth
 pernicious fire
Among the accursed, that withered
 all their strength,
And of their wonted vigour left
 them drained,
Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted,
 fallen. 920

Yet half his strength he put not
 forth, but checked
His thunder in mid volley; for he
 meant

Not to destroy, but root them out of
Heaven:
The overthrown he raised, and as a
herd
Of goats or timorous flock together
thronged
Drove them before him thunder-
struck, pursued
With terrors, and with furies, to
the bounds
And crystal wall of Heaven; which,
opening wide,
Rolled inward, and a spacious gap
disclosed 930
Into the wasteful deep: The mon-
strous sight
Struck them with horror back-
ward, but far worse
Urged them behind: Headlong

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

Hell heard the unsufferable noise,
Hell saw
Heaven ruining from Heaven, and
would have fled
Affrighted; but strict Fate had cast
too deep
Her dark foundations, and too fast
had bound. 940

Nine days they fell: Confounded
Chaos roared,
And felt tenfold confusion in their
fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge

a rout
Incumbered him with ruin: Hell at
last
Yawning received them whole, and
on them closed;
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught
with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe
and pain.

Disburdened Heaven rejoiced, and
soon repaired 950
Her mural breach, returning
whence it rolled.

Sole victor, from the expulsion of
his foes,
Messiah his triumphal chariot
turned:
To meet him all his Saints, who

silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanced; and, as
they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each
Order bright,
Sung triumph, and him sung victo-
rious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him domin-
ion given, 960
Worthiest to reign: He, celebrated,
rode
Triumphant through mid Heaven,
into the courts
And temple of his Mighty Father
throned
On high; who into glory him re-
ceived,
Where now he sits at the right hand

of bliss.

Thus, measuring things in Heaven
by things on Earth,
At thy request, and that thou
mayest beware
By what is past, to thee I have re-
vealed
What might have else to human
race been hid; 970
The discord which befel, and war
in Heaven
Among the angelick Powers, and
the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who re-
belled
With Satan; he who envies now thy
state,
Who now is plotting how he may

seduce
Thee also from obedience, that,
with him
Bereaved of happiness, thou
mayest partake
His punishment, eternal misery;
Which would be all his solace and
revenge,
As a despite done against the Most
High, 980
Thee once to gain companion of his
woe.

But listen not to his temptations,
warn
Thy weaker; let it profit thee to
have heard,
By terrible example, the reward
Of disobedience; firm they might

have stood,
Yet fell; remember, and fear to
transgress.

BOOK VII

Descend from Heaven, Urania, by
that name
If rightly thou art called, whose
voice divine
Following, above the Olympian
hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing!

empyrean air,
Thy tempering: with like safety
guided down
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying steed unreined,
(as once Bellerophon, though from a lower
clime,)
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I
fall,
Erroneous there to wander, and
forlorn. 20

Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere;
Standing on earth, not rapt above
the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice,

unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though fallen
on evil days,
On evil days though fallen, and
evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers
compassed round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while
thou
Visitest my slumbers nightly, or
when morn 30
Purples the east: still govern thou
my song,
Urania, and fit audience find,
though few.

But drive far off the barbarous dis-
sonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the

race

Of that wild rout that tore the Thra-
cian bard

In Rhodope, where woods and
rocks had ears

To rapture, till the savage clamour
drowned

Both harp and voice; nor could the
Muse defend

Her son. So fail not thou, who thee
implores: 40

For thou art heavenly, she an
empty dream.

Say, Goddess, what ensued when
Raphael,

The affable Arch-Angel, had fore-
warned

Adam, by dire example, to beware

Apostasy, by what befel in Heaven
To those apostates; lest the like be-
fall

In Paradise to Adam or his race,
Charged not to touch the inter-
dicted tree,

If they transgress, and slight that
sole command, 50

So easily obeyed amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their ap-
petite,

Though wandering. He, with his
consorted Eve,

The story heard attentive, and was
filled

With admiration and deep muse,
to hear

Of things so high and strange;
things, to their thought

So unimaginable, as hate in
Heaven,
And war so near the peace of God
in bliss,
With such confusion: but the evil,
soon
Driven back, redounded as a flood
on those 60
From whom it sprung; impossible
to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam
soon repealed
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 Heaven and Earth conspicuous

first began;
When, and whereof created; for
what cause;
What within Eden, or without, was
done
Before his memory; as one whose
drouth
Yet scarce allayed still eyes the cur-
rent stream, 70
Whose liquid murmur heard new
thirst excites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly
guest.

Great things, and full of wonder in
our ears,
Far differing from this world, thou
hast revealed,
Divine interpreter! by favour sent

Down from the empyrean, to fore-
warn
Us timely of what might else have
been our loss,
Unknown, which human knowl-
edge could not reach;
For which to the infinitely Good
we owe 80
Immortal thanks, and his admon-
ishment
Receive, with solemn purpose to
observe
Immutably his sovran will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast
vouchsafed
Gently, for our instruction, to im-
part
Things above earthly thought,
which yet concerned

In Chaos; and the work begun,
how soon
Absolved; if unforbid thou mayest
unfold
What we, not to explore the secrets
ask
Of his eternal empire, but the more
100
To magnify his works, the more we
know.

And the great light of day yet
wants to run
Much of his race though steep; sus-
pense 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:

Or if the star of evening and the
moon

Haste to thy audience, Night with
her will bring, 110

Silence; and Sleep, listening to
thee, will watch;

Or we can bid his absence, till thy
song

End, and dismiss thee ere the
morning shine.

Thus Adam his illustrious guest
besought:

And thus the Godlike Angel an-
swered mild.

This also thy request, with caution

asked,
Obtain; though to recount
almighty works
What words or tongue of Seraph
can suffice, 120
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou canst attain, which
best may serve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be
withheld
Thy hearing; such commission
from above
I have received, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain
To ask; nor let thine own inven-

tions hope
Things not revealed, which the in-
visible King,
Only Omniscient, hath suppressed
in night; 130
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 140

(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 re-
turned

Victorious with his Saints, the Om-
nipotent

Eternal Father from his throne be-
held

Their multitude, and to his Son
thus spake.

At least our envious Foe hath

failed, who thought
All like himself rebellious, by
whose aid 150
This inaccessible high strength, the
seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispos-
sessed,
He trusted to have seised, and into
fraud
Drew many, whom their place
knows here no more:
Yet far the greater part have kept, I
see,
Their station; Heaven, yet popu-
lous, retains
Number sufficient to possess her
realms
Though wide, and this high temple
to frequent

With ministeries due, and solemn
rites:
But, lest his heart exalt him in the
harm 160
Already done, to have dispeopled
Heaven,
My damage fondly deemed, I can
repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost; and in a moment will cre-
ate
Another world, out of one man a
race
Of men innumerable, there to
dwell,
Not here; till, by degrees of merit
raised,
They open to themselves at length
the way

Up hither, under long obedience
tried;
And Earth be changed to Heaven,
and Heaven to Earth, 170
One kingdom, joy and union with-
out end.

Mean while inhabit lax, ye Powers
of Heaven;
And thou my Word, begotten Son,
by thee
This I perform; speak thou, and be
it done!
My overshadowing Spirit and
Might with thee
I send along; ride forth, and bid the
Deep
Within appointed bounds be
Heaven and Earth;

Boundless the Deep, because I Am
 who fill
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
 180

Though I, uncircumscribed 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 the Almighty, and to what
 he spake
 His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave
 effect.

Immediate are the acts of God,
 more swift 190
 Than time or motion, but to human

ears
Cannot without process of speech
be told,
So told as earthly notion can re-
ceive.

Great triumph and rejoicing was in
Heaven,
When such was heard declared the
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 the ungodly from
his sight 200
And the habitations of the just; to

Immense, and all his Father in him
shone.

About his chariot numberless were
poured
Cherub, and Seraph, Potentates,
and Thrones,
And Virtues, winged Spirits, and
chariots winged
From the armoury of God; where
stand of old
Myriads, between two brazen
mountains lodged
Against a solemn day, harnessed at
hand,
Celestial equipage; and now came
forth 220
Spontaneous, for within them
Spirit lived,

Attendant on their Lord: Heaven
opened wide
Her ever-during gates, harmo-
nious sound
On golden hinges moving, to let
forth
The King of Glory, in his powerful
Word
And Spirit, coming to create new
worlds.

On heavenly ground they stood;
and from the shore
They viewed the vast immeasur-
able abyss
Outrageous as a sea, dark, waste-
ful, wild, 230
Up from the bottom turned by fu-
rious winds

And surging waves, as mountains,
to assault
Heaven's highth, and with the cen-
ter mix the pole.

Silence, ye troubled Waves, and
thou Deep, peace,
Said then the Omnifick Word; your
discord end!

Nor staid; but, on the wings of
Cherubim

Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world un-
born;

For Chaos heard his voice: Him all
his train 240

Followed in bright procession, to
behold

Creation, and the wonders of his

might.

Then staid the fervid wheels, and
in his hand
He took the golden compasses,
prepared
In God's eternal store, to circum-
scribe
This universe, and all created
things:
One foot he centered, and the other
turned
Round through the vast profundity
obscure;
And said, Thus far extend, thus far
thy bounds, 250
This be thy just circumference, O
World!
Thus God the Heaven created, thus

the Earth,
Matter unformed and void: Dark-
ness profound
Covered the abyss: but on the wa-
tery calm
His brooding wings the Spirit of
God outspread,
And vital virtue infused, and vital
warmth
Throughout the fluid mass; but
downward purged
The black tartareous cold infernal
dregs,
Adverse to life: then founded, then
conglobed
Like things to like; the rest to sev-
eral place 260
Disparted, and between spun out
the air;

And Earth self-balanced 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,
Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet
the sun
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourned the while. God saw the
light was good; 270
And light from darkness by the
hemisphere
Divided: light the Day, and dark-

ness Night,
He named. Thus was the first day
even and morn:
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial quires, when orient
light
Exhaling first from darkness they
beheld;
Birth-day of Heaven and Earth;
with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they
filled,
And touched their golden harps,
and hymning praised
God and his works; Creator him
they sung, 280
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, expanse of liquid,
pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffused
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round; partition firm
and sure,
The waters underneath from those
above 290
Dividing: for as earth, so he the
world
Built on circumfluous waters calm,
in wide
Crystalline ocean, and the loud

misrule
Of Chaos far removed; lest fierce
extremes
Contiguous might distemper the
whole frame:
And Heaven he named the Firma-
ment: So even
And morning chorus sung the sec-
ond day.

The Earth was formed, but in the
womb as yet
Of waters, embryon immature in-
volved, 300
Appeared not: over all the face of
Earth
Main ocean flowed, not idle; but,
with warm
Prolifick humour softening all her

globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Sate with genial moisture; when
God said,
Be gathered 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 310
Into the clouds; their tops ascend
the sky:
So high as heaved the tumid hills,
so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad

and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: Thither
they
Hasted with glad precipitance, up-
rolled,
As drops on dust conglobing from
the dry:
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge di-
rect,
For haste; such flight the great
command impressed
On the swift floods: As armies at
the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast
heard) 320
Troop to their standard; so the wa-
tery throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where
way they found,

Of congregated waters, he called
Seas:

And saw that it was good; and
said, Let the Earth

Put forth the verdant grass, herb
yielding seed,

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

Desart and bare, unsightly, un-
adorned, 340

Brought forth the tender grass,
whose verdure clad

Her universal face with pleasant
green;

Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,
Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept
The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: Last
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread 350
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemmed
Their blossoms: With high woods

the hills were crowned;
With tufts the valleys, and each
fountain side;
With borders long the rivers: that
Earth now
Seemed like to Heaven, a seat
where Gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love
to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God
had yet not rained
Upon the Earth, and man to till the
ground
None was; but from the Earth a
dewy mist
Went up, and watered all the
ground, and each 360
Plant of the field; which, ere it was
in the Earth,

God made, and every herb, before
it grew
On the green stem: God saw that it
was good:
So even and morn recorded the
third day.

Again the Almighty spake, Let
there be lights
High in the expanse of Heaven, to
divide
The day from night; and let them
be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and cir-
cling years;
And let them be for lights, as I or-
dain 370
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, 380
Surveying his great work, that it
was good:

For of celestial bodies first the sun
A mighty sphere he framed, un-
lightsome first,
Though of ethereal mould: then
formed the moon
Globose, and every magnitude of
stars,
And sowed with stars the Heaven,
thick as a field:
Of light by far the greater part he
took,
Transplanted from her cloudy
shrine, and placed
In the sun's orb, made porous to re-
ceive
And drink the liquid light; firm to
retain 390
Her gathered beams, great palace
now of light.

Hither, as to their fountain, other
stars
Repairing, in their golden urns
draw light,
And hence the morning-planet
gilds her horns;
By tincture or reflection they aug-
ment
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 the horizon
round 400
Invested with bright rays, jocund
to run
His longitude through Heaven's

high road; the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before
him danced,
Shedding sweet influence: Less
bright the moon,
But opposite in levelled west was
set,
His mirrour, with full face borrow-
ing her light
From him; for other light she
needed none
In that aspect, and still that dis-
tance keeps
Till night; then in the east her turn
she shines,
Revolved on Heaven's great axle,
and her reign 410
With thousand lesser lights divid-
ual holds,

With thousand thousand stars, that
then appeared
Spangling the hemisphere: Then
first adorned
With their bright luminaries that
set and rose,
Glad evening and glad morn
crowned the fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters gen-
erate
Reptile with spawn abundant, liv-
ing soul:
And let fowl fly above the Earth,
with wings
Displayed on the open firmament
of Heaven. 420

And God created the great whales,
and each

Soul living, each that crept, which
 plenteously
The waters generated by their
 kinds;
And every bird of wing after his
 kind;
And saw that it was good, and
 blessed them, saying.

Be fruitful, multiply, and in the
 seas,
And lakes, and running streams,
 the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiplied, on
 the Earth. 430

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 waved coats
dropt with gold;
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, at-
tend 440
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
Stretched like a promontory sleeps
or swims,
And seems a moving land; and at
his gills
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts
out, a sea.

450

Mean while the tepid caves, and
fens, and shores,
Their brood as numerous hatch,
from the egg that soon
Bursting with kindly rupture forth
disclosed

Their callow young; but feathered
soon and fledge
They summed their pens; and,
soaring the air sublime,
With clang despised the ground,
under a cloud
In prospect; there the eagle and the
stork
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries
build:
Part loosely wing the region, part
more wise
In common, ranged in figure,
wedge their way, 460
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
Their aery caravan, high over seas
Flying, and over lands, with mu-
tual wing
Easing their flight; so steers the

prudent crane
Her annual voyage, borne on
winds; the air
Floats as they pass, fanned with
unnumbered plumes:
From branch to branch the smaller
birds with song
Solaced the woods, and spread
their painted wings
Till even; nor then the solemn
nightingale
Ceased warbling, but all night
tun'd her soft lays: 470
Others, on silver lakes and rivers,
bathed
Their downy breast; the swan with
arched neck,
Between her white wings mantling
proudly, rows

Her state with oary feet; yet oft
they quit
The dank, and, rising on stiff pen-
nons, tower
The mid aerial sky: Others on
ground
Walked firm; the crested cock
whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and the other
whose gay train
Adorns him, coloured with the
florid hue
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The
waters thus 480
With fish replenished, and the air
with fowl,
Evening and morn solemnized the
fifth day.

The sixth, and of creation last,
arose
With evening harps and matin;
when God said,
Let the Earth bring forth soul living
in her kind,
Cattle, and creeping things, and
beast of the Earth,
Each in their kind. The Earth
obeyed, and straight
Opening her fertile womb teemed
at a birth
Innumerable living creatures, per-
fect forms, 490
Limbed and full grown: Out of the
ground up rose,
As from his lair, the wild beast
where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or

den;
Among the trees in pairs they rose,
they walked:
The cattle in the fields and mead-
ows green:
Those rare and solitary, these in
flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad
herds upsprung.

The grassy clods now calved; now
half appeared
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
500
His hinder parts, then springs as
broke from bonds,
And rampant shakes his brinded
mane; the ounce,
The libbard, and the tiger, as the

mole

Rising, the crumbled earth above
them threw

In hillocks: The swift stag from un-
der ground

Bore up his branching head: Scarce
from his mould

Behemoth biggest born of earth up-
heaved

His vastness: Fleeced the flocks
and bleating rose,

As plants: Ambiguous between sea
and land

The river-horse, and scaly
crocodile. 510

At once came forth whatever
creeps the ground,

Insect or worm: those waved their

limber fans
For wings, and smallest lineaments
exact
In all the liveries decked of summer's pride
With spots of gold and purple,
azure and green:
These, as a line, their long dimension drew,
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
Minims of nature; some of serpent-kind,
Wonderous in length and corpulence, involved 520
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious emmet, provident

Of future; in small room large heart
enclosed;
Pattern of just equality perhaps
Hereafter, joined in her popular
tribes
Of commonalty: Swarming next
appeared
The female bee, that feeds her hus-
band drone
Deliciously, and builds her waxen
cells
With honey stored: The rest are
numberless,
And thou their natures knowest,
and gavest them names, 530
Needless to thee repeated; nor un-
known
The serpent, subtlest beast of all
the field,

Of huge extent sometimes, with
brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrifick, though
to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy
call.

Now Heaven in all her glory
shone, and rolled
Her motions, as the great first
Mover's hand
First wheeled their course: Earth in
her rich attire
Consummate lovely smiled; air,
water, earth, 540
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was
swum, was walked,
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet
remained:

There wanted yet the master-work,
the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who,
not prone
And brute as other creatures, but
endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front
serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and
from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with
Heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge
whence his good 550
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 the Om-
nipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly
spake.

Let us make now Man in our im-
age, Man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and
air, 560
Beast of the field, and over all the
Earth,
And every creeping thing that
creeps the ground.

This said, he formed thee, Adam,
thee, O Man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nos-

trils breathed
The breath of life; in his own image
he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express; and thou becamest a liv-
ing soul.

Male he created thee; but thy con-
sort 570
Female, for race; then blessed
mankind, and said,
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the
Earth;
Subdue it, and throughout domin-
ion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the
air,
And every living thing that moves
on the Earth.

Wherever thus created, for no
place
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as
thou knowest,
He brought thee into this delicious
grove,
This garden, planted with the trees
of God, 580
Delectable both to behold and
taste;
And freely all their pleasant fruit
for food
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all
the Earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the
tree,
Which, tasted, works knowledge
of good and evil,
Thou mayest not; in the day thou

eatest, thou diest;
Death is the penalty imposed; be-
ware,
And govern well thy appetite; lest
Sin
Surprise thee, and her black atten-
dant Death.

590

Here finished he, and all that he
had made
Viewed, and behold all was en-
tirely good;
So even and morn accomplished
the sixth day:
Yet not till the Creator from his
work
Desisting, though unwearied, up
returned,
Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his

high abode;
Thence to behold this new created
world,
The addition of his empire, how it
showed
In prospect from his throne, how
good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he
rode 600
Followed with acclamation, and
the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand
harps, that tuned
Angelick harmonies: The earth, the
air
Resounded, (thou rememberest,
for thou heardst,)
The heavens and all the constella-
tions rung,

The planets in their station listen-
ing stood,
While the bright pomp ascended
jubilant.

Open, ye everlasting gates! they
sung,
Open, ye Heavens! your living
doors; let in 610
The great Creator from his work re-
turned
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 inter-
course

Thither will send his winged mes-
sengers
On errands of supernal grace. So
sung
The glorious train ascending: He
through Heaven,
That opened wide her blazing por-
tals, led
To God's eternal house direct the
way; 620
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
Powdered with stars. And now on
Earth the seventh

the seventh day,
As resting on that day from all his
work,
But not in silence holy kept: the
harp
Had work and rested not; the
solemn pipe,
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet
stop, 640
All sounds on fret by string or
golden wire,
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed
with voice
Choral or unison: of incense
clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid
the mount.

Creation and the six days acts they

sung:

Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite

Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue

Relate thee! Greater now in thy return

Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day 650

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 repelled; while impi-
ously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee
withdraw
The number of thy worshippers.
Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose
serves 660
To manifest the more thy might:
his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat-
est more good.

Witness this new-made world, an-
other Heaven
From Heaven-gate not far, founded
in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense,

with stars
Numerous, and every star perhaps
a world
Of destined habitation; but thou
knowest
Their seasons: among these the
seat of Men, 670
Earth, with her nether ocean cir-
cumfused,
Their pleasant dwelling-place.
Thrice happy Men,
And sons of Men, whom God hath
thus advanced!
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him; and in reward
to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or
air,
And multiply a race of worship-

pers
Holy and just: Thrice happy, if they
know
Their happiness, and persevere up-
right!
So sung they, and the empyrean
rung 680
With halleluiahs: Thus was sab-
bath kept.

And thy request think now ful-
filled, that asked
How first this world and face of
things began,
And what before thy memory was
done
From the beginning; that posterity,
Informed by thee, might know: If
else thou seekest

Aught, not surpassing human
measure, say.

BOOK VIII

The Angel ended, and in Adam's
ear
So charming left his voice, that he
a while
Thought him still speaking, still
stood fixed to hear;
Then, as new waked, thus grate-

fully replied.

What thanks sufficient, or what
recompence
Equal, have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast al-
laid
The thirst I had of knowledge, and
vouchsafed
This friendly condescension to re-
late 10
Things, else by me unsearchable;
now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as
is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator! Something yet of doubt
remains,
Which only thy solution can re-

survey
Useless besides; reasoning I oft ad-
mire,
How Nature wise and frugal could
commit
Such disproportions, with super-
fluous hand
So many nobler bodies to create,³⁰
Greater so manifold, to this one
use,
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,
Served by more noble than herself,
attains

Her end without least motion, and
receives,
As tribute, such a sumless journey
brought
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth
and light;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness
number fails. 40

So spake our sire, and by his coun-
tenance seemed
Entering on studious thoughts ab-
struse; which Eve
Perceiving, where she sat retired in
sight,
With lowliness majestick from her
seat,
And grace that won who saw to
wish her stay,

Rose, and went forth among her
fruits and flowers,
To visit how they prospered, bud
and bloom,
Her nursery; they at her coming
sprung,
And, touched by her fair tendance,
gladlier grew. 50

Yet went she not, as not with such
discourse
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: such pleasure
she reserved,
Adam relating, she sole auditress;
Her husband the relater she pre-
ferred
Before the Angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would

intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve
high dispute
With conjugal caresses: from his lip
60
Not words alone pleased her. O!
when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual
honour joined?
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 proposed,
Benevolent and facile thus replied.
70

To ask or search, I blame thee not;
for Heaven
Is as the book of God before thee
set,
Wherein to read his wonderous
works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or
months, or years:
This to attain, whether Heaven
move or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right;
the rest
From Man or Angel the great Ar-
chitect

Did wisely to conceal, and not di-
vulge
His secrets to be scanned by them
who ought 80
Rather admire; or, if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabrick of the
Heavens
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps
to move
His laughter at their quaint opin-
ions wide
Hereafter; when they come to
model Heaven
And calculate the stars, how they
will wield
The mighty frame; how build, un-
build, contrive
To save appearances; how gird the
sphere

With centrick and eccentric scrib-
bled o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb: 90
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 Heaven
such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone
receives
The benefit: Consider first, that
great
Or bright infers not excellence: the
Earth
Though, in comparison of Heaven,
so small,

Nor glistening, may of solid good
contain

More plenty than the sun that barren
shines; 100

Whose virtue on itself works no effect,

But in the fruitful Earth; there first
received,

His beams, unactive else, their
vigour find.

Yet not to Earth are those bright luminaries

Officious; but to thee, Earth's habitant.

And for the Heaven's wide circuit,
let it speak

The Maker's high magnificence,
who built

So spacious, and his line stretched
out so far; 110
That Man may know he dwells not
in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodged in a small partition; and
the rest
Ordained for uses to his Lord best
known.

The swiftness of those circles at-
tribute,
Though numberless, to his Om-
nipotence,
That to corporeal substances could
add
Speed almost spiritual: Me thou
thinkest not slow,
Who since the morning-hour set

out from Heaven 120
Where God resides, and ere mid-
day arrived
In Eden; distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But
this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heavens,
to show
Invalid that which thee to doubt it
moved;
Not that I so affirm, though so it
seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here
on Earth.

God, to remove his ways from hu-
man sense,
Placed Heaven from Earth so far,
that earthly sight, 130

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 wandering course now high,
now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or stand-
ing still,
In six thou seest; and what if sev-
enth to these
The planet earth, so stedfast
though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions

move? 140
Which else to several spheres thou
must ascribe,
Moved contrary with thwart obliquities;
Or save the sun his labour, and that
swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,
Invisible else above all stars, the
wheel
Of day and night; which needs not
thy belief,
If earth, industrious of herself,
fetch day
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, 150
Sent from her through the wide
transpicious air,
To the terrestrial moon be as a star,
Enlightening her by day, as she by
night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be
there,
Fields and inhabitants: Her spots
thou seest
As clouds, and clouds may rain,
and rain produce
Fruits in her softened soil for some
to eat
Allotted there; and other suns per-
haps,
With their attendant moons, thou
wilt descry,

Communicating male and female
light; 160
Which two great sexes animate the
world,
Stored in each orb perhaps with
some that live.

For such vast room in Nature un-
possessed
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to con-
tribute
Each orb a glimpse of light, con-
veyed so far
Down to this habitable, which re-
turns
Light back to them, is obvious to
dispute.

170

But whether thus these things, or
whether not;
But 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 spin-
ning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces
even,
And bears thee soft with the
smooth hair along;
Sollicit not thy thoughts with mat-
ters hid;
Leave them to God above; him

serve, and fear! 180
Of other creatures, as him pleases
best,
Wherever placed, let him dispose;
joy thou
In what he gives to thee, this Par-
adise
And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for
thee too high
To know what passes there; be
lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee,
and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what
creatures there
Live, in what state, condition, or
degree;
Contented that thus far hath been
revealed

Not of Earth only, but of highest
Heaven. 190

To whom thus Adam, cleared of
doubt, replied.

How fully hast thou satisfied me,
pure
Intelligence of Heaven, Angel
serene!

And, freed from intricacies, taught
to live

The easiest way; nor with perplex-
ing thoughts

To interrupt the sweet of life, from
which

God hath bid dwell far off all anx-
ious cares,

And not molest us; unless we our-
selves 200

Seek them with wandering
thoughts, and notions vain.

But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Unchecked, and of her roving is no
end;

Till warned, or by experience
taught, she learn,

That, not to know at large of things
remote

From use, obscure and subtle; but,
to know

That which before us lies in daily
life,

Is the prime wisdom: What is
more, is fume,

Or emptiness, or fond imperti-
nence: 210

And renders us, in things that most

concern,
Unpractised, unprepared, and still
to seek.

Therefore from this high pitch let
us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things
at hand
Useful; whence, haply, mention
may arise
Of something not unseasonable to
ask,
By sufferance, and thy wonted
favour, deigned.

Thee I have heard relating what
was done 220
Ere my remembrance: now, hear
me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast

not heard;
And day is not yet spent; till then
thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise;
Inviting thee to hear while I relate;
Fond! were it not in hope of thy re-
ply:
For, while I sit with thee, I seem in
Heaven;
And sweeter thy discourse is to my
ear
Than fruits of palm-tree pleasan-
test to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at
the hour 230
Of sweet repast; they satiate, and
soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words,
with grace divine

Imbued, bring to their sweetness
no satiety.

To whom thus Raphael answered
heavenly meek.

Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of
men,

Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on
thee

Abundantly his gifts hath also
poured

Inward and outward both, his im-
age fair: 240

Speaking, or mute, all comeliness
and grace

Attends thee; and each word, each
motion, forms;

Nor less think we in Heaven of
thee on Earth

Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with
Man:
For God, we see, hath honoured
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; 250
Squared in full legion (such command we had)
To see that none thence issued
forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his
work;

Lest he, incensed at such eruption
bold,
Destruction with creation might
have mixed.

Not that they durst without his
leave attempt;
But us he sends upon his high be-
hests
For state, as Sovran King; and to in-
ure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we
found, fast shut, 260
The dismal gates, and barricadoed
strong;
But long ere our approaching
heard within
Noise, other than the sound of
dance or song,

Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.

Glad we returned up to the coasts
of light
Ere sabbath-evening: so we had in
charge.

But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleased with thy words no less
than thou with mine. 270

So spake the Godlike Power, 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

Hill, dale, and shady woods, and
sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring
streams; by these,
Creatures that lived and moved,
and walked, or flew;
Birds on the branches warbling; all
things smiled; 290
With fragrance and with joy my
heart o'erflowed.

Myself I then perused, and limb by
limb
Surveyed, and sometimes went,
and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour
led:
But who I was, or where, or from
what cause,

Knew not; to speak I tried, and
forthwith spake;
My tongue obeyed, and readily
could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I,
fair light,
And thou enlightened Earth, so
fresh and gay, 300
Ye Hills, and Dales, ye Rivers,
Woods, and Plains,
And ye that live and move, fair
Creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus,
how here?—
Not of myself;—by some great
Maker then,
In goodness and in power pre-
eminent:
Tell me, how may I know him, how

adore,
From whom I have that thus I
move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I
know.—
While thus I called, and strayed I
knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and
first beheld 310
This happy light; when, answer
none returned,
On a green shady bank, profuse of
flowers,
Pensive I sat me down: There gen-
tle sleep
First found me, and with soft op-
pression seised
My droused sense, untroubled,
though I thought

I then was passing to my former
state
Insensible, and forthwith to dis-
solve:
When suddenly stood at my head
a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently
moved
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
320
And lived: One came, methought,
of shape divine,
And said, "Thy mansion wants
thee, Adam; rise,
First Man, of men innumerable or-
dained
First Father! called by thee, I come
thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat pre-

pared."
So saying, by the hand he took me
 raised,
And over fields and waters, as in
 air
Smooth-sliding without step, last
 led me up
A woody mountain; whose high
 top was plain,
A circuit wide, enclosed, with
 goodliest trees 330
Planted, with walks, and bowers;
 that what I saw
Of Earth before scarce pleasant
 seemed. Each tree,
Loaden with fairest fruit that hung
 to the eye
Tempting, stirred in me sudden ap-
 petite

To pluck and eat; whereat I waked,
and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the
dream
Had lively shadowed: Here had
new begun
My wandering, had not he, who
was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees
appeared,
Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but
with awe, 340
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiss: He reared me, and
"Whom thou soughtest I am,"
Said mildly, "Author of all this thou
seest
Above, or round about thee, or be-
neath.

This Paradise I give thee, count it
thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to
eat:
Of every tree that in the garden
grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here
no dearth:
But of the tree whose operation
brings 350
Knowledge of good and ill, which
I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and
thy faith,
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember what I warn thee, shun
to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence:
for know,

The day thou eatest thereof, my
sole command
Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt
die,
From that day mortal; and this
happy state
Shalt lose, expelled from hence into
a world
Of woe and sorrow." Sternly he
pronounced 360
The rigid interdiction, which re-
sounds
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in
my choice
Not to incur; but soon his clear as-
pect
Returned, and gracious purpose
thus renewed.

"Not only these fair bounds, but all
the Earth
To thee and to thy race I give; as
lords
Possess it, and all things that
therein live,
Or live in sea, or air; beast, fish, and
fowl.

370

In sign whereof, each bird and
beast behold
After their kinds; I bring them to
receive
From thee their names, and pay
thee fealty
With low subjection; understand
the same
Of fish within their watery resi-
dence,

Not hither summoned, since they
cannot change
Their element, to draw the thinner
air."

As thus he spake, each bird and
beast behold
Approaching two and two; these
cowering low
With blandishment; each bird
stooped on his wing. 380

I named them, as they passed, and
understood
Their nature, with such knowledge
God endued
My sudden apprehension: But in
these
I found not what methought I
wanted still;

And to the heavenly Vision thus
presumed.

O, by what name, for thou above
all these,

Above mankind, or aught than
mankind higher,

Surpassest far my naming; how
may I 390

Adore thee, Author of this uni-
verse,

And all this good to man? for
whose well being

So amply, and with hands so lib-
eral,

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 Vi-
sion bright,
As with a smile more brightened,
thus replied.

400

What callest thou solitude? Is not
the Earth
With various living creatures, and
the air
Replenished, and all these at thy
command
To come and play before thee?
Knowest thou not
Their language and their ways?
They also know,
And reason not contemptibly:

With these
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy
realm is large.

So spake the Universal Lord, and
seemed

So ordering: I, with leave of speech
implored, 410

And humble deprecation, thus
replied.

Let not my words offend thee,
Heavenly Power;

My Maker, be propitious while I
speak.

Hast thou not made me here thy
substitute,

And these inferiour far beneath me
set?

Among unequals what society

Can sort, what harmony, or true
delight?
Which must be mutual, in propor-
tion due 420
Given and received; but, in dispar-
ity
The one intense, the other still re-
miss,
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 re-
joice
Each with their kind, lion with li-
oness;

So fitly them in pairs thou hast
combined:

Much less can bird with beast, or
fish with fowl 430

So well converse, nor with the ox
the ape;

Worse then can man with beast,
and least of all.

Whereto the Almighty answered,
not displeased.

A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
Thou to thyself proposhest, in the
choice

Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt
taste

No pleasure, though in pleasure,
solitary.

440

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: 460
But Man by number is to manifest

His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his image multiplied,

In unity defective; which requires
Collateral love, and dearest amity.

Thou in thy secrecy although
alone,

Best with thyself accompanied,
seekest not

Social communication; yet, so
pleased,

Canst raise thy creature to what
highth thou wilt 470

Of union or communion, deified:

I, by conversing, cannot these erect
From prone; nor in their ways complacence find.

Thus I emboldened spake, and

freedom used
Permissive, and acceptance found;
which gained
This answer from the gracious
Voice Divine.

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was
pleased;
And find thee knowing, not of
beasts alone, 480
Which thou hast rightly named,
but of thyself;
Expressing well the spirit within
thee free,
My image, not imparted to the
brute;
Whose fellowship therefore un-
meet for thee
Good reason was thou freely

shouldst dislike;
And be so minded still: I, ere thou
spakest,
Knew it not good for Man to be
alone;
And no such company as then thou
sawest
Intended thee; for trial only
brought,
To see how thou couldest judge of
fit and meet: 490
What next I bring shall please thee,
be assured,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other
self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's de-
sire.

He ended, or I heard no more; for

now

My earthly by his heavenly over-
powered,

Which it had long stood under,
strained to the highth

In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the
sense

Dazzled and spent, sunk down;
and sought repair 500

Of sleep, which instantly fell on
me, called

By Nature as in aid, and closed
mine eyes.

Mine eyes he closed, but open left
the cell

Of fancy, my internal sight; by
which,

Abstract as in a trance, methought
I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and
saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I
stood:
Who stooping opened my left side,
and took
From thence a rib, with cordial
spirits warm, 510
And life-blood streaming fresh;
wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh filled up
and healed:
The rib he formed and fashioned
with his hands;
Under his forming hands a crea-
ture grew,
Man-like, but different sex; so

lovely fair,
That what seemed fair in all the
world, seemed now
Mean, or in her summed up, in her
contained
And in her looks; which from that
time infused
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt be-
fore,
And into all things from her air in-
spired 520
The spirit of love and amorous de-
light.

She disappeared, and left me dark;
I waked
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,
adorned
With what all Earth or Heaven
could bestow
To make her amiable: On she came,
Led by her heavenly Maker,
though unseen, 530
And guided by his voice; nor unin-
formed
Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage
rites:
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven
in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.

I, overjoyed, could not forbear
aloud.

This turn hath made amends; thou
hast fulfilled
Thy words, Creator bounteous and
benign,
Giver of all things fair! but fairest
this 540
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 di-
vinely brought,
Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
Her virtue, and the conscience of
her worth, 550
That would be wooed, and not un-
sought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but, re-
tired,
The more desirable; or, to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sin-
ful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me,
she turned:
I followed her; she what was hon-
our knew,
And with obsequious majesty ap-
proved
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial

bower
I led her blushing like the morn:
All Heaven,
And happy constellations, on that
hour 560
Shed their selectest influence; the
Earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each
hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and
gentle airs
Whispered it to the woods, and
from their wings
Flung rose, flung 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 570

My story to the sum of earthly
bliss,

Which I enjoy; and must confess to
find

In all things else delight indeed,
but such

As, used or not, works in the mind
no change,

Nor vehement desire; these delica-
cies

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 580
Superiour and unmoved; here only weak
Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.

Or Nature failed in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least on her bestowed

Too much of ornament, in outward
show

Elaborate, of inward less exact.

590

For well I understand in the prime
end

Of Nature her the inferiour, 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 ap-
proach

Her loveliness, so absolute she

seems
And in herself complete, so well to
know
Her own, that what she wills to do
or say, 600
Seems wisest, virtuousest, dis-
creeetest, best:
All higher knowledge in her pres-
ence falls
Degraded; Wisdom in discourse
with her
Loses discountenanced, 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 angelick
placed. 610

To whom the Angel with con-
tracted brow.

Accuse not Nature, she hath done
her part;
Do thou but thine; and be not diffi-
dent
Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if
thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou
needest her nigh,
By attributing overmuch to things
Less excellent, as thou thyself per-
ceivest.

620

For, what admirest 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 managed; of that skill the
 more thou knowest,
The more she will acknowledge
 thee her head,
And to realities yield all her shows:
Made so adorn for thy delight the

more, 630
So awful, that with honour thou
mayest love
Thy mate, who sees when thou art
seen least wise.

But if the sense of touch, whereby
mankind
Is propagated, seem such dear de-
light
Beyond all other; think the same
vouchsafed
To cattle and each beast; which
would not be
To them made common and di-
vulged, if aught
Therein enjoyed were worthy to
subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him

move.

640

What higher in her society thou
findest
Attractive, human, rational, love
still;
In loving thou dost well, in passion
not,
Wherein true love consists not:
Love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges;
hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious; is the
scale
By which to heavenly love thou
mayest ascend,
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for
which cause,
Among the beasts no mate for thee

was found. 650

To whom thus, half abashed,
Adam replied.

Neither her outside formed so fair,
nor aught

In procreation common to all
kinds,

(Though higher of the genial bed
by far,

And with mysterious reverence I
deem,)

So much delights me, as those
graceful acts,

Those thousand decencies, that
daily flow

From all her words and actions
mixed with love 660

And sweet compliance, which de-

clare unfeigned
Union of mind, or in us both one
soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded
pair
More grateful than harmonious
sound to the ear.

Yet these subject not; I to thee dis-
close
What inward thence I feel, not
therefore foiled,
Who meet with various objects,
from the sense
Variously representing; yet, still
free,
Approve the best, and follow what
I approve. 670

To love, thou blamest me not; for

Love, thou sayest,
Leads up to Heaven, is both the
way and guide;
Bear with me then, if lawful what I
ask:
Love not the heavenly Spirits, and
how their love
Express they? by looks only? or do
they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate
touch?
To whom the Angel, with a smile
that glowed
Celestial rosy red, Love's proper
hue,
Answered. Let it suffice thee that
thou knowest 680
Us happy, and without love no
happiness.

Whatever pure thou in the body
enjoyest,
(And pure thou wert created) we
enjoy
In eminence; and obstacle find
none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclu-
sive bars;
Easier than air with air, if Spirits
embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with
pure
Desiring, nor restrained con-
veyance need,
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul
with soul. 690

But I can now no more; the parting
sun

Beyond the Earth's green Cape and
verdant Isles
Hesperian sets, my signal to de-
part.

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, 700
The weal or woe in thee is placed;
beware!
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the Blest: Stand fast; to

stand or fall
Free in thine own arbitrement it
lies.

Perfect within, no outward aid re-
quire;
And all temptation to transgress
repel.

So saying, he arose; whom Adam
thus

Followed with benediction. Since
to part, 710

Go, heavenly guest, ethereal Mes-
senger,

Sent from whose sovran goodness
I adore!

Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be
honoured 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.

BOOK IX

No more of talk where God or An-
gel guest
With Man, as with his friend, fa-
miliar us'd,
To sit indulgent, and with him par-
take
Rural repast; permitting him the

while
Venial discourse unblam'd. I now
must change
Those notes to tragick; foul dis-
trust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,
And disobedience: on the part of
Heaven
Now alienated, distance and dis-
taste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judge-
ment given, 10
That brought into this world a
world of woe,
Sin and her shadow Death, and
Misery
Death's harbinger: Sad task! yet ar-
gument
Not less but more heroick than the

wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pur-
sued
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or
rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd;
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so
long
Perplexed the Greek, and
Cytherea's son:
If answerable style I can obtain 20
Of my celestial patroness, who
deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me slumbering; or
inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse:
Since first this subject for heroick
song

Pleas'd me long choosing, and be-
ginning late;
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroick deem'd chief mastery to
dissect
With long and tedious havock fa-
bled knights 30
In battles feign'd; the better forti-
tude
Of patience and heroick martyr-
dom
Unsung; or to describe races and
games,
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd
shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and
steeds,
Bases and tinsel trappings, gor-

geous 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 heroick
name 40
To person, or to poem. Me, of these
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher ar-
gument
Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late,
or cold
Climate, or years, damp my in-
tended 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 50
Twilight upon the earth, short ar-
biter
'Twixt day and night, and now
from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veil'd the
horizon round:
When satan, who late fled before
the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now im-
prov'd
In meditated fraud and malice,
bent
On Man's destruction, maugre

what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless re-
turned
By night he fled, and at midnight
returned
From compassing the earth; cau-
tious of day, 60
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, de-
scried
His entrance, and forewarned the
Cherubim
That kept their watch; thence full
of anguish driven,
The space of seven continued
nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoc-
tial line
He circled; four times crossed the
car of night

From pole to pole, traversing each
colure;
On the eighth returned; and, on the
coast averse
From entrance or Cherubick watch,
by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There
was a place, 70
Now not, though sin, not time, first
wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Par-
adise,
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, involved in rising mist; then

sought
Where to lie hid; sea he had
searched, and land,
From Eden over Pontus and the
pool
Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctick; and in
length, 80
West from Orontes to the ocean
barred
At Darien; thence to the land
where flows
Ganges and Indus: Thus the orb he
roamed
With narrow search; and with in-
spection deep
Considered every creature, which
of all
Most opportune might serve his

wiles; and found
The Serpent subtlest beast of all the
field.

Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolved, his final sen-
tence chose 90
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
observed,
Doubt might beget of diabolick

power

Active within, beyond the sense of
brute.

Thus he resolved, but first from in-
ward grief 100

His bursting passion into plaints
thus poured.

More justly, seat worthier of Gods,
as built

With second thoughts, reforming
what was old!

O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not
preferred

For what God, after better, worse
would build?

Terrestrial Heaven, danced round
by other Heavens

That shine, yet bear their bright of-

ficious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as
 seems,
In thee concentrating all their pre-
 cious beams 110
Of sacred influence! As God in
 Heaven
Is center, yet extends to all; so thou,
Centring, receivest from all those
 orbs: in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known
 virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and no-
 bler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual
 life
Of growth, sense, reason, all
 summed up in Man.

would be my state.

But neither here seek I, no nor in
Heaven 130
To dwell, unless by mastering
Heaven's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miser-
able
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 linked in weal or
woe;
In woe then; that destruction wide
may range: 140
To me shall be the glory sole
among
The infernal Powers, in one day to
have marred
What he, Almighty styled, six
nights and days
Continued making; and who
knows how long
Before had been contriving?
though perhaps
Not longer than since I, in one
night, freed
From servitude inglorious well
nigh half
The angelick name, and thinner left

the throng
Of his adorers: He, to be avenged,
And to repair his numbers thus im-
paired, 150
Whether such virtue spent of old
now failed
More Angels to create, if they at
least
Are his created, or, to spite us
more,
Determined to advance into our
room
A creature formed of earth, and
him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With heavenly spoils, our spoils:
What he decreed,
He effected; Man he made, and for
him built

Magnificent this world, and earth
his seat,
Him lord pronounced; and, O in-
dignity! 160
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 170
With Gods to sit the highest, am
now constrained
Into a beast; and, mixed with bes-
tial slime,
This essence to incarnate and im-
brute,
That to the highth of Deity aspired!
But what will not ambition and re-
venge
Descend to? Who aspires, must
down as low
As high he soared; obnoxious, first
or last,
To basest things. Revenge, at first
though sweet,

Bitter ere long, back on itself re-
coils:

Let it; I reckon not, so it light well
aimed, 180

Since higher I fall short, on him
who next

Provokes my envy, this new
favourite

Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of
despite,

Whom, us the more to spite, his
Maker raised

From dust: Spite then with spite is
best repaid.

So saying, through each thicket
dank or dry,

Like a black mist low-creeping, he
held on

His midnight-search, where soon-
est he might find
The serpent; him fast-sleeping
soon he found 190
In labyrinth of many a round self-
rolled,
His head the midst, well stored
with subtile wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal
den,
Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy
herb,
Fearless unfeared he slept: in at his
mouth
The Devil entered; and his brutal
sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon
inspired
With act intelligential; but his sleep

Disturbed not, waiting close the
approach of morn.

200

Now, when as sacred light began to
dawn

In Eden on the humid flowers, that
breathed

Their morning incense, when all
things, that breathe,

From the Earth's great altar send
up silent praise

To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the
human pair,

And joined their vocal worship to
the quire

Of creatures wanting voice; that
done, partake

The season prime for sweetest

scents and airs:

Then commune, how that day they
best may ply 210

Their growing work: for much
their work out-grew

The hands' dispatch of two gar-
dening 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 enjoined; 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, 220

One night or two with wanton
growth derides

Tending to wild. Thou therefore
now advise,

Or bear what to my mind first
thoughts present:

Let us divide our labours; thou,
where choice

Leads thee, or where most needs,
whether to wind

The woodbine round this arbour,
or direct

The clasping ivy where to climb;
while I,

In yonder spring of roses inter-
mixed

With myrtle, find what to redress
till noon:

For, while so near each other thus
all day 230

Our task we choose, what wonder
if so near

Looks intervene and smiles, or ob-
ject new

Casual discourse draw on; which
intermits

Our day's work, brought to little,
though begun

Early, and the hour of supper
comes unearned?

To whom mild answer Adam thus
returned.

Sole Eve, associate sole, to me be-
yond

Compare above all living creatures
dear!

Well hast thou motioned, well thy
thoughts employed, 240

How we might best fulfil the work
which here

God hath assigned us; nor of me
shalt pass

Unpraised: for nothing lovelier can
be found

In woman, than to study houshold
good,

And good works in her husband to
promote.

Yet not so strictly hath our Lord im-
posed

Labour, as to debar us when we
need

Refreshment, whether food, or talk
 between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet in-
 tercourse 250
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 de-
 light,
He made us, and delight to reason
 joined.

These paths and bowers doubt not
 but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with
 ease, as wide

As we need walk, till younger
hands ere long 260
Assist us; But, if much converse
perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I
could yield:
For solitude sometimes is best soci-
ety,
And short retirement urges sweet
return.

But other doubt possesses me, lest
harm
Befall thee severed from me; for
thou knowest
What hath been warned us, what
malicious foe
Envyng our happiness, and of his
own

Despairing, seeks to work us woe
and shame 270
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 joined,
where each
To other speedy aid might lend at
need:
Whether his first design be to with-
draw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps
no bliss
Enjoyed by us excites his envy
more;

Or this, or worse, leave not the
faithful side 280
That gave thee being, still shades
thee, and protects.

The wife, where danger or dishon-
our lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her hus-
band stays,
Who guards her, or with her the
worst endures.

To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
As one who loves, and some un-
kindness meets,
With sweet austere composure
thus replied.

290
Offspring of Heaven and Earth,
and all Earth's Lord!

That such an enemy we have, who
 seeks
Our ruin, both by thee informed I
 learn,
And from the parting Angel over-
 heard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then returned at shut of
 evening flowers.

But, that thou shouldst my firm-
 ness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a
 foe
May tempt it, I expected not to
 hear. 300

His violence thou fearest not, being
 such
As we, not capable of death or

pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear; which
plain infers
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith
and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or se-
duced;
Thoughts, which how found they
harbour in thy breast,
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee
so dear? 310
To whom with healing words
Adam replied.
Daughter of God and Man, immor-
tal Eve!
For such thou art; from sin and
blame entire:

From thee alone, which on us both
at once
The enemy, though bold, will
hardly dare;
Or daring, first on me the assault
shall light.

Nor thou his malice and false guile
contemn; 330
Subtle he needs must be, who
could seduce
Angels; nor think superfluous
other's 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-
reached,
Would utmost vigour raise, and
raised unite.

340

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 domestick Adam in his
care
And matrimonial love; but Eve,
who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply with accent sweet
renewed.

To whom thus Adam fervently
replied.

O Woman, best are all things as the
will

Of God ordained them: His creat-
ing 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: 380

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
surprised,
She dictate false; and mis-inform
the will
To do what God expressly hath for-
bid.

Not then mistrust, but tender love,
enjoins, 390
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
suborned,
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping strictest watch, as she
was warned.

Seek not temptation then, which to
avoid
Were better, and most likely if from
me 400
Thou sever not: Trial will come un-
sought.

Wouldst thou approve thy con-
stancy, approve
First thy obedience; the other who
can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who at-
test?

soning words
Touched only; that our trial, when
 least sought,
May find us both perhaps far less
 prepared,
The willinger I go, nor much ex-
 pect 420
A foe so proud will first the weaker
 seek;
So bent, the more shall shame him
 his repulse.

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

In gait surpassed, and Goddess-
like deport,
Though not as she with bow and
quiver armed,
But with such gardening tools as
Art yet rude, 430
Guiltless of fire, had formed, or
Angels brought.

To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,
Likest she seemed, Pomona when
she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her
prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye
pursued
Delighted, but desiring more her
stay.

440

Oft he to her his charge of quick re-
turn
Repeated; she to him as oft en-
gaged
To be returned by noon amid the
bower,
And all things in best order to in-
vite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's re-
pose.

O much deceived, much failing,
hapless Eve,
Of thy presumed return! event per-
verse!
Thou never from that hour in Par-
adise
Foundst either sweet repast, or

460

In bower and field he sought,
where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more
pleasant lay,
Their tendance, or plantation for
delight;
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wished
his hap might find
Eve separate; he wished, but not
with hope
Of what so seldom chanced; when
to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he
spies,
Veiled in a cloud of fragrance,
where she stood,
Half spied, so thick the roses blush-

ing round 470
About her glowed, oft stooping to
support
Each flower of slender stalk, whose
head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or
specked with gold,
Hung drooping unsustained; them
she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless
the while
Herself, though fairest un-
ported flower,
From her best prop so far, and
storm so nigh.

Nearer he drew, and many a walk
traversed
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or

palm; 480
Then voluble and bold, now hid,
now seen,
Among thick-woven arborets, and
flowers
Imbordered on each bank, the
hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than those gar-
dens feigned
Or of revived Adonis, or renowned
Alcinous, host of old Laertes' son;
Or that, not mystick, where the
sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyp-
tian spouse.

Much he the place admired, the
person more. 490

As one who long in populous city

pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer's morn,
to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoined, from each thing met
conceives delight;
The smell of grain, or teded grass,
or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance, with nymph-like step,
fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seemed, for her now
pleases more; 500
She most, and in her look sums all
delight:

remained
Stupidly good; of enmity dis-
armed,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of re-
venge:
But the hot Hell that always in him
burns,
Though in mid Heaven, soon
ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the
more he sees
Of pleasure, not for him ordained:
then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his
thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus ex-
cites.

520

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 de-
stroy,
Save what is in destroying; other
joy
To me is lost. Then, let me not let
pass
Occasion which now smiles; be-
hold alone
The woman, opportune to all at-
tempts,
Her husband, for I view far round,
not nigh, 530

Whose higher intellectual more I
shun,
And strength, of courage haughty,
and of limb
Heroick built, though of terrestrial
mould;
Foe not formidable! exempt from
wound,
I not; so much hath Hell debased,
and pain
Enfeebled me, to what I was in
Heaven.

She fair, divinely fair, fit love for
Gods!
Not terrible, though terrour be in
love
And beauty, not approached by
stronger hate, 540

With burnished neck of verdant
gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on
the grass
Floated redundant: pleasing was
his shape
And lovely; never since of serpent-
kind
Lovelier, not those that in Illyria
changed,
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus; nor to which trans-
formed
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline,
was seen;
He with Olympias; this with her
who bore
Scipio, the highth of Rome. With
tract oblique 560

At first, as one who sought access,
but feared
To interrupt, side-long he works
his way.

As when a ship, by skilful steers-
men wrought
Nigh river's mouth or foreland,
where the wind
Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts
her sail:
So varied he, and of his tortuous
train
Curled many a wanton wreath in
sight of Eve,
To lure her eye; she, busied, heard
the sound
Of rusling leaves, but minded not,
as used 570

To such disport before her through
the field,
From every beast; more duteous at
her call,
Than at Circean call the herd dis-
guised.

He, bolder now, uncalled before
her stood,
But as in gaze admiring: oft he
bowed
His turret crest, and sleek enam-
elled neck,
Fawning; and licked the ground
whereon she trod.

His gentle dumb expression turned
at length 580
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he,
glad

Of her attention gained, with
serpent-tongue
Organick, or impulse of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began.

Wonder not, sovran Mistress, if
perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder!
much less arm
Thy looks, the Heaven of mildness,
with disdain,
Displeas'd that I approach thee
thus, and gaze
Insatiate; I thus single; nor have
feared 590
Thy awful brow, more awful thus
retired.

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 admired; but
here
In this enclosure wild, these beasts
among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man
except, 600
Who sees thee? and what is one?
who should be seen
A Goddess among Gods, adored
and served

By Angels numberless, thy daily
train.

So glozed the Tempter, and his
proem tuned:

Into the heart of Eve his words
made way,

Though at the voice much marvel-
ling; at length,

Not unamazed, she thus in answer
spake.

What may this mean? language of
man pronounced 610

By tongue of brute, and human
sense expressed?

The first, at least, of these I thought
denied

To beasts; whom God, on their
creation-day,

Created mute to all articulate
 sound:
The latter I demur; for in their
 looks
Much reason, and in their actions,
 oft appears.

Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all
 the field
I knew, but not with human voice
 endued;
Redouble then this miracle, and
 say, 620
How camest thou speakable of
 mute, and how
To me so friendly grown above the
 rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in
 sight?

Say, for such wonder claims attention due.

To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied.

Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!

Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou commandest; and right
thou shouldst be obeyed: 630

I was at first as other beasts that
graze

The trodden herb, of abject
thoughts and low,

As was my food; nor aught but
food discerned

Or sex, and apprehended nothing
high:

Till, on a day roving the field, I

chanced

A goodly tree far distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours
mixed,

Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to
gaze;

When from the boughs a savoury
odour blown,

Grateful to appetite, more pleased
my sense 640

Than smell of sweetest fennel, or
the teats

Of ewe or goat dropping with milk
at even,

Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend
their play.

To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I re-

solved
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at
once,
Powerful persuaders, quickened at
the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urged me so
keen.

650

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.

pacious mind
Considered all things visible in
Heaven,
Or Earth, or Middle; all things fair
and good: 670
But all that fair and good in thy di-
vine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's
heavenly ray,
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second! which com-
pelled
Me thus, though importune per-
haps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee of
right declared
Sovran of creatures, universal
Dame!
So talked the spirited sly Snake;

and Eve,
Yet more amazed, unwary thus
replied.

680

Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in
doubt

The virtue of that fruit, in thee first
proved:

But say, where grows the tree?
from hence how far?

For many are the trees of God that
grow

In Paradise, and various, yet un-
known

To us; in such abundance lies our
choice,

As leaves a greater store of fruit un-
touched,

Still hanging incorruptible, till men

Grow up to their provision, and
more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her
birth. 690

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 rolled
In tangles, and made intricate seem

straight, 700
To mischief swift. Hope elevates,
and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wan-
dering 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 delu-
sive light,
Misleads the amazed night-
wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through
pond or pool;

There swallowed up and lost, from
succour far. 710

So glistered the dire Snake, and
into fraud

Led Eve, our credulous mother, to
the tree

Of prohibition, root of all our woe;
Which when she saw, thus to her
guide she spake.

Serpent, we might have spared our
coming hither,

Fruitless to me, though fruit be
here to excess,

The credit of whose virtue rest with
thee;

Wonderous indeed, if cause of such
effects. 720

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, 730
Yet Lords declared of all in earth or
air?
To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of
the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may

eat;
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, 740
New part puts on; and, as to pas-
sion moved,
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely
and in act
Raised, as of some great matter to

begin.

As when of old some orator
renowned,
In Athens or free Rome, where elo-
quence
Flourished, since mute! to some
great cause addressed,
Stood in himself collected; while
each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere
the tongue;
Sometimes in highth began, as no
delay 750
Of preface brooking, through his
zeal of right:
So standing, moving, or to highth
up grown,
The Tempter, all impassioned, thus

began.

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

760

Queen of this universe! do not believe
Those rigid threats of death: ye
shall not die:
How should you? by the fruit? it
gives you life

To knowledge; by the threatener?
 look on me,
Me, who have touched and tasted;
 yet both live,
And life more perfect have attained
 than Fate
Meant me, by venturing higher
 than my lot.

Shall that be shut to Man, which to
 the Beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
 770
For such a petty trespass? and not
 praise
Rather your dauntless virtue,
 whom the pain
Of death denounced, whatever
 thing death be,

Deterred not from achieving what
 might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good
 and evil;
Of good, how just? of evil, if what
 is evil
Be real, why not known, since eas-
 ier shunned?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and
 be just;
Not just, not God; not feared then,
 nor obeyed:
Your fear itself of death removes
 the fear. 780

Why then was this forbid? Why,
 but to awe;
Why, but to keep ye low and igno-
 rant,

His worshippers? He knows that
in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem
so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be
then
Opened and cleared, and ye shall
be as Gods,
Knowing both good and evil, as
they know.

That ye shall be as Gods, since I as
Man, 790
Internal Man, is but proportion
meet;
I, of brute, human; ye, of human,
Gods.

So ye shall die perhaps, by putting
off

Human, to put on Gods; death to
be wished,
Though threatened, which no
worse than this can bring.

And what are Gods, that Man may
not become
As they, participating God-like
food?

The Gods are first, and that advan-
tage use 800
On our belief, that all from them
proceeds:

I question it; for this fair earth I see,
Warmed by the sun, producing ev-
ery kind;

Them, nothing: if they all things,
who enclosed
Knowledge of good and evil in this

tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith
attains
Wisdom without their leave? and
wherein lies
The offence, that Man should thus
attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt
him, or this tree
Impart against his will, if all be his?
810
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heavenly 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:
Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which
to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears
the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words,
impregn'd 820
With reason, to her seeming, and
with truth:
Mean while the hour of noon drew
on, and waked
An eager appetite, raised by the
smell
So savoury of that fruit, which with
desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or

taste,
Solicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing a while, thus to herself she
mused.

Great are thy virtues, doubtless,
best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and wor-
thy to be admired; 830
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 for-
bidding
Commends thee more, while it in-
fers the good
By thee communicated, and our
want:
For good unknown sure is not had;
or, had 840
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
 eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and rea-
 sons, and discerns, 850
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us de-
 nied
This intellectual food, for beasts re-
 served?
For beasts it seems: yet that one
 beast which first
Hath tasted envies not, but brings
 with joy

The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.

What fear I then? rather, what
know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and
evil, 860
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
plucked, she eat!
Earth felt the wound; and Nature
from her seat,
Sighing through all her works,
gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the
thicket slunk 870
The guilty Serpent; and well might;
for Eve,
Intent now wholly on her taste,
nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as
seemed,
In fruit she never tasted, whether
true
Or fancied so, through expectation
high
Of knowledge; not was Godhead

from her thought.

Greedily she ingorged without re-
straint,

And knew not eating death: Satiated
at length,

And hightened as with wine, jo-
cund and boon, 880

Thus to herself she pleasingly be-
gan.

O sovran, virtuous, precious of all
trees

In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscured, in-
famed.

And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no
end

Created; but henceforth my early
care,

And givest access, though secret
she retire.

900

And I perhaps am secret: Heaven
is high,
High, and remote to see from
thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care
perhaps
May have diverted from continual
watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all
his spies
About him. But to Adam in what
sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make
known
As yet my change, and give him to
partake

Full happiness with me, or rather
not,
But keeps the odds of knowledge
in my power 910
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
Superiour; for, inferiour, 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 ex-
tinct;

A death to think! Confirmed then I
resolve, 920

Adam shall share with me in bliss
or woe:

So dear I love him, that with him
all deaths

I could endure, without him live no
life.

So saying, from the tree her step
she turned;

But first low reverence done, as to
the Power

That dwelt within, whose presence
had infused

Into the plant sciential sap, derived
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam

the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had
wove 930
Of choicest flowers a garland, to
adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours
crown;
As reapers oft are wont their
harvest-queen.

Great joy he promised to his
thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long de-
layed:
Yet oft his heart, divine of some-
thing ill,
Misgave him; he the faltering mea-
sure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the

way she took
That morn when first they parted:
by the tree 940
Of knowledge he must pass; there
he her met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in
her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that
downy smiled,
New gathered, and ambrosial
smell diffused.

To him she hasted; in her face ex-
cuse
Came prologue, and apology too
prompt;
Which, with bland words at will,
she thus addressed.

Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at

my stay? 950
Thee I have missed, and thought it
long, deprived
Thy presence; agony of love till
now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for
never more
Mean I to try, what rash untried I
sought,
The pain of absence from thy sight.
But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonder-
ful to hear:
This tree is not, as we are told, a
tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil un-
known
Opening the way, but of divine ef-
fect

mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler
heart, 970
And growing up to Godhead;
which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can
despise.

For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is
bliss;
Tedious, unshared with thee, and
odious soon.

Thou therefore also taste, that
equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal
love;
Lest, thou not tasting, different de-
gree
Disjoin us, and I then too late re-

roses shed:

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

O fairest of Creation, last and best
Of all God's works, Creature in
whom excelled
Whatever can to sight or thought
be formed,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or
sweet!
How art thou lost! how on a sud-
den lost,
Defaced, deflowered, and now to
death devote! 1000
Rather, how hast thou yielded to
transgress

The strict forbiddance, how to vio-
late
The sacred fruit forbidden! Some
cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet
unknown,
And me with thee hath ruined; for
with thee
Certain my resolution is to die:
How can I live without thee! how
forego
Thy sweet converse, and love so
dearly joined,
To live again in these wild woods
forlorn!
Should God create another Eve,
and I 1010
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart: no,

no! I feel
The link of Nature draw me: flesh
of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from
thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or
woe.

So having said, as one from sad
dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts
disturbed
Submitting to what seemed
remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to
Eve he turned. 1020

Bold deed thou hast presumed, ad-
venturous Eve,
And peril great provoked, who

thus hast dared,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.

But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps
the fact 1030
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profaned first by the serpent, by him first
Made common, and unhallowed,
ere our taste;

Nor yet on him found deadly; yet
 he lives;
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to
 live, as Man,
Higher degree of life; inducement
 strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent; which cannot
 be
But to be Gods, or Angels, demi-
 Gods.

1040

Nor can I think that God, Creator
 wise,
Though threatening, 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,
Dependant made; so God shall un-
create,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour
lose;
Not well conceived of God, who,
though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would
be loth
Us to abolish, lest the Adversary
1050
Triumph, and say; "Fickle their
state whom God
Most favours; who can please him
long? Me first
He ruined, now Mankind; whom
will he next?"

Matter of scorn, not to be given the
Foe.

However I with thee have fixed my
lot,

Certain to undergo like doom: If
death

Consort with thee, death is to me
as life;

So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of Nature draw me to my
own; 1060

My own in thee, for what thou art
is mine;

Our state cannot be severed; we are
one,

One flesh; to lose thee were to lose
myself.

So Adam; and thus Eve to him

replied.

O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate; but, short
Of thy perfection, how shall I at-
tain, 1070
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 re-
solved,
Rather than death, or aught than
death more dread,
Shall separate us, linked 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 pre-
 sented 1080
This happy trial of thy love, which
 else
So eminently never had been
 known?
Were it I thought death menaced
 would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain
 alone
The worst, and not persuade thee,
 rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a
 fact

Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly as-
sured

Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful, love unequalled: but I
feel

Far otherwise the event; not death,
but life 1090

Augmented, opened eyes, new
hopes, new joys,

Taste so divine, that what of sweet
before

Hath touched my sense, flat seems
to this, and harsh.

On my experience, Adam, freely
taste,

And fear of death deliver to the
winds.

So saying, she embraced him, and

for joy
Tenderly wept; much won, that he
his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice to in-
cur 1100
Divine displeasure for her sake, or
death.

In recompence (for such compli-
ance bad
Such recompence best merits) from
the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing
fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not
to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not
deceived,
But fondly overcome with female

charm.

Earth trembled from her entrails,
as again 1110
In pangs; and Nature gave a second
groan;
Sky loured; and, muttering thunder,
some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal
sin
Original: while Adam took no
thought,
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass feared, the
more to sooth
Him with her loved society; that
now,
As with new wine intoxicated
both,

They swim in mirth, and fancy that
they feel

Divinity within them breeding
wings, 1120

Wherewith to scorn the earth: But
that false fruit

Far other operation first displayed,
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 dal-
liance move.

Eve, now I see thou art exact of
taste,

And elegant, of sapience no small
part;

As meet is, after such delicious
fare;
For never did thy beauty, since the
day
I saw thee first and wedded thee,
adorned
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 under-
stood
Of Eve, whose eye darted conta-
gious fire.

1150

Her hand he seised; and to a shady
bank,
Thick over-head with verdant roof
imbowered,
He led her nothing loth; flowers
were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth; Earth's freshest soft-
est lap.

There they their fill of love and
love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt
the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy
sleep
Oppressed them, wearied with
their amorous play, 1160
Soon as the force of that fallacious

fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour
 bland
About their spirits had played, and
 inmost powers
Made err, was now exhaled; and
 grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with con-
 scious dreams
Incumbered, now had left them; up
 they rose
As from unrest; and, each the other
 viewing,
Soon found their eyes how opened,
 and their minds
How darkened; innocence, that as
 a veil
Had shadowed them from know-
 ing ill, was gone; 1170

Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour, from about them,
naked left
To guilty Shame; he covered, but
his robe
Uncovered more. So rose the Dan-
ite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the
harlot-lap
Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked
Shorn of his strength. They desti-
tute and bare
Of all their virtue: Silent, and in
face
Confounded, long they sat, as
strucken mute:
Till Adam, though not less than
Eve abashed, 1180

At length gave utterance to these
words constrained.

O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give
ear
To that false worm, of whomsoever
taught
To counterfeit Man's voice; true in
our fall,
False in our promised rising; since
our eyes
Opened we find indeed, and find
we know
Both good and evil; good lost, and
evil got;
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to
know;
Which leaves us naked thus, of
honour void, 1190

Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
Our wonted ornaments now soiled
 and stained,
And in our faces evident the signs
Of foul concupiscence; whence evil
 store;
Even shame, the last of evils; of the
 first
Be sure then.—How shall I behold
 the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, erst
 with joy
And rapture so oft beheld? Those
 heavenly shapes
Will dazzle now this earthly with
 their blaze
Insufferably bright. O! might I here
 1200
In solitude live savage; in some

glade
Obscured, where highest woods,
impenetrable
To star or sun-light, spread their
umbrage broad
And brown as evening: Cover me,
ye Pines!
Ye Cedars, with innumerable
boughs
Hide me, where I may never see
them more!—
But let us now, as in bad plight, de-
vise
What best may for the present
serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that
seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseem-
liest seen; 1210

Some tree, whose broad smooth
leaves together sewed,
And girded on our loins, may
cover round
Those middle parts; that this new
comer, Shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as
unclean.

So counselled he, and both to-
gether went
Into the thickest wood; there soon
they chose
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit
renowned,
But such as at this day, to Indians
known,
In Malabar or Decan spreads her
arms 1220

Branching so broad and long, that
in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and
daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillared
shade
High over-arched, and echoing
walks between:
There oft the Indian herdsman,
shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pas-
turing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest
shade: Those leaves
They gathered, broad as Amazo-
nian targe;
And, with what skill they had, to-
gether sewed,
To gird their waist; vain covering,

if to hide 1230
Their guilt and dreaded shame! O,
how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of
late
Columbus found the American, so
girt
With feathered cincture; naked
else, and wild
Among the trees on isles and
woody shores.

Thus fenced, and, as they thought,
their shame in part
Covered, but not at rest or ease of
mind,
They sat them down to weep; nor
only tears
Rained at their eyes, but high

winds worse within 1240
Began to rise, high passions, anger,
 hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and
 shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm
 region once
And full of peace, now tost and tur-
 bulent:
For Understanding ruled not, and
 the Will
Heard not her lore; both in subjec-
 tion now
To sensual Appetite, who from be-
 neath
Usurping over sovran Reason
 claimed
Superiour sway: From thus dis-
 tempered breast,

Adam, estranged in look and al-
tered style, 1250
Speech intermitted thus to Eve re-
newed.

Would thou hadst hearkened to my
words, and staid
With me, as I besought thee, when
that strange
Desire of wandering, this unhappy
morn,
I know not whence possessed thee;
we had then
Remained still happy; not, as now,
despoiled
Of all our good; shamed, naked,
miserable!
Let none henceforth seek needless
cause to approve

The faith they owe; when earnestly
they seek 1260
Such proof, conclude, they then be-
gin to fail.

To whom, soon moved with touch
of blame, thus Eve.

What words have passed thy lips,
Adam severe!

Imputest thou that to my default,
or will

Of wandering, as thou callest it,
which who knows

But might as ill have happened
thou being by,

Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou
been there,

Or here the attempt, thou couldst
not have discerned 1270

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 not thou,
the head,
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger, as thou
saidst? 1280
Too facile then, thou didst not
much gainsay;
Nay, didst permit, approve, and

fair dismiss.

Hadst thou been firm and fixed in
thy dissent,
Neither had I transgressed, nor
thou with me.

To whom, then first incensed,
Adam replied.

Is this the love, is this the recom-
pence
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! ex-
pressed 1290
Immutable, when thou wert lost,
not I;
Who might have lived, and joyed
immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death
with thee?

And am I now upbraided as the

cause
Of thy transgressing? Not enough
severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: What
could I more
I warned thee, I admonished thee,
foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this, had
been force;
And force upon free will hath here
no place. 1300

But confidence then bore thee on;
secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial; and per-
haps
I also erred, in overmuch admiring

What seemed in thee so perfect,
that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I
rue
The error now, which is become
my crime,
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall
befall
Him, who, to worth in women
overtrusting, 1310
Lest her will rule: restraint she will
not brook;
And, left to herself, if evil thence
ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will
accuse.

Thus they in mutual accusation
spent

The fruitless hours, but neither
self-condemning;
And of their vain contest appeared
no end.

BOOK X

Mean while the heinous and de-
spiteful act
Of Satan, done in Paradise; and
how
He, in the serpent, had perverted
Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal

fruit,
Was known in Heaven; for what
can 'scape the eye
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his
heart
Omniscient? who, in all things
wise and just,
Hindered not Satan to attempt the
mind
Of Man, with strength entire and
free will armed,
Complete to have discovered and
repulsed 10
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming
friend.

For still they knew, and ought to
have still remembered,
The high injunction, not to taste

that fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not
obeying,
(Incurred what could they less?)
the penalty;
And, manifold in sin, deserved to
fall.

Up into Heaven from Paradise in
haste
The angelick guards ascended,
mute, and sad, 20
For Man; for of his state by this
they knew,
Much wondering how the subtle
Fiend had stolen
Entrance unseen. Soon as the un-
welcome news
From Earth arrived at Heaven-

gate, displeased
All were who heard; dim sadness
did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet,
mixed
With pity, violated not their bliss.

About the new-arrived, in multi-
tudes
The ethereal people ran, to hear
and know 30
How all befel: They towards the
throne supreme,
Accountable, made haste, to make
appear,
With righteous plea, their utmost
vigilance
And easily approved; when the
Most High

Eternal Father, from his secret
cloud,
Amidst in thunder uttered thus his
voice.

Assembled Angels, and ye Powers
returned
From unsuccessful charge; be not
dismayed,
Nor troubled at these tidings from
the earth, 40
Which your sincerest care could
not prevent;
Foretold so lately what would
come to pass,
When first this tempter crossed the
gulf from Hell.

I told ye then he should prevail,
and speed

On his bad errand; Man should be
seduced,
And flattered out of all, believing
lies
Against his Maker; no decree of
mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of
impulse 50
His free will, to her own inclining
left
In even scale. But fallen he is; and
now
What rests, but that the mortal sen-
tence pass
On his transgression,—death de-
nounced that day?
Which he presumes already vain
and void,

Because not yet inflicted, as he
feared,
By some immediate stroke; but
soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance, ere
day end.

Justice shall not return as bounty
scorned. 60

But whom send I to judge them?
whom but thee,
Vicegerent Son? To thee I have
transferred
All judgement, whether in Heaven,
or Earth, or Hell.

Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with justice, send-
ing thee

Man's friend, his Mediator, his de-
signed
Both ransom and Redeemer volun-
tary,
And destined Man himself to judge
Man fallen. 70

So spake the Father; and, unfold-
ing bright
Toward the right hand his glory, on
the Son
Blazed forth unclouded Deity: He
full
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Expressed, and thus divinely an-
swered mild.

Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
Mine, both in Heaven and Earth, to
do thy will

Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son
beloved, 80
Mayest ever rest well pleased. I go
to judge
On earth these thy transgressours;
but thou knowest,
Whoever judged, the worst on me
must light,
When time shall be; for so I under-
took
Before thee; and, not repenting,
this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their
doom
On me derived; yet I shall temper
so
Justice with mercy, as may illus-
trate most
Them fully satisfied, and thee ap-

pease.

90

Attendance none shall need, nor
train, where none
Are to behold the judgement, but
the judged,
Those two; the third best absent is
condemned,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all
law:
Conviction to the serpent none be-
longs.

Thus saying, from his radiant seat
he rose
Of high collateral glory: Him
Thrones, and Powers,
Princedoms, and Dominations
ministrant,

Accompanied to Heaven-gate;
from whence 100
Eden, and all the coast, in prospect
lay.

Down he descended straight; the
speed of Gods
Time counts not, though with
swiftest minutes winged.

Now was the sun in western ca-
dence low
From noon, and gentle airs, due at
their hour,
To fan the earth now waked, and
usher in
The evening cool; when he, from
wrath more cool,
Came the mild Judge, and Interces-
sour both, 110

To sentence Man: The voice of God
they heard
Now walking in the garden, by soft
winds
Brought to their ears, while day de-
clined; they heard,
And from his presence hid them-
selves among
The thickest trees, both man and
wife; till God,
Approaching, thus to Adam called
aloud.

Where art thou, Adam, wont with
joy to meet
My coming seen far off? I miss thee
here,
Not pleased, thus entertained with
solitude, 120

Where obvious duty ere while ap-
peared 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; discountenanced both,
and discomposed;
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.

130

Whence Adam, faltering long, thus
answered brief.

I heard thee in the garden, and of
thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself.
To whom
The gracious Judge without revile
replied.

My voice thou oft hast heard, and
hast not feared,
But still rejoiced; how is it now be-
come
So dreadful to thee? That thou art
naked, who
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of
the tree, 140
Whereof I gave thee charge thou
shouldst not eat?

To whom thus Adam sore beset
replied.

O Heaven! in evil strait this day I
stand

Before my Judge; either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my
life;

Whose failing, while her faith to
me remains,

I should conceal, and not expose to
blame

By my complaint: but strict neces-
sity

150

Subdues me, and calamitous con-
straint;

Lest on my head both sin and pun-
ishment,

However insupportable, be all
Devolved; though should I hold
 my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I
 conceal.—
This Woman, whom thou madest
 to be my help,
And gavest me as thy perfect gift,
 so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect
 no ill,
And what she did, whatever in it-
 self, 160
Her doing seemed to justify the
 deed;
She gave me of the tree, and I did
 eat.

To whom the Sovran Presence thus
replied.

Was she thy God, that her thou
didst obey
Before his voice? or was she made
thy guide,
Superiour, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood,
and the place
Wherein God set thee above her
made of thee, 170
And for thee, whose perfection far
excelled
Hers in all real dignity? Adorned
She was indeed, and lovely, to at-
tract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and
her gifts

Were such, as under government
well seemed;
Unseemly to bear rule; which was
thy part
And person, hadst thou known
thyself aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in
few.

180

Say, Woman, what is this which
thou hast done?
To whom sad Eve, with shame
nigh overwhelmed,
Confessing soon, yet not before her
Judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abashed
replied.

The Serpent me beguiled, and I did

eat.

Which when the Lord God heard,
without delay
To judgement he proceeded on the
accused
Serpent, though brute; unable to
transfer 190
The guilt on him, who made him
instrument
Of mischief, and polluted from the
end
Of his creation; justly then ac-
cursed,
As vitiated in nature: More to
know
Concerned not Man, (since he no
further knew)
Nor altered his offence; yet God at

last
To Satan first in sin his doom ap-
plied,
Though in mysterious terms,
judged as then best:
And on the Serpent thus his curse
let fall.

200

Because thou hast done this, thou
art accursed
Above all cattle, each beast of the
field;
Upon thy belly groveling thou
shalt go,
And dust shalt eat all the days of
thy life.

Between thee and the woman I will
put

Enmity, and between thine and her
seed;
Her seed shall bruise thy head,
thou bruise his heel.

So spake this oracle, then verified
210

When Jesus, Son of Mary, second
Eve,
Saw Satan fall, like lightning,
down from Heaven,
Prince of the air; then, rising from
his grave
Spoiled Principalities and Powers,
triumphed
In open show; and, with ascension
bright,
Captivity led captive through the
air,

The realm itself of Satan, long
usurped;
Whom he shall tread at last under
our feet;
Even he, who now foretold his fatal
bruise;
And to the Woman thus his sen-
tence turned. 220

Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception; children thou
shalt bring
In sorrow forth; and to thy hus-
band's will
Thine shall submit; he over thee
shall rule.

On Adam last thus judgement he
pronounced.

Because thou hast hearkened to the

voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree, concerning
which 230
I charged thee, saying, Thou shalt
not eat thereof:
Cursed is the ground for thy sake;
thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof, all the days of thy
life;
Thorns also and thistles it shall
bring thee forth
Unbid; and thou shalt eat the herb
of the field;
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou
eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground;
for thou
Out of the ground wast taken,
know thy birth,

For dust thou art, and shalt to dust
return.

240

So judged he Man, both Judge and
Saviour sent;

And the instant stroke of death, de-
nounced that day,

Removed far off; then, pitying how
they stood

Before him naked to the air, that
now

Must suffer change, disdained not
to begin

Thenceforth the form of servant to
assume;

As when he washed his servants
feet; so now,

As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of

beasts, or slain,
Or as the snake with youthful coat
repaid; 250
And thought not much to clothe
his enemies;
Nor he their outward only with the
skins
Of beasts, but inward nakedness,
much more.

Opprobrious, with his robe of righ-
teousness,
Arraying, covered from his Fa-
ther's sight.

To him with swift ascent he up re-
turned,
Into his blissful bosom reassumed
In glory, as of old; to him appeased
260

All, though all-knowing, what had
 passed with Man
Recounted, mixing intercession
 sweet.

Mean while, ere thus was sinned
 and judged on Earth,
Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and
 Death,
In counterview within the gates,
 that now
Stood open wide, belching outra-
 geous flame
Far into Chaos, since the Fiend
 passed through,
Sin opening; who thus now to
 Death began.

270

O Son, why sit we here each other

viewing
Idly, while Satan, our great author,
thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat
provides
For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be
But that success attends him; if
mishap,
Ere this he had returned, with fury
driven
By his avengers; since no place like
this
Can fit his punishment, or their re-
venge.

Methinks I feel new strength
within me rise, 280
Wings growing, and dominion

given me large
Beyond this deep; whatever draws
me on,
Or sympathy, or some connatural
force,
Powerful at greatest distance to
unite,
With secret amity, things of like
kind,
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my
shade
Inseparable, must with me along;
For Death from Sin no power can
separate.

But, lest the difficulty of passing
back 290
Stay his return perhaps over this
gulf

Impassable, impervious; let us try
Adventurous work, yet to thy
power and mine
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from Hell to that
new world,
Where Satan now prevails; a mon-
ument
Of merit high to all the infernal
host,
Easing their passage hence, for in-
tercourse,
Or transmigration, as their lot shall
lead.

300

Nor can I miss the way, so strongly
drawn
By this new-felt attraction and in-
stinct.

Whom thus the meager Shadow
answered soon.

Go, whither Fate, and inclination
strong,

Leads thee; I shall not lag behind,
nor err

The way, thou leading; such a scent
I draw

Of carnage, prey innumerable, and
taste

The savour of death from all things
there that live: 310

Nor shall I to the work thou enter-
prisest

Be wanting, but afford thee equal
aid.

So saying, with delight he snuffed
the smell

Of mortal change on earth. As
when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a
league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field,
Where armies lie encamped, come
flying, lured
With scent of living carcasses de-
signed
For death, the following day, in
bloody fight: 320
So scented the grim Feature, and
upturned
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 power
 (their power was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what
 they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together
 crouded drove, 330
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 the
 imagined way
Beyond Petsora eastward, to the
 rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated

soil
Death with his mace petrifick, cold
and dry,
As with a trident, smote; and fixed
as firm
As Delos, floating once; the rest his
look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not
to move; 340
And with Asphaltick slime, broad
as the gate,
Deep to the roots of Hell the gath-
ered beach
They fastened, and the mole im-
mense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high-
arched, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the
wall

Immoveable of this now fenceless
world,
Forfeit to Death; from hence a pas-
sage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to
Hell.

So, if great things to small may be
compared, 350
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to
yoke,
From Susa, his Memnonian palace
high,
Came to the sea: and, over Helle-
spont
Bridging his way, Europe with
Asia joined,
And scourged with many a stroke
the indignant waves.

Now had they brought the work by
wonderous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,
Over the vexed abyss, following
the track
Of Satan to the self-same place
where he 360
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 interposed; three
several ways
In sight, to each of these three
places led.

370

And now their way to Earth they
had descried,
To Paradise first tending; when, be-
hold!
Satan, in likeness of an Angel
bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scor-
pion steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries
rose:
Disguised he came; but those his
children dear

Their parent soon discerned,
though in disguise.

He, after Eve seduced, unminded
slunk
Into the wood fast by; and, chang-
ing shape, 380
To observe the sequel, saw his
guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, sec-
onded
Upon her husband; saw their
shame that sought
Vain covertures; but when he saw
descend
The Son of God to judge them, ter-
rified
He fled; not hoping to escape, but
shun

The present; fearing, guilty, what
his wrath
Might suddenly inflict; that past,
returned
By night, and listening where the
hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and var-
ious plaint, 390
Thence gathered his own doom;
which understood
Not instant, but of future time,
with joy
And tidings fraught, to Hell he
now returned;
And at the brink of Chaos, near the
foot
Of this new wonderous pontifice,
unhoped
Met, who to meet him came, his

offspring dear.

Great joy was at their meeting, and
at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy
increased.

400

Long he admiring stood, till Sin,
his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the si-
lence broke.

O Parent, these are thy magnifick
deeds,
Thy trophies! which thou viewest
as not thine own;
Thou art their author, and prime
architect:
For I no sooner in my heart di-
vined,

My heart, which by a secret har-
mony
Still moves with thine, joined in
connexion sweet,
That thou on earth hadst pros-
pered, which thy looks 410
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 ob-
scure
Detain from following thy illustri-

ous track.

Thou hast achieved our liberty,
confined
Within Hell-gates till now; thou us
impowered 420
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 gained
With odds what war hath lost, and
fully avenged
Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt
monarch reign,
There didst not; there let him still
victor sway,

As battle hath adjudged; from this
new world
Retiring, by his own doom alien-
ated; 430
And henceforth monarchy with
thee divide
Of all things, parted by the
empyrean bounds,
His quadrature, from thy orbicular
world;
Or try thee now more dangerous to
his throne.

Whom thus the Prince of darkness
answered glad.

Fair Daughter, and thou Son and
Grandchild both;
High proof ye now have given to
be the race

Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
440
Antagonist of Heaven's Almighty
King,)
Amplly have merited of me, of all
The infernal empire, that so near
Heaven's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have
met,
Mine, with this glorious work; and
made one realm,
Hell and this world, one realm, one
continent
Of easy thorough-fare. Therefore,
while I
Descend through darkness, on
your road with ease,
To my associate Powers, them to
acquaint

tan went down 470
The causey to Hell-gate: On either
side
Disparted Chaos overbuilt ex-
claimed,
And with rebounding surge the
bars assailed,
That scorned his indignation:
Through the gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan
passed,
And all about found desolate; for
those,
Appointed to sit there, had left
their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the rest
were all
Far to the inland retired, about the
walls

horns 490
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all
waste beyond
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
To Tauris or Casbeen: So these, the
late
Heaven-banished host, left desart
utmost Hell
Many a dark league, reduced in
careful watch
Round their metropolis; and now
expecting
Each hour their great adventurer,
from the search
Of foreign worlds: He through the
midst unmarked,
In show plebeian Angel militant
Of lowest order, passed; and from
the door 500

Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
Ascended his high throne; which,
 under state
Of richest texture spread, at the up-
 per end
Was placed in regal lustre. Down a
 while
He sat, and round about him saw
 unseen:
At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent
 head
And shape star-bright appeared, or
 brighter; clad
With what permissive glory since
 his fall
Was left him, or false glitter: All
 amazed
At that so sudden blaze the Stygian
 throng 510

Bent their aspect, and whom they
wished beheld,
Their mighty Chief returned: loud
was the acclaim:
Forth rushed in haste the great con-
sulting peers,
Raised from their dark Divan, and
with like joy
Congratulant approached him;
who with hand
Silence, and with these words at-
tention, won.

Thrones, Dominations, Prince-
doms, Virtues, Powers;
For in possession such, not only of
right,
I call ye, and declare ye now; re-
turned 520

Successful beyond hope, to lead ye
forth
Triumphant out of this infernal pit
Abominable, accursed, the house
of woe,
And dungeon of our tyrant: Now
possess,
As Lords, a spacious world, to our
native Heaven
Little inferiour, by my adventure
hard
With peril great achieved. Long
were to tell
What I have done; what suffered;
with what pain
Voyaged th' unreal, vast, un-
bounded deep
Of horrible confusion; over which
530

By Sin and Death a broad way now
is paved,
To expedite your glorious march;
but I
Toiled out my uncouth passage,
forced to ride
The untractable abyss, plunged in
the womb
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos
wild;
That, jealous of their secrets,
fiercely opposed
My journey strange, with clam-
orous uproar
Protesting Fate supreme; thence
how I found
The new created world, which
fame in Heaven
Long had foretold, a fabrick won-

derful 540
Of absolute perfection! therein
Man
Placed in a Paradise, by our exile
Made happy: Him by fraud I have
seduced
From his Creator; and, the more to
encrease
Your wonder, with an apple; he,
thereat
Offended, worth your laughter!
hath given up
Both his beloved Man, and all his
world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to
us,
Without our hazard, labour, or
alarm;
To range in, and to dwell, and over

Man 550

To rule, as over all he should have ruled.

True is, me also he hath judged, or rather

Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape

Man I deceived: that which to me belongs,

Is enmity which he will put between

Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;

His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:

A world who would not purchase with a bruise,

Or much more grievous pain?—Ye

have the account 560
Of my performance: What re-
mains, ye Gods,
But up, and enter now into full
bliss?
So having said, a while he stood,
expecting
Their universal shout, and high ap-
plause,
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he
hears
On all sides, from innumerable
tongues,
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of publick scorn; he wondered, but
not long
Had leisure, wondering at himself
now more,
His visage drawn he felt to sharp

and spare; 570
His arms clung to his ribs; his legs
entwining
Each other, till supplanted down
he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly
prone,
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater
power
Now ruled him, punished in the
shape he sinned,
According to his doom: he would
have spoke,
But hiss for hiss returned with
forked tongue
To forked tongue; for now were all
transformed
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories
To his bold riot: Dreadful was the

Huge Python, and his power no
less he seemed 590
Above the rest still to retain; they
all
Him followed, issuing forth to the
open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted
rout,
Heaven-fallen, in station stood or
just array;
Sublime with expectation when to
see
In triumph issuing forth their glo-
rious Chief;
They saw, but other sight instead!
a croud
Of ugly serpents; horror on them
fell,
And horrid sympathy; for, what

they saw,
They felt themselves, now chang-
ing; down their arms, 600
Down fell both spear and shield;
down they as fast;
And the dire hiss renewed, and the
dire form
Caught, by contagion; like in pun-
ishment,
As in their crime. Thus was the ap-
plause they meant,
Turned to exploding hiss, triumph
to shame
Cast on themselves from their own
mouths. There stood
A grove hard by, sprung up with
this their change,
His will who reigns above, to ag-
gravate

Their penance, laden with fair
fruit, like that
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of
Eve 610
Used by the Tempter: on that
prospect strange
Their earnest eyes they fixed,
imagining
For one forbidden tree a multitude
Now risen, to work them further
woe or shame;
Yet, parched with scalding thirst
and hunger fierce,
Though to delude them sent, could
not abstain;
But on they rolled in heaps, and,
up the trees
Climbing, sat thicker than the
snaky locks

their jaws,
With soot and cinders filled; so oft
they fell
Into the same illusion, not as Man
630
Whom they triumphed once
lapsed. Thus were they
plagued
And worn with famine, long and
ceaseless hiss,
Till their lost shape, permitted,
they resumed;
Yearly enjoined, some say, to un-
dergo,
This annual humbling certain
numbered days,
To dash their pride, and joy, for
Man seduced.

However, some tradition they dispersed
Among the Heathen, of their purchase got,
And fabled how the Serpent, whom they called 640
Ophion, with Eurynome, the wide-
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driven
And Ops, ere yet Dictaeon Jove was born.

Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arrived; Sin, there in power before,

Once actual; now in body, and to
 dwell
Habitual habitant; behind her
 Death,
Close following pace for pace, not
 mounted yet 650
On his pale horse: to whom Sin
 thus began.

Second of Satan sprung, all-
 conquering Death!
What thinkest thou of our empire
 now, though earned
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at Hell's dark threshold
 to have sat watch,
Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself
 half starved?
Whom thus the Sin-born monster

answered soon.

To me, who with eternal famine
pine, 660
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 corps.

To whom the 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, what-
ever thing 670
The sithe of Time mows down, de-
vour unspared;
Till I, in Man residing, through the
race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, ac-
tions, all infect;
And season him thy last and sweet-
est 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 the
Almighty seeing,

I suffer them to enter and possess
690
A place so heavenly; and, conniv-
ing, 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 mis-
rule;
And know not that I called, and
drew them thither,
My Hell-hounds, to lick up the
draff and filth
Which Man's polluting sin with
taint hath shed
On what was pure; til, crammed
and gorged, nigh burst

Sung Halleluiah, as the sound of
seas,
Through multitude that sung: Just
are thy ways,
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy
works;
Who can extenuate thee? Next, to
the Son,
Destined Restorer of mankind, by
whom
New Heaven and Earth shall to the
ages rise,
Or down from Heaven descend.—
Such was their song;
While the Creator, calling forth by
name
His mighty Angels, gave them sev-
eral charge,
As sorted best with present things.

The sun 720
Had first his precept so to move, so
shine,
As might affect the earth with cold
and heat
Scarce tolerable; and from the
north to call
Decrepit winter; from the south to
bring
Solstitial summer's heat. To the
blanc moon
Her office they prescribed; to the
other five
Their planetary motions, and as-
pects,
In sextile, square, and trine, and
opposite,
Of noxious efficacy, and when to
join

In synod unbenign; and taught the
fixed 730
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 terrour through the dark
aereal hall.

Some say, he bid his Angels turn
ascense
The poles of earth, twice ten de-
grees and more,

From the sun's axle; they with
labour pushed 740
Oblique the centrick globe: Some
say, the sun
Was bid turn reins from the
equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus with
the seven
Atlantick Sisters, and the Spartan
Twins,
Up to the Tropick 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 smiled on earth with

vernant flowers,
Equal in days and nights, except to
those 750
Beyond the polar circles; to them
day
Had unbenighted shone, while the
low sun,
To recompense his distance, in
their sight
Had rounded still the horizon, and
not known
Or east or west; which had forbid
the snow
From cold Estotiland, and south as
far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted
fruit
The sun, as from Thyestean banquet,
turned

His course intended; else, how had
the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more
than now, 760
Avoided pinching cold and scorch-
ing heat?
These changes in the Heavens,
though slow, produced
Like change on sea and land;
sideral blast,
Vapour, and mist, and exhalation
hot,
Corrupt and pestilent: Now from
the north
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed
shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon,
armed with ice,
And snow, and hail, and stormy

gust and flaw,
Boreas, and Caecias, and Argestes
loud,
And Thrascias, rend the woods,
and seas upturn; 770
With adverse blast upturns them
from the south
Notus, and Afer black with thun-
derous clouds
From Serraliona; thwart of these,
as fierce,
Forth rush the Levant and the Po-
nent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lat-
eral noise,
Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things; but
Discord first,
Daughter of Sin, among the irra-

tional

Death introduced, through fierce
antipathy:

Beast now with beast 'gan war, and
fowl with fowl, 780

And fish with fish; to graze the
herb all leaving,

Devoured each other; nor stood
much in awe

Of Man, but fled him; or, with
countenance grim,

Glared on him passing. These were
from without

The growing miseries, which
Adam saw

Already in part, though hid in
gloomiest shade,

To sorrow abandoned, but worse
felt within;

And, in a troubled sea of passion
tost,
Thus to disburden sought with sad
complaint.

790

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
Accursed, of blessed? hide me
from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then
my highth
Of happiness!—Yet well, if here
would end
The misery; I deserved it, and
would bear

My own deservings; but this will
not serve:
All that I eat or drink, or shall
beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice, once
heard 800
Delightfully, Encrease and multi-
ply;
Now death to hear! for what can I
encrease,
Or multiply, but curses on my
head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but,
feeling
The evil on him brought by me,
will curse
My head? Ill fare our ancestor im-
pure,
For this we may thank Adam! but

his thanks
Shall be the execration: so, besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all
from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me re-
bound; 810
On me, as on their natural center,
light
Heavy, though in their place. O
fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with last-
ing 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
Concurred not to my being, it were
but right
And equal to reduce me to my
dust;
Desirous to resign and render back
820
All I received; 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? Inex-
plicable
Thy justice seems; yet to say truth,
too late
I thus contest; then should have

been refused
Those terms whatever, when they
were proposed:
Thou didst accept them; wilt thou
enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? And,
though God 830
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 con-
tempt 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. 840

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 de-
cree
Fixed on this day? Why do I over-
live,
Why am I mocked with death, and
lengthened out

To deathless pain? How gladly
would I meet
Mortality my sentence, and be
earth 850
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 inspired, cannot together perish
With this corporeal clod; then, in
the grave, 860
Or in some other dismal place, who
knows
But I shall die a living death? O
thought
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but
breath
Of life that sinned; what dies but
what had life
And sin? The body properly had
neither,
All of me then shall die: let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no
further knows.

For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? Be it, Man is not
so, 870
But mortal doomed. How can he
exercise
Wrath without end on Man, whom
death must end?
Can he make deathless death? That
were to make
Strange contradiction, which to
God himself
Impossible is held; as argument
Of weakness, not of power. Will he
draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite,
In punished Man, to satisfy his
rigour,
Satisfied never? That were to ex-

tend

His sentence beyond dust and Na-
ture's law; 880

By which all causes else, according
still

To the reception of their matter, act;
Not to the extent of their own
sphere. But say

That death be not one stroke, as I
supposed,

Bereaving sense, but endless mis-
ery

From this day onward; which I feel
begun

Both in me, and without me; and
so last

To perpetuity;—Ay me! that fear
Comes thundering back with
dreadful revolution

But all corrupt; both mind and will
depraved 900
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? How can they then ac-
quitted stand
In sight of God? Him, after all dis-
putes,
Forced 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; 910
Than all the world much heavier,
though divided
With that bad Woman? Thus, what
thou desirest,
And what thou fearest, alike de-
stroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee mis-
erable
Beyond all past example and fu-
ture;
To Satan only like both crime and
doom.

O Conscience! into what abyss of
fears
And horrors hast thou driven me;
out of which

I find no way, from deep to deeper
plunged! 920
Thus Adam to himself lamented
loud,
Through the still night; not now, as
ere Man fell,
Wholesome, and cool, and mild,
but with black air
Accompanied; with damps, and
dreadful gloom;
Which to his evil conscience repre-
sented
All things with double terrour: On
the ground
Outstretched he lay, on the cold
ground; and oft
Cursed his creation; Death as oft
accused
Of tardy execution, since de-

nounced
The day of his offence. Why comes
not Death, 930
Said he, with one thrice-acceptable
stroke
To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep
her word,
Justice Divine not hasten to be just?
But Death comes not at call; Justice
Divine
Mends not her slowest pace for
prayers or cries,
O woods, O fountains, hillocks,
dales, and bowers!
With other echo late I taught your
shades
To answer, and resound far other
song.—
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve

beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approach-
ing nigh, 940
Soft words to his fierce passion she
assayed:
But her with stern regard he thus
repelled.

Out of my sight, thou Serpent!
That name best
Befits thee with him leagued, thy-
self as false
And hateful; nothing wants, but
that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine,
may show
Thy inward fraud; to warn all crea-
tures from thee
Henceforth; lest that too heavenly

form, pretended
To hellish falshood, snare them!
But for thee 950
I had persisted happy; had not thy
pride
And wandering vanity, when least
was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and dis-
dained
Not to be trusted; longing to be
seen,
Though by the Devil himself; him
overweening
To over-reach; but, with the ser-
pent meeting,
Fooled and beguiled; by him thou,
I by thee
To trust thee from my side; imag-
ined wise,

Constant, mature, proof against all
assaults;
And understood not all was but a
show, 960
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 supernumer-
ary
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 de-

fect
Of nature, and not fill the world at
once
With Men, as Angels, without fem-
inine; 970
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? This mischief had not
been befallen,
And more that shall befall; innu-
merable
Disturbances on earth through fe-
male 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 sel-

dom gain
Through her perverseness, but
shall see her gained
By a far worse; or, if she love, with-
held 980
By parents; or his happiest choice
too late
Shall meet, already linked and
wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or
shame:
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace
confound.

He added not, and from her
turned; but Eve,
Not so repulsed, with tears that
ceased not flowing

And tresses all disordered, at his
feet
Fell humble; and, embracing them,
besought 990
His peace, and thus proceeded in
her plaint.

Forsake me not thus, Adam! wit-
ness Heaven
What love sincere, and reverence
in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have of-
fended,
Unhappily deceived! Thy suppli-
ant
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, 1000
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 joined in injuries, one enmity
Against a foe by doom express assigned us,
That cruel Serpent: On me exercise
not
Thy hatred for this misery befallen;
On me already lost, me than thyself
More miserable! Both have sinned;
but thou

Against God only; I against God
and thee; 1010
And to the place of judgement will
return,
There with my cries importune
Heaven; that all
The sentence, from thy head re-
moved, 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 obtained
from fault
Acknowledged and deplored, in
Adam wrought
Commiseration: Soon his heart re-
lented

Towards her, his life so late, and
sole delight, 1020
Now at his feet submissive in dis-
tress;
Creature so fair his reconcilment
seeking,
His counsel, whom she had dis-
pleased, his aid:
As one disarmed, his anger all he
lost,
And thus with peaceful words up-
raised her soon.

Unwary, and too desirous, as be-
fore,
So now of what thou knowest not,
who desirest
The punishment all on thyself;
alas!

Each other, blamed enough else-
where; but strive 1040

In offices of love, how we may
lighten

Each other's burden, in our share
of woe;

Since this day's death denounced,
if aught I see,

Will prove no sudden, but a slow-
paced evil;

A long day's dying, to augment
our pain;

And to our seed (O hapless seed!)
derived.

To whom thus Eve, recovering
heart, replied.

Adam, by sad experiment I know
1050

How little weight my words with
 thee can find,
Found so erroneous; thence by just
 event
Found so unfortunate: Neverthe-
 less,
Restored by thee, vile as I am, to
 place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to re-
 gain
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 ex-
 tremes,
Or end; though sharp and sad, yet

tolerable, 1060
As in our evils, and of easier
choice.

If care of our descent perplex us
most,
Which must be born to certain woe,
devoured
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 1070
It lies, yet ere conception to prevent

The race unblest, to being yet un-
begot.

Childless thou art, childless re-
main: so Death
Shall be deceived his glut, and with
us two
Be forced to satisfy his ravenous
maw.

But if thou judge it hard and diffi-
cult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to ab-
stain
From love's due rights, nuptial em-
braces sweet; 1080
And with desire to languish with-
out hope,
Before the present object languish-
ing

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 un-
 der fears,
That show no end but death, and
 have the power, 1090
Of many ways to die the shortest
 choosing,
Destruction with destruction to

destroy?—
She ended here, or vehement de-
spair
Broke off the rest: so much of death
her thoughts
Had entertained, as dyed her
cheeks with pale.

But Adam, with such counsel noth-
ing swayed,
To better hopes his more attentive
mind
Labouring had raised; and thus to
Eve replied.

1100

Eve, thy contempt of life and plea-
sure seems
To argue in thee something more
sublime

And excellent, than what thy mind
contemns;
But self-destruction therefore
sought, refutes
That excellence thought in thee;
and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and
regret
For loss of life and pleasure
overloved.

Or if thou covet death, as utmost
end
Of misery, so thinking to evade
1110
The penalty pronounced; doubt
not but God
Hath wiselier armed his vengeful
ire, than so

grand foe,
Satan; who, in the serpent, hath
contrived
Against us this deceit: To crush his
head
Would be revenge indeed! which
will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or
childless days
Resolved, as thou proposest; so our
foe
Shal 'scape his punishment or-
dained, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our
heads.

1130

No more be mentioned then of vio-
lence
Against ourselves; and wilful bar-

renness,
That cuts us off from hope; and
saviours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and
despite,
Reluctance against God and his
just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with
what mild
And gracious temper he both
heard, and judged,
Without wrath or reviling; we ex-
pected
Immediate dissolution, which we
thought
Was meant by death that day;
when lo! to thee 1140
Pains only in child-bearing were
foretold,

And bringing forth; soon recom-
pensed with joy,
Fruit of thy womb: On me the
curse aslope
Glanced on the ground; with
labour I must earn
My bread; what harm? Idleness
had been worse;
My labour will sustain me; and,
lest cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely
care
Hath, unbesought, provided; and
his hands
Clothed us unworthy, pitying
while he judged;
How much more, if we pray him,
will his ear 1150
Be open, and his heart to pity in-

cline,
And teach us further by what
means to shun
The inclement seasons, rain, ice,
hail, and snow!
Which now the sky, with various
face, begins
To show us in this mountain; while
the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering
the graceful locks
Of these fair spreading trees; which
bids us seek
Some better shroud, some better
warmth to cherish
Our limbs benumbed, ere this di-
urnal star
Leave cold the night, how we his
gathered beams 1160

Reflected may with matter sere fo-
ment;
Or, by collision of two bodies,
grind
The air attrite to fire; as late the
clouds
Justling, or pushed with winds,
rude in their shock,
Tine the slant lightning; whose
thwart flame, driven down
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or
pine;
And sends a comfortable heat from
far,
Which might supply the sun: Such
fire to use,
And what may else be remedy or
cure
To evils which our own misdeeds

have wrought, 1170
He will instruct us praying, and of
grace
Beseeching him; so as we need not
fear
To pass commodiously this life,
sustained
By him with many comforts, till we
end
In dust, our final rest and native
home.

What better can we do, than, to the
place
Repairing where he judged us,
prostrate fall
Before him reverent; and there con-
fess
Humbly our faults, and pardon

beg; with tears 1180
Watering the ground, and with our
sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts con-
trite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humilia-
tion meek.

Undoubtedly he will relent, and
turn
From his displeasure; in whose
look serene,
When angry most he seemed and
most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and
mercy, shone?
So spake our father penitent; nor
Eve
Felt less remorse: they, forthwith to

the place 1190
Repairing where he judged them,
prostrate fell
Before him reverent; and both confessed
Humbly their faults, and pardon
begged; with tears
Watering the ground, and with
their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite,
in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned, and humiliation meek.

BOOK XI

Thus they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had removed
The stony from their hearts, and

made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead; that
sighs now breathed
Unutterable; which the Spirit of
prayer
Inspired, and winged for Heaven
with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: Yet their
port
Not of mean suitors; nor important
less
Seemed their petition, than when
the ancient pair 10
In fables old, less ancient yet than
these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to re-
store
The race of mankind drowned, be-
fore the shrine

Of Themis stood devout. To
Heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor missed the way, by
envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in
they passed
Dimensionless through heavenly
doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden al-
tar fumed,
By their great intercessour, came in
sight
Before the Father's throne: them
the glad Son 20
Presenting, thus to intercede be-
gan.

See Father, what first-fruits on
earth are sprung

From thy implanted grace in Man;
these sighs
And prayers, which in this golden
censer mixed
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 produced,
ere fallen 30
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 40
Before thee reconciled, at least his
days
Numbered, though sad; till death,
his doom, (which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to re-
verse,)

To better life shall yield him: where
with me
All my redeemed may dwell in joy
and bliss;
Made one with me, as I with thee
am one.

To whom the Father, without
cloud, serene.

All thy request for Man, accepted
Son, 50
Obtain; all thy request was my de-
cree:
But, longer in that Paradise to
dwell,
The law I gave to Nature him for-
bids:
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
Distempered all things, and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
Created him endowed; with happiness,
And immortality: that fondly lost,
This other served but to eternize woe;

Till I provided death: so death be-
comes
His final remedy; and, after life,
Tried in sharp tribulation, and re-
fined
By faith and faithful works, to sec-
ond life,
Waked in the renovation of the just,
Resigns him up with Heaven and
Earth renewed. 70

But let us call to synod all the Blest,
Through Heaven'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 confirmed.

He ended, and the Son gave signal
high
To the bright minister that
watched; he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since
perhaps 80
When God descended, and per-
haps once more
To sound at general doom. The an-
gelick blast
Filled all the regions: from their bl-
isful bowers
Of amarantine shade, fountain or
spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they
sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of

light
Hasted, resorting to the summons
high;
And took their seats; till from his
throne supreme
The Almighty thus pronounced his
sovrän will.

90

O Sons, like one of us Man is be-
come
To know both good and evil, since
his taste
Of that defended fruit; but let him
boast
His knowledge of good lost, and
evil got;
Happier! had it sufficed him to
have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.

He sorrows now, repents, and
prays contrite,
My motions in him; longer than
they move,
His heart I know, how variable and
vain, 100
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, 110
Or in behalf of Man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trou-
ble raise:
Haste thee, and from the Paradise
of God
Without remorse drive out the sin-
ful pair;
From hallowed ground the unholy;
and denounce
To them, and to their progeny, from
thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest
they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously

urged,
(For I behold them softened, and
with tears
Bewailing their excess,) all terrour
hide. 120

If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; re-
veal
To Adam what shall come in future
days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My covenant in the Woman's seed
renewed;
So send them forth, though sor-
rowing, yet in peace:
And on the east side of the garden
place,
Where entrance up from Eden eas-

iest climbs,
Cherubick watch; and of a sword
the flame 130
Wide-waving; all approach far off
to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of
life:
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To Spirits foul, and all my trees
their prey;
With whose stolen fruit Man once
more to delude.

He ceased; and the arch-angelick
Power prepared
For swift descent; with him the co-
hort bright
Of watchful Cherubim: four faces
each

Had, like a double Janus; all their
shape 140
Spangled with eyes more numer-
ous than those
Of Argus, and more wakeful than
to drowse,
Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the
pastoral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean
while,
To re-salute the world with sacred
light,
Leucothea waked; and with fresh
dews imbalmed
The earth; when Adam and first
matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and
found
Strength added from above; new

hope to spring
Out of despair; joy, but with fear
yet linked; 150
Which thus to Eve his welcome
words renewed.

Eve, easily my faith admit, that all
The good which we enjoy from
Heaven descends;
But, that from us aught should as-
cend 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

death

Is past, and we shall live. Whence
hail to thee, 170

Eve rightly called, 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 de-
meanour meek.

Ill-worthy I such title should be-
long

To me transgressour; who, for thee
ordained

A help, became thy snare; to me re-
proach

Rather belongs, distrust, and all

dispraise: 180
But infinite in pardon was my
Judge,
That I, who first brought death on
all, am graced
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
imposed,
Though after sleepless night; for
see! the morn,
All unconcerned with our unrest,
begins
Her rosy progress smiling: let us
forth;

I never from thy side henceforth to
stray, 190
Where'er our day's work lies,
though now enjoined
Laborious, till day droop; while
here we dwell,
What can be toilsome in these
pleasant walks?
Here let us live, though in fallen
state, content.

So spake, so wished much hum-
bled Eve; but Fate
Subscribed not: Nature first gave
signs, impressed
On bird, beast, air; air suddenly
eclipsed,
After short blush of morn; nigh in
her sight

The bird of Jove, stooped from his
aery tour, 200
Two birds of gayest plume before
him drove;
Down from a hill the beast that
reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursued a gentle
brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and
hind;
Direct to the eastern gate was bent
their flight.

Adam observed, and with his eye
the chase
Pursuing, not unmoved, to Eve
thus spake.

O Eve, some further change awaits
us nigh, 210

Which Heaven, by these mute
 signs in Nature, shows
Forerunners of his purpose; or to
 warn
Us, haply too secure, of our dis-
 charge
From penalty, because from death
 released
Some days: how long, and what till
 then our life,
Who knows? or more than this,
 that we are dust,
And thither must return, and be no
 more?
Why else this double object in our
 sight
Of flight pursued in the air, and
 o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? why

in the east 220
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 some-
thing heavenly fraught?
He erred not; for by this the heav-
enly 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 dimmed
Adam's eye.

230

Not that more glorious, when the
Angels met
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
The field pavilioned with his
guardians bright;
Nor that, which on the flaming
mount appeared
In Dothan, covered with a camp of
fire,
Against the Syrian king, who to
surprise
One man, assassin-like, had levied
war,
War unproclaimed. The princely
Hierarch
In their bright stand there left his
Powers, to seize
Possession of the garden; he alone,

240

To find where Adam sheltered,
took his way,
Not unperceived of Adam; who to
Eve,
While the great visitant ap-
proached, thus spake.

Eve, now expect great tidings,
which perhaps
Of us will soon determine, or im-
pose
New laws to be observed; for I de-
scry,
From yonder blazing cloud that
veils the hill,
One of the heavenly host; and, by
his gait,
None of the meanest; some great

Potentate 250
Or of the Thrones above; such
majesty
Invests him coming! yet not terrible,
That I should fear; nor sociably
mild,
As Raphael, that I should much
confide;
But solemn and sublime; whom
not to offend,
With reverence I must meet, and
thou retire.

He ended: and the Arch-Angel
soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as
man
Clad to meet man; over his lucid

arms 260

A military vest of purple flowed,
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 showed
him prime

In manhood where youth ended;
by his side,

As in a glistering zodiack, hung the
sword,

Satan's dire dread; and in his hand
the spear.

Adam bowed low; he, kingly, from
his state 270

Inclined not, but his coming thus
declared.

Adam, Heaven's high behest no
preface needs:

Sufficient that thy prayers are
heard; and Death,

Then due by sentence when thou
didst transgress,

Defeated of his seisure many days
Given thee of grace; wherein thou
mayest repent,

And one bad act with many deeds
well done

Mayest cover: Well may then thy
Lord, appeased,

Redeem thee quite from Death's
rapacious claim; 280

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
Discovered soon the place of her
 retire. 290

O unexpected stroke, worse than of
 Death!

Your tribes, and water from the
ambrosial fount?
Thee lastly, nuptial bower! by me
adorned
With what to sight or smell was
sweet! from thee
How shall I part, and whither wan-
der down
Into a lower world; to this obscure
And wild, how shall we breathe in
other air
Less pure, accustomed to immortal
fruits?
Whom thus the Angel interrupted
mild. 310

Lament not, Eve, but patiently re-
sign
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; whom to follow
thou art bound;
Where he abides, think there thy
native soil.

Adam, by this from the cold sud-
den damp
Recovering, and his scattered spir-
its returned, 320
To Michael thus his humble words
addressed.

Celestial, whether among the
Thrones, or named
Of them the highest; for such of

shape may seem
Prince above princes! gently hast
thou told
Thy message, which might else in
telling wound,
And in performing end us; what
besides
Of sorrow, and dejection, and de-
spair,
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings
bring,
Departure from this happy place,
our sweet 330
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes! all places else
Inhospitable appear, and desolate;
Nor knowing us, nor known: And,
if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change

the will
Of Him who all things can, I would
not cease
To weary him with my assiduous
cries:
But prayer against his absolute de-
cree
No more avails than breath against
the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that
breathes it forth: 340
Therefore to his great bidding I
submit.

This most afflicts me, that, depart-
ing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, de-
prived
His blessed countenance: Here I

could frequent
With worship place by place where
he vouchsafed
Presence Divine; and to my sons
relate,
On this mount he appeared; under
this tree
Stood visible; among these pines
his voice
I heard; here with him at this foun-
tain talked: 350
So many grateful altars I would
rear
Of grassy turf, and pile up every
stone
Of lustre from the brook, in mem-
ory,
Or monument to ages; and thereon
Offer sweet-smelling gums, and

fruits, and flowers:
In yonder nether world where shall
I seek
His bright appearances, or foot-
step trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet re-
called
To life prolonged and promised
race, I now
Gladly behold though but his ut-
most skirts 360
Of glory; and far off his steps
adore.

To whom thus Michael with regard
benign.

Adam, thou knowest Heaven his,
and all the Earth;
Not this rock only; his Omnipres-

ence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind
that lives,
Fomented by his virtual power and
warmed:
All the earth he gave thee to possess
and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not
then 370
His presence to these narrow
bounds confined
Of Paradise, or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from
whence had spread
All generations; and had hither
come
From all the ends of the earth, to
celebrate
And reverence thee, their great

progenitor.

But this pre-eminence thou hast
lost, brought down

To dwell on even ground now with
thy sons:

Yet doubt not but in valley, and in
plain, 380

God is, as here; and will be found
alike

Present; and of his presence many
a sign

Still following thee, still compass-
ing thee round

With goodness and paternal love,
his face

Express, and of his steps the track
divine.

Which that thou mayest believe,

and be confirmed
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 390
Expect to hear; supernal grace con-
tending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to
learn
True patience, and to temper joy
with fear
And pious sorrow; equally inured
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt
thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepared
endure

Thy mortal passage when it
comes.—Ascend
This hill; let Eve (for I have
drenched her eyes)
Here sleep below; while thou to
foresight wakest; 400
As once thou sleptst, while she to
life was formed.

To whom thus Adam gratefully
replied.

Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide,
the path
Thou leadest me; and to the hand
of Heaven submit,
However chastening; to the evil
turn
My obvious breast; arming to over-
come

By suffering, and earn rest from
labour won,

If so I may attain.—So both ascend
410

In the visions of God. It was a hill,
Of Paradise the highest; from
whose top

The hemisphere of earth, in clear-
est ken,

Stretched out to the amplest reach
of prospect lay.

Not higher that hill, nor wider
looking round,

Whereon, for different cause, the
Tempter set

Our second Adam, in the wilder-
ness;

To show him all Earth's kingdoms,

and their glory.

420

His eye might there command
wherever stood

City of old or modern fame, the
seat

Of mightiest empire, from the des-
tined walls

Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's
throne,

To Paquin of Sinaean kings; and
thence

To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,
Down to the golden Chersonese; or
where

The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan; or where the Russian
Ksar

430

In Mosco; or the Sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye
not ken
The empire of Negus to his utmost
port
Ercoco, and the less maritim 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 At-
las mount
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez
and Sus,
Morocco, and Algiers, and Trem-
isen; 440
On Europe thence, and where

Rome was to sway
The world: in spirit perhaps he
also saw
Rich Mexico, the seat of Mon-
tezume,
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoiled
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's
sons
Call El Dorado. But to nobler
sights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film
removed,
Which that false fruit that
promised clearer sight
Had bred; then purged with eu-
phrasy and rue 450
The visual nerve, for he had much
to see;

And from the well of life three
drops instilled.

So deep the power of these ingredi-
ents pierced,
Even to the inmost seat of mental
sight,
That Adam, now enforced to close
his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his spirits be-
came entranced;
But him the gentle Angel by the
hand
Soon raised, and his attention thus
recalled.

460

Adam, now ope thine eyes; and
first behold
The effects, which thy original

crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee; who
never touched
The excepted tree; nor with the
snake conspired;
Nor sinned thy sin; yet from that
sin derive
Corruption, to bring forth more vi-
olent deeds.

His eyes he opened, and beheld a
field,
Part arable and tilth, whereon were
sheaves
New reaped; the other part sheep-
walks and folds; 470
I' the midst an altar as the land-
mark stood,
Rustick, of grassy sord; thither

anon

A sweaty reaper from his tillage
brought
First fruits, the green ear, and the
yellow sheaf,
Unculled, as came to hand; a shep-
herd next,
More meek, came with the
firstlings of his flock,
Choicest and best; then, sacrificing,
laid
The inwards and their fat, with in-
cense strowed,
On the cleft wood, and all due
rights performed:
His offering soon propitious fire
from Heaven 480
Consumed with nimble glance,
and grateful steam;

The other's not, for his was not sincere;
Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,
Smote him into the midriff with a stone
That beat out life; he fell; and, deadly pale,
Groaned out his soul with gushing blood effused.

Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismayed, and thus in haste to the Angel cried.

490

O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen
To that meek man, who well had

sacrificed;
Is piety thus and pure devotion
paid?
To whom Michael thus, he also
moved, replied.

These two are brethren, Adam, and
to come
Out of thy loins; the unjust the just
hath slain,
For envy that his brother's offering
found
From Heaven acceptance; but the
bloody fact
Will be avenged; and the other's
faith, approved, 500
Lose no reward; though here thou
see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore. To which

our sire.

Alas! both for the deed, and for the
cause!

But have I now seen Death? Is this
the way

I must return to native dust? O
sight

Of terrour, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to
feel!

To whom thus Michael. Death thou
hast seen

In his first shape on Man; but many
shapes 510

Of Death, and many are the ways
that lead

To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to
sense

More terrible at the entrance, than
within.

Some, as thou sawest, by violent
stroke shall die;

By fire, flood, famine, by intemper-
ance more

In meats and drinks, which on the
earth shall bring

Diseases dire, of which a mon-
strous crew

Before thee shall appear; that thou
mayest know

What misery the inabstinence of
Eve 520

Shall bring on Men. Immediately a
place

Before his eyes appeared, sad, noi-
some, dark;

A lazar-house it seemed; wherein
 were laid
Numbers of all diseased; all mal-
 adies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking tor-
 ture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous
 kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce
 catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colick-
 pangs,
Demoniack phrenzy, moaping
 melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining
 atrophy, 530
Marasmus, and wide-wasting
 pestilence,
Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-

racking rheums.

Dire was the tossing, deep the
groans; Despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch
to couch;
And over them triumphant Death
his dart
Shook, but delayed to strike,
though oft invoked
With vows, as their chief good, and
final hope.

Sight so deform what heart of rock
could long 540
Dry-eyed behold? Adam could
not, but wept,
Though not of woman born; com-
passion quelled
His best of man, and gave him up

to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts re-
strained excess;
And, scarce recovering words, his
plaint renewed.

O miserable mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state
reserved!
Better end here unborn. Why is life
given
To be thus wrested from us? rather,
why 550
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we
knew
What we receive, would either no
accept
Life offered, or soon beg to lay it
down;

Glad to be so dismissed in peace.
Can thus
The image of God in Man, created
once
So goodly and erect, though faulty
since,
To such unsightly sufferings be de-
based
Under inhuman pains? Why
should not Man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be
free, 560
And, for his Maker's image sake,
exempt?
Their Maker's image, answered
Michael, then
Forsook them, when themselves
they vilified

To serve ungoverned Appetite;
and took
His image whom they served, 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
defaced; 570
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 sub-

mit.

But is there yet no other way, be-
sides
These painful passages, how we
may come
To death, and mix with our connat-
ural dust?
There is, said Michael, if thou well
observe 580
The rule of Not too much; by tem-
perance taught,
In what thou eatest and drinkest;
seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous
delight,
Till many years over thy head re-
turn:
So mayest thou live; till, like ripe

fruit, thou drop
Into thy mother's lap; or be with
ease
Gathered, nor harshly plucked; for
death mature:
This is Old Age; but then, thou
must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy
beauty; which will change
To withered, weak, and gray; thy
senses then, 590
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 an-
cestor.

Henceforth I fly not death, nor
would prolong
Life much; bent rather, how I may
be quit,
Fairest and easiest, of this cum-
brous charge; 600
Which I must keep till my ap-
pointed day
Of rendering up, and patiently at-
tend
My dissolution. Michael replied.

Nor love thy life, nor hate; but
what thou livest
Live well; how long, or short, per-

mit to Heaven:
And now prepare thee for another
sight.

He looked, and saw a spacious
plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue; by some,
were herds 610
Of cattle grazing; others, whence
the sound
Of instruments, that made melodi-
ous chime,
Was heard, of harp and organ; and,
who moved
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
Labouring, two massy clods of iron
and brass
Had melted, (whether found
where casual fire 620
Had wasted woods on mountain
or in vale,
Down to the veins of earth; thence
gliding hot
To some cave's mouth; or whether
washed by stream
From underground;) the liquid ore
he drained
Into fit moulds prepared; from
which he formed
First his own tools; then, what

might else be wrought
Fusil or graven in metal. After
these,
But on the hither side, a different
sort
From the high neighbouring hills,
which was their seat,
Down to the plain descended; by
their guise 630
Just men they seemed, and all their
study bent
To worship God aright, and know
his works
Not hid; nor those things last,
which might preserve
Freedom and peace to Men; they
on the plain
Long had not walked, when from
the tents, behold!

With feast and musick all the tents
resound.

Such happy interview, and fair
event

Of love and youth not lost, songs,
garlands, flowers,

And charming symphonies, at-
tached the heart 650

Of Adam, soon inclined to admit
delight,

The bent of nature; which he thus
expressed.

True opener of mine eyes, prime
Angel blest;

Much better seems this vision, and
more hope

Of peaceful days portends, than
those two past;

Those were of hate and death, or
pain much worse;
Here Nature seems fulfilled in all
her ends.

To whom thus Michael. Judge not
what is best 660
By pleasure, though to nature
seeming meet;
Created, as thou art, to nobler end
Holy and pure, conformity divine.

Those tents thou sawest so pleas-
ant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall
dwell his race
Who slew his brother; studious
they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventers
rare;

Unmindful of their Maker, though
his Spirit
Taught them; but they his gifts ac-
knowledged none. 670

Yet they a beauteous offspring
shall beget;
For that fair female troop thou
sawest, that seemed
Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth,
so gay,
Yet empty of all good wherein con-
sists
Woman's domestick honour and
chief praise;
Bred only and completed to the
taste
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to
dance,

To dress, and troll the tongue, and
roll the eye:
To these that sober race of men,
whose lives 680
Religious titled them the sons of
God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all
their fame
Ignobly, to the trains and to the
smiles
Of these fair atheists; and now
swim in joy,
Erelong to swim at large; and
laugh, for which
The world erelong a world of tears
must weep.

To whom thus Adam, of short joy
bereft.

O pity and shame, that they, who
to live well 690

Entered 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 the Angel, who should better
hold his place

By wisdom, and superiour gifts re-
ceived.

But now prepare thee for another
scene. 700

He looked, 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
threatening war,
Giants of mighty bone and bold
emprise;
Part wield their arms, part curb the
foaming steed,
Single or in array of battle ranged
Both horse and foot, nor idly mus-
tering stood;
One way a band select from forage
drives 710
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair
kine,

With dart and javelin, stones, and
sulphurous fire;
On each hand slaughter, and gi-
gantick deeds.

In other part the sceptered heralds
call
To council, in the city-gates; anon
Gray-headed men and grave, with
warriours mixed,
Assemble, and harangues are
heard; but soon,
In factious opposition; till at last,
Of middle age one rising, eminent
730
In wise deport, spake much of
right and wrong,
Of justice, or religion, truth, and
peace,

And judgement from above: him
old and young
Exploded, and had seized with vi-
olent hands,
Had not a cloud descending
snatched him thence
Unseen amid the throng: so vio-
lence
Proceeded, and oppression, and
sword-law,
Through all the plain, and refuge
none was found.

Adam was all in tears, and to his
guide 740
Lamenting turned full sad; O! what
are these,
Death's ministers, not men? who
thus deal death

Produce prodigious births of body
or mind.

Such were these giants, men of
high renown;
For in those days might only shall
be admired,
And valour and heroick virtue
called;
To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils
with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the
highest pitch 760
Of human glory; and for glory
done
Of triumph, to be styled great con-
querours
Patrons of mankind, Gods, and

sons of Gods;
Destroyers rightlier called, and
plagues of men.

Thus fame shall be achieved,
renown on earth;
And what most merits fame, in si-
lence hid.

But he, the seventh from thee,
whom thou beheldst
The only righteous in a world pre-
verse, 770
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 sawest, receive, to
walk with God
High in salvation and the climes of
bliss,
Exempt from death; to show thee
what reward
Awaits the good; the rest what
punishment;
Which now direct thine eyes and
soon behold. 780

He looked, and saw the face of
things quite changed;
The brazen throat of war had
ceased to roar;
All now was turned to jollity and

game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance;
Marrying or prostituting, as befel,
Rape or adultery, where passing
fair
Allured them; thence from cups to
civil broils.

At length a reverend sire among
them came, 790
And of their doings great dislike
declared,
And testified against their ways; he
oft
Frequented their assemblies,
whereso met,
Triumphs or festivals; and to them
preached
Conversion and repentance, as to

souls
In prison, under judgements imminent:
But all in vain: which when he saw,
he ceased
Contending, and removed his tents
far off;
Then, from the mountain hewing
timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge
bulk; 800
Measured by cubit, length, and
breadth, and highth;
Smear'd round with pitch; and in
the side a door
Contrived; and of provisions laid
in large,
For man and beast: when lo, a
wonder strange!

Of every beast, and bird, and insect
small,
Came sevens, and pairs; and entered
in as taught
Their order: last the sire and his
three sons,
With their four wives; and God
made fast the door.

Mean while the south-wind rose,
and, with black wings 810
Wide-hovering, all the clouds together
drove
From under Heaven; the hills to
their supply
Vapour, and exhalation dusk and
moist,
Sent up amain; and now the thick-
ened sky

Like a dark ceiling stood; down
rushed the rain
Impetuous; and continued, till the
earth
No more was seen: the floating
vessel swum
Uplifted, and secure with beaked
prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all
dwellings else
Flood overwhelmed, and them
with all their pomp 820
Deep under water rolled; sea cov-
ered sea,
Sea without shore; and in their
palaces,
Where luxury late reigned, sea-
monsters whelped
And stabled; of mankind, so nu-

merous late,
All left, in one small bottom swum
imbarked.

How didst thou grieve then,
Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so
sad,
Depopulation! Thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee
also drowned, 830
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gen-
tly reared
By the Angel, on thy feet thou
stoodest at last,
Though comfortless; as when a fa-
ther mourns
His children, all in view destroyed
at once;

And scarce to the Angel utter'dst
thus thy plaint.

O visions ill foreseen! Better had I
Lived ignorant of future! so had
borne

My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear; those now, that
were dispensed 840

The burden of many ages, on me
light

At once, by my foreknowledge
gaining birth

Abortive, to torment me ere their
being,

With thought that they must be.

Let no man seek

Henceforth to be foretold, what
shall befall

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, 850
Man is not whom to warn: those
few escaped
Famine and anguish will at last
consume,
Wandering that watery desart: I
had hope,
When violence was ceased, and
war on earth,
All would have then gone well;
peace would have crowned

With length of happy days the race
of Man;
But I was far deceived; for now I
see
Peace to corrupt no less than war
to waste.

How comes it thus? unfold, celes-
tial Guide, 860
And whether here the race of Man
will end.

To whom thus Michael. Those,
whom last thou sawest
In triumph and luxurious wealth,
are they
First seen in acts of prowess emi-
nent
And great exploits, but of true
virtue void;

Who, having spilt much blood, and
done much wast
Subduing nations, and achieved
thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and
rich prey;
Shall change their course to plea-
sure, ease, and sloth, 870
Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness
and pride
Raise out of friendship hostile
deeds in peace.

The conquered also, and enslaved
by war,
Shall, with their freedom lost, all
virtue lose
And fear of God; from whom their
piety feigned

In sharp contest of battle found no
aid
Against invaders; therefore, cooled
in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practice how to
live secure,
Worldly or dissolute, on what their
lords 880
Shall leave them to enjoy; for the
earth shall bear
More than enough, that temper-
ance may be tried:
So all shall turn degenerate, all de-
praved;
Justice and temperance, truth and
faith, forgot;
One man except, the only son of
light
In a dark age, against example

good,
Against allurements, custom, and a
world
Offended: fearless of reproach and
scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked
ways
Shall them admonish; and before
them set 890
The paths of righteousness, how
much more safe
And full of peace; denouncing
wrath to come
On their impenitence; and shall re-
turn
Of them derided, but of God ob-
served
The one just man alive; by his com-
mand

Shall build a wonderous ark, as
thou beheldst,
To save himself, and houshold,
from amidst
A world devote to universal wrack.

No sooner he, with them of man
and beast 900
Select for life, shall in the ark be
lodged,
And sheltered round; but all the
cataracts
Of Heaven set open on the Earth
shall pour
Rain, day and night; all fountains
of the deep,
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to
usurp
Beyond all bounds; till inundation

rise

Above the highest hills: Then shall
this mount

Of Paradise by might of waves be
moved

Out of his place, pushed by the
horned flood,

With all his verdure spoiled, and
trees adrift, 910

Down the great river to the open-
ing 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 looked, and saw the ark hull on
the flood, 920

Which now abated; for the clouds
were fled,

Driven by a keen north-wind, that,
blowing dry,

Wrinkled the face of deluge, as de-
cayed;

And the clear sun on his wide wa-
tery glass

Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave
largely drew,

As after thirst; which made their
flowing shrink

From standing lake to tripping ebb,
that stole
With soft foot towards the deep;
who now had stopt
His sluices, as the Heaven his win-
dows shut.

930

The ark no more now floats, but
seems on ground,
Fast on the top of some high moun-
tain fixed.

And now the tops of hills, as rocks,
appear;
With clamour thence the rapid cur-
rents 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 940
Green tree or ground, whereon his
foot may light:
The second time returning, in his
bill
An olive-leaf he brings, pacifick
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 Heaven, over his head
beholds

A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a
bow
Conspicuous with three lifted
colours gay,
Betokening peace from God, and
covenant new. 950

Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so
sad,
Greatly rejoiced; and thus his joy
broke forth.

O thou, who future things canst
represent
As present, heavenly Instructor! I
revive
At this last sight; assured that Man
shall live,
With all the creatures, and their
seed preserve.

Far less I now lament for one whole
world 960
Of wicked sons destroyed, than I
rejoice
For one man found so perfect, and
so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise an-
other world
From him, and all his anger to for-
get.

But say, what mean those coloured
streaks in Heaven
Distended, as the brow of God ap-
peased?
Or serve they, as a flowery verge,
to bind
The fluid skirts of that same watery
cloud,

Lest it again dissolve, and shower
the earth? 970
To whom the Arch-Angel. Dextrously thou aimest;
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting him of Man
depraved;
Grieved at his heart, when looking
down he saw
The whole earth filled with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way; yet,
those removed,
Such grace shall one just man find
in his sight,
That he relents, not to blot out
mankind;
And makes a covenant never to destroy

The earth again by flood; nor let
the sea 980
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-coloured 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,
Both Heaven and Earth, wherein
the just shall dwell.

BOOK XII

As one who in his journey bates at
noon,
Though bent on speed; so here the
Arch-Angel paused
Betwixt the world destroyed and
world restored,
If Adam aught perhaps might in-

terpose;

Then, with transition sweet, new
speech resumes.

Thus thou hast seen one world be-
gin, and end;
And Man, as from a second stock,
proceed.

Much thou hast yet to see; but I
perceive 10
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects di-
vine

Must needs impair and weary hu-
man 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; 20
Labouring 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 poured,
and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy un-
blamed; 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 unde-
served 30
Over his brethren, and quite dis-
possess
Concord and law of nature from
the earth;
Hunting (and men not beasts shall
be his game)
With war, and hostile snare, such
as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be

mouth of Hell:
Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast
to build
A city and tower, whose top may
reach to Heaven;
And get themselves a name; lest,
far dispersed
In foreign lands, their memory be
lost; 50
Regardless whether good or evil
fame.

But God, who oft descends to visit
men
Unseen, and through their habita-
tions walks
To mark their doings, them behold-
ing soon,
Comes down to see their city, ere

the tower
Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in
derision sets
Upon their tongues a various
spirit, to rase
Quite out their native language;
and, instead,
To sow a jangling noise of words
unknown: 60
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises
loud,
Among the builders; each to other
calls
Not understood; till hoarse, and all
in rage,
As mocked they storm: great
laughter was in Heaven,
And looking down, to see the hub-
bub strange,

And hear the din: Thus was the
building left
Ridiculous, and the work Confu-
sion named.

Whereto thus Adam, fatherly dis-
pleased.

70

O execrable son! so to aspire
Above his brethren; to himself as-
suming
Authority usurped, from God not
given:
He gave us only over beast, fish,
fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we
hold
By his donation; but man over men
He made not lord; such title to him-

self
Reserving, human left from human
free.

But this usurper his encroachment
proud 80
Stays not on Man; to God his tower
intends
Siege and defiance: Wretched man!
what food
Will he convey up thither, to sus-
tain
Himself and his rash army; where
thin air
Above the clouds will pine his en-
trails 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,
90
Since thy original lapse, true lib-
erty
Is lost, which always with right
reason dwells
Twinned, and from her hath no di-
vidual being:
Reason in man obscured, or not
obeyed,
Immediately inordinate desires,
And upstart passions, catch the
government
From reason; and to servitude re-

But justice, and some fatal curse
annexed,
Deprives them of their outward
liberty;
Their inward lost: Witness the ir-
reverent son 110
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, with-
draw

His presence from among them,
and avert
His holy eyes; resolving from
thenceforth
To leave them to their own pol-
luted ways; 120
And one peculiar nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be in-
voked,
A nation from one faithful man to
spring:
Him on this side Euphrates yet re-
siding,
Bred up in idol-worship: O, that
men
(Canst thou believe?) should be so
stupid grown,
While yet the patriarch lived, who
'scaped the flood,

As to forsake the living God, and
fall
To worship their own work in
wood and stone
For Gods! Yet him God the Most
High vouchsafes 130
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 Chaldaeae, passing now the
ford 140

To Haran; after him a cumbrous
train

Of herds and flocks, and numerous
servitude;

Not wandering poor, but trusting
all his wealth

With God, who called him, in a
land unknown.

Canaan he now attains; I see his
tents

Pitched about Sechem, and the
neighbouring plain

Of Moreh; there by promise he re-
ceives
Gift to his progeny of all that land,
From Hameth northward to the
Desart south; 150
(Things by their names I call,
though yet unnamed;)
From Hermon east to the great
western Sea;
Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each
place behold
In prospect, as I point them; on the
shore
Mount Carmel; here, the double-
founted stream,
Jordan, true limit eastward; but his
sons
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 160
Is meant thy great Deliverer, who
shall bruise
The Serpent's head; whereof to
thee anon
Plainlier shall be revealed. This pa-
triarch 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 grandchild, with twelve sons
increased, departs
From Canaan to a land hereafter

called
Egypt, divided by the river Nile
See where it flows, disgorging at
seven mouths 170
Into the sea. To sojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger
son
In time of dearth, a son whose wor-
thy 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 in-
mate guests

To blood unshed the rivers must be
turned;
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his
palace fill 190
With loathed 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 mixed
with hail,
Hail mixed with fire, must rend the
Egyptians sky,
And wheel on the earth, devouring
where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit,
or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts

swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave
nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his
bounds, 200
Palpable darkness, and blot out
three days;
Last, with one midnight stroke, all
the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with
ten wounds
The river-dragon tamed at length
submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart; but
still, as ice
More hardened after thaw; till, in
his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismissed,

the sea
Swallows him with his host; but
them lets pass,
As on dry land, between two crystal
walls; 210
Awed by the rod of Moses so to
stand
Divided, till his rescued gain their
shore:
Such wondrous power God to his
saint will lend,
Though present in his Angel; who
shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar
of fire;
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of
fire;
To guide them in their journey, and
remove

Behind them, while the obdurate
king pursues:
All night he will pursue; but his ap-
proach
Darkness defends between till
morning watch; 220
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 ex-
tends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the
waves return,
And overwhelm their war: The
race elect

Safe toward Canaan from the shore
advance
Through the wild Desert, not the
readiest way;
Lest, entering on the Canaanite
alarmed, 230
War terrify them inexperienced, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choos-
ing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for
life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrained in arms, where rashness
leads not on.

This also shall they gain by their
delay
In the wide wilderness; there they
shall find

Their government, and their great
senate choose
Through the twelve tribes, to rule
by laws ordained: 240
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 ap-
pertain
To civil justice; part, religious rites
Of sacrifice; informing them, by
types
And shadows, of that destined
Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what means he
shall achieve

Mankind's deliverance. But the
voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful: They be-
seech 250
That Moses might report to them
his will,
And terrour cease; he grants what
they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without Mediator, whose high of-
fice 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
Established, such delight hath God

in Men
Obedient to his will, that he vouch-
safes 260
Among them to set up his taberna-
cle;
The Holy One with mortal Men to
dwell:
By his prescript a sanctuary is
framed
Of cedar, overlaid with gold;
therein
An ark, and in the ark his testi-
mony,
The records of his covenant; over
these
A mercy-seat of gold, between the
wings
Of two bright Cherubim; before
him burn

Seven lamps as in a zodiack representing
The heavenly fires; over the tent a
cloud 270
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by
night;
Save when they journey, and at
length they come,
Conducted by his Angel, to the
land
Promised to Abraham and his
seed:—The rest
Were long to tell; how many battles
fought
How many kings destroyed; and
kingdoms won;
Or how the sun shall in mid
Heaven stand still
A day entire, and night's due

course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, "Sun, in
Gibeon stand,
And thou moon in the vale of
Aialon, 280
Till Israel overcome!" so call the
third
From Abraham, son of Isaac; and
from him
His whole descent, who thus shall
Canaan win.

Here Adam interposed. O sent
from Heaven,
Enlightener of my darkness, gra-
cious things
Thou hast revealed; those chiefly,
which concern
Just Abraham and his seed: now

first I find
Mine eyes true-opening, and my
heart much eased;
Erewhile perplexed with thoughts,
what would become 290
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 forbid-
den 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? 300
To whom thus Michael. Doubt not
but that sin
Will reign among them, as of thee
begot;
And therefore was law given them,
to evince
Their natural pravity, by stirring
up
Sin against law to fight: that when
they see
Law can discover sin, but not re-
move,
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 righ-
teousness 310
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 mor-
tal part
Perform; and, not performing, can-
not live.

So law appears imperfect; and but
given
With purpose to resign them, in

full time,
Up to a better covenant; disciplin-
ed
From shadowy types to truth; from
flesh to spirit; 320
From imposition of strict laws to
free
Acceptance of large grace; from
servile fear
To filial; works of law to works of
faith.

And therefore shall not Moses,
though of God
Highly beloved, being but the min-
ister
Of law, his people into Canaan
lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Je-

By Judges first, then under Kings;
of whom
The second, both for piety
renowned 340
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.

350

But first, a long succession must
ensue;

And his next son, for wealth and
wisdom famed,

The clouded ark of God, till then in
tents

Wandering, shall in a glorious tem-
ple enshrine.

Such follow him, as shall be regis-
tered

Part good, part bad; of bad the
longer scroll;

Whose foul idolatries, and other
faults

Heaped to the popular sum, will so

incense
God, as to leave them, and expose
their land, 360
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 sawest
Left in confusion; Babylon thence
called.

There in captivity he lets them
dwell
The space of seventy years; then
brings them back,
Remembering mercy, and his
covenant sworn
To David, stablished as the days of

Heaven.

370

Returned from Babylon by leave of
kings

Their lords, whom God disposed,
the house of God

They first re-edify; and for a while
In mean estate live moderate; till,
grown

In wealth and multitude, factious
they grow;

But first among the priests dis-
sention springs,

Men who attend the altar, and
should most

Endeavour peace: their strife pol-
lution brings

Upon the temple itself: at last they
seise

The scepter, and regard not
David's sons; 380
Then lose it to a stranger, that the
true
Anointed King Messiah might be
born
Barred of his right; yet at his birth
a star,
Unseen before in Heaven, pro-
claims him come;
And guides the eastern sages, who
inquire
His place, to offer incense, myrrh,
and gold:
His place of birth a solemn Angel
tells
To simple shepherds, keeping
watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and by a

quire

Of squadroned Angels hear his
carol sung. 390

A virgin is his mother, but his sire
The power 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 ceased, discerning Adam with
such joy

Surcharged, as had like grief been
dewed in tears,

Without the vent of words; which
these he breathed.

400

O prophet of glad tidings, finisher

Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
What oft my steadiest thoughts
have searched in vain;
Why our great Expectation should
be called
The seed of Woman: Virgin
Mother, hail,
High in the love of Heaven; yet
from my loins
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 410
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 Heaven, a
deadlier bruise,
Disabled, not to give thee thy
death's wound:
Which he, who comes thy Saviour,
shall recure, 420
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, im-
posed
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 ap-
paid.

The law of God exact he shall fulfil
430
Both by obedience and by love,
though love
Alone fulfil the law; thy punish-

ment
He shall endure, by coming in the
flesh
To a reproachful life, and cursed
death;
Proclaiming life to all who shall be-
lieve
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 blas-
phemed, 440
Seised on by force, judged, and to
death condemned
A shameful and accursed, nailed to

the cross
By his own nation; slain for bring-
ing life:
But to the cross he nails thy ene-
mies,
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 450
Return, the stars of morn shall see
him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawn-

ing light,
Thy ransom paid, which Man from
death redeems,
His death for Man, as many as of-
fered life
Neglect not, and the benefit em-
brace
By faith not void of works: This
God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou
shouldest 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
main arms; 460
And fix far deeper in his head their
stings
Than temporal death shall bruise

the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems; a
death, like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life.

Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth, than certain times
to appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still followed him; to them shall
leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him
they learned 470
And his salvation; them who shall
believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream,
the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin
to life

Pure, and in mind prepared, if so
 befall,
For death, like that which the Re-
 deemer died.

All nations they shall teach; for,
 from that day,
Not only to the sons of Abraham's
 loins
Salvation shall be preached, but to
 the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever
 through the world; 480
So in his seed all nations shall be
 blest.

Then to the Heaven of Heavens he
 shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through
 the air

Over his foes and thine; there shall
surprise
The Serpent, prince of air, and drag
in chains
Through all his realm, and there
confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, ex-
alted high
Above all names in Heaven; and
thence shall come, 490
When this world's dissolution
shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge
both quick and dead;
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to
reward
His faithful, and receive them into
bliss,

Whether in Heaven or Earth; for
then the Earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier
place
Than this of Eden, and far happier
days.

So spake the Arch-Angel Michael;
then paused,
As at the world's great period; and
our sire, 500
Replete with joy and wonder, thus
replied.

O Goodness infinite, Goodness im-
mense!
That all this good of evil shall pro-
duce,
And evil turn to good; more won-
derful

Than that which by creation first
brought forth
Light out of darkness! Full of
doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now
of sin
By me done, and occasioned; or re-
joice
Much more, that much more good
thereof shall spring; 510
To God more glory, more good-will
to Men
From God, and over wrath grace
shall abound.

But say, if our Deliverer up to
Heaven
Must re-ascend, what will betide
the few

His faithful, left among the un-
faithful herd,
The enemies of truth? Who then
shall guide
His people, who defend? Will they
not deal
Worse with his followers than with
him they dealt?
Be sure they will, said the Angel;
but from Heaven 520
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 recom-
pensed, 530
And oft supported so as shall
amaze
Their proudest persecutors: For
the Spirit,
Poured first on his Apostles, whom
he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on
all
Baptized, shall them with wonder-

ous 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 re-
ceive
With joy the tidings brought from
Heaven: At length
Their ministry performed, and race
well run, 540
Their doctrine and their story writ-
ten 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 un-
derstood.

550

Then shall they seek to avail them-
selves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to
join
Secular power; though feigning
still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appro-
priating

The Spirit of God, promised alike
and given
To all believers; and, from that pre-
tence,
Spiritual laws by carnal power
shall force
On every conscience; laws which
none shall find
Left them inrolled, or what the
Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What
will they then 560
But force the Spirit of Grace itself,
and bind
His consort Liberty? what, but un-
build
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 perse-
vere
Of spirit and truth; the rest, far
greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and
specious forms 570
Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire
Bestuck with slanderous darts, and
works of faith
Rarely be found: So shall the world
go on,
To good malignant, to bad men be-
nign;

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 promised to thy
aid,
The Woman's Seed; obscurely then
foretold,
Now ampler known thy Saviour
and thy Lord; 580
Last, in the clouds, from Heaven to
be revealed
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world;
then raise
From the conflagrantly mass, purged
and refined,
New Heavens, new Earth, ages of

endless date,
Founded in righteousness, and
peace, and love;
To bring forth fruits, joy and eter-
nal bliss.

He ended; and thus Adam last
replied.

590

How soon hath thy prediction, Seer
blest,
Measured this transient world, the
race of time,
Till time stand fixed! Beyond is all
abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can
reach.

Greatly-instructed I shall hence de-
part;

Greatly in peace of thought; and
 have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can
 contain;
Beyond which was my folly to as-
 pire.

600

Henceforth I learn, that to obey is
 best,
And love with fear the only God; to
 walk
As in his presence; ever to observe
His providence; and on him sole
 depend,
Merciful over all his works, with
 good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by
 things deemed weak

Subverting worldly strong, and
worldly wise
By simply meek: that suffering for
truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory, 610
And, to the faithful, death the gate
of life;
Taught this by his example, whom
I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever
blest.

To whom thus also the Angel last
replied.

This having learned, thou hast at-
tained the sum
Of wisdom; hope no higher,
though all the stars
Thou knewest by name, and all the

ethereal powers,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's
works, 620
Or works of God in Heaven, air,
earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoyedst,
And all the rule, one empire; only
add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance;
add love,
By name to come called charity, the
soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not
be loth
To leave this Paradise, but shalt
possess

A Paradise within thee, happier
far.—

Let us descend now therefore from
this top 630

Of speculation; for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence; and see
the guards,

By me encamped 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
calmed

Portending good, and all her spir-
its composed

To meek submission: thou, at sea-
son fit,
Let her with thee partake what
thou hast heard; 640
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 cheered
With meditation on the happy end.

He ended, and they both descend

the hill;
Descended, Adam to the bower,
where Eve 650
Lay sleeping, ran before; but found
her waked;
And thus with words not sad she
him received.

Whence thou returnest, and
whither wentest, 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,

For now, too nigh
The Arch-Angel stood; and, from
the other hill
To their fixed station, all in bright
array
The Cherubim descended; on the
ground
Gliding meteorous, as evening-
mist
Risen from a river o'er the marish
glides,
And gathers ground fast at the
labourer's heel
Homeward returning. High in
front advanced,
The brandished sword of God be-
fore them blazed,
Fierce as a comet; which with tor-
rid heat, 680

And vapour as the Libyan air
adust,
Began to parch that temperate
clime; whereat
In either hand the hastening Angel
caught
Our lingering parents, and to the
eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff
as fast
To the subjected plain; then disap-
peared.

They, looking back, all the eastern
side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy
seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand;
the gate 690

With dreadful faces thronged, and
fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropt, but
wiped them soon;
The world was all before them,
where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence
their guide:
They, hand in hand, with wander-
ing steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary
way.