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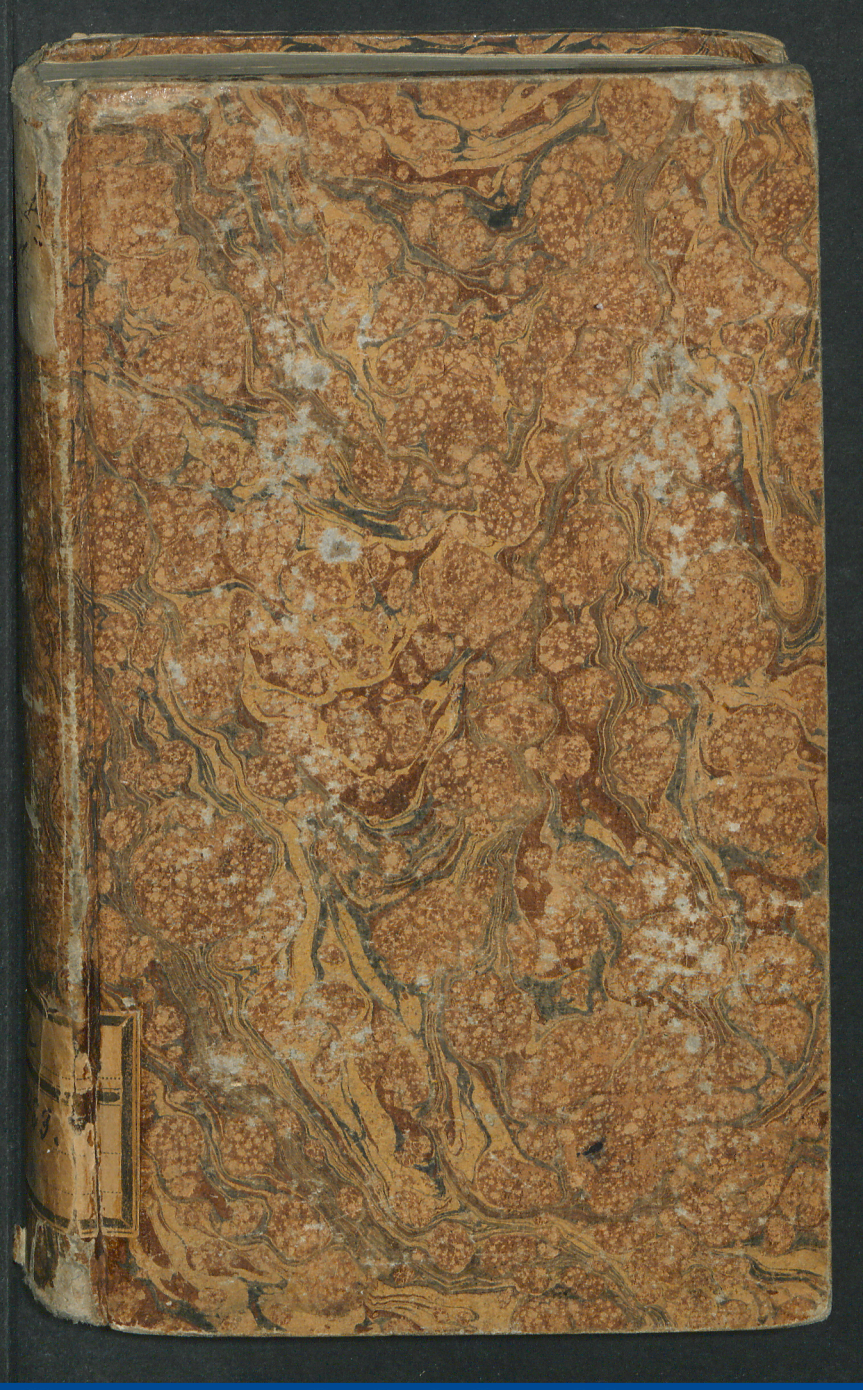
John Milton

Paradise Lost : A Poem : In Twelve Books

A new Edition, carefully corrected, Altenburgh: printed and sold by Richter, 1796

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PARADISE LOST

A POEM,

IN TWELVE BOOKS

WRITTEN BY

JOHN MILTON.

A new Edition, carefully corrected.

Τον πέρι Μῶσ' ἐφίλησε, δίδε δ' ἀγαθόν τε, κακόν τε·
Ὀφθαλμῶν μέν ἄμερσε, δίδε δ' ἡδεῖαν ἀοιδήν.

HOMER Odyss. Θ.

ALTENBURGH,
printed and sold by RICHTER.
1796.

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PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd, who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth
Rose out of Chaos: Or if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous 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
Wast present, and with mighty wings out-spread
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 argument
I may assert eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to Men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the deep tract of Hell, say first what cause
Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
Favor'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off
From their creator, and transgress his will
For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
Th' infernal Serpent! he it was, whose guile,
Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd
The mother of mankind, what time his pride
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his host
Of rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring
To set himself in glory above his peers,
He trusted to have equal'd the most High,
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim
Against the throne and monarchy of God
Rais'd impious war in Heav'n and battel proud
With vain attempt. Him the almighty Power
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
With hideous ruin and combustion, down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantin chains and penal fire,
Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to arms.
Nine times the space that measures day and night
To mortal men, with his horrid crew
Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes,
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,
Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
At once, as far as angels ken, he views
The dismal situation waste and wild;
A dungeon horrible, on all sides round
As one great furnace flam'd, yet from those flames
No light, but rather darkness visible
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe;

Regions

Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell; hope never comes
That comes to all; but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:
Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd
For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd,
In utter darkness, and their portion set
As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n,
As from the centre thrice to th' utmost pole.
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!
There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
He soon discerns; and welt'ring by his side
One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd
Beëlzebub. To whom th' Arch-enemy,
And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou beest He; But O how fall'n! how chang'd
From him, who in the happy realms of light
Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine
Myriads tho' bright! If he whom mutual league,
United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd
In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest
From what height fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
He with his thunder: and till then who knew
The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
Nor what the potent victor in his rage
Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind
And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
And to the fierce contention brought along
Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,

His utmoſt pow'r with adverſe pow'r oppos'd
In dubious battel on the plains of Heav'n,
And ſhook his throne. What tho' the field be loſt?
All is not loſt; th' unconquerable will,
And ſtudy of revenge, immortal hate,
And courage never to ſubmit or yield,
And what is elſe not to be overcome;
That glory never ſhall his wrath or might
Extort from me. To bow and ſue for grace
With ſuppliant knee, and deify his pow'r,
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 advanc'd,
We may with more ſucceſsful hope reſolve
To wage by force or guile eternal war,
Irreconcileable to our grand foe,
Who now triumphs, and in th' exceſs of joy
Sole reigning holds the tyranny of heaven.
So ſpake th' apoſtate Angel, though in pain,
Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep deſpair:
And him thus anſwer'd ſoon his bold compeer.
O Prince, O chief of many throned Powers,
That led th' imbattel'd Seraphim to war
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds
Fearleſs, endanger'd Heav'n's perpetual king,
And put to proof his high ſupremacy,
Whether upheld by ſtrength, or chance, or fate;
Too well I ſee and rue the dire event,
That with ſad overthrow and foul defeat
Hath loſt us Heav'n, and all this mighty hoſt
In horrible deſtruction laid thus low,
As far as Gods and heav'nly eſſences
Can periſh: for the mind and ſpirit remains
Invincible, and vigor ſoon returns,

Though

Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
But what if he our conqu'ror, whom I now
Of force believe almighty, since no less
Than such could have o'er-pow'r'd such force as ours,
Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
Or do him mightier service as his thralls
By right of war, whate'er his business be,
Here in the heart of Hell to work in fire,
Or do his errands in the gloomy deep;
What can it then avail, though yet we feel
Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
To undergo eternal punishment?
Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.
Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable
Doing or suffering: but of this be sure,
To do ought good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight,
As being the contrary to his high will
Whom we resist. If then his providence
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
Our labour must be to pervert that end,
And out of good still to find means of evil;
Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
But see! the angry victor hath recall'd
His ministers of vengeance and pursuit
Back to the gates of Heav'n: the sulphurous hail
Shot after us in storm, o'er-blown hath laid
The fiery surge, that from the precipice
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage,
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,

Or ſatiate fury yield it from our foe.
Seeſt thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild,
The ſeat of deſolation, void of light,
Save what the glimmering of theſe livid flames
Caſts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
From off the toſſing of theſe fiery waves,
There reſt, if any reſt can harbour there,
And re-aſſembling our afflicted Powers,
Conſult how we may henceforth moſt offend
Our enemy, our own loſs how repair,
How overcome this dire calamity,
What reinforcement we may gain from hope,
If not what reſolution from deſpair.

Thus Satan talking to his neareſt mate
With head up-lift above the wave, and eyes
That ſparkling blaz'd, his other parts beſides
Prone on the flood, extended long and large
Lay floating many a rood: in bulk as huge
As whom the fables name of monſtrous ſize,
Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove,
Briareus or Typhon, whom the den
By ancient Tarſus held, or that ſea-beaſt
Leviathan, which God of all his works
Created hugeſt that ſwim th' ocean ſtream:
Him haply ſlumb'ring on the Norway foam
The pilot of ſome ſmall night-founder'd ſkiff
Deeming ſome iſland, oft, as ſea-men tell,
With fixed anchor in his ſcaly rind
Moors by his ſide under the lee, while night
Inveſt the ſea, and wiſhed morn delays:
So ſtretch'd out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay,
Chain'd on the burning lake, nor ever thence
Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will
And high permiſſion of all-ruling Heaven
Left him at large to his own dark deſigns,
That with reiterated crimes he might
Heap on himſelf damnation, while he ſought
Evil to others, and enrag'd might ſee

How

How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shown
On Man by him seduc'd, but on himself
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.
Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
Driv'n backward slope their pointing spires, and roll'd
In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid vale.
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air
That felt unusual weight, till on dry land
He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force
Of subterranean wind transports a hill
Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
Of thund'ring Aetna, whose combustible
And fuel'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds,
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
With stench and smoke; Such resting found the sole
Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate,
Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.
Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat
That we must change for heav'n, this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he
Who now is sov'rain can dispose and bid
What shall be right: farthest from him is best,
Whom reason equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail horrors! hail
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time.
The mind is its own place, and in itself

Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be, all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:
Here we may reign secure; and in my choice
To reign is worth ambition, tho' in hell:
Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven.
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends
Th' associates and copartners of our loss,
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion, or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?
So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd. Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge
Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive, tho' now they lie
Groveling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,
As we ere while, astounded and amaz'd,
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicous height.
He scarce had ceas'd when the superior Fiend
Was moving tow'ard the shore; his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolé,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,
Rivers or mountains in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine

Hewn

Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the maſt
Of ſome great ammiral, were but a wand,
He walk'd with to ſupport uneaſy ſteps
Over the burning marle not like thoſe ſteps
On heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
Smote on him ſore beſides, vaulted with fire:
Nathleſs he ſo endur'd, till on the beach
Of that inflamed ſea he ſtood; and call'd
His legions, Angel-forms, who lay entranc'd,
Thick as autumnal leaves that ſtrow the brooks
In Vallombroſa, where th' Etrurian ſhades
High over-arch'd embow'r; or ſcatter'd ſedge
Aflote, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd
Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coaſt, whoſe waves o'erthrew
Buſiris and his Memphian chivalry,
While with perfidious hatred they perſued
The ſojourners of Goſhen, who beheld
From the ſafe ſhore their floating carcaſes
And brocken chariot wheels: ſo thick beſtrown
Abject and loſt lay theſe, covering the flood,
Under amazement of their hideous change.
He call'd ſo loud, that all the hollow deep
Of hell reſounded. Princes, Potentates,
Warriors, the flow'r of Heav'n, once your's, now loſt,
If ſuch aſtoniſhment as this can ſeiſe
Eternal Spirits; or have ye chos'n this place
After the toil of battel to repoſe
Your wearied virtue, for the eaſe you find
To ſlumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
Or in this abject poſture have ye ſworn
To adore the conqueror? who now beholds
Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
With ſcatter'd arms and enſigns, till anon
His ſwift purſuers from Heav'n gates diſcern
Th' advantage, and deſcending tread us down
Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
Tranſfix us to the bottom of this gulf,
Awake, ariſe, or be for ever fall'n.

They

They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
Yet to their General's voice they soon obey'd
Innumerable. As when the potent Rod
Of Amram's Son, in Egypt's evil day,
Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud
Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
So numberless were those bad Angels seen
Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
Till, as a signal giv'n, th'up-lifted spear
Of their great Sultan waving to direct
Their course, in even ballance down they light
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain;
A multitude! like which the populous north
Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.
Forthwith from ev'ry squadron and each band
The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
Their great commander; God-like shapes and forms
Excelling human, princely Dignities,
And Pow'rs, that erst in heaven sat on thrones;
Though of their names in heav'nly records now
Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd
By their rebellion, from the books of life.
Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
Got them new names, till wand'ring o'er the earth,
Thro' God's high sufferance for the tryal of man,
By falsities and lies the greatest part
Of mankind they corrupted to forsake

God

God their creator, and th'invisible
Glory of him, that made them to transform
Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
And Devils to adore for Deities:
Then were they known to men by various names,
And various Idols thro' he Heathen world.
Say, Muse, their names then known; who first, who last,
Rous'd 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 croud stood yet aloof.
The chief were those who from the pit of Hell
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix
Their seats long after next the seat of God,
Their altars by his altar, Gods ador'd
Among the nations round, and durst abide
Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
Abominations; and with cursed things
His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd,
And with their darkness durst affront his light.
First Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worship'd in Rabba and her watry plain,
In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
His temple right against the temple of God
On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell.
Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,

From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild
Of ſouthmoſt Abarim; in Heſebon
And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines,
And Eleäle to the Aſphaltic pool.
Peor his other name, when he entic'd
Iſrael in Sittim on their march from Nile
To do him wanton rites, which coſt them woe.
Yet thence his luſtful orgies he enlarg'd
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 bord'ring flood
Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts
Aegypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baälim and Aſhtaroth; thoſe male,
Theſe feminine. For Spirits when they pleaſe
Can either ſex aſſume, or both; ſo oft
And uncompounded is their eſſence pure,
Not ty'd or manacled with joint or limb,
Nor founded on the brittle ſtrength of bones,
Like cumbrous fleſh; but in what ſhape they chooſe
Dilated or conden's'd, bright or obſcure,
Can execute their airy purpoſes,
And works of love or enmity fulfil.
For thoſe the race of Iſrael oft forſook
Their living ſtrength, and unfrequented left
His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
To beſtial Gods; for which their heads as low
Bow'd down in battel, ſunk before the ſpear
Of deſpicable foes. With theſe in troop
Came Aſtoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
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 mountain, built
By that uxorious King, whoſe heart tho' large,

Be-

Beguil'd by fair idolatreſſes, fell
To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
Whoſe annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
The Syrian Damſels to lament his fate
In am'rous ditties all a ſummer's day,
While ſmooth Adonis from his native rock
Ran purple to the ſea, ſuppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
Whoſe wanton paſſions in the ſacred porch
Ezekiel ſaw, when by the viſion led
His eyes ſurvey'd the dark idolatries
Of alienated Judah. Next came one
Who mourn'd in earneſt, when the captive ark
Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
In his own temple, on the grunſel edge,
Where he fell flat, and ſham'd his worſhippers;
Dagon his name, ſea-monſter, upward man
And downward fiſh: yet had his temple high
Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coaſt
Of Paleſtine, in Gath, and Aſcalon,
And Accaron, and Gaza's frontier bounds.
Him follow'd Rimmon, whoſe delightful ſeat
Was fair Damaſcus, on the fertil banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid ſtreams.
He alſo againſt the houſe of God was bold:
A leper once he loſt, and gain'd a king;
Ahaz his ſottiſh conqu'ror, whom he drew
God's altar to diſparage and diſplace,
For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
His odious offerings, and adore the Gods
Whom he had vanquiſh'd. After theſe appear'd
A crew who under names of old renown,
Oſiris, Iſis, Orus, and their train,
With monſtrous ſhapes and ſorceries abus'd
Fanatic Aegypt and her prieſts, to ſeek
Their wand'ring Gods diſguis'd in brutiſh forms
Rather than human. Nor did Iſrael 'ſcape

From

Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
Likening his Maker to the grazed ox,
Jehovah, who in one night when he pass'd
From Aegypt marching, equal'd with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating Gods.
Belial came last, than whom a spirit more lewd
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love
Vice for itself: to him no temple stood
Or altar smoak'd; yet who more oft than he
In temples and at altars, when the priest
Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd
With lust and violence the house of God?
In courts and palaces he also reigns
And in luxurious cities, where the noise
Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
And injury and outrage: and when night
Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
Expos'd a matron to avoid worse rape

These were the prime in order and in might;
The rest were long to tell, tho' far renown'd:
Th' Ionian Gods, of Javan's issue held
Gods, yet confess'd later than Heav'n and Earth,
Their boasted parents. Titan, heav'ns first-born,
With his enormous brood, and birthright seis'd
By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove
His own and Rhea's son like measure found;
So Jove usurping reign'd: these first in Crete
And Ida known, thence on the snowy top
Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle air,
Their highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian cliff,
Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old

Fled

Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,
And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.
All these and more came flocking, but with looks
Down-cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd
Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their Chief
Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost
In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast
Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears.
Then strait commands that at the warlike sound
Of trumpets loud, and clarions, be uprear'd
His mighty standard: that proud honor claim'd
Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall;
Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd
Th' imperial ensign; which full high advanc'd,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden lustre rich imblaz'd,
Seraphic arms and trophies: all the while
Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds:
At which the universal host up sent
A shout that tore Hell's concave; and beyond
Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
All in a moment thro' the gloom were seen
Ten thousand banners rise into the air
With orient colours waving: with them rose
A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
Appear'd, and ferried shields in thick array,
Of depth immeasurable: anon they move
In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood
Of flutes, and soft recorders; such as rais'd
To height of noblest temper Heroes old
Arming to battel; and instead of rage,
Deliberate valor breath'd, firm, and unmov'd
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
Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil: and now
Advanc'd in view, they stand, a horrid front
Of dreadful length, and dazling arms, in guise
Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield,
Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
Had to impose: he thro' the armed files
Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
The whole battalion views their order due;
Their visages and stature as of Gods;
Their number last he sums. And now his heart
Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
Glories: for never since, created man
Met such imbodied force, as nam'd with these
Could merit more than that small infantry
Warr'd on by cranes: tho' all the Giant brood
Of Phlegra with th' Heroic race were join'd,
That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
Mix'd with auxiliar Gods: and what resounds
In fable or romance of Uther's son,
Begirt with British and Armoric Knights;
And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban,
Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisond;
Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore,
When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell
By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
Their dread commander: he, above the rest
In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
Stood like a tow'r: his form had yet not lost
All her original brightness, nor appear'd
Less than Arch-Angel ruin'd, and th' excess
Of glory obscur'd: as when the Sun new-ris'n
Looks thro' the horizontal misty air,

Shorn

Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes Monarchs; darken'd so, yet shone
Above them all th' Arch-Angel: but his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd, and care
Sate on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
Signs of remorse and passion to behold
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather,
Far other once beheld in bliss, condemn'd
For ever now to have their lot in pain;
Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
Of heav'n, and from eternal splendors flung
For his revolt, yet faithful now they stood,
Their glory wither'd: as when Heaven's fire
Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
With singed top their stately growth tho' bare
Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd
To speak, whereat their doubled ranks they bend
From wing to wing, and half inclose him round
With all his Peers: attention held them mute:
Thrice he assay'd, and thrice in spite of scorn
Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.
O myriads of immortal spirits! O Pow'rs
Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife
Was not inglorious, tho' th' event was dire,
As this place testifies, and this dire change,
Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind,
Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,
How such united force of Gods, how such
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?
For who can yet believe, tho' after loss,
That all these puissant legions, whose exile
Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend

Self-rais'd, and re-poſſeſs their native ſeat?
For me be witneſs all the hoſt of heav'n,
If counſels different, or danger ſhunn'd
By me, have loſt our hopes: but he who reigns
Monarch in Heav'n, 'till then as one ſecure
Sate on his throne, upheld by old repute,
Conſent or cuſtom, and his regal ſtate
Put forth at full, but ſtill his ſtrength conceal'd,
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;
So as not either to provoke, or dread
New war, provok'd; our better part remains
To work in cloſe deſign, by fraud or guile,
What force effected not: that he no leſs
At length from us may find, who overcomes
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.
Space may produce new worlds; whereof ſo riſe
There went a fame in Heav'n, that he ere long
Intended to create; and therein plant
A generation, whon his choice regard
Should favour equal to the ſons of Heav'n:
Thither, if but to pry, ſhall be perhaps
Our firſt eruption, thither or elſewhere:
For this infernal pit ſhall never hold
Celeſtial ſpirits in bondage, nor th'abyſs
Long under darkneſs cover. But theſe thoughts
Full counſel muſt mature; peace is deſpair'd,
For who can think ſubmiſſion? war then, war
Open or underſtood muſt be reſolv'd.
He ſpake: and to confirm his words out-flew
Millions of flamming ſwords, drawn from the thighs
Of mighty Cherubim: the ſudden blaze
Far round illumin'd Hell; highly they rag'd
Againſt the Higheſt, and fierce with graſped arms
Claſh'd on their ſounding ſhields the din of war,
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.
There ſtood a hill not far, whoſe griſly top
Belch'd fire and rolling ſmoke; the reſt entire

Shone

Shone with a gloſſy ſcurf, undoubted ſign
That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
The work of ſulphur. Thither wing'd with ſpeed
A numerous brigad haſten'd: as when bands
Of pioneers, with ſpade and pickax arm'd,
Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
Or caſt a rampart. Mammon led them on,
Mammon, the leaſt erected ſpirit that fell
From Heav'n; for ev'n in Heav'n his looks and thoughts
Where always downward bent; admiring more
The riches of Heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
Than ought divine or holy elſe, enjoy'd
In viſion beatific: by him firſt
Men alſo, and by his ſuggeſtion taught,
Ranſack'd the center, and with impious hands
Rifled the bowels of their mother earth,
For treaſures better hid. Soon had his crew
Open'd into the hill a ſpacious wound,
And dig'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire
That riches grow in Hell; that ſoil may beſt
Deſerve the precious bane. And here let thoſe
Who boaſt in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
Learn how their greateſt monuments of fame,
And ſtrength and art are eaſily out-done
By ſpirits reprobate, and in an hour
What in an age they with inceſſant toil
And hands innumerable ſcarce perform.
Nigh on the plain in many cells prepar'd,
That underneath had veins of liquid fire
Sluc'd from the lake, a ſecond multitude
With wondrous art found out the maſſy ore;
Severing each kind, and ſcumm'd the bullion droſs;
A third as ſoon had form'd within the ground
A various mold; and from the boiling cells
By ſtrange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook:
As in an Organ from one blaſt of wind
To many a row of pipes the ſound-board breathes.

Anon out of the earth a fabric huge
Roſe like an exhalation, with the ſound
Of dulcet ſymphonies and voices ſweet,
Built like a temple, where pilaſters round
Were ſet, and Doric pillars overlaid
With golden architrave: nor did there want
Cornice or freeze, with boſſy ſculptures graven;
The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
Nor great Alcairo ſuch magnificence
Equal'd in all their glories, to inſhrine
Belus, or Serapis their Gods, or ſeat
Their kings, when Egypt with Aſſyria ſtrove
In wealth and luxury. Th' aſcending pile
Stood fix'd her ſtately height, and ſtrait the doors
Opening their brazen folds, diſcover wide
Within, her ample ſpaces, o'er the ſmooth
And level pavement: from the arched roof,
Pendent by ſubtle magic many a row
Of ſtarry lamps and blazing creſſets, fed
With Naphtha and Aſphaltus, yielded light
As from a ſky. The haſty multitude
Admiring enter'd, and the work ſome praiſe
And ſome the architect: his hand was known
In Heav'n by many a tow'red ſtructure high,
Where ſceptered angels held their reſidence,
And ſate as Princes; whom the ſupreme king
Exalted to ſuch power, and gave to rule,
Each in Hierarchy, the orders bright.
Not was his name unheard, or unador'd,
In ancient Greece; and in Auſonian land
Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell
From Heav'n they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
Sheer o'er the chryſtal battlements; from morn
To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
A ſummer's day: and with the ſetting ſun
Dropt from the zenith like a falling ſtar:
On Lemnos th' Aegean iſle; thus they relate,
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout

Fell

Fell long before; nor ought evail'd him now
T' have built in Heave'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'scape
By all his engines, but was headlong sent
With his industrious crew to build in Hell.
Mean while the winged heralds by command
Of sov'reign pow'r, with awful ceremony
And trumpets sound, throughout the host proclaime
A solemn council forthwith to be held
At Pandemonium, the high capital
Of Satan and his Peers: their summons call'd
From every band and squared regiment
By place or choise the worthiest; they anon
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
Attended: all access was throng'd, the gates
And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall,
Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldans chair
Defy'd the best of Panim chivalry
To mortal combat, or career with lance,
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air
Brush'd with the hiss of rustling winds. As bees
In spring time, when the sun with Taurus rides,
Pour forth their populous youth about the hive
In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
Their state affairs. So thick the aery croud
Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till, the signal giv'n,
Behold a wonder! they but now who seem'd
In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
Throng numberless, like that pygmean race
Beyond the Indian mount, or fairy elves,
Whose midnight revels by a forest side
Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
Or dreams he sees, while over-head the moon
Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth

Weehls her pale courſe; they on their mirth and dance
Intent, with jocund muſic charm his ear;
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
Thus incorporeal ſpirits to ſmalleſt forms
Reduc'd their ſhapes immenſe, and were at large,
Though without number ſtill amidſt the hall
Of that infernal court. But far within,
And in their own dimenſions like themſelves,
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim,
In cloſe receſs and ſecret conclave ſat;
A thouſand Demi-gods on golden ſeats,
Frequent and full: after ſhort ſilence then
And ſummons read, the great conſult began.

The End of Firſt Book.

BOOK II.

High on a throne of royal ſtate, which far
Outſhone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous eaſt with richeſt hand
Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted ſat, by merit rais'd
To that bad eminence; and from deſpair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aſpires
Beyond thus high, inſatiate to purſue
Vain war with Heav'n, and by ſucceſs untaught
His proud imaginations thus diſplay'd.
  Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n!
For ſince no deep within her gulph can hold
Immortal vigor, though oppreſs'd and fall'n,
I give not Heav'n for loſt. From this deſcent
Celeſtial virtues riſing, will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And truſt themſelves to fear no ſecond fate.
Me, though juſt right, and the fix'd laws of Heav'n
Did firſt create your leader, next free choice,
With what beſides, in council or in fight,

Hath

Hath been achiev'd of merit, yet this loſs
Thus far at leaſt recover'd, hath much more
Eſtabliſh'd in a ſafe unenvied throne,
Yielded with full conſent. The happier ſtate
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw
Envy from each inferior; but who here
Will envy whom the higheſt place expoſes
Foremoſt to ſtand againſt the Thunderer's aim
Your bulwark, and condemns to greateſt ſhare
Of endleſs pain? Where there is then no good
For which to ſtrive, no ſtrife can grow up there
From faction; for none ſure will claim in Hell
Precedence; none, whoſe portion is ſo ſmall
Of preſent pain, that with ambitious mind
Will covet more! With this advantage then
To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heav'n, we now return
To claim our juſt inheritance of old,
Surer to proſper than proſperity
Could have aſſur'd us; and by what beſt way,
Whether of open war or covert guile,
We now debate; who can adviſe may ſpeak.
He ceas'd, and next him Moloch, ſceptred king,
Stood up, the ſtrongeſt and the fierceſt ſpirit
That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by deſpair:
His truſt was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
Equal in ſtrength, and rather than be leſs
Car'd not to be at all; with that care loſt
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worſe,
He reck'd not; and theſe words thereafter ſpake:
My ſentence is for open war: of wiles,
More unexpert, I boaſt not: them let thoſe
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now:
For while they ſit contriving, ſhall the reſt,
Millions that ſtand in arms, and longing wait
The ſignal to aſcend, ſit ling'ring here
Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
Accept this dark opprobrious den of ſhame,

The prison of his tyranny who reigns
By our delay? No! let us rather choose,
Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once
O'er Heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
Turning our tortures into horrid arms
Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
Of his Almighty engin he shall hear
Infernal thunder, and for lightning see
Black fire and horrot shot with equal rage
Among his Angels; and his throne itself
Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
His own invented torments. But perhaps
The way seems difficult and steep to scale
With upright wing against a higher foe.
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
That in our proper motion we ascend
Up to our native seat: descent and fall
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late
When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
Insulting, and persued us through the deep,
With what compulsion and laborious flight
We sunk thus low? th' ascent is easy then;
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
To our destruction: if there be in Hell
Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse
Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
Where pain of inextinguishable fire
Must exercise us without hope of end,
The vassals of his anger, when the scourge
Inexorably and the torturing hour,
Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus
We should be quite abolish'd and expire.
What fear then? what doubt we to incense
His utmost ire? which to the height enrag'd,
Will either quite consume us, and reduce

To

To nothing this essential; happier far
Than miserable to have eternal being:
Or if our substance be indeed divine,
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,
And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.
He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
Desperate revenge, and battel dangerous
To less than Gods. On th' other side up rose
Belial, in act more graceful and humane:
A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seem'd
For dignity compos'd and high exploit;
But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear
The better reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low;
To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
Timorous and slothful; yet he pleas'd the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began.
I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd
Main reason to persuade immediate war,
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels,
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
First, what revenge? the tow'rs of Heav'n are fill'd
With armed watch, that render all access
Impregnable; oft on the bordering deep
Encamp their legions, or with obscure wing
Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way

By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise
With blackest insurrection, to confound
Heav'n's purest light; yet our great enemy
All incorruptible would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and th' ethereal mould
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
And that must end us, that must be our cure
To be no more: sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
In the wide womb of uncreated night,
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,
Let this be good, whether our angry foe
Can give it, or will ever? how he can,
Is doubtful; that he never will, is sure.
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,
Belike through impotence, or unaware,
To give his enemies their wish, and end
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves
To punish endless? Wherefore cease we then?
Say they who counsel war, we are decreed,
Reserv'd, and destin'd to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
What! when we fled amain, pursu'd and struck
With Heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
The deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd
A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
What if the breath that kindled those grim fires,
Awak'd should blow them into sevenfold rage,
And plunge us in the flames? or from above

Should

Should intermitted vengeance arm again
His red right hand to plague us? what if all
Her ſtores were open'd, and this firmament
Of Hell ſhould ſpout her cataracts of fire,
Impendent horrors, threatning hideous fall
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps
Deſigning or exhorting glorious war,
Caught in a fiery tempeſt ſhall be hurl'd
Each on his rock transfix'd, the ſport and prey
Of racking whirlwinds; or for ever ſunk
Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
There to converſe with everlaſting groans,
Unreſpited, unpitied, unrepriev'd,
Ages of hopeleſs end? this would be worſe.
War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
My voice diſſuades; for what can force or guile
With him, or who deceive his mind, whoſe eye
Views all things at one view? He from Heav'n's height
All theſe our motions vain ſees and derides;
Not more almighty to reſiſt our might,
Than wiſe to fruſtrate all our plots and wiles.
Shall we then live thus vile, the Race of Heaven
Thus trampled, thus expell'd, to ſuffer here
Chains and theſe torments? better theſe than worſe,
By my advice; ſince fate inevitable
Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
The victor's will. To ſuffer as to do,
Our ſtrength is equal, nor the law unjuſt
That ſo ordains. This was at firſt reſolv'd
If we were wiſe, againſt ſo great a foe
Contending, and ſo doubtful what might fall.
I laugh, when thoſe who at the ſpear are bold
And ventrous, if that fail them, ſhrink and fear
What yet they know muſt follow, to endure
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
The ſentence of their conqu'ror: this is now
Our doom; which if we can ſuſtain and bear,
Our ſupreme foe, in time may much remit

His anger, and perhaps thus far remov'd
Not mind us not offending, satisfy'd
With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
Will slaken, if his breath stir not their flames.
Our purer essence then will overcome
Their noxious vapor; or enur'd, not feel;
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
In temper and in nature, will receive
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
This horror will grow mild, this darkness light:
Besides what hope the never-ending flight
Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
Worth waiting, since our present lot appears
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
If we procure not to ourselves more woe.
Thus Belial with words cloath'd in reason's gard
Counsel'd ignobie ease, and peaceful sloth
Not peace: and after him thus Mammon spake.
Either to disinthrone the king of Heav'n
We war, if war be best, or to regain
Our own right lost. Him to unthrone we then
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife:
The former vain to hope argues as vain
The latter: for what place can be for us
Within Heav'n's bound, unless Heav'n's Lord supreme
We overpower? suppose he should relent
And publish grace to all, on promise made
Of new subjection: with what eyes could we
Stand in his presence humble, and receive
Strict laws impos'd, to celebrate his throne
With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
Forc'd hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
Our envy'd Sov'reign, and his altar breathes
Ambrosial odors, and ambrosial flowers,
Our servile offerings? This must be our task
In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisome
Eternity so spent in worship paid

To

To whom we hate! let us not then purſue
By force impoſſible, by leave obtain'd
Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our ſtate
Of ſplendid vaſſalage; but rather ſeek
Our own good from ourſelves, and from our own
Live to ourſelves, though in this vaſt receſs,
Free, and to none accountable, preferring
Hard liberty before the eaſy yoke
Of ſervile pomp. Our greatneſs will appear
Then moſt conſpicuous, when great things of ſmall,
Uſeful of hurtful, proſperous of adverſe
We can create; and in what place ſo e'er
Thrive under evil, and work eaſe out of pain,
Through labor and indurance. This deep world
Of darkneſs do we dread? how oft amidſt
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'n's all-ruling Sire
Chooſe to reſide, his glory unobſcur'd,
And with the majeſty of darkneſs round
Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
Muſt'ring their rage, and Heav'n reſembles Hell?
As he our darkneſs, cannot we his light
Imitate when we pleaſe? this deſert ſoil
Wants not her hidden luſtre, gems and gold:
Nor want we ſkill or art, from whence to raiſe
Magnificence; and what can Heav'n ſhew more?
Our torments alſo may in length of time
Become our elements; theſe piercing fires
As ſoft as now ſevere, our temper chang'd
Into their temper: which muſt needs remove
The ſenſible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counſels, and the ſettled ſtate
Of order, how in ſafety beſt we may
Compoſe our preſent evils, with regard
Of what we are and where, diſmiſſing quite
All thoughts of war. Ye have what I adviſe.
He ſcarce had finiſh'd, when ſuch murmur fill'd
Th' aſſembly, as when hollow rocks retain
The ſound of bluſtring winds, which all night long

Had

Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadense lull
Sea-fearing men o'erwatch'd, whose bark by chance
Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest: such applause was heard
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd,
Advising peace; for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell: so much the fear
Of thunder, and the sword of Michaël
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether Empire, which might rise
By policy, and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat, with grave
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
Majestic though in ruin? sage he stood,
With Atlantean shoulders fit to bear
The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
Drew audience and attention still as night
Or summer's noon-tide air, while thus he spake.
Thrones, and Imperial Pow'rs, Offspring of Heav'n,
Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now
Must we renounce, and changing style, be call'd
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here
A growing empire: doubtless; while we dream,
And know not that the king of Heav'n hath doom'd
This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat
Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
Banded against his throne, but to remain
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd
Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
His captive multitude: For he, be sure,
In height or depth, still first and last will reign

Sole

Sole King, and of his kingdom loſe no part
By our revolt; but over Hell extend
His empire, and with iron ſceptre rule
Us here, as with his golden thoſe in Heav'n.
What ſit we then projecting peace and war?
War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loſs
Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
Vouchſaf'd or ſought: for what peace will be giv'n
To us enſlav'd, but cuſtody ſevere,
And ſtripes, and arbitrary puniſhment
Inflicted? and what peace can we return?
But, to our power, hoſtility, and hate,
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though ſlow,
Yet ever plotting how the conqueror leaſt
May reap his conqueſt, and may leaſt rejoice
In doing what we moſt in ſuffering feel?
Nor will occaſion want, nor ſhall we need
With dangerous expedition to invade
Heav'n, whoſe high walls fear no aſſault or ſiege,
Or ambuſh from the deep: what if we find
Some eaſier enterprize? there is a place,
If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n
Err not, another world, the happy ſeat
Of ſome new race call'd Man, about this time
To be created like to us, though leſs
In pow'r and excellence, but favor'd more
Of him who rules above: ſo was his will
Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an oath,
That ſhook Heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
What creatures there inhabit, of what mold,
Or ſubſtance, how endu'd, and what their pow'r,
And where their weakneſs, how attempted beſt,
By force or ſubtlety. Though Heav'n be ſhut,
And Heav'n's high arbitrator ſit ſecure
In his own ſtrength, this place may lye expos'd
The utmoſt border of his kingdom, left
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps

Some advantagious act may be atchiev'd
By sudden onset, either with hell fire
To waste his whole creation, or possess
All as our own, and drive, as we are driv'n,
The puny habitans; or if not drive,
Seduce them to our party, that their God
May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
Abolish his own works. This would surpass
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
In our confusion, and our joy upraise
In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
Their frail original, and faded bliss,
Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
Hatching vain empires. —— Thus Beëlzebub
Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
By Satan, and in part propos'd: for whence,
But from the author of all ill, could spring
So deep a malice to confound the race
Of mankind in one root, and earth with hell
To mingle and involve, done all to spite
The great Creator? but their spite still serves
His glory to augment. The bold design
Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy
Sparkl'd in all their eyes; with full assent
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.
Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate
Synod of Gods! and, like to what ye are,
Great things resolv'd; which from the lowest deep
Will once more lift us up, in spight of fate,
Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
Of those bright confines, whence with neighbouring arms,
And opportune excursion, we may chance
Re-enter Heav'n: or else in some mild Zone
Dwell not unvisited of Heav'n's fair light
Secure, and at the brightning orient beam
Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air,

To

To heal the ſcar of theſe corroſive fires
Shall breathe her balm. But firſt whom ſhall we ſend
In ſearch of this new world; whom ſhall we find
Sufficient? who ſhall tempt with wandring feet
The dark unbottom'd infinite abyſs,
And through the palbable obſcure find out
His uncouth way, or ſpread his aery flight
Upborn with indefatigable wings
Over the vaſt abrupt, e'er he arrive
The happy iſle? What ſtrength, what art can then
Suffice, or what evaſion bear him ſafe
Through the ſtrict ſenteries, and ſtations thick
Of Angels watching round? here he had need
All circumſpection; and we now no leſs
Choice in our ſuffrage: for on whom we ſend,
The weight of all and our laſt hope relies.
This ſaid, he ſat; and expectation held
His look ſuſpenſe, awaiting who appear'd
To ſecond, or oppoſe, or undertake
The perilous attempt: But all ſat mute,
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
In others count'nance read his own diſmay
Aſtoniſh'd: none, among the choice and prime
Of thoſe heav'n-warring champions, could be found
So hardy, as to proffer or accept
Alone the dreadful voyage: till at laſt
Satan, whom now tranſcendent glory rais'd
Above his fellows, with monarchal pride
Conſcious of higheſt worth, unmov'd thus ſpake.
O Progeny of Heav'n, empyreal Thrones!
With reaſon hath deep ſilence and demur
Seiz'd us, though undiſmay'd: long is the way
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to light.
Our priſon ſtrong, this huge convex of fire,
Outragious to devour, immures us round
Ninefold: and gates of burning adamant
Barr'd over us prohibit all egreſs
Theſe paſs'd, if any paſs, the void profound

Of uneſſential night receives him next
Wide gaping, and with utter loſs of being
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
If thence he ſcape into whatever world,
Or unknown region, what remains him leſs
Than unknown dangers, and as hard eſcape?
But I ſhould ill become this throne, O Peers,
And this imperial ſov'reign'ty, adorn'd
With ſplendor, arm'd with pow'r, if ought propos'd
And judg'd of public moment, in the ſhape
Of difficulty or danger could deter
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I aſſume
Theſe Royalties, and not refuſe to reign,
Refuſing to accept as great a ſhare
Of hazard as of honor, due alike
To him who reigns, and ſo much to him due
Of hazard more, as he above the reſt
High honor'd ſits? Go therefore mighty Pow'rs,
Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,
While here ſhall be our home, what beſt may eaſe
The preſent miſery, and render Hell
More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
To reſpite or deceive, or ſlack the pain
Of this ill manſion. Intermit no watch
Againſt a wakeful foe, while I abroad
Through all the coaſt of dark deſtruction ſeek
Deliverance for us all: this enterprize
None ſhall partake with me. —— Thus ſaying roſe
The Monarch, and prevented all reply;
Prudent, leſt from his reſolution rais'd
Others among the chief might offer now,
Certain to be refus'd, what erſt they fear'd;
And ſo refus'd might in opinion ſtand
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
Which he through hazard huge muſt earn. But they
Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice
Forbidding; and at once with him they roſe:
Their riſing all at once was as the ſound

Of

Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
With awful reverence prone; and as a God
Extol him equal to the higheſt in Heav'n:
Nor fail'd they to expreſs how much they prais'd,
That for the general ſafety he deſpis'd
His own: for neither do the ſpirits damn'd
Loſe all their virtue; leſt bad men ſhould boaſt
Their ſpecious deeds on earth, which glory excites;
Or cloſe ambition varniſh'd o'er with zeal.
Thus they their doubtful conſultations dark
Ended, rejoicing in their matchleſs Chief:
As when from mountain tops the duſky clouds
Aſcending, while the north-wind ſleeps, o'er-ſpread
Heav'n's chearful face, the lowring element
Scowls o'er the darken'd landſcape ſnow, or ſhower;
If chance the radiant ſun with farewel ſweet
Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,
The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
Atteſt their joy, that hill and valley rings.
O ſhame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd
Firm concord holds; men only diſagree
Of creatures rational, though under hope
Of heav'nly grace: and God proclaiming peace,
Yet live in hatred; enmity and ſtrife
Among themſelves, and levy cruel wars,
Waſting the earth, each other to deſtroy:
As if, which might induce us to accord,
Man had not helliſh foes enow beſides,
That day and night for his deſtruction wait.
The Stygian council thus diſſolv'd, and forth
In order came the grand infernal Peers:
'Midſt came their mighty Paramount, and ſeem'd
Alone th' antagoniſt of heav'n, nor leſs
Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp ſupreme,
And Goh-like imitated ſtate: him round
A globe of fiery Seraphim inclos'd
With bright imblazonry, and horrent arms.
Then of their ſeſſion ended they bid cry

With trumpets regal ſound the great reſult:
Tow'rds the four winds four ſpeedy Cherubim
Put to their mouths the ſounding alchemy
By heralds voice explain'd: the hollow Abyſs
Heard far and wide, and all the hoſt of Hell
With deaf'ning ſhout return'd them loud acclaim.
Thence more at eaſe their minds, and ſomewhat rais'd
By falſe preſumptuous hope, the ranged Powers
Disband, and wand'ring, each his ſeveral way
Purſues, as inclination or fad choice
Leads him perplex'd, where he may likelieſt find
Truce to his reſtleſs thoughts, and entertain
The irkſome hours, till his great chief return.
Part on the plain, or in the air ſublime
Upon the wing, or in ſwift race contend,
As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields:
Part curb their fiery ſteeds, or ſhun the goal
With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form.
As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
Wag'd in the troubl'd ſky, and armies ruſh
To battel in the clouds, before each van
Prick forth the aery Knights, and couch their ſpears
Till thickeſt legions cloſe; with feats of arms
From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.
Others, with vaſt Typhoean rage, more fell
Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air
In whirlwind: Hell ſcarce hold the wild uproar.
As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
With conqueſt, felt th' invenom'd robe, and tore
Through pain up by the roots Theſſalian pines,
And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw
Into th' Euboic ſea. Others more mild,
Retreated in a ſilent valley, ſing
With notes angelical to many a harp
Their own heroic deeds and hapleſs fall
By doom of battel; and complain that fate
Free virtue ſhould inthrall to force or chance.
Their ſong was partial, but the harmony,

What

What could it less when spirits immortal sing?
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet,
For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense,
Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
In thoughts more elevate, an reason'd high
Of providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
Of good and evil much they argued then,
Of happiness and final misery,
Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy:
Yet with a pleasing sorcery could charm
Pain for a while, or anguish; and excite
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.
Another part, in squadrons and gross bands,
On bold adventure to discover wide
That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
Might yield them easier habitation, bend
Four ways their flying march, along the banks
Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful streams;
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
Sad Acheron, of sorrow black and deep;
Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton,
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
For off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe the river of oblivion rolls
Her watry labyrinth; whereof who drinks,
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.
Beyond this flood a frozen continent
Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
Of whirlwind and dire hail; which on firm land
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems

Of ancient pile; or else deep snow and ice,
A gulf profound, as that Serbonian bog
Betwixt Damiata and mount Casius old,
Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire.
Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd
At certain revolutions all the damn'd
Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire,
They ferry over this Lethéan sound
Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
And wish and struggle as they pass, to reach
The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
All in one moment, and so near the brink:
But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt
Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
The ford, and of itself the water flies
All taste of living wight, as once it fled
The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
In confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands
With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp,
Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death,
A universe of death, which God by curse
Created evil, for evil only good,
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
Abominable, inutterable, and worse
Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
Gorgons, and Hydra's, and Chimera's dire.

Mean

Mean while the Adversary of God and Man,
Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,
Puts on swift wings, and tow'rds the gates of Hell
Explores his solitary flight; sometimes
He scours the right-hand coast; sometimes the left,
Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars
Up to the fiery concave towring high
As when far off at sea a fleet descry'd
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs: they on the trading flood
Through the wide Ethiopian, to the Cape
Ply stemming nightly tow'rd the pole. So seem'd
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass
Three iron, three of adamantin rock,
Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable shape;
The one seem'd woman to the waste, and fair,
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast, a serpent arm'd
With mortal sting: about her middle round
A cry of hell-hounds never ceasing bark'd
With wide Cerberian mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal: yet, when they list, would creep,
If ought disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd, and howl'd
Within, unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these
Vex'd Scylla bathing in the sea that parts
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring Moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,

If ſhape it might be call'd that ſhape had none
Diſtinguiſhable in member, joint, or limb,
Or ſubſtance might be call'd that ſhadow ſeem'd,
For each ſeem'd either; black it ſtood as Night,
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And ſhook a dreadful dart; what ſeem'd his head
The likeneſs of a Kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his ſeat
The monſter moving onward came as faſt
With horrid ſtrides. Hell trembled as he ſtrode.
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
Created thing not valued he nor ſhunn'd;
And with diſdainful look thus firſt began.
Whence and what art thou, execrable ſhape,
That dar'ſt, though grim and terrible, advance
Thy miſcreated front athwart my way
To yonder gates? through them I mean to paſs,
That be aſſur'd, without leave aſk'd of thee.
Retire, or taſte thy folly, and learn by proof,
Hell-born; not to contend with ſpirits of Heav'n.
To whom the goblin full of wrath reply'd,
Art thou that traitor-Angel, art thou He,
Who firſt broke peace in Heav'n, and faith, till then
Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's ſons,
Conjur'd againſt the Higheſt; for which both thou
And they, outcaſt from God, are here condemn'd
To waſte eternal days in woe and pain?
And reckon'ſt thou thyſelf with ſpirits of Heav'n,
Hell-doom'd! and breath'ſt defiance here and ſcorn
Where I reign King, and, to enrage thee more,
Thy King and Lord? Back to thy puniſhment,
Falſe fugitive! and to thy ſpeed add wings;
Leſt with a whip of ſcorpions I purſue
Thy lingring; or with one ſtroke of this dart
Strange horror ſeize thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So

So spake the griesly terror, and in shape,
So speaking and so threatning, grew tenfold
More dreadful and deform. On th' other side
Incens'd with indignation Satan stood
Unterrify'd, and like a comet burn'd,
That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
Level'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
No second stroke intend; and such a frown
Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
With Heav'n's artill'ry fraught, come rattling on
Over the Caspian; then stand front to front
Hov'ring a space, till winds the signal blow
To join their dark encounter in mid air:
So frown'd the mighty combatants, that Hell
Grew darker at their frown: so match'd they stood:
For never but once more was either like
To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds
Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,
Had not the snaky sorceres that sat
Fast by Hell-gate, and kept the fatal key,
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.
O father! what intends thy hand, she cry'd,
Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom;
For him who sits above, and laughs the while
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.
She spacke, and at her words the hellish pest
Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd.
So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds
What it intends; till first I know of thee,
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd; and why

In

In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
Sight more detestable than him, and thee.
T' whom thus the portress of hell-gate reply'd:
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
In Heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
Of all the Seraphim, with thee combin'd
In bold conspiracy against Heav'n's King,
All on a sudden miserable pain
Surpriz'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide,
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd,
Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seiz'd
All th' host of Heav'n; back they recoil'd afraid
At first, and call'd me Sin; and for a sign
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,
I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft,
Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing,
Becam'st inamour'd, and such joy thou took'st
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
A growing burthen. Mean while war arose,
And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein remain'd,
For what could else, to our almighty foe
Clear victory; to our part loss and rout,
Through all the empyréan: down they fell
Driv'n headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
Into this deep; and in the gen'ral fall
I also: at which time this powerful key
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep
These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,

Pro-

Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes:
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy
Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out Death!
Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
From all her caves, and back resounded, Death!
I fled, but he pursued, though more, it seems,
Inflam'd with lust than rage, and swifter far,
Me overtook his mother, all dismay'd,
And in embraces forcible and foul
Ingendring with me, of that rape begot
These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
To me; for when they list, into the womb
That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth
Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
That rest or intermission none I find.
Before mine eyes in opposition sits
Grim Death my son and foe; who sets them on,
And me his parent would full soon devour
For want of other prey, but that he knows
His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
Whenever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.
But thou, O father! I forewarn thee, shun
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
To be invuln'rable in those bright arms,
Though temper'd heav'nly; for that mortal dint,
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.
She finish'd, and the subtle Fiend his lore
Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth.

Dear

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

Fear-

Fearleſs to be o'ermatch'd by living might,
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thruſt me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To ſit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nly-born,
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamors compaſs'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'ſt me; whom ſhould I obey
But thee? whom follow? thou wilt bring me ſoon
To that new world of light and bliſs, among
The Gods who live at eaſe, where I ſhall reign
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beſeems
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.
Thus ſaying, from her ſide the fatal key,
Sad inſtrument of all our woe! ſhe took;
And towards the gate rolling her beſtial train,
Forthwith the huge Portcullis high up-drew;
Which but her ſelf, not all the Stygian Pow'rs
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of maſſy iron, or ſolid rock, with eaſe
Unfaſtens: on a ſudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring ſound
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harſh thunder, that the loweſt bottom ſhook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to ſhut
Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open ſtood,
That with extended wings a banner'd hoſt,
Under ſpread enſings marching, might paſs through
With horſe and chariots rank'd in looſe array;
So wide they ſtood, and like a furnace mouth
Caſt forth redounding ſmoke and ruddy flame!
Before their eyes in ſudden view appear
The ſecrets of the hoary deep, a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,

With-

Without dimenſion, where lenght, breadth, and height,
And time, and place are loſt; where eldeſt Night
And Chaos, anceſtors of Nature, hold
Eternal anarchy, amidſt the noiſe
Of endleſs wars, and by confuſion ſtand.
For hot, cold, moiſt, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for maſt'ry, and to battel bring
Their embryon atoms; they around the flag
Of each his faction, in their ſev'ral clans,
Light-arm'd or heavy, ſharp, ſmooth, ſwift or ſlow,
Swarm populous, un-number'd as the ſands
Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid ſoil,
Levied to ſide with warring winds, and poiſe
Their lighter wings. To whom theſe moſt adhere,
He rules a moment; Chaos umpire ſits,
And by deciſion more embroils the fray
By which he reigns: next him high arbiter
Chance governs all. Into this wild abyſs,
The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
Of neither ſea, nor ſhore, nor air, nor fire,
But all theſe in their pregnant cauſes mix'd
Confus'dly, and which thus muſt ever fight,
Unleſs th' almighty Maker them ordain
His dark materials to create more worlds;
Into this wild abyſs the wary Fiend
Stood on the brink of Hell, and look'd a while,
Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
He had to croſs: nor was his ear leſs peal'd
With noiſes loud and rouinous, to compare
Great things with ſmall, than when Bellona ſtorms,
With all her batt'ring engins bent to raſe
Some capital city; or leſs than if this frame
Of Heav'n were falling, and theſe elements
In mutiny had from her axle torn
The ſtedfaſt earth. At laſt his ſail-broad vans
He ſpreads for flight, and in the ſurging ſmoke
Uplifted ſpurns the ground: thence many a league,
As in a cloudy chair, aſcending rides

Auda-

Audacious; but that ſeat ſoon failing, meets
A vaſt vacuity: all unawares
Flutt'ring his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
Ten thouſand fathom deep, and to this hour
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance
The ſtrong rebuff of ſome tumultuous cloud,
Inſtinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
As many miles aloft: that fury ſtay'd,
Quench'd in a boggy Syrtis, neither ſea,
Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares,
Treading the crude conſiſtence, half on foot,
Half flying; behoves him now both oar and ſail.
As when a gryphon through the wilderneſs
With winged courſe, o'er hill or moory dale,
Perſues the Arimaſpian, who by ſtealth
Had from his wakeful cuſtody purloin'd
The guarded gold: ſo eagerly the Fiend
O'er bog, or ſteep, through ſtrait, rough, denſe, or rare,
With head, hands, wings or feet purſues his way,
And ſwims, or ſinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:
At length a univerſal hubbub wild
Of ſtunning ſounds and voices all confus'd,
Borne through the hallow dark, aſſaults his ear
With loudeſt vehemence: thither he plies,
Undaunted to meet there whatever Power
Or ſpirit of the nethermoſt abyſs
Might in that noiſe reſide, of whom to aſk
Which way the neareſt coaſt of darkneſs lies
Bordering on light; when ſtrait behold the throne
Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion ſpread
Wide on the waſteful deep; with him inthron'd
Sate ſable-veſted Night, eldeſt of things,
The conſort of his reign; and by them ſtood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon: Rumor next and Chance,
And Tumult and Confuſion all imbroil'd,
And Diſcord with a thouſand various mouths.
T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus. — Ye Powers,

And ſpirits of this nethermoſt abyſs,
Chaos and ancient Night, I come no ſpy,
With purpoſe to explore or to diſturb
The ſecrets of your realm, but by conſtraint
Wand'ring this darkſome deſart, as my way
Lies through your ſpacious empire up to light,
Alone, and without guide, half loſt, I ſeek
What readieſt path leads where your gloomy bounds
Confine with Heav'n: or if ſome other place,
From your dominion won, th' ethereal king
Poſſeſſes lately, thither to arrive
I travel this profound, direct my courſe;
Directed no mean recompenſe it brings
To your behoof, if I that region loſt,
All uſurpation thence expell'd, reduce
To her original darkneſs, and your ſway,
Which is my preſent journey, and once more
Erect the ſtandard there of ancient Night;
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.
Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
With falt'ring ſpeech and viſage incompos'd,
Anſwer'd. I know thee, ſtranger, who thou art,
That mighty leading Angel, who of late
Made head againſt Heav'n's King, though overthrown.
I ſaw and heard, for ſuch a num'rous hoſt
Fled not in ſilence through the frighted deep
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
Confuſion worſe confounded: and Heav'n gates
Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
Purſuing. I upon my frontiers here
Keep reſidence; if all I can will ſerve
That little which is left ſo to defend,
Encroach'd on ſtill through our inteſtine broils,
Weakning the ſcepter of old Night: firſt Hell,
Your dungeon, ſtretching far and wide beneath;
Now lately Heav'n and Earth, another world,
Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain,
To that ſide Heav'n from whence your legions fell:

If

If that way be your walk, you have not far;
So much the nearer danger: go and speed!
Havoc, and spoil, and ruin are my gain.
He ceas'd; and Satan staid not to reply,
But glad that now his sea should find a shore,
With fresh alacrity and force renew'd
Springs upward like a pyramid of fire
Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
Of fighting elements, on all sides round
Environ'd, wins his way: harder beset
And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
Through Bosporus, betwixt the justling rocks:
Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
Charybdis; and by th' other whirlpool steer'd.
So he with difficulty and labor hard
Mov'd on, with difficulty and labor he;
But he once past, soon after when man fell,
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
Following his track, such was the will of Heaven!
Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way,
Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
Tamely endur'd a bridge of wond'rous length,
From Hell continued reaching th' utmost orb
Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse
With easy intercourse pass to and fro
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom
God and good Angels guard by special grace.
But now at last the sacred influence
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heaven
Shoots far into the bosom of dim Night
A glimmering dawn: here Nature first begins
Her farthest verge, and Chaos to retire
As from her outmost works a broken foe
With tumult less and with less hostile din;
That Satan with less toil, and now with ease
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
And like a weather-beaten vessel holds
Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;

Or in the emptier waſte, reſembling air,
Weighs his ſpread wings, at leaſure to behold
Far off th' empyreal Heav'n, extended wide
In circuit, undetermin'd ſquare or round:
With opal tow'rs, and battlements adorn'd
Of living ſaphir, once his native ſeat;
And faſt by hanging in a golden chain
This pendent world, in bigneſs as a ſtar
Of ſmalleſt magnitude, cloſe by the moon.
Thither full fraught with miſchievous revenge,
Accurs'd, and in a curſed hour he hies.

The End of the Second Book.

BOOK III.

Hail holy Light, offſpring of Heav'n firſt-born,
Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam
May I expreſs thee unblam'd? ſince God is light,
And never but in unapproached light
Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee,
Bright effluence of bright eſſence increate.
Or hear'ſt thou rather pure ethereal ſtream,
Whoſe fountain who ſhall tell? before the Sun,
Before the heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle didſt inveſt
The riſing world of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formleſs infinite.
Thee I 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 th' Orphéan lyre,
I ſung of Chaos and eternal Night,
Taught by the heav'nly Muſe to venture down
The dark deſcent, and up to re-aſcend,
Tho' hard and rare. Thee I reviſit ſafe,
And feel thy ſov'reign vital lamp: but thou

Revi-

Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a *drop serene* hath quench'd their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander, where the Muses haunt,
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song: but chief
Thee, Sion, and the flowry brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallow'd feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equal'd with me in fate,
So were I equal'd with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides,
And Tiresias, and Phineus Prophets old.
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntary move
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful bird
Sings darkling, and in shadiest covert hid
Tunes her nocturnal note. Thus with the year
Seasons return, but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of ev'n or morn,
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine:
But cloud instead, and ever-during dark
Surrounds me; from the chearful ways of men
Cut off; and for the book of knowledge fair
Presented with an universal blank
Of nature's works, to me expung'd and ras'd,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.
So much the rather thou, coelestial 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 moral sight.
Now had th' almighty Father from above,
From the pure empyrean where he sits
High thron'd above all height, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view:
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven
Stood

Stood thick as ſtars, and from his ſight receiv'd
Beatitude paſt utterance: on his right
The radiant image of his glory ſat,
His only Son. On earth he firſt beheld
Our two firſt parents, yet the only two
Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrival'd love
In bliſsful ſolitude. He then ſurvey'd
Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
Coaſting the wall of Heav'n on this ſide Night,
In the dun air ſublime, and ready now
To ſtoop with wearied wings, and willing feet
On the bare outſide of this world, that ſeem'd
Firm land imboſom'd, without firmament,
Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
Him God beholding from his proſpect high,
Wherein paſt, preſent, future he beholds,
Thus to his only Son foreſeeing ſpake.
Only begotten Son, ſeeſt thou what rage
Tranſports our Adverſary? whom no bounds
Preſcrib'd, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyſs
Wide interrupt can hold; ſo bent he ſeems
On deſperate revenge, that ſhall redound
Upon his own rebellious head. And now
Through all reſtraint broke looſe he wings his way
Not far off Heav'n, in the percincts of light,
Directly towards the new crated world,
And Man there plac'd; with purpoſe to aſſay
If him by force he can deſtroy, or worſe,
By ſome falſe guile pervert, and ſhall pervert,
For man will hearken to his glozing lies,
And eaſily tranſgreſs the ſole command,
Sole pledge of his obedience: ſo will fall,
He and his faithleſs progeny. Whoſe fault?
Whoſe but his own? Ingrate! he had of me
All he could have: I made him juſt and right,

Suf-

Sufficient to have ſtood, though free to fall.
Such I created all th' ethereal Powers
And Spirits, both them who ſtood and them who fail'd;
Freely they ſtood who ſtood, and fell who fell.
Not free, what proof could they have giv'n ſincere
Of true allegiance, conſtant faith or love,
Where only what they needs muſt do appear'd,
Not what they would? what praiſe could they receive?
What pleaſure I from ſuch obedience paid,
When will and reaſon, reaſon alſo is choice,
Uſeleſs and vain, of freedom both deſpoil'd,
Made paſſive both, had ſerv'd neceſſity,
Not me? They therefore as to right belong'd,
So were created, nor can juſtly accuſe
Their maker, or their making, or their fate,
As if predeſtination over-rul'd
Their will, diſpos'd by abſolute decree
Or high foreknowledge. They themſelves decreed
Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
Which had no leſs prov'd certain unforeknown.
So without leaſt impulſe or ſhadow of fate,
Or ought by me immutably foreſeen,
They treſpaſs, authors to themſelves in all,
Both what they judge and what they chooſe; for ſo
I form'd them free, and free they muſt remain,
'Till they inthrall themſelves; I elſe muſt change
Their nature, and revoke the high decree
Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
Their freedom, they themſelves ordain'd their fall.
The firſt ſort by their own ſuggeſtion fell,
Self-tempted, ſelf-deprav'd: Man falls, deceiv'd
By th' other firſt: Man therefore ſhall find grace,
The other none: in mercy and juſtice both,
Through Heav'n and Earth, ſo ſhall my glory excel,
But mercy firſt and laſt ſhall brighteſt ſhine.
Thus while God ſpake, ambroſial fragrance fill'd
All Heav'n, and in the bleſſed Spirits elect

Senſe of new joy ineffable diffus'd:
Beyond compare the Son of God was ſeen
Moſt glorious; in him all his Father ſhone
Subſtantially expreſs'd; and in his face
Divine compaſſion viſibly appear'd
Love without end, and without meaſure grace,
Which uttering, thus he to his Father ſpake.
O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
Thy ſov'reign ſentence, that man ſhould find grace:
For which both Heav'n and earth ſhall high extol
Thy praiſes, with th' innumerable ſound
Of hymns and ſacred ſongs, wherewith thy throne
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.
Or ſhall the Adverſary thus obtain
His end, and fruſtrate thine? ſhall he fulfil
His malice, and thy goodneſs bring to nought,
Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
Yet with revenge accompliſh'd, and to Hell
Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyſelf
Aboliſh thy creation, and unmake
For him, what for thy glory thou haſt made?
So ſhould thy goodneſs and thy greatneſs both
Be queſtion'd, and blaſphem'd without defence.
To whom the great Creator thus reply'd.
O Son, in whom my ſoul hath chief delight,
Son of my boſom, Son who art alone
My word, my wiſdom, and effectual might,
All haſt thou ſpoken as my thoughts are, all
As my eternal purpoſe hath decreed.
Man ſhall not quite be loſt, but ſav'd who will,
Yet not of will in him, but grace in me

Freely

Freely vouchsaf'd: once more I will renew
His lapsed pow'rs, though forfeit and inthrall'd
By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
On even ground against his mortal foe,
By me upheld, that he may know how frail
His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
All his deliverance, and to none but me.
Some I have chosen of peculiar grace
Elect above the rest: so is my will:
The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd
Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
Th' incensed Deity, while offer'd grace
Invites: for I will clear their senses dark,
What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
And I will place within them as a guide
My umpire conscience: whom if they will hear,
Light after light well us'd they shall attain,
And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
But hard be harden'd, blind be blinded more,
That they may stumble on, and deeper fall:
And none but such from mercy I exclude.
But yet all is not done: Man disobeying,
Disloyal breaks his fealty, and sins
Against the high supremacy of Heav'n,
Affecting God-head, and so losing all,
To expiate his treason hath nought left,
But to destruction sacred and devote,
He with his whole posterity must die,
Die he or justice must; unless for him
Some other able, and as willing, pay
The rigid satisfaction, death for death.

Say heav'nly Pow'rs, where shall we find such love?
Which of ye will be mortal to redeem
Man's mortal crime, and just, th' unjust to save?
Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?
He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,
And silence was in Heav'n: on man's behalf
Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
Much less that durst upon his own head draw
The deadly forfeiture, and ransome set.
And now without redemption all mankind
Must have been lost, adjudg'd to Death and Hell
By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
His dearest mediation thus renew'd.
Father, thy word is past, Man shall find grace;
And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
The speediest of thy winged messengers,
To visit all thy creatures, and to all
Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?
Happy for Man, so coming; he her aid
Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
Atonement for himself or offering meet,
Indebted, and undone, hath none to bring:
Behold me then; me for him, life for life
I offer, on me let thine anger fall;
Account me Man: I for his sake will leave
Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
Freely put off, and for him lastly die
Well pleas'd, on me let Death wreak all his rage;
Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long
Lie vanquish'd; thou hast giv'n me to possess
Life in myself for ever; by thee I live,
Though now to Death I yield, and am his due
All that of me can die: yet that debt paid,
Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
For ever with corruption there to dwell;
But I shall rise victorious, and subdue
My

My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
I through the ample air in triumph high
Shall lead Hell captive, maugre Hell; and show
The Pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou at the sight
Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
While by thee rais'd I ruin all my foes,
Death last, and with his carcass glut the grave:
Then with the multitude of my redeem'd
Shall enter Heav'n long absent, and return,
Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
And reconcilement; wrath shall be no more
Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.
His words here ended, but his meek aspect
Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
To mortal men, above which only shone
Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will
Of his great Father. Admiration seis'd
All Heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend
Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus reply'd.
O Thou in Heav'n and Earth the only peace
Found out for mankind under wrath, O Thou
My sole complacence! well thou know'st how dear
To me are all my works, nor Man the least
Though last created; that for him I spare
Thee from my bosom and right hand, to save,
By losing thee a while, the whole race lost.
Thou therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
Their nature also to thy nature join;
And be thyself man among men on earth,
Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin-seed,
By wondrous birth: be thou in Adam's room
The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
As in him perish all men, so in thee,
As from a second root, shall be restor'd

As many as are reſtor'd, without thee none.
His crime makes guilty all his ſons; thy merit
Imputed ſhall abſolve them who renounce
Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds:
And live in thee tranſplanted, and from thee
Receive new life. So Man, as is moſt juſt,
Shall ſatisfy for man, be judg'd and die;
And dying riſe, and riſing with him raiſe
His brethren, ranſom'd with his own dear life.
So heav'nly love ſhall outdo helliſh hate,
Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
So dearly to redeem what helliſh hate
So eaſily deſtroy'd, and ſtill deſtroys
In thoſe who, when they may, accept not grace.
Nor ſhalt thou, by deſcending to aſſume
Man's nature, leſſen or degrade thine own.
Becauſe thou haſt, tho' thron'd in higheſt bliſs
Equal to God, and equally enjoying
God-like fruition, quitted all to ſave
A world from utter loſs, and haſt been found
By merit more than birthright Son of God,
Found worthieſt to be ſo by being good,
Far more than great or high; becauſe in thee
Love hath abounded more than glory abounds,
Therefore thy humiliation ſhall exalt
With thee thy manhood alſo to this throne;
Here ſhalt thou ſit incarnate, here ſhalt reig'n
Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
Anointed univerſal king; all power
I give thee; reign for ever, and aſſume
Thy merits: under thee as head ſupreme
Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions I reduce:
All knees to thee ſhall bow, of them that 'bide
In Heav'n, or Earth, or under Earth in Hell.
When thou attended glorioufly from Heav'n
Shalt in the ſky appear, and from thee ſend
The ſummoning Arch-Angels to proclaim
Thy dread tribunal: forthwith from all winds

The

The living, and forthwith the cited dead
Of all paſt ages to the general doom
Shall haſten, ſuch a peal ſhall rouſe their ſleep.
Then all thy ſaints aſſembled, thou ſhalt judge
Bad men and Angels, they arraign'd ſhall ſink
Beneath thy ſentence; Hell, her numbers full,
Thenceforth ſhall be for ever ſhut. Mean while
The world ſhall burn, and from her aſhes ſpring
New Heav'n and Earth, wherein the juſt ſhall dwell,
And after all their tribulations long
See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth,
Then thou thy regal ſceptre ſhalt lay by,
For regal ſceptre then no more ſhall need,
God ſhall be all in all. But all ye Gods,
Adore him, who to compaſs all this dies,
Adore the Son, and honor him as me.
No ſooner had th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
The multitude of Angels with a ſhout
Loud as from numbers without number, ſweet
As from bleſt voices, uttering joy, Heav'n rung
With jubilee, and loud hoſanna's fill'd
Th' eternal regions. Lowly reverent
Tow'rds either throne they bow, and to the ground
With ſolemn adoration down they caſt
Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold,
Immortal amarant! a flow'r which once
In Paradiſe faſt by the tree of life
Began to bloom; but ſoon for man's offence
To Heav'n remov'd, where firſt it grew, there grows,
And flow'rs aloft ſhading the fount of life,
And where the river of bliſs thro' midſt of Heaven
Rolls o'er Elyſian flow'rs her amber ſtream:
With theſe that never fade the ſpirits elect
Bind their reſplendent locks, inwreath'd with beams,
Now in looſe garlands thick thrown off the bright
Pavement, that like a ſea of jaſper ſhone,
Impurpled with coeleſtial roſes ſmil'd.

Then

Then crown'd again, their golden harps they took,
Harps ever tun'd, that glitt'ring by their ſide
Like quivers hung, and with preamble ſweet
Of charming ſymphony they introduce
Their ſacred ſong, and waken raptures high,
No voice exempt; no voice but well could join
Melodious part, ſuch concord is in Heav'n.
Thee, Father, firſt they ſung, Omnipotent,
Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
Eternal King; Thee Author of all Being,
Fountain of Light, thyſelf inviſible
Amidſt the glorious brightneſs where thou ſit'ſt
Thron'd inacceſſible, but when thou ſhad'ſt
The full blaze of thy beams, and thro' a cloud
Drawn round about thee like a radiant ſhrine,
Dark with exceſſive bright thy ſkirts appear,
Yet dazle Heav'n, that brighteſt Seraphim
Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
Thee next they ſung of all creation firſt,
Begotten Son, Divine ſimilitude!
In whoſe conſpicuous count'nance, without cloud
Made viſible, th' almighty Father ſhines,
Whom elſe no creature can behold: on thee
Impreſs'd, th' effulgence of his glory abides;
Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit reſts.
He Heav'n of Heav'ns, and all the pow'rs therein
By thee created; and by thee drew down
Th' aſpiring Dominations. Thou that day
Thy Father's dreadful thunder didſt not ſpare,
Nor ſtop thy flaming chariot wheels, that ſhook
Heav'n's everlaſting frame, while o'er the necks
Thou drov'ſt of warring Angels disarray'd.
Back from purſuit thy Pow'rs with loud acclame
Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
To execute fierce vengeance on his foes.
Not ſo on man: him thro' their malice fall'n,
Father of mercy and grace! thou didſt not doom
So ſtrictly; but much more to pity incline.

No

No sooner did thy dear and only Son,
Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd,
He to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
Second to thee, offer'd himself to die
For man's offence. O unexampled love!
Love no where to be found less than Divine!
Hail Son of God, Saviour of men! thy name
Shall be the copious matter of my song
Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.
Thus they in Heav'n, above the starry sphere,
Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.
Mean while upon the firm opacous globe
Of this round wold, whose first convex divides
The luminous inferior orbs inclos'd
From Chaos, and th' inroad of Darkness old,
Satan alighted walks. A globe far off
It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms
Of Chaos blustring round, inclement sky!
Save on that side which from the well of Heaven,
Tho' distant far, some small reflection gains
Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud.
Here walk'd the Fiend at large in spacious field.
As when a Vultur on Imaus bred,
Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
Dissodging from a region scarce of prey
To gorge the flesh of lambs, or yeanling kids,
On hills where flocks are fed, flies tow'rd the springs
Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams;
But in his way lights on the barren plains
Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
So on this windy sea of land, the Fiend

Walk'd

Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
Alone, for other creature in this place
Living or lifeleſs to be found was none;
None yet, but ſtore hereafter from the earth
Up hither like aereal vapors flew,
Of all things tranſitory and vain, when ſin
With vanity had fill'd the works of men:
Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
Built their fond hopes of glory or laſting fame,
Or happineſs in this or th' other life:
All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
Of painful ſuperſtition and blind zeal,
Nought ſeeking but the praiſe of men, here find
Fit retribution, empty as their deeds:
All th' unaccompliſh'd works of Nature's hand,
Abortive, monſtrous, or unkindly mix'd,
Diſſolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
Till final diſſolution, wander here,
Not in the neighb'ring moon, as ſome have dream'd;
Thoſe argent fields more likely habitants,
Tranſlated Saints, or middle Spirits hold
Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
Hither, of ill-join'd ſons and daughters born,
Firſt from the ancient world thoſe giants came,
With many a vain exploit, tho' then renown'd:
The builders next of Babel on the plain
Of Sennaar, and ſtill with vain deſign
New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
Others came ſingle; he who to be deem'd
A God, leap'd fondly into Aetna flames,
Empedocles: and he who to enjoy
Plato's Elyſium, leap'd into the Sea,
Cleombrotus: and many more too long,
Embryoes and idiots, Eremits, and Friars
White, *Black* and *Gray*, with all their trumpery.
Here Pilgrims roam, that ſtray'd ſo far to ſeek
In Golgotha him dead, who lives in Heav'n:
And they who, to be ſure of Paradiſe,

Dying

Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
Or in Franciſcan think to paſs diſguis'd;
They paſs the Planets ſeven, and paſs the fix'd,
And that chryſtalline ſphere whoſe ballance weighs
The trepidation talk'd, and that firſt mov'd;
And now Saint Peter at Heav'n's wicket ſeems
To wait them with his keys, and now at foot
Of Heav'n's aſcent they lift their feet, when lo!
A violent croſs-wind from either coaſt
Blows them transverſe, ten thouſand leagues awry
Into the devious air: then might ye ſee
Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers toſt
And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
Indulgences, Diſpenſes, Pardons, Bulls,
The ſport of winds. All theſe upwhirl'd aloft
Fly o'er the backſide of the world far off
Into a Limbo large and broad, ſince call'd
The Paradiſe of Fools, to few unknown
Long after: now unpeopled; and untrod.
All this dark globe the Fiend found as he paſs'd,
And long he wander'd, till at laſt a gleam
Of dawning light turn'd thither-ward in haſte
His travel'd ſteps; far diſtant he deſcries
Aſcending by degrees magnificent
Up to the wall of Heav'n a ſtructure high;
At top whereof, but far more rich appear'd
The work as of a kingly palace-gate,
With frontiſpiece of diamond and gold
Embelliſh'd; thick with ſparkling orient gems
The portal ſhone, inimitable on earth
By model, or by ſhading pencil drawn.
The ſtairs were ſuch as whereon Jacob ſaw
Angels aſcending and deſcending, bands
Of guardians bright, when he from Eſau fled
To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,
Dreaming by night under the open ſky,
And waking cry'd, *This is the gate of Heav'n.*
Each ſtair myſteriouſly was meant, nor ſtood

There always, but drawn up to Heav'n sometimes
Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon
Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd,
Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake
Rap'd in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:
Direct against which open'd from beneath,
Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
Wider by far than that of after-times
Over mount Sion, and, though that were large,
Over the Promis'd Land to God so dear,
By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
On high behests his Angels to and fro
Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard,
From Paneas the fount of Jordan's flood
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore;
So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair
That scal'd by steps of gold to Heaven gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this world at once. As when a scout
Thro' dark and desart ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of chearful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
With glistering spires and pinnacles adorn'd,
Which now the rising Sun gilds with his beams:
Such wonder seis'd, though after Heaven seen,
The spirit malign; but much more envy seis'd
At sight of all this world beheld so fair.

Round

Round he surveys, and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of night's extended shade, from eastern point
Of Libra, to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond th' horizon: then from pole to pole
He views in breadth, and without longer pause
Down right into the world's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
Thrice happy isles, but who dwelt happy there
He stay'd not to inquire. Above them all
The golden sun, in splendor likest Heav'n,
Allur'd his eye: thither his course he bends
Through the calm firmament: but up or down,
By centre, or eccentric, hard to tell,
Or longitude, where the great luminary
Aloof the vulgar constellations thick,
That from his lordly eye keep distance due,
Dispenses light from far; they as they move
Their starry dance in numbers that compute
Days, months and years, tow'rds his all-chearing lamp
Turn swift their various motions, or are turn'd
By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
The universe, and to each inward part
With gentle penetration, though unseen,
Shoots invisible virtue even to the deep;
So wondrously was set his station bright.
There lands the Fiend, a spot like which perhaps
Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw.
The place he found beyond expression bright,
Compar'd with ought on earth, metal or stone:

Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear:
If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
Ruby or topaz, or the twelve that shone
In Aaron's breast-plate: and a stone besides,
Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
That stone, or like to that, which here below
Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
In vain, though by their pow'rful art they bind
Volatil Hermes, and call up unbound
In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
Drain'd through a limbec to his native form.
What wonder then if fields and regions here
Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
Th' arch-chemic sun, so far from us remote,
Produces, with terrestrial humor mix'd,
Here in the dark so many precious things
Of color glorious, and effect so rare?
Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
Undazled; far and wide his eye commands,
For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
Culminate from th' equator, as they now
Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
Shadow from body opaque can fall, and th' air
No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray
To objects distant far, whereby he soon
Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,
The same whom John saw also in the sun:
His back was turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
Lay waving round: on some great charge employ'd
He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.
Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope

To

To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
To Paradise the happy seat of Man,
His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
But first he casts to change his proper shape,
Which else might work him danger or delay:
And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
Youth smiled celestial, and to ev'ry limb
Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd.
Under a coronet his flowing hair
In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore
Of many a color'd plume, sprinkled with gold,
His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
Before his decent steps a silver wand.
He drew not nigh unheard, the Angel bright,
Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
Th' Arch-Angel Uriel, one of the sev'n
Who in Gods presence, nearest to his throne
Stand ready at command, and are his eyes
That run thro' all the Heav'ns, or down to th' earth
Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts.
Uriel, for thou of those sev'n spirits that stand
In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
The first art wont his great authentic will
Interpreter through highest Heav'n to bring,
Where all his sons thy embassy attend:
And here art likeliest by supreme decree
Like honor to obtain, and as his eye
To visit oft this new creation round:
Unspeakable desire to see, and know
All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,
His chief delight and favor, him for whom
All these his works so wondrous he ordain'd,
Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim
Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph, tell
In which of all these shining orbs hath Man

His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell:
That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
Or open admiration him behold,
On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
That both in him and all things, as is meet,
The Universal Maker we may praise;
Who justly hath driven out his rebel foes
To deepest Hell, and to repair that loss
Created this new happy race of Men
To serve him better: wise are all his ways.
So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd;
For neither Man nor Angel can discern
Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
Invisible, except to God alone,
By his permissive will, through Heav'n and Earth:
And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
Where no ill seems: Which now for once beguil'd
Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held
The sharpest-sighted spirit of all in Heaven:
Who to the fraudulent impostor foul
In his uprightness answer thus return'd.
Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know
The works of God, thereby to glorify
The great Work-master, leads to no excess
That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps
Contented with report hear only in Heav'n:
For wonderful indeed are all his works,
Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
Had in remembrance always with delight;
But what created mind can comprehend
Their number, or the wisdom infinite

That

That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
I saw when at his word the formless mass,
This world's material mould, came to a heap:
Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar
Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd:
Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
Swift to their several quarters hasted then
The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire:
And this ethereal quintessence of Heav'n
Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars,
Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
Each had his place appointed, each his course;
The rest in circuit walls this universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, tho' but reflected, shines:
That place is Earth, the seat of man, that light
His day, which else as th' other hemisphere
Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon,
So call that opposite fair star, her aid
Timely interposes, and her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid Heav'n,
With borrow'd light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties, to enlighten th' earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode, those lofty shades his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires.
Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan bowing low,
As to superior spirits wont in Heav'n,
Where honor due and reverence none neglects,
Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,
Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success,
Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
Nor stay'd, till on Niphates top he lights.

The End of the Third Book.

BOOK IV.

O for that warning voice, which he who saw
Th' Apocalyps heard cry in Heav'n aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
Woe to th' inhabitants on earth! that now
While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
The coming of their secret foe, and scap'd,
Haply so scap'd his mortal snare: for now
Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
The tempter e're th' accuser of mankind,
To wreck on innocent frail man his loss
Of that first battel, and his flight to Hell:
Yet not rejoicing in his speed though bold,
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt, which nigh the birth
Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
And like a devilish engine back recoils
Upon himself: horror and doubt distract
His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
The Hell within him; for within him hell
He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
One step no more than from himself can fly
By change of place: now conscience wakes despair
That slumber'd, wakes the bitter memory
Of what he was, what is, and what must be
Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
Sometimes tow'rds Eden, which now in his view
Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
Sometimes tow'rds Heav'n and the full blazing sun,
Which now sat high in his meridian tow'r:
Then much revolving, thus in sighs began.

O thou that with surpassing glory crown'd,
Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
Of this new world, at whose sight all the stars
Hide their diminished heads; to thee I call,

But

But with no friendly voice, and add thy name
O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
That bring to my remembrance from what ſtate
I fell, how glorious once above thy ſphere;
Till pride and worſe ambition threw me down
Warring in Heav'n againſt Heav'n's matchleſs king.
Ah wherefore! he deſerv'd no ſuch return
From me, whom he created what I was
In that bright eminence, and with his good
Upbraided none; nor was his ſervice hard.
What could be leſs than to afford him praiſe,
The eaſieſt recompenſe, and pay him thanks;
How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
And wrought but malice; lifted up ſo high
I 'ſdein'd ſubjection, and thought one ſtep higher
Would ſet me higheſt, and in a moment quit
The debt immenſe of endleſs gratitude,
So burdenſome ſtill paying, ſtill to owe,
Forgetful what from him I ſtill receiv'd,
And underſtood not that a grateful mind
By owing owes not, but ſtill pays, at once
Indebted and diſcharg'd: what burden then?
O had his pow'rful deſtiny ordain'd
Me ſome inferior Angel! I had ſtood
Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd
Ambition. Yet why not? ſome other Power
As great might have aſpir'd, and me though mean
Drawn to his part; but other Pow'rs as great
Fell not, but ſtand unſhaken, from within
Or from without, to all temptations arm'd.
Hadſt thou the ſame free will and pow'r to ſtand?
Thou hadſt: whom haſt thou then, or what, t'accuſe,
But Heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?
Be then his love accurs'd, ſince love or hate,
To me alike, it deals eternal woe.
Nay curs'd be thou; ſince againſt his thy will
Choſe freely what it now ſo juſtly rues.
Me miſerable! which way ſhall I fly

Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?
Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell;
And in the lowest deep a lower deep
Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.
O then at last relent! is there no place
Left for repentance, none for pardon left?
None left but by submission; and that word
Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
With other promises and other vaunts
Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
Th' Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
How dearly I abide that boast so vain;
Under what torments inwardly I groan,
While they adore me on the throne of Hell.
With diadem and sceptre high advanc'd,
The lower still I fall, only supreme
In misery; such joy ambition finds!
But say I could repent, and could obtain
By act of grace my former state; how soon
Would hight recall high thoughts, how soon unsay
What feign'd submission swore! ease would recant
Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
For never can true reconcilement grow
Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:
Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
Short intermission bought with double smart.
This knows my punisher; therefore as far
From granting he, as I from begging peace.
All hope excluded thus, behold in stead
Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
Mankind created, and for him this world.
So farewel hope, and with hope farewel fear,
Farewel remorse! all good to me is lost;
Evil be thou my good! by thee at least
Divided empire with Heav'n's king I hold;

By

By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign:
As Man e're-long, and this new world shall know.
Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy and despair;
Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld.
For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm,
Artificer of fraud; and was the first
That practis'd falsehood under saintly show,
Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
Uriel once warn'd; whose eye pursued him down
The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
He mark'd, and mad demeanour, then alone,
As he supposs'd, all unobserv'd, unseen.
So on he fares, and to the border comes
Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
As with a rural mound, the champaign head
Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
With thicket overgrown, grottesque and wild,
Access deny'd: and over head up grew
Insuperable hight of loftiest shade,
Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
A sylvan scene, and as the ranks ascend
Shade above shade, a woody theatre
Of statelieſt view. Yet higher than their tops
The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung:
Which to our general sire gave prospect large
Into his nether empire, neighb'ring round.
And higher than that wall a circling row
Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd colors mix'd:

On

On which the Sun more glad impreſs'd his beams
Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
When God hath ſhow'r'd the earth; ſo lovely ſeem'd
That landſcape! and of pure now purer air
Meets his approach, and to the heart inſpires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All ſadneſs but deſpair: now gentle gales
Fanning their odoriferous wings diſpenſe
Native perfumes, and whiſper whence they ſtole
Thoſe balmy ſpoils. As when to them who ſail
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are paſt
Mozambic, off at ſea north-eaſt winds blow
Sabean odors from the ſpicy ſhore
Of Araby the bleſt; with ſuch delay
Well pleas'd they ſlack their courſe, and many a league
Chear'd with the grateful ſmell old Ocean ſmiles:
So entertain'd thoſe odorous ſweets the Fiend
Who came their bane; though with them better pleas'd
Than Asmodëus with the fiſhy fume
That drove him, though enamour'd, from the ſponſe
Of Tobit's ſon, and with a vengeance ſent
From Media poſt to Egypt, there faſt bound.
Now to th' aſcent of that ſteep ſavage hill
Satan had journey'd on, penſive and ſlow;
But further way found none, ſo thick entwin'd,
As one continu'd brake, the undergrowth
Of ſhrups and tangling buſhes had perplex'd
All path of man or beaſt that baſs'd that way:
One gate there only was, and that look'd eaſt
On th' other ſide: which when th' Arch-felon ſaw,
Due entrance he diſdain'd, and in contempt,
At one ſlight bound hight over-leape'd all bound
Of hill or higheſt wall, and ſheer within
Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
Whom hunger drives to ſeek new haunt for prey,
Watching where ſhepherds pen their flocks at eve
In hurdled cotes amid the field ſecure,
Leaps o'er the fence with eaſe into the fold:

Or

Or as a thief bent to unhoard the cash
Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
Cross barr'd and bolted fast, fear no assault,
In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles:
So clomb this first grand thief into God's fold;
So since into his Church lewd hirelings climb.
Thence up he flew, and on the tree of life,
The middle tree and highest there that grew,
Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life,
Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
To them who liv'd: nor on the virtue thought
Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge
Of immortality. So little knows
Any, but God alone, to value right
The good before him, but perverts best things
To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.
Beneath him with new wonder now he views
To all delight of human sense expos'd
In narrow room Natures whole wealth, yea more,
A Heav'n on Earth! for blissful Paradise
Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
Of Eden planted; Eden stretch'd her line
From Auran eastward to the royal towers
Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
Or where the sons of Eden long before
Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil
His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd:
Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
And all amid them stood the tree of life,
High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
Of vegetable gold: and next to life,
Our death the Tree of knowledge, grew fast by;
Knowledge of good bought dear by knowing ill!
Southward through Eden went a river large,
Nor chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
Pass'd underneath ingulf'd, for God had thrown

That

That mountain as his garden mold high rais'd
Upon the rapid current, which through veins
Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
Wa r'd the garden; thence united fell
Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood
Which from his darksome passage now appears,
And now divided into four main streams,
Runs diverse, wand'ring many a famous realm
And country, whereof here needs no account;
But rather to tell how, if Art could tell,
How, from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
With mazy error under pendent shades
Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed
Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade
Imbrown'd the noon-tide bow'rs. Thus was this place
A happy rural seat of various view:
Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums, and balm,
Others whose fruit burnish'd with golden rind
Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true,
If true, here only, and of delicious taste.
Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd,
Or palmy hilloc, or the flow'ry lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store;
Flow'rs of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grots and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant: mean-while murm'ring waters fall
Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
Her chrystal mirror holds, unite their streams.

The

The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on th' eternal spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flow'r by gloomy Dis
Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her thro' the world; nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
Of Eden strive: nor that Nyseian isle
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea, and her florid son
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye:
Nor where Abassin kings their issue guard,
Mount Amara, though this by some suppos'd
True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
By Nilus' head, inclos'd with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden; where the Fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape erect and tall,
Godlike erect; with native honor clad
In naked majesty, seem'd Lords of all,
And worthy seem'd: for in their looks divine,
The image of their glorious maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure,
Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd,
Whence true authority in men: though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
For contemplation he and valor form'd,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
He for God only, she for God in him.
His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd
Absolute rule; and hyacinthin locks

Round

Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Cluſtring, but not beneath his ſhoulders broad.
She, as a veil, down to the ſlender waiſt
Her unadorned golden treſſes wore,
Diſhevel'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd,
As the vine curls her tendrils, which imply'd
Subjection, but requir'd with gentle ſway,
And by her yielded, by him beſt receiv'd,
Yielded with coy ſubmiſſion, modeſt pride,
And ſweet reluctant amorous delay.
Nor thoſe myſterious parts were then conceal'd;
Then was not guilty ſhame, dishoneſt ſhame
Of nature's works; honor diſhonorable,
Sin-bred! how have ye troubled all mankind
With ſhows inſtead, mere ſhows of ſeeming pure,
And baniſh'd from man's life his happieſt life,
Simplicity and ſpotleſs innocence?
So paſs'd they naked on, nor ſhunn'd the ſight
Of God or Angel, for they thought no ill:
So hand in hand they paſs'd, the loveliest pair
That ever ſince in love's embraces met;
Adam the goodlieſt man of men ſince born
His ſons the faireſt of her daughters Eve.
Under a ruft of ſhade, that on a green
Stood whiſp'ring ſoft, by a freſh fountain ſide
They ſat them down: and after no more toil
Of their ſweet gard'ning labor than ſuffic'd
To recommend cool Zephyr, and made eaſe
More eaſy, wholſome thirſt and appetite
More grateful, to their ſupper fruits they fell,
Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
Yielded them, ſide-long as they ſat recline
On the ſoft downy banck damaſk'd with flowers.
The ſavoury pulp they chew, and in the rind
Still as they thirſted ſcoop the brimming ſtream;
Nor gentle purpoſe, nor endearing ſmiles
Wanted, nor youthful dalliance as beſeems
Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,

Alone

Alone as they. About them frisking play'd
All beasts of th'earth, since wild, and of all chase
In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
Gambol'd before them, th'unwieldy elephant
To make them mirth us'd all his might, and wreath'd
His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly
Insinuating, wove with gordian twine
His braided train, and of his fatal guile
Gave proof unheeded: others on the grass
Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
Or bedward ruminating: for the sun
Declin'd was hasting now with prone career
To th'ocean isles, and in th'ascending scale
Of Heav'n the stars that usher evening rose:
When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
Scarce thus at length fail'd speech recover'd sad.

O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
Creatures of other mold; earth-born perhaps,
Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
In them divine resemblance, and such grace
The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd.
Ah gentle pair, ye little thinck how nigh
Your change approaches, when all these delights
Will vanish, and deliver you to woe,
More woe, the more your taste is now of joy:
Happy, but for so happy ill secur'd
Long to continue; and this high seat your Heav'n
Ill fenc'd for Heav'n, to keep out such a foe
As now is enter'd: yet no purpos'd foe
To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
Though I unpitied. League with you I seek,
And mutual amity so strait, so close,
That I with you must dwell, or you with me

Henceforth: my dwelling haply may not pleaſe,
Like this fair Paradiſe, your ſenſe, yet ſuch
Accept your maker's work; he gave it me,
Which I as freely give: Hell ſhall unfold,
To entertain you two, her wideſt gates,
And ſend forth all her kings: there will be room,
Not like theſe narrow limits, to receive
Your numerous offspring: if no better place,
Thank him who puts me loath to this revenge
On you who wrong me not for him who wrong'd.
And ſhould I at your harmleſs innocence
Melt, as I do, yet public reaſon juſt,
Honor and empire with revenge enlarg'd,
By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
To do, what elſe, though damn'd, I ſhould abhor.
So ſpake the Fiend, and with neceſſity,
The tyrant's plea, excus'd his deviliſh deeds.
Then from his lofty ſtand on that high tree
Down he alights among the ſportful herd
Of thoſe four-footed kinds, himſelf now one,
Now other, as their ſhape ſerv'd beſt his end
Nearer to view his prey, and uneſpy'd
To mark what of their ſtate he more might learn
By word or action mark'd: about them round
A lion now he ſtalks with fiery glare;
Then as a tiger, who by chance hath ſpy'd
In ſome purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
Straight couches cloſe, then riſing changes oft
His couchant watch, as one who choſe his ground,
Whence ruſhing he might ſureſt ſeize them both
Grip'd in each paw: when Adam firſt of men
To firſt of women Eve thus moving ſpeech,
Turn'd him, all ear, to hear new utterance flow.
Sole partner and ſole part of all theſe joys,
Dearer thyſelf than all! needs muſt the Pow'r
That made us, and for us this ample world,
Be infinitely good, and of his good
As liberal and free as infinite;

That

That rais'd us from the duſt, and plac'd us here
In all this happineſs, who at his hand
Have nothing merited, nor can perform
Ought whereof he hath need, he who requires
From us no other ſervice than to keep
This one, this eaſy charge, of all the trees
In Paradiſe that bear delicious fruit
So various, not to taſte that only tree
Of knowledge, planted by the tree of life;
So near grows death to life, whate'er death is,
Some dreadful thing no doubt: for well thou know'ſt
God hath pronounc'd it death to taſte that tree,
The only ſign of our obedience left
Among ſo many ſigns of pow'r and rule
Conferr'd upon us, and dominion giv'n
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 extoll
His bounty, following our delightful taſk
To prune theſe growing plants, and tend theſe flow'rs,
Which were it toilſome, yet with thee were ſweet.
To whom thus Eve reply'd. O thou for whom
And from whom I was form'd, fleſh of thy fleſh,
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head, what thou haſt ſaid is juſt and right.
For we to him indeed all praiſes owe,
And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Praeeminent by ſo much odds, while thou
Like conſort to thyſelf canſt no where find.
That day I oft remember, when from ſleep
I firſt awak'd, and found myſelf repos'd
Under a ſhade of flow'rs, much wond'ring where
And what I was, whence thither brought and how.
Not diſtant far from thence a murmuring ſound

Of waters iſſu'd from a cave, and ſpread
Into a liquid plain, then ſtood unmov'd
Pure as th' expanſe of Heav'n; I thither went
With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me ſeem'd another ſky.
As I bent down to look, juſt oppoſite
A ſhape within the watry gleam appear'd,
Bending to look on me. I ſtarted back,
It ſtarted back; but pleas'd I ſoon return'd;
Pleas'd it return'd as ſoon with anſwering looks
Of ſympathy and love: there I had fix'd
Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain deſire,
Had not a voice thus warn'd me, "What thou ſeeſt,
"What there thou ſeeſt, fair Creature, is thyſelf;
"With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
"And I will bring thee where no ſhadow ſtays
"Thy coming, and thy ſoft embraces, he
"Whoſe image thou art; him thou ſhalt enjoy
"Inſeparably thine, to him ſhalt bear
"Multitudes like thyſelf, and thence be call'd
"Mother of human race." What could I do,
But follow ſtraight, inviſibly thus led?
Till I eſpyd' thee, fair indeed and tall,
Under a plantan, yet methought leſs fair,
Leſs winning ſoft, leſs amiably mild,
Than that ſmooth watry image: back I turn'd;
Thou following cry'dſt aloud, Return fair Eve,
Whom fly'ſt thou? whom thou fly'ſt, of him thou art,
His fleſh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
Out of my ſide to thee, nearеſt my heart
Subſtantial life, to have thee by my ſide
Henceforth an individual ſolace dear.
Part of my ſoul, I ſeek thee, and thee claim
My other half! —— with that thy gentle hand
Seiz'd mine, I yielded, and from that time ſee
How beauty is excell'd by manly grace
And wiſdom, which alone is truly fair.

So

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
Of conjugal attraction unreprov'd,
And meek surrender, half embracing leanʼd
On our first father; half her swelling breast
Naked met his under the flowing gold
Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
Both of her beauty and submissive charms
Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds
That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip
With kisses pure: aside the Devil turn'd
For envy, yet with jealous leer malign
Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd.
Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two
Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
Of bliss on bliss, while I to Hell am thrust,
Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
Among our other torments not the least,
Still unfulfill'd with pain of longing pines.
Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
From their own mouths; all is not theirs it seems:
One fatal Tree there stands of knowledge call'd,
Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden?
Suspicious, reasonless. Why should their Lord
Envy them that? can it be sin to know?
Can it be death? and do they only stand
By ignorance? is that their happy state,
The proof of their obedience and their faith?
O fair foundation laid whereon to build
Their ruin! hence I will excite their minds
With more desire to know, and to reject
Envious commands, invented with design
To keep them low whom knowledge might exalt
Equal with Gods: aspiring to be such,
They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
But first with narrow search I must walk round
This garden, and no corner leave unspy'd;

A chance but chance may lead where I may meet
Some wandring Spirit of Heav'n, by fountain side,
Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may
Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed,
So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale his roam
Mean-while in utmost longitude, where Heav'n
With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun
Slowly descended, and with right aspect
Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Level'd his evening rays: it was a rock
Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
Betwixt these roky pillars Gabriel sat,
Chief of th' Angelic guards, awaiting night:
About him exercis'd heroic games
Th' unarmed youth of Heav'n, but nigh at hand
Celestial armory, shields, helms, and spears,
Hung high with diamond flaming, and with gold.
Thither came Uriel, gliding through the ev'n
On a Sun beam, swift as a shooting star
In Autumn thwarts the night, when vapors fir'd
Impress the air, and shows the mariner
From what point of his Compass to beware
Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste.
Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath giv'n
Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
No evil thing approach, or enter in.
This day at hight of noon came to my sphere
A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know
More of th' Almighty's works, and chiefly man,
God's latest image: I describ'd his way

Bent

Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gait:
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks
Alien from Heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
Lost sight of him; one of the banish'd crew,
I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep to raise
New troubles; him thy care must be to find.
To whom the winged warrior thus return'd:
Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the Sun's bright circle where thou sit'st,
See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come
Well known from Heav'n; and since meridian hour
No creature thence. If spirit of other sort,
So minded, have o'erleap'd these earthy bounds
On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
Spiritual substance with corporeal bar.
But if within the circuit of these walks,
In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.
So promis'd he, and Uriel to his charge
Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd
Bore him slope downward to the Sun, now fall'n
Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,
Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
Diurnal, or this less volubil earth
By shorter flight to th'east, had left him there
Arraying with reflected purple and gold.
The clouds that on his western throne attend.
Now came still evening on, and twiligt gray
Had in her sober livery all things clad;
Silence accompany'd, for beast and bird,
They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
Were slunk; all but the wakeful nigthingale:
She all night long her amorous descant sung;
Silence was pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
With living saphirs: Hesperus, that led

The ſtarry hoſt rode brighteſt, till the moon
Riſing in clouded majeſty at lenght,
Apparent Queen, unveil'd her peerleſs light,
And o'er the dark her ſilver mantle threw;
When Adam thus to Eve: Fair conſort, th'hour
Of night, and all things now retir'd to reſt
Mind us of like repoſe, ſince God hath ſet
Labor and reſt, as day and night to men
Succeſſive; and the timely dew of ſleep
Now falling with ſoft ſlumbrous weight, inclines
Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long
Rove idle, unemploy'd, and leſs need reſt:
Man hath his daily work of body, or mind
Appointed, which declares his dignity,
And the regard of Heav'n on all his ways:
While other animals unactive range,
And of their doings God takes no account.
To morrow, e're freſh morning ſtreak the eaſt
With firſt approach of light, we muſt be ris'n,
And at our pleaſant labor, to reform
Yon flow'ry arbors, yonder alleys green
Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown;
That mock our ſcant manuring, and require
More hands than ours to lop their wanto growth.
Thoſe bloſſoms alſo, and thoſe dropping gums
That lie beſtrown unſightly and unſmooth,
Aſk riddance, if we mean to tread with eaſe:
Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us reſt.
To whom thus Eve with perfect beauty adorn'd:
My author and diſpoſer, what thou bidſt
Unargu'd I obey; ſo God ordains;
God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
Is woman's happieſt knowledge and her praiſe.
With thee converſing I forget all time;
All ſeaſons and their change, all pleaſe alike.
Sweet is the breath of morn, her riſing ſweet,
With charm of earlieſt birds: pleaſant the Sun,
When firſt on this delightful land he ſpreads

His

His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flow'r,
Glist'ring with dew: fragrant the fertile earth
After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful ev'ning mild: then silent night
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train.
But neither breath of morn, when she ascends
With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun
On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flow'r,
Glistring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night
With this her solemn bird, nor walk by moon,
Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.
But wherefore all night long shine these, for whom
This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
To whom our general ancestor reply'd;
Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve,
These have their course to finish, round the earth,
By morrow ev'ning, and from land to land
In order, though to nations yet unborn,
Ministring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
Lest total darkness should by night regain
Her old possession, and extinguish life
In nature and all things; which these soft fires
Not only enlighten, but with kindly heat
Of various influence foment and warm,
Temper or nourish; or in part shed down
Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
On earth; made hereby apter to receive
Perfection from the Sun's more potent ray.
These then, though unbeheld in deep of night,
Shine not in vain; nor think, though men were none,
That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:
Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep.
All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
Both day and night: how often from the steep
Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard

Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their great Creator; oft in bands
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk
With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.
Thus talking, hand in hand, alone they pass'd
On to their blissful Bow'r: it was a place
Chos'n by the sov'reign planter, when he fram'd
All things to man's delightful use: the roof
Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
Laurel and myrtle; and what higher grew
Of firm and fragrant leaf, on either side
Acanthus, and each od'rous bushy shrub
Fenc'd up the verdant wall: each beauteous flow'r,
Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
Mosaic; underfoot the violet,
Crocus and hyacinth, with rich inlay
Broider'd the ground, more color'd than with stone
Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
Such was their awe of man. In shadier bow'r
More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph,
Nor faunus haunted. Here in close recess
With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed,
And heav'nly quires the hymenaean sung;
What day the genial Angel to our sire
Brought her in naked beauty, more adorn'd,
More lovely than Pandora, whom the Gods
Endow'd with all their gifts, and O, too like
In sad event! when to th' unwiser son
Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she insnar'd
Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus

Thus at their shady Lodge arriv'd, both stood,
Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
The God that made both sky, air, earth and heav'n,
Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
And starry pole: Thou also mad'st the night,
Maker omnipotent, and thou the day
Which we in our appointed work employ'd
Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
Ordain'd by thee, and this delicious place
For us too large, where thy abundance wants
Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.
This said unanimous, and other rites,
Observing none, but adoration pure,
Which God likes best, into their inmost bow'r
Handed they went; and eas'd the putting off
These troublesome disguises which we wear,
Straight side by side were laid: nor turn'd I ween
Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
Whatever hypocrites austerely talk
Of purity and place and innocence,
Defaming as impure what God declares
Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
Our maker bids increase; who bids abstain
But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
Hail wedded love! mysterious law, true source
Of human offspring, sole propriety
In Paradise, of all things common else.
By thee adult'rous lust was driv'n from men,
Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
Relations dear, and all the charities
Of father, son, and brother first were known.

Far

Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame;
Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets!
Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
Present, or past, as Saints and Patriarchs us'd.
Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
Reigns here and revels: not in the bought smile
Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendeard,
Casual fruition, nor in court amours,
Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain.
These, lull'd by nightingales embracing slept,
And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
Shower'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on
Blest pair; and O! yet happiest, if ye seek
No happier state, and know to know no more.
Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
And from their ivory port the Cherubim
Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour stood arm'd
To their night watches in warlike parade,
When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake.
Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
With strictest watch: these other wheel the north,
Our circuit meets full west. As flame they part
Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear.
From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd,
That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge.
Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook:
But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge,
Now laid, perhaps asleep secure of harm.
This evening from the Sun's decline arriv'd,
Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
Hitherward bent, who could have thought? escap'd
The bars of Hell, on errand bad no doubt:

Such

Such where ye find, seise fast, and hither bring.
So saying, on he led his radiant files,
Dazling the moon; these to the bow'r direct,
In search of whom they sought: him there they found
Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve;
Assaying by his devilish art to reach
The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams:
Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
Th' animal spirits, that from pure blood arise
Like gentle breaths from rivers pure; thence raise
At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
Blown up with high conceits ingendring pride.
Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear
Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can indure
Touch of coelestial temper, but returns
Of force to its own likeness, up he starts
Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid
Fit for the tun, some magazine to store
Against a rumor'd war, the smutty grain
With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air:
So started up in his own shape the Fiend.
Back stept those two fair angels half amaz'd
So sudden to behold the grisly King;
Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon.
Which of those rebel spirits adjudg'd to Hell
Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd,
Why sat'st thou, like an enemy in wait,
Here watching at the head of these that sleep?
Known ye not then, said Satan, fill'd with scorn,
Know ye not Me? ye knew me once no mate
For you, there sitting where you 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

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn,
Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same
Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
As when thou stood'st in Heav'n upright and pure;
That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
Departed from thee; and thou resembl'st now
Thy sin and place of doom, obscure and foul.
But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
This place inviolable, and these from harm.
So spake the Cherub, and his grave rebuke,
Severe in youthful beauty, added grace
Invincible: abash'd the Devil stood,
And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
Virtue in her shape how lovely, saw and pin'd,
His loss: but chiefly to find here observ'd
His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd
Undaunted. If I must contend, said he,
Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
Or all at once; more glory will be won,
Or less be lost. Thy fear, said Zephon bold,
Will save us trial what the least can do
Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.
The Fiend reply'd not, overcome with rage;
But like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd
His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
The western point, where those half-rounding guards
Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
Awaiting next command; to whom their Chief,
Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud.
O friends, I hear the tread of nimble feet
Hasting this way, and now by glimpse discern
Ithuriel and Zephon trough the shade,
And with them comes a third of regal port,
But faded splendor wan, who by his gait
And fierce demeanor seems the Prince of Hell;

Not

Not likely to part hence without contest:
Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.
He scarce had ended when those two approach'd,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.
To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake.
Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have pow'r and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employ'd it seems to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?
To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow.
Gabriel, thou hadst in Heav'n th' esteem of wise,
And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Tho' thither doom'd? thou would'st thyself, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place,
Farthest from pain; where thou might'st hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight, which in this place I sought:
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not try'd. And wilt object
His will who bound us? let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance! thus much what was ask'd.
The rest is true: they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence, or harm.
Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus reply'd,
O loss of one in Heav'n to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew!
And now returns him from his prison scap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicens'd from his bounds in Hell prescrib'd;

So

So wise he judges it to fly from pain
However, and to scape his punishment.
So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight
Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain
Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee
Came not all Hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they
Less hardy to indure? courageous chief!
The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alledg'd
To thy deserted host this cause of flight,
Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.
To which the Fiend thus answer'd frowning stern.
Not that I less indure, or shrink from pain,
Insulting Angel, well thou know'st; I stood
The fiercest, when in battel to thy aid
The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.
But still thy words at random, as before,
Argue thy inexperience what behoves
From hard assays and ill successes past,
A faithful leader, not to hazard all
Through ways of danger by himself untry'd:
I therefore, I alone first undertook
To wing the desolate Abyss, and spy
This new created world, whereof in Hell
Fame is not silent; here in hope to find
Better abode, and my afflicted Pow'rs
To settle here on earth, or in mid air;
Though, for possession, put to try once more
What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
High up in Heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.
To whom the warrior Angel soon reply'd:
To say, and straight unsay, pretending first

Wise

Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader but a liar trac'd,
Satan! and couldst thou *faithful* add? O name,
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!
Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.
Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,
Your military obedience, to dissolve
Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Pow'r supreme?
And thou, sly hypocrite! who now wouldst seem
Patron of liberty, who more than thou
Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servily ador'd
Heav'n's awful Monarch? wherefore but in hope
To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
But mark what I arreed thee now: avant!
Fly thiter whence thou fledst: if from this hour
Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd,
And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
The facil gates of Hell too slightly barr'd.
So threaden'd he, but Satan to no threats
Gave heed, but waxin more in rage reply'd.
Then when I am thy captive talk of chains,
Proud limitary Cherub, but e're 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, draw'st his triumphant wheels
In progress through the road of Heav'n star-pav'd.
While thus he spake, th' Angelic squadron bright
Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
With ported spears, as thick as when a field
Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
Sways them; the careful plowman doubting stands,
Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
Prove chaff. On th' other side Satan alarm'd,

Collecting all his might dilated stood
Like Tenériff, or Atlas, unremov'd:
His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
Sat horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp
What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds
Might have ensu'd, nor only Paradise
In this commotion, but the starry cope
Of Heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
With violence of this conflict, had not soon
Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
Hung forth in Heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astræa and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
The pendulous round earth with ballanc'd air
In counterpoise; now ponders all events,
Battels and realms: in these he put two weights
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up flew, and kick'd the beam:
Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the Fiend.
Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own but giv'n: what folly then
To boast what arms can do, since thine no more
Than Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire: for proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon coelestial sign,
Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
If thou resist. —— The Fiend look'd up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night.

The End of the Fourth Book.

BOOK V.

Now morn her rosy steps in th' eastern clime
Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam wak'd: so custom'd; for his sleep
Was aery light, from pure digestion bred,

And

And temperate vapors bland, which th' only ſound *)
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly diſpers'd, and the ſhrill matin ſong
Of birds on every bough. So much the more
His wonder was, to find unwaken'd Eve
With treſſes diſcompos'd, and glowing cheek,
As through unquiet reſt: he on his ſide
Leaning half rais'd, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
Beauty, which whether waking or aſleep,
Shot forth peculiar graces: then, with voice
Mild as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
Her hand ſoft touching, whiſper'd thus: Awake
My faireſt, my eſpous'd, my lateſt found,
Heav'n's laſt beſt gift, my ever new delight!
Awake! the morning ſhines, and the freſh field
Calls us, we loſe the prime, to mark how ſpring
Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
How nature paints her colors, how the bee
Sits on the bloom extracting liquid ſweet.
Such whiſpering wak'd her, but with ſtartl'd eye
On Adam, whom embracing, thus ſhe ſpake.
O ſole in whom my thoughts find all repoſe,
My glory, my perfection! glad I ſee
Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night,
Such night till this I never paſs'd, have dream'd,
If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
Works of day paſt, or morrow's next deſign,
But of offence and trouble, which my mind
Knew never till this irkſome night. Methought
Cloſe at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
With gentle voice, I thought it thine; it ſaid,

*) *Perhaps theſe two Verſes were originaly dictated by the Author thus:*

And temperate vapors bland from fuming rills,
Which th' only ſound of leaves, Aurora's fan,
Lightly diſpers'd, &c.

Why sleep'st thou Eve? now is the pleasant time,
The cool, the silent, save where silence yields
To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
Tunes sweetest his love-labor'd song; now reigns
Full orb'd the moon, and with more pleasant light
Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
If none regard: heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire?
In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
I rose as at thy call, but found thee not:
To find thee I directed then my walk;
And on, methought, alone I pass'd thro' ways
That brought me on a sudden to the tree
Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
And as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from Heav'n
By us oft seen: his dewy locks distill'd
Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;
And O fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,
Deigns none to ease thy load and taste thy sweet,
Nor God, nor Man? Is knowledge so despis'd?
Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
Longer thy offer'd good: why else set here?
This said he paus'd not, but with vent'rous arm
He pluck'd, he tasted: me damp horror chill'd
At such bold words, vouch'd with a deed so bold.
But he thus, overjoy'd, O fruit divine!
Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt!
Forbidden here it seems, as only fit
For Gods, yet able to make Gods of Men:
And why not Gods of Men, since good the more
Communicated, more abundant grows,
The author not impair'd, but honor'd more?
Here, happy creature, fair Angelic Eve!
Partake thou also: happy though thou art,

Hap-

Happier thou may'ſt be, worthier canſt not be:
Taſte this, and be henceforth among the Gods
Thyſelf a Goddeſs, not to earth confin'd,
But ſometimes in the air, as we, ſometimes
Aſcend to Heav'n by merit thine, and ſee
What life the Gods live there, and ſuch live thou.
So ſaying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
Ev'n to my mouth of that fame fruit held part
Which he had pluck'd: the pleaſant ſavoury ſmell
So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought,
Could not but taſte. Forthwith up to the clouds
With him I flew, and underneath beheld
The earth outſtretch'd immenſe, a proſpect wide
And various: wond'ring at my flight and change
To this high exaltation; ſuddenly
My guide was gone, and I, methought, ſunk down,
And fell aſleep: but O, how glad I wak'd
To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night
Related, and thus Adam anſwer'd ſad.

Beſt image of myſelf, and dearer half!
The trouble of thy thoughts this night in ſleep
Affects me equally; nor can I like
This uncouth dream, of evil ſprung I fear,
Yet evil whence? in thee can harbour none,
Created pure. But know that in the ſoul
Are many leſſer faculties that ſerve
Reaſon as chief: among theſe fancy next
Her office holds: of all external things
Which the five watchful ſenſes repreſent,
She forms imaginations, aery ſhapes,
Which Reaſon joining or disjoining, frames
All what we affirm, or what deny, and call
Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
Into her private cell, when nature reſts.
Oft in her abſence mimic fancy wakes
To imitate her; but misjoining ſhapes,
Wild work produces oft, and moſt in dreams;
Ill matching words and deeds long paſt or late.

Some such resemblances methinks I find
Of our last evening's talk, in this thy dream,
But with addition strange: yet be not sad.
Evil into the mind of God or Man
May come and go, so unapprov'd, and leave
No spot or blame behind: which gives me hope
That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream,
Waking thou never wilt consent to do.
Be not disheartn'd then, nor cloud those looks,
That wont to be more chearful and serene,
Than when fair morning first smiles on the world:
And let us to our fresh employments rise
Among the groves, the fountains and the flow'rs,
That open now their choicest bosom'd smells
Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.
So chear'd he his fair spouse, and she was chear'd,
But silently a gentle tear let fall
From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair:
Two other precious drops that ready stood,
Each in their crystal sluice, he e're they fell
Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended.
So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
But first from under shady arborous roof,
Soon as they forth were come to open sight
Of day-spring, and the Sun, who scarce uprisen,
With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean brim,
Shot parallel to th' earth his dewy ray,
Discovering in wide landscape all the east
Of Paradise, and Eden's happy plains.
Lowly they bow'd, adoring, and began
Their orisons, each morning duly paid
In various style; for neither various style
Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd or sung
Unmeditated, such prompt eloquence
Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse.
More tuneable, than needed lute or harp

To

To add more sweetness, and they thus began.
These are thy glorious works, Parent of good!
Almighty! thine this universal frame,
Thus wondrous fair; thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable! who sitst above these Heav'ns,
To us invisible, or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works: yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
Speak ye who best can tell, ye sons of light,
Angels! for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing; ye in Heav'n,
On earth join all ye creatures to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end!
Fairest of stars, last in the train of night,
If better thou belong not to the dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great world both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater, sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high noon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
Moon, that now meet'st orient sun, now fly'st,
With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
And ye five other wand'ring fires, that move
In mystic dance not without song, resound
His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
Air, and ye elements, the eldest birth
Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change
Vary to our Great Maker still new praise.
Ye mists and exhalations that now rise
From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
In honor to the world's great author rise;
Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolor'd sky,

Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers,
Rising or falling still advance his praise.
His praise, ye winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
With every plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains and ye, that warble, as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Join voices, all ye living souls, ye birds,
That singing up to Heaven gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep:
Witness if I be silent, morn or even,
To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail universal Lord! be bounteous still
To give us only good: and if the night
Have gather'd ought of evil or conceal'd,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.
So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
Firm peace recover'd soon and wonted calm.
On to their morning's rural work they haste
Among sweet dews and flow'rs; where any row
Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd to far
Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check
Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine
To wed her elm; she spous'd about him twines
Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
Her dow'r th' adopted clusters, to adorn
His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd
Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd
To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
His marriage with the seventimes wedded maid.
Raphael, said he, thou hear'st what stir on earth
Satan, from Hell scap'd thro' the darksome gulf,
Hath rais'd in Paradise, and how disturb'd
This night the human pair, how he designs

In

In them at once to ruin all mankind.
Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
Converſe with Adam, in what bow'r or ſhade
Thou find'ſt him from the heat of noon retir'd,
To reſpit his day-labor with repaſt,
Or with repoſe: and ſuch diſcourſe bring on,
As may adviſe him of his happy ſtate,
Happineſs in his pow'r left free to will,
Left to his own free will; his will though free,
Yet mutuable: whence warn him to beware
He ſwerve not too ſecure. Tell him withal
His danger, and from whom; what enemy
Late fall'n himſelf from Heav'n, is plotting now
The fall of others from like ſtate of bliſs:
By violence? no, for that ſhall be withſtood;
But by deceit and lies; this let him know,
Left wilfully transgreſſing he pretend
Surpriſal, unadmoniſh'd, unforewarn'd.

So ſpake th' eternal Father, and fulfill'd
All juſtice: nor delay'd the winged ſaint
After his charge receiv'd; but from among
Thouſand celeſtial Ardors, where he ſtood
Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up ſpringing light,
Flew through the midſt of Heav'n: th' angelic quires
On each hand parting, to his ſpeed gave way
Through all th' empyreal road; till at the gate
Of Heav'n arriv'd, the gate ſelf-open'd wide
On golden hinges turning, as by work
Divine, the ſov'reign architect had fram'd.
From hence no cloud, or, to obſtruct his ſight,
Star interpos'd, however ſmall he ſees,
Not unconform to other ſhining globes,
Earth, and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd
Above all hills. As when by night the glaſs
Of Galileo, leſs aſſur'd, obſerves
Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:
Or pilot, from amidſt the Cyclades,
Delos, or Samos, firſt appearing, kens

A cloudy ſpot. Down thither prone in flight
He ſpeeds, and through the vaſt ethereal ſky
Sails between worlds and worlds: with ſteddy wing
Now on the polar winds; then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air; till within ſoar
Of towring eagles, to all the fowls he ſeems
A Phœnix gaz'd by all, as that ſole bird,
When to inſhrine his reliques in the ſun's
Bright temple, to Egytian Thebes he flies.
At once on th' eaſtern cliff of Paradiſe
He lights, and to his proper ſhape returns,
A Seraph wing'd: ſix wings he wore, to ſhade
His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
Each ſhoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breaſt
With regal ornament: the middle pair
Girt like a ſtarry zone his waiſt, and round
Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
And colors dipt in heav'n: the third his feet
Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's ſon he ſtood,
And ſhook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
Of Angels under watch; and to his ſtate,
And to his meſſage high in honor riſe;
For on ſome meſſage high they gueſs'd him bound.
Their glitt'ring tents he paſs'd, and now is come
Into the bliſsfull field, through groves of myrrh,
And flow'ring odors, caſſia, nard, and balm;
A wilderneſs of ſweets! for Nature here
Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will
Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more ſweet,
Wild above rule or art; enormous bliſs!
Him through the ſpicy foreſt onward come
Adam diſcern'd, as in the door he ſat
Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted Sun
Shot down direct his fervid rays to warm
Earth's inmoſt womb, more warmth than Adam needs:
And Eve within, due at her hour prepar'd

For

For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
True appetite, and not disrelish thirst
Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
Berry or grape; to whom thus Adam call'd.
Haste hither Eve, and worth thy sight behold
Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
Comes this way moving; seems another morn
Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from Heav'n
To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
And what thy stores contain, bring forth and pour
Abundance, fit to honor and receive
Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford
Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies
Her fertil growth, and by disburd'ning grows
More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.
To whom thus Eve. Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
Of God inspir'd, small store will serve, where store,
All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes.
But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
Each plant, and juciest gourd, will pluck such choice
To entertain our Angel-guest, as he
Beholding shall confess, that here on Earth
God had dispens'd his bounties, as in Heav'n.
So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste,
She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
What choice to chuse for delicacy best,
What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring
Taste after taste upheld with kindliest change:
Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
Whatever earth all-bearing mother yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus, or the Punic coast, or where
Alcinous reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat

Rough,

Rough or ſmooth rin'd, or bearded huſk, or ſhell,
She gathers; tribute large and on the board
Heaps with unſparing hand: for drink the grape
She cruſhes, inoffenſive muſt, and meaths
From many a berry; and from ſweet kernels preſs'd,
She tempers dulcet creams; nor theſe to hold
Wants her fit veſſels pure: then ſtrows the ground
With roſe, and odors from the ſhrub unfum'd.
Mean while our primitive great ſire, to meet
His god-like gueſt, walks forth, without more train
Accompanied than with his own complete
Perfections; in himſelf was all his ſtate:
More ſolemn than the tedious pomp that waits
On Princes, when their rich retinue long
Of horſes led, and grooms beſmear'd with gold
Dazles the crowd, and ſets them all agape.
Nearer his preſence Adam though not aw'd,
Yet with ſubmiſs approach, and reverence meek,
As to a ſuperior nature, bowing low,
Thus ſaid. Native of Heaven! for other place
None can than Heaven ſuch glorious ſhape contain,
Since by deſcending from the thrones above,
Thoſe happy places thou haſt deign'd a while
To want, and honor theſe, vouchſafe with us
Two only, who yet by ſov'reign gift poſſeſs
This ſpacious ground, in yonder ſhady bower
To reſt; and what the garden choiceſt bears
To ſit and taſte, till this meridian heat
Be over, and the Sun more cool decline.
Whom thus th' angelic Virtue anſwer'd mild.
Adam, I therefore came, nor art thou ſuch
Created, or ſuch place haſt here to dwell,
As may not oft invite, though ſpirits of Heav'n,
To viſit thee: lead on then where thy bow'r
O'erſhades; for theſe mid-hours, till ev'ning riſe,
I have at will. So to the ſylvan lodge
They came, that like Pomona's arbor ſmil'd,
With flowrets deck'd, and fragrant ſmells: but Eve

Und-

Undeck'd, save with herself, more lovely fair
Than Wood-Nymph, or the fairest Goddess feign'd
Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
Stood t'entertain her guest from Heav'n: no veil
She needed, virtue-proof, no thought infirm
Alter'd her cheek. On whom the Angel *Hail*
Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
Long after to 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 heap'd this table. Rais'd of grassy turf
Their table was, and mossy seats had round:
And on her ample square from side to side
All Autumn pil'd, though Spring and Autumn here
Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold;
No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
Our author. Heav'nly stranger! please to taste
These bounties which our nourisher, from whom
All perfect good, unmeasur'd out, descends,
To us for food and for delight hath caus'd
The earth to yield: unsavoury food perhaps
To spiritual natures; only this I know,
That one celestial Father gives to all.
To whom the Angel. Therefore what he gives,
Whose praise be ever sung! to man, in part
Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found
No ingrateful food, and food alike those pure
Intelligential substances require,
As doth your rational: and both contain
Within them every lower faculty
Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
For know, whatever was created, needs
To be sustain'd and fed: of elements
The grosser feeds the purer; earth the sea;
Earth and the sea feed air; the air those fires

Ethe-

Ethereal; and as lowest first the moon;
Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
Vapors, not yet into her substance turn'd.
Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
From her moist continent to higher orbs.
The Sun, that light imparts to all, receives
From all his alimental recompense,
In humid exhalations; and at ev'n
Sups with the ocean. Though in Heav'n the trees
Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
Yield Nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
Cover'd with pearly grain: yet God hath here
Varied his bounty so with new delights,
As may compare with Heaven, and to taste
Think not I shall be nice. —— So down they sat,
And to their viands fell, nor seemingly
The Angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
Of Theologians, but with keen dispatch
Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
Through spirits with ease, nor wonder; if by fire
Of sooty coal the empiric alchymist
Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
As from the mine. Mean while at table Eve
Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
With pleasant liquors crown'd. O innocence
Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
Then had the sons of God excuse t' have been
Enamour'd at that sight: but in those hearts
Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
Was understood, the injur'd lover's Hell.
Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
Giv'n him by this great conference, to know
Of things above this world, and of their being

Who

Who dwell in Heav'n: whose excellence he saw
Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
Divine effulgence! whose high pow'r so far
Exceeded human; and his wary speech
Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd.
Inhabitant with God! now know I well
Thy favor, in this honor done to man;
Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
Food meet for Angels, yet accepted so,
As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
At Heav'n's high feasts t' have fed: yet what compare?
To whom the winged Hierarch reply'd.
O Adam! one Almighty is, from whom
All things proceed, and up to him return
If not deprav'd from good, created all,
Such to perfection, one first matter all,
Indued with various forms, various degrees
Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
But more refin'd, more spiritous, and pure,
As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending,
Each in their several active spheres assign'd;
Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
Springs lighter the green stalk; from thence the leaves
More aery; last, the bright consummate flow'r
Spirits odorous breathes; flow'rs, and their fruit,
Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
To intellectual; give both life and sense,
Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
Reason receives; and reason is her being,
Discursive, or intuitive; discourse
Is oftest yours, the latter most is ours;
Differing but in degree, of kind the same.
Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
To proper substance. Time may come, when Men

With

With Angels may participate, and find
No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare:
And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
Improv'd by tract of time; and wing'd ascend
Ethereal, as we; or may at choice,
Here, or in heav'nly Paradises dwell;
If ye be found obedient, and retain
Unalterably firm his love entire,
Whose progeny you are. Mean while, enjoy
Your fill what happiness this happy state
Can comprehend, incapable of more.
To whom the patriarch of mankind reply'd.
O favourable spirit, propitious guest!
Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
From center to circumference; whereon
In contemplation of created things,
By steps we may ascent to God. But say,
What meant that caution join'd, if ye be found
Obedient? Can we want obedience then,
To him, or possibly his love desert,
Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here,
Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
Human desires can seek, or apprehend?
To whom the Angel. Son of heav'n and earth,
Attend: That thou art happy, owe to God:
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
This was that caution giv'n thee; he advis'd.
God made thee perfect, not immutable;
And good he made thee; but to persevere
He left it in thy pow'r, ordain'd thy will
By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity.
Our voluntary service he requires,
Not our necessitated; such with him
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how

Can

Can hearts, not free, be try'd whether they ſerve
Willing or no, who will but what they muſt
By deſtiny, and can no other chuſe?
Myſelf and all th' Angelic hoſt, that ſtand
In ſight of God inthron'd, our happy ſtate
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other ſurety none: freely we ſerve,
Becauſe we freely love; as in our will
To love, or not; in this we ſtand or fall.
And ſome are fall'n, to diſobedience fall'n,
And ſo from Heaven to deepeſt Hell; O fall
From what high ſtate of bliſs, into what woe!
To whom our great progenitor. Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear,
Divine inſtructor! I have heard, than when
Cherubic ſongs by night from neighb'ring hills
Aereal muſic ſend. Nor knew I not
To be both will and deed created free;
Yet that we never ſhall forget to love
Our Maker, and obey him whoſe command
Single is yet ſo juſt, my conſtant thoughts
Aſſur'd me, and ſtill aſſure; though what thou tell'ſt
Hath paſs'd in Heav'n, ſome doubt within me move,
But more deſire to hear, if thou conſent,
The full relation; which muſt needs be ſtrange,
Worthy of ſacred ſilence to be heard:
And we have yet large day, for ſcarce the ſun
Hath finiſh'd half his journey, and ſcarce begins
His other half in the great zone of Heav'n.
Thus Adam made requeſt, and Raphael
After ſhort pauſe aſſenting, thus began.
High matter thou injoin'ſt me, O prime of men!
Sad taſk and hard! For how ſhall I relate
To human ſenſe th' inviſible exploits
Of warring ſpirits? How, without remorſe,
The ruin of ſo many glorious once,
And perfect, while they ſtood? how laſt unfold
The ſecrets of another world, perhaps

Not lawful to reveal! Yet for thy good
This is dispens'd: and what surmounts the reach
Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
By lik'ning spiritual to corporeal forms,
As may express them best: though, what if earth
Be but the shadow of heav'n, and things therein
Each to' other like, more than on earth is thought?
As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
Reign'd where these Heav'n's now roll, where earth now rests
Upon her centre pois'd; when on a day,
For time, though in eternity, apply'd
To motion, measures all things durable
By present, past, and future, on such day
As Heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
Of Angels by imperial summons call'd,
Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne
Forthwith, from all the ends of Heav'n, appear'd
Under their Hierarchs in orders bright:
Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
Standarts, and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear,
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees:
Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,
By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake.
Hear all ye Angels, progeny of light,
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!
Hear my decree, which unrevok'd shall stand.
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand; your Head I him appoint:
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow

All

All knees in Heav'n, and ſhall confeſs him Lord.
Under his great vice-gerent reign abide
United, as one individual ſoul,
For ever happy: Him who diſobeys,
Me diſobeys, breaks union, and that day,
Caſt out from God and bleſſed viſion, falls
Into utter darkneſs, deep ingulf'd, his place
Ordain'd without redemption, without end.
So ſpake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
All ſeem'd well pleas'd: all ſeem'd, but were not all.
That day, as other ſolemn days, they ſpent
In ſong and dance about the ſacred hill;
Myſtical dance, which yonder ſtarry ſphere
Of Planets and of fix'd in all her wheels
Reſembles neareſt, mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
Then moſt, when moſt irregular they ſeem;
And in their motions harmony divine
So ſmooths her charming tones, that God's own ear
Liſtens delighted. Evening now approach'd,
For we have alſo our ev'ning and our morn,
We ours for change delectable, not need,
Forthwith from dance to ſweet repaſt they turn
Deſirous: all in circles as they ſtood,
Tables are ſet, and on a ſudden pil'd
With Angels food, and rubied nectar flows
In pearl, in diamond, and maſſy gold,
Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
On flow'rs repoſ'd, and with freſh flow'rets crown'd,
They eat, they drink, and in communion ſweet
Quaff immortality and joy, ſecure
Of ſurfeit, where full meaſure only bounds
Exceſs, before th' all-bounteous King, who ſhowr'd
With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
Now when ambroſial night with clouds exhal'd
From that high mount of God, whence light and ſhade
Spring both, the face of brighteſt Heav'n had chang'd
To grateful twilight, for night comes not there

In darker veil, and roſeate dews diſpos'd
All but th' unſleeping eyes of God to reſt;
Wide over all the plain, and wider far
Than all this globoſe earth in plain outſpread,
Such are the courts of God! th' Angelic throng
Diſpers'd in bands and files, their camp extend
By living ſtreams among the trees of life,
Pavilions numberleſs, and ſudden rear'd,
Celeſtial tabernacles, where they ſlept
Fann'd with cool winds! ſave thoſe who in their courſe
Melodious hymns, about the ſov'reign throne,
Alternate all night long. But not ſo wak'd
Satan ſo call him now, his former name
Is heard no more in Heaven. He of the firſt,
If not the firſt Arch-Angel, great in pow'r,
In favor and preeminence, yet fraught
With envy againſt the Son of God, that day
Honor'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
Meſſiah, King anointed, could not bear
Thro' pride that ſight, and thought himſelf impair'd.
Deep malice thence conceiving and diſdain,
Soon as midnight brought on the duſky hour,
Friendlieſt to ſleep and ſilence, he reſolv'd
With all his legions to diſlodge, and leave
Unworſhipt, unobey'd the throne ſupreme
Contemptuous, and his next ſubordinate
Awak'ning, thus to him in ſecret ſpake.

Sleep'ſt thou, companion dear! what ſleep can cloſe
Thy eye-lids? and remember'ſt what decree
Of yeſterday, ſo late hath paſs'd the lips
Of Heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts
Waſt wont, I mine to thee was wont t' impart:
Both waking we were one; how then can now
Thy ſleep diſſent? New laws thou ſeeſt impos'd:
New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raiſe
In us who ſerve; new counſels, to debate
What doubtful may enſue: more in this place
To utter is not ſafe. Aſſemble thou

Of

Of all those myriads which we lead the chief:
Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night
Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
And all who under me their banners wave,
Homeward, with flying march, where we possess
The quarters of the north; there to prepare
Fit entertainment to receive our King,
The great Messiah, and his new commands;
Who speedily through all Hierarchies
Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.
So spake the false Arch-Angel, and infus'd
Bad influence into th' unwary breast
Of his associate: he together calls,
Or several one by one, the regent Pow'rs,
Under him regent, tells, as he was taught,
That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
Now ere dim night had disincumber'd heav'n,
The great hierarchal standard was to move:
Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
Ambiguous words, and jealousies, to sound
Or taint integrity: but all obey'd
The wonted signal, and superior voice
Of their great Potentate; for great indeed
His name, and high was his degree in Heav'n,
His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
The starry flock allur'd them; and with lies
Drew after him the third part of Heav'n's host.
Mean-while th' Eternal eye, whose sights discerns
Abstruse thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
And from within the golden lamps that burn
Nightly before him, saw without their light
Rebellion rising, saw in whom, how spread
Among the Sons of Morn, what multitudes
Were banded to oppose his high decree;
And smiling to his only Son thus said.
Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
In full resplendence, Heir of all my might!
Nearly it now concerns us to be sure

Of our Omnipotence; and with what arms
We mean to hold what anciently we claim
Of Deity or empire: such a foe
Is rising, who intends t' erect his throne
Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north;
Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
In battel, what our pow'r is, or our right.
Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
With speed what force is left, and all employ
In our defense, lest unawares we lose
This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.
To whom the Son with calm aspect, and clear,
Lightning divine, ineffable, serene!
Made answer. Mighty Father, thou thy foes
Justly hast in derision and secure
Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
Illustrates, when they see all regal pow'r
Giv'n me to quell their pride; and in event
Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
Thy Rebels, or be found the worst in Heav'n.
So spake the Son: but Satan with his powers
Far was advanc'd on winged speed; an host
Innumerable as the stars of night,
Or, stars of morning, dew-drops, which the Sun
Impearls on every leaf and every flow'r.
Regions they pass'd, and mighty regencies
Of Seraphim, and Potentates, and Thrones,
In their triple degrees; Regions to which
All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
Than what this garden is to all the earth,
And all the sea; from one entire globose
Stretch'd into longitude, which having pass'd,
At length into the limits of the north
They came, and Satan to his royal seat
High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
From diamond quarries hew'n, and rocks of gold,

The

The Palace of great Lucifer; ſo call
That ſtructure in the dialect of men
Interpreted, which not long after he,
Affecting all equality with God,
In imitation of that mount whereon
Meſſiah was declar'd in ſight of Heav'n,
The Mountain of the Congregation call'd,
For thither he aſſembled all his train,
Pretending ſo commanded, to conſult
About the great reception of their King,
Thither to come, and with calumnious art
Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears.
Thrones, Dominations, Pricedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs!
If theſe magnific titles yet remain
Not merely titular! ſince by decree
Another now hath to himſelf ingroſs'd
All pow'r, and us eclips'd under the name
Of King anointed; for whom all this haſte
Of midnight-march, and hurry'd meeting here,
This only to conſult, how we may beſt
With what may be devis'd of honors new
Receive him, coming to receive from us
Knee-tribute yet unpaid, proſtration vile,
Too much to one, but double how indur'd,
To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?
But what if better counſels might erect
Our minds, and teach us to caſt off this yoke?
Will ye ſubmit your necks, and chooſe to bend
The ſupple knee? Ye will not, if I truſt
To know ye right; or if ye know yourſelves
Natives and ſons of Heav'n, poſſeſs'd before
By none; and if not equal all, yet free,
Equally free; for orders and degrees
Jar not with liberty, but well conſiſt.
Who can in reaſon then, or right, aſſume
Monarchy over ſuch as live by right
His equals, if in pow'r and ſplendor leſs,
In freedom equal? or can introduce

Law and edict on us, who whithout law
Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
And look for adoration, to th' abuse
Of those Imperial Titles which assert
Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve?
Thus far his bold discourse without controul
Had audience; when among the Seraphim,
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd
The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe,
The current of his fury thus oppos'd.
O argument blasphemous, false and proud!
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heav'n
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate!
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounc'd and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right indued
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heav'n
Shall bend the knee, and in that honor due
Confess him rightful King? Unjust, thou say'st,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucceeded pow'r. ——
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art? and form'd the Pow'rs of Heav'n
Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good
And of our good, and of our dignity
How provident he is; how far from thought
To make us less; bent rather to exalt
Our happy state, under one Head more near
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign:
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all Angelic nature join'd in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? By whom,

As by his Word, the mighty Father made
All things, ev'n thee, and all the spirits of Heav'n,
By him created in their bright degrees;
Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Pow'rs,
Essential Pow'rs! nor by his reign obscur'd,
But more illustrious made, since he the Head
One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;
His laws our laws, all honor to him done
Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
Th' incensed Father, and th' incensed Son,
While pardon may be found, in time besought.
So spake the fervent Angel: but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judg'd,
Or singular and rash: whereat rejoic'd
Th' apostate, and more haughty thus reply'd.
That we were form'd then, say'st thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd
From Father to his Son? Strange point and new!
Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: who saw
When this creation was? Remember'st 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 quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course
Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
Of this our native Heav'n, ethereal sons.
Our puissance is our own, our own right hand
Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
Whether by supplication we intend
Address, and to begirt th' Almighty throne
Beseeching or besieging. This report,
These tidings carry to th' anointed King;
And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight?
He said, and, as the sound of waters deep,
Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause,

Through the infinite hoſt: nor leſs for that
The flaming Seraph fearleſs, though alone
Encompaſs'd round with foes, thus anſwer'd bold.
O alienate from God, O ſpirit accurſs'd,
Forſaken of all good! I ſee thy fall
Determin'd, and thy hapleſs crew involv'd
In this perfidious fraud, contagion ſpread
Both of thy crime and puniſhment. Henceforth
No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
Of God's Meſſiah: thoſe indulgent laws,
Will not be now vouchſaf'd; other decrees
Againſt thee are gone forth without recall.
That golden ſcepter which thou didſt reject,
Is now an iron rod, to bruiſe and break
Thy diſobedience. Well thou didſt adviſe;
Yet not for thy advice, or threats I fly
Theſe wicked tents devoted; leſt the wrath
Impendent, raging into ſudden flame
Diſtinguiſh not: for ſoon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire!
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou ſhalt know.
So ſpake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithleſs, faithful only he:
Among innumerable falſe, unmov'd,
Unſhaken, unſeduc'd, unterrify'd,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example with him wrought
To ſwerve from truth, or change his conſtant mind
Though ſingle. From amidſt them forth he paſs'd,
Long way through hoſtile ſcorn, which he ſuſtain'd
Superior, nor of violence fear'd ought:
And, with retorted ſcorn, his back he turn'd
On thoſe proud tow'rs to ſwift deſtruction doom'd.

The End of the Fifth Book.

BOOK VI.

All night the dreadless Angel unpursu'd,
Thro' Heav'n's wide champain held his way, till morn,
Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand
Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes thro' Heav'n
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night:
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour
To veil the Heav'n, tho' darkness there might well
Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn,
Such as in highest Heav'n, array'd in gold
Empyreal; from before her vanish'd night,
Shot thro' with orient beams: when all the plain
Cover'd with thick imbattel'd squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view.
War he perceiv'd, war in procinct, and found
Already known what he for news had thought
To have reported: gladly then he mix'd
Among those friendly Pow'rs, who him receiv'd
With joy and acclamations loud, that One,
That of so many myriads fall'n, yet One
Return'd, not lost. On to the sacred hill
They led him high applauded, and present
Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard.
Servant of God, well done, well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintain'd
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms:
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach; far worse to bear
Than violence: for this was all thy care,

To ſtand approv'd in ſight of God, tho' worlds
Judg'd thee perverſe. The eaſier conqueſt now
Remains thee, aided by this hoſt of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
Than ſcorn'd thou didſt depart; and to ſubdue
By force, who reaſon for their law refuſe,
Right reaſon for their law, and for their king
Meſſiah, who by right of merit reigns.
Go, Michael, of celeſtial armies prince,
And thou in military proweſs next
Gabriel, lead forth to battel theſe my ſons
Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,
By thouſands and by millions rang'd for fight;
Equal in number to that godleſs crew,
Rebellious: them with fire and hoſtile arms
Fearleſs aſſault; and to the brow of Heav'n
Purſuing, drive them out from God and bliſs,
Into their place of puniſhment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery Chaos to receive their fall.
So ſpake the Sovereign Voice, and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and ſmoke to roll
In duſky wreaths, reluctant flames, the ſign
Of wrath awak'd: Nor with leſs dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:
At which command, the Powers militant
That ſtood for Heav'n, in mighty quadrat join'd
Of union irreſiſtible, mov'd on
In ſilence their bright legions, to the ſound
Of inſtrumental harmony, that breath'd
Heroic ardor to advent'rous deeds,
Under their God-like leaders, in the cauſe
Of God and his Meſſiah. On they move
Indiſſolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
Nor ſtrait'ning vale, nor wood, nor ſtream divides
Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
Their march was, and the paſſive air upbore
Their nimble tread: as when the total kind

Of

Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
Came summon'd over Eden, to receive
Their names of thee: so, over many a tract
Of Heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide,
Tenfold the lenght of his terrene. At last,
Far in th' horizon to the north appear'd,
From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd
In battailous aspect, and nearer view
Bristled with upright beams innumerable
Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
The banded Pow'rs of Satan, hasting on
With furious expedition: for they ween'd
That self-same day by fight, or by surprize
To win the mount of God; and on his throne
To set the envier of his state, the proud
Aspirer; but their thoughts prov'd fond and vain
In the mid-way. Though strange to us it seem'd
At first, that Angel should with Angel war,
And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
So oft in festivals of joy and love
Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
Hymning th' eternal Father: but the shout
Of battel now began, and rushing sound
Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
High in the midst exalted as a God,
Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
Idol of majesty divine! inclos'd
With flaming Cherubim, and golden shields:
Then, lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
A dreadful interval! and front to front
Presented stood in terrible array,
Of hideous length, before the cloudy van,
On the rough edge of battel e're it join'd,
Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
Came towring, arm'd in adamant and gold:
Abdiel that sight indur'd not, where he stood

Among

Among the mightieſt, bent on higheſt deeds;
And thus his own undaunted heart explores.
O Heav'n! that ſuch reſemblance of the Higheſt
Should yet remain, where faith and realty
Remain not: wherefore ſhould not ſtrength and might
There fail where virtue fails; or weakeſt prove
Where boldeſt, though to fight unconquerable?
His puiſſance, truſting in th' Almighty's aid,
I mean to try; whoſe reaſon I have try'd
Unſound and falſe: nor is it ought but juſt,
That he who in debate of truth hath won
Should win in arms, in both diſputes alike
Victor: though brutiſh that conteſt and foul,
When reaſon hath to deal with force; yet ſo
Moſt reaſon is that reaſon overcome.
So pondering, and from his armed peers
Forth-ſtepping oppoſit, half way he met
His daring foe, at this prevention more
Incens'd, and thus ſecurely him defy'd.
Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
The height of thy aſpiring unoppos'd,
The throne of God unguarded, and his ſide
Abandon'd at the terror of thy pow'r,
Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain
Againſt th' Omnipotent to riſe in arms:
Who, out of ſmalleſt things, could without end
Have rais'd inceſſant armies to defeat
Thy folly; or with ſolitary hand,
Reaching beyond all limit at one blow,
Unaided could have finiſh'd thee, and whelm'd
Thy legions under darkneſs: but thou ſeeſt
All are not of thy train; there be who faith
Prefer, and piety to God, though then
To thee not viſible, when I alone
Seem'd in thy world erroneous to diſſent
From all: my ſect thou ſeeſt; now learn too late
How few ſometimes may know, when thouſand err.
Whom the grand foe with ſcornful eye aſkance

Thus

Thus answer'd. Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour
For my revenge, first sought for thou return'st
From flight, seditious Angel! to receive
Thy merited reward, the first assay
Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue
Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose
A third part of the Gods, in synod met
Their deities to assert, who while they feel
Vigor divine within them, can allow
Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
From me some plume, that thy success may show
Destruction to the rest; this pause between,
Unanswer'd lest thou boast, to let thee know,
At first I thought that liberty and Heav'n,
To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now
I see that most through sloth had rather *serve*,
Ministring spirits, train'd up in feast and song,
Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of Heav'n,
Servility with freedom to contend,
As both their deeds compar'd this day shall prove.
To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern reply'd.
Apostate, still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
Unjustly thou deprav'st it with the name
Of *Servitude*, to serve whom God ordains,
Or Nature: God and Nature bid the same,
When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
Thyself not free, but to thyself inthrall'd;
Yet lewdly dar'st our ministring upbraid.
Reign thou in Hell thy kingdom, let me serve
In Heav'n God ever blest, and his divine
Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd!
Yet chains in Hell, not realms expect: mean while
From me return'd, as erst thou saidst, from flight,

This

This greeting on thy impious creſt receive.
So ſaying, a noble ſtroke he lifted high,
Which hung not, but ſo ſwift with tempeſt fell
On the proud creſt of Satan, that no ſight,
Nor motion of ſwift thought, leſs could his ſhield
Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
He back recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee,
His maſſy ſpear upſtay'd: as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had puſh'd a mountain from his ſeat,
Half-ſunk with all his Pines. Amazement ſeis'd
The rebel thrones, but greater rage, to ſee
Thus foil'd their mightiest: ours joy fill'd, and ſhout,
Preſage of victory and fierce deſire
Of battel: whereat Michaël bid ſound
Th' Arch-Angel trumpet; through the vaſt of Heav'n
It ſounded, and the faithful armies rung
Hoſannah to the Higheſt: nor ſtood at gaze
The adverſe legions, nor leſs hideous join'd
The horrid ſhock. Now ſtorming fury roſe,
And clamor, ſuch as heard in Heav'n till now
Was never; arms on armor claſhing bray'd
Horrible diſcord, and the madding wheels
Of brazen chariots rag'd: 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 ruſh'd
Both battels main, with ruinous aſſault
And inextinguiſhable rage: all Heav'n
Reſounded; and had Earth been then, all Earth
Had to her centre ſhook. What wonder? when
Millions of fierce encountring Angels fought
On either ſide, the leaſt of whom could wield
Theſe elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions: how much more of pow'r
Army againſt army, numberleſs, to raiſe
Dreadful combuſtion warring, and diſturb,

Though

Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not th' eternal King omnipotent,
From his strong hold of Heav'n, high over-rul'd
And limited their might: though number'd such,
As each divided legion might have seem'd
A numerous host; in strenght each armed hand
A legion, led in fight yet leader seem'd
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear: each on himself rely'd,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war, and various: sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight; then soaring on main wing
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd
Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference: At his approach
The great Arch-Angel from his warlike toil
Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
Intestine war in Heav'n, th' arch-foe subdu'd,
Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown
And visage all inflam'd, first thus began.
Author of evil! unknown till thy revolt,
Unnam'd in Heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest

Theſe acts of hateful ſtrife, hateful to all,
Though heavieſt by juſt meaſure on thyſelf
And thy adherents: how haſt thou diſturb'd
Heav'n's bleſſed-peace, and into nature brought
Miſery, uncreated till the crime
Of thy rebellion! how haſt thou inſtil'd
Thy malice into thouſands, once upright
And faithful, now prov'd falſe! But think not here
To trouble holy reſt; Heav'n caſts thee out
From all her confines. Heav'n, the ſeat of bliſs,
Brooks not the works of violence and war.
Hence then, and Evil go with thee along,
Thy offſpring, to the place of evil, Hell,
Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,
Ere this avenging ſword begin thy doom,
Or ſome more ſudden vengeance, wing'd from God,
Precipitate thee with augmented pain.

So ſpake the Prince of Angels: to whom thus
The Adverſary. Nor think thou with wind
Of aery threats to awe, whom yet with deeds
Thou canſt not. Haſt thou turn'd the leaſt of theſe
To flight, or if to fall, but that they riſe
Unvanquiſh'd, eaſier to tranſact with me,
That thou ſhouldſt hope, imperious, and with threats
To chaſe me hence? Err not that ſo ſhall end
The ſtrife which thou call'ſt evil, but we ſtile
The ſtrife of glory; which we mean to win
Or turn this Heav'n itſelf into the Hell
Thou fableſt, here however to dwell free,
If not to reign: mean while thy utmoſt force,
And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
I fly not; but have ſought thee far and nigh.

Thy ended parle, and both addreſs'd for fight
Unſpeakable; for who, though with the tongue
Of Angels, can relate, or to what things
Liken on earth conſpicuous, that may lift
Human imagination to ſuch height
Of Godlike pow'r? For likeſt Gods they ſeem'd,

Stood

Stood they or mov'd, in ſtature, motion, arms,
Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
Now wav'd their fiery ſwords, and in the air
Made horrid circles; two broad ſuns their ſhields
Blaz'd oppoſit, while expectation ſtood
In horror: from each hand with ſpeed retir'd,
Where erſt was thickeſt fight, th' angelic throng,
And left large field, unſafe within the wind
Of ſuch commotion: ſuch as, to ſet forth
Great things by ſmall, if Nature's concord broke,
Among the conſtellations war were ſprung,
Two planets ruſhing from aſpect malign
Of fierceſt oppoſition in mid-ſky
Should combat, and their jarring ſpheres confound.
Together both, with next t' almighty arm
Up-lifted imminent, one ſtroke they aim'd
That might determine, and not need repeat,
As not of pow'r at once; nor odds appear'd
In might or ſwift prevention: but the ſword
Of Michael from the armory of God
Was giv'n him temper'd ſo, that neither keen
Nor ſolid might reſiſt that edge: it met
The ſword of Satan, with ſteep force to ſmite
Deſcending, and in half cut ſheer; nor ſtay'd,
But with ſwift wheel reverſe, deep entring ſhar'd
All his right ſide: then Satan firſt knew pain,
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; ſo ſore
The griding ſword with diſcontinuous wound
Paſs'd thro' him: but th' ethereal ſubſtance clos'd,
Not long diviſible; and from the gaſh
A ſtream of nectarous humor iſſuing flow'd
Sanguin, ſuch as celeſtial ſpirits may bleed,
And all his armor ſtain'd, e're while ſo bright.
Forthwith on all ſides to his aid was run
By Angels many and ſtrong, who interpos'd
Defenſe; while others bore him on their ſhields
Back to his chariot; where it ſtood retir'd
From off the files of war: there they him laid

Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame,
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in pow'r.
Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout
Vital in every part, not as frail man
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
Cannot but by annihilating die:
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air!
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, all sense; and as they please,
They limb themselves, and color, shape or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.
Mean while in other parts like deeds deserv'd
Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,
And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
Of Moloch furious king! who him defy'd,
And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of Heav'n
Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon
Down cloven to the waste, with shatter'd arms
And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
Uriel and Raphael, his vaunting foe,
Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
Vanquish'd Adramelech, and Asmadai,
Two potent thrones! that to be less than Gods
Disdain'd: but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
Mangl'd with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
The atheist crew, but with redoubl'd blow
Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence
Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted overthrew. ——
I might relate of thousands, and their names
Eternize here on earth; but those elect
Angels, contented with their fame in Heav'n,
Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
In might though wondrous, and in acts of war,

Nor

Nor of renown leſs eager, yet by doom
Cancel'd from Heav'n and ſacred memory,
Nameleſs in dark oblivion let them dwell.
For ſtrength from truth divided, and from juſt,
Illaudable, nought merits but diſpraiſe
And ignominy; yet to glory aſpires
Vain-glorious, and through infamy ſeeks fame:
Therefore eternal ſilence be their doom!
And now, their mightieſt quell'd, the battel ſwerv'd,
With many an inrode gor'd; deformed rout
Enter'd, and foul diſorder: all the ground
With ſhiver'd armor ſtrown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd,
And fiery foaming ſteeds: what ſtood, recoil'd
O'er-wearied, thro' the faint Satanic hoſt
Defenſive ſcarce, or with pale fear ſurpriz'd,
Then firſt with fear ſurpriz'd and ſenſe of pain,
Fled ignominious: to ſuch evil brought
By ſin of diſobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwiſe th' inviolable Saints,
In cubic phalanx firm, advanc'd entire,
Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd:
Such high advantages their innocence
Gave them above their foes, not to have ſinn'd,
Not to have diſobey'd! in fight they ſtood
Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pain'd
By wound, tho' from their place by violence mov'd.
Now night her courſe began, and over Heav'n
Inducing darkneſs, grateful truce impos'd,
And ſilence on the odious din of war:
Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,
Victor and vanquiſh'd. On the foughten field
Michael and his Angels prevalent
Encamping, plac'd in guard their watches round,
Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part,
Satan with his rebellious diſappear'd,
Far in the dark diſlodg'd, and void of reſt,

His Potentates to council call'd by night;
And in the midst thus undismay'd began.
O now in danger try'd, now known in arms
Not to be overpower'd, Companions dear!
Found worthy not of liberty alone,
Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
Honor, dominion, glory, and renown;
Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight,
And if one day, why not eternal days?
What Heaven's Lord hath powerfullest to send
Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
But proves not so! —— then fallible, it seems,
Of future we may deem him, though till now
Omniscient thought. True 't is, less firmly arm'd,
Some disadvantage we indur'd, and pain,
Till now not known, but known as soon contemn'd;
Since now we find this our empyreal form
Incapable of mortal injury,
Imperishable; and though pierc'd with wound,
Soon closing, and by native vigor heal'd.
Of evil then so small as easy think
The remedy: perhaps more valid arms,
Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
Or equal what between us made the odds,
In nature none: if other hidden cause
Left them superior, while we can preserve
Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
Due search and consultation will disclose.
He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of Principalities the prime;
As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake.
Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our right as Gods! yet hard
For Gods, and too unequal work we find,

Against

Againſt unequal arms to fight in pain,
Againſt unpain'd, impaſſive: from which evil
Ruin muſt needs enſue: for what avails
Valor or ſtrength, tho' matchleſs, quell'd with pain
Which all ſubdues, and makes remiſs the hands
Of mightieſt? Senſe of pleaſure we may well
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine,
But live content, which is the calmeſt life:
But pain is perfect miſery, the worſt
Of evils, and exceſſive, overturns
All patience. He who therefore can invent
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourſelves with like defence, to me deſerves
No leſs than for deliverance what we owe.
Whereto with look compos'd Satan reply'd.
Not uninvented that, which thou aright
Believ'ſt ſo main to our ſucceſs, I bring.
Which of us who beholds the bright ſurface
Of this ethereous mould, whereon we ſtand,
This continent of ſpacious Heav'n, adornd
With plant, fruit, flow'r ambroſial, gems, and gold;
Whoſe eye ſo ſuperficially ſurveys
Theſe things, as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground; materials dark and crude,
Of ſpirituous and fiery ſpume, till touch'd
With heavens ray, and temper'd they ſhoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
Theſe, in their dark nativity, the deep
Shall yield us pregnant with infernal flame:
Which into hollow engins, long and round,
Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, ſhall ſend forth
From far, with thund'ring noiſe, among our foes
Such implements of miſchief, as ſhall daſh
To pieces, and o'erwhelm whatever ſtands
Adverſe: that they ſhall fear we have diſarm'd
The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.

Nor long shall be our labor; yet ere dawn,
Effect shall end our wish. Mean while revive,
Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
Think nothink hard, much less to be despair'd.
He ended, and his words their drooping chear
Inlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
To be th' inventor miss'd, so easy it seem'd
Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
Impossible. Yet haply of thy race
In future days, if malice should abound,
Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
With dev'lish machination, might devise
Like instrument, to plague the sons of men
For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
Forthwith from council to the work they flew,
None arguing stood: innumerable hands
Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
Th' originals of nature in their crude
Conception: sulphurous and nitrous foam
They found, they mingled, and with subtle art,
Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
To blackest grain, and into store convey'd.
Part, hidden veins digg'd up, nor hath this earth
Entrails unlike, of mineral and stone,
Whereof to found their engins and their balls
Of missive ruin: part, incentive reed
Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire.
So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
With silent circumspection unespy'd.
Now when fair morn orient in Heav'n appear'd,
Up rose the victor Angels, and to arms
The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
Of golden panoply, refulgent host!
Soon banded: others from the dawning hills
Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour.

Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,
Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for 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 cry'd.
Arm, warrior's, arm for fight! the foe at hand,
Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud
He comes, and settled in his face I see
Sad resolution, and secure. Let each
His adamantine coad gird well, and each
Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbed shield,
Born ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
If I conjecture ought, no drizling show'r,
But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire.
So warn'd he them, aware themselves; and soon
In order, quit of all impediment,
Instant without disturb they took alarm,
And onward mov'd embattel'd: when behold!
Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
Approaching gross and huge; in hollow cube
Training his devilish enginry, impal'd
On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
A while; but suddenly at head appear'd
Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud.
Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
That all may see who hate us, how we seek
Peace and composure, and with open breast
Stand ready to receive them, if they like
Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
But that I doubt: however witness Heav'n!
Heav'n witness thou anon! while we discharge
Freely our part: ye who appointed stand,
Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch

What we propound, and loud that all may hear.
So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
Had ended; when to right and left the front
Divided, and to either flank retir'd:
Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange!
A triple mounted row of pillars; laid
On wheels, for like to pillars most they seem'd,
Or hollow'd bodies made of oak, or fir,
With branches lop'd, in wood or mountain fell'd;
Brass, iron, stony mold; had not their mouths
With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
Portending hollow truce: at each behind
A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
Stood waving tip'd with fire; while we suspense
Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd:
Not long! for sudden all at once their reeds
Put forth, and to a narrow vent apply'd
With nicest touch; immediate in a flame,
But soon obscur'd with smoke, all Heav'n appear'd,
From those deep-throated engins belch'd, whose roar
Embowel'd with outrageous noise the air,
And all her entrails tore; disgorging foul
Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts, and hail
Of iron globes, which on the victor host
Level'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
Though standing else as rocks; but down they fell
By thousands, Angel on Arch-Angel roll'd;
The sooner for their arms, unarm'd they might
Have easily as spirits evaded swift
By quick contraction or remove: but now
Foul dissipation follow'd, and forc'd rout;
Nor serv'd it to relax their serried files:
What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse
Repeated, and indecent overthrow
Doubl'd, would render them yet more despis'd,
And to their foes a laughter: for in view,
Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,

In

In posture to displode their second tire
Of thunder: back defeated to return
They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
And to his mates thus in derision call'd.
O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
Erewhile 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 chang'd their minds,
Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
As they would dance: yet for a dance they seem'd
Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps
For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
If our proposals once again where heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.
To whom thus Belial in like gamesome mood:
Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home;
Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
And stumbled many: who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.
So they among themselves in pleasant vein
Stood scoffing, highten'd in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory: eternal might
To match with their inventions they presum'd
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
A while in trouble: but they stood not long;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit t' oppose,
Forthwith, behold the excellence, the pow'r,
Which God hath in his mighty Angels plac'd!
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills,
For earth hath this variety from Heav'n,
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale,)
Light as the light'ning glimpse they ran, they flew:

From

From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Up-lifting bore them in their hands. Amaze,
Be sure, and terror, seiz'd the rebel host,
When coming towards them, so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
Till on those cursed engins triple-row
They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep:
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppress whole legions arm'd:
Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;
Long struggling underneath, e're they could wind
Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light:
Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
The rest in imitation to like arms
Betook them, and the neighb'ring hills up tore:
So hills amid the air encounter'd hill's,
Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire;
That under ground they fought in dismal shade,
Infernal noise! war seem'd a civil game
To this uproar; horrid confusion heap'd
Upon confusion rose. And now all Heav'n
Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,
Had not th' almighty Father, where he sits
Shrin'd in his sanctuary of Heav'n secure
Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:
That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
To honor his anointed Son aveng'd
Upon his enemies, and to declare
All pow'r on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,
Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began.
Effulgence of my glory, Son belov'd,

Son in whose face invisible is beheld
Visibly, what by deity I am;
And in whose hand what by decree I do,
Second Omnipotence! two days are past,
Two days, as we compute the days of Heav'n,
Since Michael and his Pow'rs went forth to tame
These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd:
For to themselves I left them, and thou know'st,
Equal in their creation they were form'd,
Save what sin hath impair'd, which yet hath wrought
Insensibly, for I suspend their doom:
Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
Endless, and no solution will be found.
War wearied hath perform'd what war can do,
And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
With mountains as with weapons arm'd; which makes
Wild work in Heav'n, and dangerous to the main.
Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
For thee I have ordain'd it; and thus far
Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
Of ending this great war, since none but thou
Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
In Heav'n and Hell thy pow'r above compare:
And this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
Of all things; to be Heir, and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
Go then thou Mightiest in thy Father's might!
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake Heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh.
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
From all Heav'n's bounds into the utter deep:
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Messiah his anointed king.

He

He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full; he all his Father full expreſs'd
Ineffably into his face receiv'd:
And thus the filial Godhead anſw'ring ſpake.
O Father, O ſupreme of heav'nly Thrones,
Firſt, Higheſt, Holieſt, Beſt, thou always ſeek'ſt
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is moſt juſt; this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me well pleas'd, declar'ſt thy will
Fulfil'd, which to fulfil is all my bliſs.
Scepter and pow'r, thy giving, I aſſume,
And gladlier ſhall reſign, when in the end
Thou ſhalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever; and in me all whom thou lov'ſt:
But whom thou hat'ſt, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildneſs on,
Image of thee in all things: and ſhall ſoon,
Arm'd with thy might, rid Heav'n of theſe rebell'd,
To their prepar'd ill manſion driven down,
To chains of darkneſs, and th' undying worm;
That from thy juſt obedience could revolt,
Whom to obey is happineſs entire.
Then ſhall thy Saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
Far ſeparate, circling thy holy mount
Unfeigned Hallelujahs to thee ſing,
Hymns of high praiſe, and I among them Chief.
So ſaid, He o'er his ſceptre bowing, roſe
From the right hand of glory where he ſat;
And the third ſacred morn began to ſhine, (ſound
Dawning through Heav'n. Forth ruſh'd with whirlwind
The chariot of Paternal Deity,
Flaſhing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itſelf inſtinct with ſpirit, but convoy'd
By four Cherubic ſhapes; four faces each
Had wondrous; as with ſtars their bodies all
And wings were ſet with eyes; with eyes the wheels
Of beril, and careering fires between:

Over

Over their heads a chryſtal firmament;
Where on a ſaphir throne inlaid with pure
Amber, and colors of the ſhow'ry arch,
He in celeſtial panoply all arm'd
Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
Aſcended: at his right hand Victory
Sate eagle-wing'd; beſide him hung his bow
And quiver with three-bolted thunder ſtor'd;
And from about him fierce effuſion roll'd
Of ſmoke and bickering flame and ſparkles dire:
Attended with ten thouſand thouſand Saints,
He onward came; far off his coming ſhone,
And twenty thouſand, I their number heard,
Chariots of God, half on each hand were ſeen.
He on the wings of Cherub rode ſublime
On the cryſtalline ſky, in ſaphir thron'd,
Illuſtrious far and wide: but by his own
Firſt ſeen; them unexpected joy ſurpriz'd,
When the great enſign of Meſſiah blaz'd,
Aloft by Angels borne, his ſign in Heav'n:
Under whoſe conduct Michael ſoon reduc'd
His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
Under their Head imbodied all in one.
Before him pow'r divine his way prepar'd;
At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
Each to his place, they heard his voice and went
Obſequious; Heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
And with freſh flowrets hill and valley ſmil'd.
This ſaw his hapleſs foes, but ſtood obdur'd,
And to rebellious fight rallied their Pow'rs,
Inſenſate! hope conceiving from deſpair:
In heav'nly ſpirits could ſuch perverſeneſs dwell?
But, to convince the proud what ſigns avail,
Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent?
They harden'd more by what might moſt reclaim,
Grieving to ſee his glory, at the ſight
Took env; and aſpiring to his height,
Stood reembattel'd, fierce, by force or fraud

Weenin

Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
Against God and Messiah; or to fall
In universal ruin last: and now
To final battel drew, disdaining flight,
Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
To all his host on either hand thus spake.

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

So spake the Son, and into terror chang'd
His count'nance, too severe to be beheld!
And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
At once the four spread out their starry wings,
With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.
He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as night; under his burning wheels

Thee

The ſtedfaſt empyrean ſhook throughout
All but the throne itſelf of God. Full ſoon
Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand
Graſping ten thouſand thunders, which he ſent
Before him, ſuch as in their ſouls infix'd
Plagues: they aſtoniſh'd, all reſiſtance loſt,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt:
O'er ſhields, and helms and helmed heads he rode
Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim proſtrate;
That wiſh'd the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them as a ſhelter from his ire.
Nor leſs on either ſide tempeſtuous fell
His arrows, from the fourfold-viſag'd Four,
Diſtinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
Diſtinct alike with multitude of eyes;
One ſpirit in them rul'd, and every eye
Glar'd lightning, and ſhot forth pernicious fire
Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their ſtrength,
And of their wonted vigor left them drain'd,
Exhauſted, ſpiritleſs, afflicted, fall'n.
Yet half his ſtrength he put not forth, but check'd
His thunder in mid voly; for he meant
Not to deſtroy, but root them out of Heav'n.
The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
Drove them before him thunder-ſtruck, purſued
With terrors, and with furies, to the bounds
And chryſtal wall of heav'n; which op'ning wide,
Roll'd inward, and a ſpacious gap diſclos'd
Into the waſteful deep: the monſtrous ſight
Struck them with horror backward; but far worſe
Urg'd them behind: headlong themſelves they threw
Down from the verge of Heav'n; eternal wrath
Burn'd after them to the bottomleſs pit.
Hell heard th' unſufferable noiſe, Hell ſaw
Heav'n ruining from Heav'n, and would have fled
Affrighted; but ſtrict fate had caſt too deep
Her dark foundations, and too faſt had bound.

Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roar'd,
And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
Incumber'd him with ruin! Hell at last
Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd;
Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
Disburden'd Heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
Sole Victor, from th' expulsion of his foes
Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:
To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood
Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
With jubilee advanc'd; and as they went,
Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
Worthiest to reign: He celebrated rode
Triumphant through mid-heav'n, into the courts
And temple of his mighty Father thron'd
On high; who into glory him receiv'd,
Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
Thus, measuring things in Heav'n by things on earth,
At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd
What might have else to human race been hid;
The discord which befel, and war in heav'n
Among th' Angelic Powr's, and the deep fall
Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
With Satan, he who envies now thy state,
Who now is plotting how he may seduce
Thee also from obedience, that with him
Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
His punishment, eternal misery;
Which would be all his solace and revenge,
As a despite done against the Most High,
Thee once to gain companion of his woe:
But listen not to his temptations; warn

Thy

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.

The End of the Sixth Book.

BOOK VII.

Descend from Heav'n, Urania! by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasæan wing.
The meaning, not the name I call: for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but heav'nly born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal *Wisdom* didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of th' almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the Heav'n of Heav'ns I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy temp'ring: With like safety guided down,
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd, as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime,
Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere:
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice; unchang'd
To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days,
On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude! Yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly; or when morn

Purples the east: still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers; the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, 'till the savage clamor drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.
Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphaël,
The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarn'd
Adam, by dire example to beware
Apostasy, by what befel in Heav'n
To those apostates, lest the like befal
In Paradise to Adam or his race,
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
If they transgress, and slight that sole command:
So easily obey'd, amid the choice
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
Though wand'ring. — He with his consorted Eve
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
With admiration and deep muse, to hear
Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
So unimaginable, as hate in Heav'n,
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
With such confusion: but the evil soon
Driv'n back redounded as a flood on those
From whom it sprung; impossible to mix
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
What nearer might concern him, how this world
Of Heav'n and earth conspicuous first began;
When, and whereof created, for what cause,
What within Eden or without was done
Before his memory, as one whose drouth
Yet scarce allay'd, still eyes the current stream,

Whose

Whose liquid murmur heard, new thirst exites,
Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest.
Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,
Far diff'ring from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
Divine interpreter! by favor sent
Down from the empyréan, to forewarn
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
Unknown; which human knowledge could not reach:
For which to th' infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sovereign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd
Gently, for our instruction, to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail us known,
How first began this Heav'n, which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd,
Imbracing round this florid earth; what cause
Mov'd the Creator in his holy rest
Through all eternity so late to build
In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon
Absolv'd, if unforbid thou may'st unfold
What we, not to explore the secret ask
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race, though steep; suspense in Heav'n,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,
And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of nature from the unapparent deep:
Or if the star of ev'ning, and the moon
Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring

Silence, and sleep, list'ning to thee, will watch;
Or we can bid his absence, 'till thy song
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.
Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild.
This also thy request, with caution ask'd,
Obtain: though to recount almighty works,
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
Yet what thou can'st attain, which best may serve
To glorify the Maker, and infer
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
Thy hearing: such commission from above
I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
Of knowledge within bounds: beyond abstain
To ask, nor let thine own invention hope
Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
Only omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,
To none communicable in Earth or Heav'n:
Enough is left besides to search and known.
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 Heav'n,
So call him, brighter once amidst the host
Of Angels, than that star the stars among,
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep
Into his place, and the great Son return'd
Victorious with his Saints, th' omnipotent
Eternal Father from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.
At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
He trusted to have seis'd, and into fraud

Drew

Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see
Their station; Heav'n, yet populous, retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms
Though wide; and this high temple to frequent
With ministeries due and solemn rites.
But lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled Heav'n,
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be, to lose
Self-lost, and in a moment will create
Another world; out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here: 'till by degrees of merit rais'd
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither; under long obedience try'd,
And Earth be chang'd to Heav'n, and Heav'n to Earth,
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Mean while inhabit lax, ye pow'rs of Heav'n!
And thou my Word, begotten Son! by thee
This I perform, speak thou, and be it done.
My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
I send along: ride forth, and bid the deep
Within appointed bounds be Heav'n and Earth:
Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
Though I, uncircumscrib'd myself, retire
And put not forth my goodness which is free
To act or not: necessity and change
Approach not me; and what I will is fate.
So spake th' Almighty, and to what he spake
His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect.
Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
Than time or motion; but to human ears
Cannot without process of speech be told,
So told, as earthly notion can receive.
Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heav'n,
When such was heard declar'd th' Almighty's will;

Glory they ſung to the moſt High! good will
To future men, and in their dwellings peace;
Glory to him! whoſe juſt avenging ire
Had driven out th' ungodly from his ſight,
And th' habitations of the juſt: to him
Glory and praiſe, whoſe wiſdom had ordain'd
Good out of evil to create; inſtead
Of ſpirits malign a better race to bring
Into their vacant room, and thence diffuſe
His good to worlds and ages infinite.
So ſang the Hierarchies. Mean while the Son
On his great expedition now appear'd,
Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
Of majeſty divine: ſapience and love
Immenſe, and all his Father in him ſhone.
About his chariot numberleſs were pour'd
Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,
And Virtues: winged ſpirits, and chariots wing'd
From th' armory of God, where ſtand of old
Myriads between two brazen mountains lodg'd
Againſt a ſolemn day, harneſs'd at hand,
Celeſtial equipage! and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them ſpirit liv'd,
Attendant on their Lord: Heav'n open'd wide
Her ever during gates, harmonious ſound
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory in his pow'rful Word,
And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
On heav'nly ground they ſtood, and from the ſhore
They view'd the vaſt immeaſurable Abyſs,
Outrageous as a ſea, dark, waſteful, wild;
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And ſurging waves, as mountains, to aſſault
Heav'n's height, and with the center mix the pole.
Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace!
Said then th' omnific Word, your diſcord end: ——
Nor ſtay'd, but on the wings of Cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode

Far

Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train
Follow'd in bright proceſſion, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then ſtaid the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compaſſes, prepar'd
In God's eternal ſtore, to circumſcribe
This Univerſe, and all created things.
One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd
Round through the vaſt profundity obſcure;
And ſaid, thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy juſt circumference, o World!
Thus God the heav'n created, thus the earth;
Matter unform'd and void! Darkneſs profund
Cover'd th' abyſs, but on the watry calm
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outſpread,
And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid maſs; but downward purg'd
The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,
Adverſe to life; then founded, then conglob'd
Like things to like; the reſt to ſeveral place
Diſparted, and between ſpun out the air;
And earth ſelf balanc'd on her centre hung.
Let there be light! ſaid God; and forthwith light
Ethereal, firſt of things, quinteſſence pure
Sprung from the deep: and from her native eaſt,
To journey through the aery gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud; for yet the ſun
Was not, ſhe in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God ſaw the light was good;
And light from darkneſs by the hemiſphere
Divided: light the dey, and darkneſs night
He nam'd. Thus was the firſt day ev'n and morn:
Nor paſt uncelebrated, nor unſung
By the celeſtial quires, when orient light
Exhaling firſt from darkneſs they beheld;
Birth-day of Heav'n and Earth! with joy and ſhout
The hollow univerſal orb they fill'd;

And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works, Creator him they sung,
Both when first ev'ning was, and when first morn.
Again, God said, let there be firmament
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters! And God made
The firmament expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffus'd
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round: partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide
Chrystallin ocean, and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far remov'd; lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
And Heav'n he nam'd the firmament: so ev'n
And morning chorus sung the second day.
The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryon immature, involv'd,
Appear'd not: over all the face of earth
Main ocean flow'd; not idle, but with warm
Prolific humor soft'ning all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Satiate with genial moisture, when God said,
Be gather'd now ye waters under Heav'n
Into one place, and let dry land appear! ——
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds, their tops ascend the sky.
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom, broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters: Thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command impress'd
On the swift floods: as armies at the call

Of

Of trumpet, for of armies thou hast heard,
Troop to their standard; so the wat'ry throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill;
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,
And on the washy oose deep channels wore;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now
Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, earth, and the great receptacle
Of congregated waters, he call'd seas;
And saw that it was good: and said, let th' earth
Puth forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the earth! ——
He scarce had said, when the bare earth, 'till then
Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green,
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowr'd
Op'ning their various colors, and made gay
Her bosom smelling sweet. And these scarce blown,
Forth florish'd thick the clustring vine, forth crept
The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattl'd in her field; and th' humble shrub,
And bush, with friz'l'd hair implicit. Last,
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit; or gemm'd
Their blossoms: with high woods the hills were crown'd;
With tufts the vallies, and each fountain side,
With borders long the rivers: that earth now
Seem'd like to Heav'n; a seat where Gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
None was: but from the earth a dewy mist

Went

Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each
Plant of the field; which, ere it was in th' earth,
God made, and ev'ry herb, before it grew
On the green ſtem: God ſaw that it was good,
So Ev'n and Morn recorded the third Day.
Again th' Almighty ſpake: Let there be lights
High in th' expanſe of Heaven, to divide
The day from night: and let them be for ſigns,
For ſeaſons, and for days, and circling years,
And let them be for lights, as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of Heav'n,
To give light on the earth! —— and it was ſo.
And God made two great lights, great for their uſe
To man, the greater to have rule by day,
The leſs by night altern: and made the ſtars,
And ſet them in the firmament of Heav'n,
T' illuminate the earth, and rule the day,
In their viciſſitude, and rule the night,
And light from darkneſs to divide. God ſaw,
Surveying his great work, that is was good:
For of celeſtial bodies firſt the Sun
A mighty ſphere! he fram'd; unlightſome firſt,
Tho' of ethereal mold; then form'd the moon,
Globoſe; and ev'ry magnitude of ſtars;
And ſow'd with ſtars the Heav'n, thick as a field.
Of light by far the greater part he took,
Tranſplanted from her cloudy ſhrine, and plac'd
In the Sun's orb, made porous to receive
And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light:
Hither, as to their fountain, other ſtars
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
And hence the morning planet gilds her horns:
By tincture, or reflection, they augment
Their ſmall peculiar, though from human ſight
So far remote, with diminution ſeen.
Firſt in his eaſt the glorious lamp was ſeen,
Regent of day; and all th' horizon round

In-

Inveſted with bright rays, jocond to run
His longitude through Heav'n's high road: the gray
Dawn, and the Pleiades before him danc'd,
Shedding ſweet influence. Leſs bright the moon,
But oppoſite in level'd weſt was ſet
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him, for other light ſhe needed none
In that aſpect: and ſtill that diſtance keeps
'Till night; then in the eaſt her turn ſhe ſhines,
Revolv'd on Heav'ns great axle, and her reign
With thouſand leſſer lights dividual holds,
With thouſand thouſand ſtars, that then appear'd
Spangling the hemiſphere; then firſt adorn'd
With the bright luminaries, that ſet and roſe,
Glad ev'ning and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.
And God ſaid, let the waters generate
Reptil with ſpawn abundant, living ſoul!
And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
Diſplay'd on th' open firmament of Heav'n!
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteouſly
The waters generated by their kinds!
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And ſaw that it was good, and bleſs'd them, ſaying,
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the ſeas
And lakes, and running ſtreams the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiply'd on th' earth.
Forthwith the ſounds, and ſea, 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 thro' groves
Of coral ſtray; or, ſporting with quick glance,
Shew to the Sun their wav'd coats, dropt with gold;
Or, in their pearly ſhells at eaſe, attend
Moiſt nutriment, or under rocks their food,
In jointed armour watch: on ſmooth the Seal

And

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

Ev'ning

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

Of

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

This

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

The Heav'n's and all the constellations rung:
The planets in their station list'ning stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
Open, ye everlasting gates, they sung,
Open, ye Heav'ns, your living doors; let in
The great Creator, from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days work, a World!
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men,
Delighted; and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers,
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending: He through Heav'n,
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led,
To God's eternal house direct the way;
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest
Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Ev'ning arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night; when, at the holy mount
Of Heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne
Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
The filial Pow'r arriv'd, and sat him dow'n
With his great Father: for he also went
Invisible, yet staid, such privilege
Hath Omnipresence, and the work ordain'd,
Author and end of all things; and from work
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,
As resting on that day from all his work:
But not in silence holy kept; the harp
Had work and rested not, the solemn pipe,
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string, or golden wire,
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral, or unison: of incense clouds,

Fuming

Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount;
Creation, and the six days acts, they sung.
Great are thy works, Jehovah, infinite
Thy pow'r! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee? Greater now in thy return
Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day
Thy thunders magnify'd; but to create
Is greater, than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King! or bound
Thy empire? Easily the proud attempt
Of spirits apostate, and their counsels vain,
Thou hast repell'd; while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another Heav'n!
From Heaven gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
Numerous, and ev'ry star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men!
And sons of men! whom God hath thus advanc'd.
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him; and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air;
And multiply a race of worshippers
Holy and just: thrice happy if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!
So sung they, and the empyrean rung
With hallelujahs: Thus was Sabbath kept,
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done

From the beginning, that posterity
Inform'd by thee might know. If else thou seek'st
Ought, not surpassing human measure, say.

The End of the Seventh Book.

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 fix'd to hear:
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully reply'd.
What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal, have I to render thee, divine
Historian? who thus largely hast allay'd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
This friendly condescension to relate
Things, else by me unsearchable; now heard
With wonder, but delight; and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator. Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world
Of Heav'n and earth consisting; and compute
Their magnitudes; this earth a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd,
And all her number'd stars; that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible, for such
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal, merely to officiate light
Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night; in all their vast survey
Useless besides: reasoning I oft admire,
How Nature, wise and frugal, could commit
Such disproportions; with superfluous hand,
So many nobler bodies to create,
Greater so manifold to this one use,
For ought appears, and on their orbs impose
Such

Such reſtleſs revolution day by day
Repeated, while the ſedentary earth,
That better might with far leſs compaſs move,
Serv'd by more noble than herſelf, attains
Her end without leaſt motion; and receives,
As tribute, ſuch a ſumleſs journey brought
Of incorporeal ſpeed, her warmth and ligth;
Speed, to deſcribe whoſe ſwiftneſs number fails.
So ſpake our ſire, and by his count'nance ſeem'd
Entring on ſtudious thoughts abſtruſe; which Eve
Perceiving, where ſhe ſat retir'd in ſight,
With lowlineſs majeſtic from her ſeat,
And grace, that won who ſaw to wiſh her ſtay;
Roſe, and went forth among her fruits and flow'rs,
To viſit how they proſper'd, bud and bloom,
Her nurſery: they at her coming ſprung,
And touch'd by her fair tendance gladlier grew,
Yet went ſhe not, as not with ſuch diſcourſe
Delighted, or not capable her ear
Of what was high: ſuch pleaſure ſhe reſerv'd,
Adam relating, ſhe ſole auditreſs:
Her huſband the relater ſhe preferr'd
Before the Angel, and of him to aſk
Choſe rather: he, ſhe knew, would intermix
Grateful digreſſions, and ſolve high diſpute
With conjugal careſſes: from his lip
Not words alone pleas'd her. O when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honor join'd?
With Goddes-like demeanour forth ſhe went;
Not unattended! for on her, as Queen,
A pomp of winning Graces waited ſtill,
And from about her ſhot darts of deſire
Into all eyes, to wiſh her ſtill in ſight.
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt propos'd,
Benevolent and facil thus reply'd.
To aſk or ſearch I blame thee not, for Heav'n
Is as the book of God before thee ſet,
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn

His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
This to attain, whether Heav'n move or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
From man or angel, the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal; and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire. Or, if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heav'ns
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter; when they come to model Heav'n,
And calculate the stars, how they will wield
The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances; how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribl'd o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb.
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and suppose't,
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heav'n such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit. Consider first, that great
Or bright infers not excellence: the earth
Though, in comparison of Heav'n, so small,
Nor glistering, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the Sun, that barren shines;
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful earth: there first receiv'd
His beams, unactive else, their vigor find.
Yet not to earth are those bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee, earth's habitant.
And for the Heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak
The Maker's high magnificence; who built
So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far;
That man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a small partition; and the rest
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.

The

The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed all most spiritual: me thou think'st not slow,
Who since the morning-hour set out from Heav'n,
Where God resides; and ere mid-day arriv'd
In Eden: distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name! but this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heav'n's; to shew
Invalid, that which thee to doubt it mov'd:
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac'd heav'n from earth so far, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the Sun
Be center to the world; and other stars
By his attractive virtue, and their own,
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest: and what if sev'nth to these
The planet earth, so stedfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move?
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities,
Or save the sun his labor, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos'd,
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
Of day and night: which needs not thy belief,
If earth industrious of herself, fetch day
Travelling east; and with her part averse
From the sun's beam meet night; her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light,
Sent from her through the wide transpicous air,
To the terrestrial moon be as a star,
Inlightning her by day, as she by night
This earth, reciprocal? if land be there,

Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
Allotted there: and other Suns perhaps
With their attendent moons thou wilt descry,
Communicating male and female light,
Which two great sexes animate the world,
Stor'd in each orb, perhaps, with some that live.
For such vast room in nature unpossess'd
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
Each orb a glimpse of light, convey'd so far
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not,
Whether the sun, predominant in heav'n,
Rise on the earth, or earth rise on the sun;
He, from the east his flaming road begin;
Or she, from west her silent course advance,
With inoffensive pace, that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces ev'n,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,
Sollicit not thy thoughts with matters hid,
Leave them to God above, him serve and fear.
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Where-ever plac'd, let him dispose: joy thou
In what he gives to thee, this paradise
And thy fair Eve: Heav'n is for thee too high
To know what passes there: be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition or degree;
Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd,
Not of earth only, but of highest Heav'n.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, reply'd.

How fully hast thou satisfy'd me, pure
Intelligence of Heav'n, Angel serene!
And freed from intricacies taught to live,

The

The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us, unless we ourselves
Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end:
'Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn,
That not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom: what is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence;
And renders us in things that most concern
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful, whence haply mention may arise
Of something not unseasonable to ask,
By sufferance, and thy wonted favor deign'd,
Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now, hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard:
And day is yet not spent, 'till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise,
Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heav'n,
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of Palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labor, at the hour
Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill
Tho' pleasant; but thy words with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.
Tho whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek.
Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men!
Nor tongue ineloquent: for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd,

Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking or mute all comelineſs and grace
Attents thee, and each word, each motion, forms:
Nor leſs think we in Heav'n of thee on Earth,
Than of our fellow-ſervant; and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with Man:
For God we ſee hath honor'd thee, and ſet
On Man his equal love. Say therefore on;
For I that day was abſent, as befel,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obſcure,
Far on excurſion toward the gates of hell,
Squar'd in full legion, ſuch command we had,
To ſee that none thence iſſu'd forth a ſpy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work,
Leſt he, incens'd at ſuch eruption bold,
Deſtruction with creation might have mix'd.
Not that they durſt without his leave attempt;
But us he ſends upon his high beheſts
For ſtate, as Sov'reign King; and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Faſt we found, faſt ſhut
The diſmal gates, and parricado'd ſtrong!
But long e're our approaching heard within
Noiſe, other than the ſound of dance or ſong!
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we return'd up to the coaſt of light
Ere Sabbath ev'ning: ſo we had in charge.
But thy relation now! for I attend,
Pleas'd with thy words no leſs than thou with mine.
So ſpake the Godlike Pow'r, and thus our ſire.
For Man to tell how human life began
Is hard; for who himſelf beginning knew?
Deſire with thee ſtill longer to converſe
Induc'd me. —— As new wak'd from ſoundeſt ſleep,
Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid,
In balmy ſweat; which with his beams the ſun
Soon dry'd, and on the reaking moiſture fed.
Straight toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd a while the ample ſky; 'till rais'd

By

By quick instinctive motion up I sprung,
As thitherward endeavoring, and upright
Stood on my feet. About me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams: by these,
Creatures that liv'd, and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew;
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd:
With fragrance, and with joy, my heart o'erflow'd.
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigor led.
But who I was, or where, or from what cause,
Knew not: to speak I try'd, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light!
And thou inlighten'd Earth, so fresh and gay!
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods and plains!
And ye that live and move, fair creatures! tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
Not of myself —— By some great Maker then,
In goodness and in pow'r praeeminent.
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light; when answer none return'd,
On a green shady bank profuse of flow'rs
Pensive I sat me down. There gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seis'd
My drouséd sense, untroubl'd, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy, to believe I yet had being,
And liv'd. One came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, "Thy mansion wants thee, *Adam*, rise,

"First

"First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
"First Father! call'd by thee I come thy guide
"To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd"
So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd;
And over fields and waters, as in air,
Smood sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain, whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, inclos'd, with goodliest trees
Planted, with walks, and bow'rs; that what I saw
Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree
Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to th' eye
Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively shadow'd. Here had new begun
My wand'ring, had not he, who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
Presence divine! rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell
Submiss: he rear'd me, and "whom thou sought'st I am,
Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest
"Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
"This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
"To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:
"Of every tree that in the garden grows
"Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth;
"But of the tree whose operation brings
"Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
"The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
"Amid the garden by the tree of Life,
"Remember what I warn thee! shun to taste,
"And shun the bitter consequence; for know,
"The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
"Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt dye;
"From that day mortal: and this happy state
"Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
"Of woe and sorrow." —— Sternly he pronounc'd
The rigid interdiction, which resounds

Yet

Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
Not to incur: but soon his clear aspect
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd.
"Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth
"To thee and to thy race I give; as Lords
"Possess it, and all things that therein live,
"Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl;
"In sign whereof, each bird, and beast, behold
"After their kinds: I bring them to receive
"From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
"With low subjection: understand the same
"Of fish within their watry residence,
"Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
"Their element to draw the thinner air,"
As thus her spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching, two and two; these, cowring low
With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing.
I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God indu'd
My sudden apprehension! but in these
I found not what methought I wanted still;
And to the heav'nly Vision thus presum'd.
O by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or ought than mankind higher,
Surpassest far my naming, how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe,
And all this good to man? For whose well-being
So amply, and with hand so liberal
Thou hast provided all things. But with me
I see not who partakes: in solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone?
Or all enjoying, what contentment find?
Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
As with a smile more brighten'd, thus reply'd.
What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
With various living creatures, and the air
Replenish'd, and all these at they command
To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not

Their

Their language and their ways? They also know,
And reason not contemptibly: with these
Find pastime, and bear rule? thy realm is large.
So spake the universal Lord, and seem'd
So ordering: I, with leave of speech implor'd,
And humble deprecation, thus reply'd.
Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly Pow'r,
My Maker, be propitious while I speak!
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?
Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Giv'n and receiv'd: but in disparity,
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight; wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort: they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape:
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.
Whereto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd.
A nice and subtle happiness I see
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy associates, Adam; and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possest
Of happiness or not, who am alone
From all eternity? for none I know
Second to me, or like; equal much less.
How have I then with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents

Beneath what other creatures are to thee?
He ceas'd, I lowly answer'd. To attain
The height and depth of thy eternal ways,
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!
Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
Is no deficience found. Not so is Man,
But in degree; the cause of his desire,
By conversation with his like to help,
Or solace his defect. No need that thou
Should'st propagate, already Infinite;
And through all numbers absolute, though one.
But Man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection; and beget
Like of his like, his image multiply'd:
In unity defective, which requires
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in thy secresy although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
Social communication: yet, so pleas'd,
Canst raise thy creature, to what height thou wilt
Of union or communion, deify'd:
I by conversing cannot these erect
From prone, nor in their ways complacence find.
Thus I imbolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd
This answer from the gracious voice divine.
Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;
And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself:
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My image, not imparted to the brute:
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee,
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;
And be so minded still. I, e're thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for man to be alone:
And no such company as then thou saw'st
Intended thee; for tryal only brought,
To see how thou could'st judge of fit and meet.

What

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

Of

Of nuptial ſanctity, and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her ſteps, Heav'n in her eye,
In every geſture dignity and love.
I overjoy'd could not forbear aloud.
This turn hath made amends; Thou haſt fulfill'd
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign!
Giver of all things fair! but faireſt this
Of all thy gifts, nor envieſt. I now ſee
Bone of my bone, fleſh of my fleſh, myſelf
Before me: Woman is her name, of Man
Extracted: for this cauſe he ſhall forego
Father and mother, and t' his wife adhere;
And they ſhall be one fleſh, one heart, one ſoul.
She heard me thus, and tho' divinely brought,
Yet innocence, and virgin modeſty,
Her virtue, and the conſcience of her worth,
That would be woo'd, and not unſought be won,
Not obvious, not obtruſive, but retir'd,
The more deſirable: or, to ſay all,
Nature herſelf, though pure of ſinful thought,
Wrought in her ſo, that ſeeing me, ſhe turn'd;
I follow'd her; ſhe what was honor knew,
And with obſequious majeſty approv'd,
My pleaded reaſon. —— To the nuptial bow'r
I led her bluſhing like the morn: all Heav'n,
And happy conſtellations, on that hour
Shed their ſelecteſt influence: the earth
Gave ſign of gratulation, and each hill:
Joyous the birds; freſh gales, and gentle airs
Whiſper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung roſe, flung odors from the ſpicy ſhrub,
Diſporting! till the amorous bird of night
Sung ſpouſal, and bid haſte the ev'ning ſtar
On this hill-top, to light the bridal lamp.
Thus have I told thee all my ſtate, and brought
My ſtory to the ſum of earthly bliſs,
Which I enjoy; and muſt confeſs to find
In all things elſe delight indeed, but ſuch

As us'd or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flow'rs,
Walks, and the melody of birds: but here
Far otherwise, transported I behold,
Transported touch: here passion first I felt,
Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else
Superior, and unmov'd; here only weak,
Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
Or Nature fail'd in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;
Or from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough: at least, on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament; in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
For well I understand in the prime end
Of Nature, her th' inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel:
In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both; and less expressing
The character of that dominion giv'n
O'er other creatures. Yet, when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own; that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best:
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenanc'd, and like folly shews;
Authority and reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally: and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard Angelic plac'd.
To whom the Angel with contracted brow.
Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;
Do thou but thine, and be not diffident

Of

Of wisdom: she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
By attributing over-much to things
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
For what admir'st thou, what transports thee so?
An outside? fair no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honoring, and thy love;
Not thy subjection. Weigh with her thyself;
Then value: oft-times nothing profits more
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right,
Well manag'd: of that skill the more thou know'st,
The more she will acknowledge thee her Head,
And to realities yield all her shows:
Made so adorn for thy delight the more;
So awful, that with honor thou may'st love
Thy mate; who sees, when thou art seen least wife.
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
Is propagated, seem such dear delight
Beyond all other; think the same vouchsaf'd
To cattel, and each beast; which would not be
To them made common, and divulg'd, if ought
Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him move.
What higher in her society thou find'st
Attractive, human, rational, love still:
In loving thou dost well, in passion not;
Wherein true love consists not. Love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious: is the scale
By which to heav'nly love thou may'st ascend;
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.
To whom thus, half abash'd, Adam reply'd.
Neither her out-side form'd so fair, nor ought
In procreation common to all kinds,
Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem,
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,

Thoſe thouſand decencies that daily flow
From all her words and actions mix'd with love
And ſweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both one ſoul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair,
More grateful than harmonious ſound to th' ear.
Yet theſe ſubject not: I to thee diſcloſe
What inward thence I feel; not therefore foil'd;
Who meet with various objects, from the ſenſe
Variouſly repreſenting; yet ſtill free,
Approve the beſt, and follow what I approve.
To love thou blam'ſt me not; for love thou ſay'ſt
Leads up to Heav'n, is both the way and guide;
Bear with me then, if lawful what I aſk:
Love not the heav'nly ſpirits? And how their love
Expreſs they? By looks only? Or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?
To whom the Angel, with a ſmile that glow'd
Celeſtial roſy-red, love's proper hue,
Anſwer'd. Let it ſuffice thee that thou know'ſt
Us happy, and without love no happineſs.
Whatever pure thou in thy body enjoy'ſt,
And pure thou wert created, we enjoy
In eminence: and obſtacle find none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, excluſive bars:
Eaſier than air with air, if ſpirits embrace,
Total they mix; union of pure with pure
Deſiring: nor reſtrain'd conveyance need,
As fleſh to mix with fleſh, or ſoul with ſoul.
But I can now no more: the parting ſun
Beyond the earth's green cape, and verdant iſles,
Heſperian ſets, my ſignal to depart.
Be ſtrong, live happy, and love! But, firſt of all,
Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command: take heed leſt paſſion ſway
Thy judgment to do ought, which elſe free will
Would not admit: thine, and of all thy ſons,
The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware!

I in thy perſevering ſhall rejoice,
And all the bleſt. Stand faſt! to ſtand or fall
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies:
Perfect within, no outward aid require,
And all temptation to transgreſs repel.
So ſaying, he aroſe: whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction. Since to part,
Go heav'nly gueſt, ethereal meſſenger,
Sent from whoſe ſov'reign goodneſs I adore!
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condeſcenſion, and ſhall be honor'd ever
With grateful memory: thou to mankind,
Be good and friendly ſtill, and oft return!
So parted they, the Angel up to Heav'n
From the thick ſhade, and Adam to his bow'r.

The End of the Eighth Book.

BOOK IX.

No more of talk where God or Angel gueſt
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us'd
To ſit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repaſt; permitting him the while
Venial diſcourſe unblam'd. I now muſt change
Thoſe notes to tragic! Foul diſtruſt, and breach
Diſloyal on the part of man, revolt,
And diſobedience: on the part of Heav'n,
Now alienated! diſtance, and diſtaſte,
Anger, and juſt rebuke, and judgement giv'n,
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin, and her ſhadow Death, and Miſery,
Death's harbinger. Sad taſk! yet argument
Not leſs, but more heroic than the wrath
Of ſtern Achilles on his foe purſu'd
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall: or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia diſeſpous'd,
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that ſo long

Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's ſon;
If anſwerable ſtile I can obtain
Of my celeſtial patroneſs, who deigns
Her nightly viſitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me ſlumb'ring; or inſpires
Eaſy my unpremeditated verſe:
Since firſt this ſubject for Heroic ſong
Pleas'd me, long chuſing, and beginning late;
Not ſedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deem'd; chief maſt'ry to diſſect
With long and tedious havock fabled Knights
In battels feign'd: the better fortitude
Of patience, and Heroic Martyrdom,
Unſung; or to deſcribe Races, and Games,
Or tilting furniture, emblazon'd ſhields,
Impreſſes quaint, capariſons, and ſteeds;
Baſes, and tinſel trappings, gorgeous Knights
At jouſt and torneament; then marſhal'd feaſt
Serv'd up in hall with ſewers, and ſeneſhals:
The ſkill of artifice, or office, mean;
Not that which juſtly gives Heroic name
To perſon, or to poem. Me of theſe
Nor ſkill'd, nor ſtudious, higher argument
Remains; ſufficient of itſelf to raiſe
That name, unleſs an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years damp my intended wing
Depreſs'd: and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.
The Sun was ſunk, and after him the ſtar
Of Heſperus, whoſe office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, ſhort arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now, from end to end,
Night's hemiſphere had veil'd th' horizon round:
When Satan who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On man's deſtruction, maugre what might hap

Of

Of heavier on himſelf, fearleſs return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
From compaſſing the earth; cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the Sun, deſcry'd
His entrance, and forewarn'd the Cherubim,
That kept their watch: thence full of anguiſh driv'n,
The ſpace of ſev'n continu'd nights he rode
With darkneſs; thrice the equinoctial Line
He circled; four times croſs'd the car of Night
From Pole to Pole, traverſing each Colure;
On th' eighth return'd, and on the coaſt averſe
From entrance, or Cherubic watch, by ſtealth
Found unſuſpected way. There was a place,
Now not, tho'ſin, not time, firſt wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradiſe,
Into a gulph ſhot under ground, 'till part
Roſe up a fountain by the Tree of Life.
In with the river ſunk, and with it roſe
Satan, involv'd in riſing miſt; then fought
Where to lie hid: ſea he had ſearch'd, and land,
From Eden over Pontus, and the pool
Maeotis, up beyond the river Ob:
Downward as far antarctic: and in length,
Weſt from Orontes, to the ocean barr'd
At Darien: thence, to the land where flows
Ganges, and Indus. Thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow ſearch; and with inſpection deep
Conſider'd 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 revol'd, his final ſentence choſe
Fit veſſel, fitteſt imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark ſuggeſtions hide
From ſharpeſt ſight: for in the wily ſnake
Whatever ſleights, none would ſuſpicious mark,
As from his wit and native ſubtlety
Proceeding; which in other beaſts obſerv'd

Doubt might beget of diabolic pow'r
Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd.
O Earth, how like to Heav'n! if not preferr'd
More justly, seath worthier of Gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God after better worse would built?
Terrestrial Heav'n, danc'd round by other Heav'ns
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
In thee concentring all their precious beams
Of sacred influence! As God in Heav'n
Is center, yet extends to all; so thou
Centring, receiv'st from all those orbs: in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life,
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in Man.
With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
If I could joy in ought: sweet interchange
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains!
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
Find place or refuge: and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries: all good to me becomes
Bane; and in Heav'n much worse would be my state;
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heav'n
To dwell, unless by mast'ring Heav'n's Supreme:
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound.
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroy'd,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made; all this will soon

Fol-

Follow, as to him link'd in weal or woe:
In woe then! that deſtruction wide may range.
To me ſhall be the glory ſole among
Th' infernal Pow'rs, in one day to have marr'd
What he *Almighty* ſtyl'd, ſix nights and days
Continu'd making; and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than ſince I, in one night, freed
From ſervitude inglorious well nigh half
Th' Angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers. He, to be aveng'd,
And to repair his numbers thus impair'd;
Whether ſuch virtue ſpent of old now fail'd
More Angels to create, if they at leaſt
Are his created, or, to ſpite us more,
Determin'd to advance into our room
A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from ſo baſe original!
With heav'nly ſpoils; our ſpoils. What he decreed,
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his ſeat,
Him Lord pronounc'd; and, o indignity!
Subjected to his ſervice Angel wings,
And flaming miniſters, to watch and tend
Their earthly charge. Of theſe the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrap'd in miſt
Of midnight vapor glide obſcure, and pry
In every buſh and brake, where hap may find
The ſerpent ſleeping; in whoſe mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul deſcent! that I, who erſt contended
With Gods to ſit the higheſt, am now conſtrain'd
Into a beaſt; and mix'd with beſtial ſlime,
This eſſence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the height of Deity aſpir'd!
But what will not ambition, and revenge,
Deſcend to? who aſpires, muſt down as low,
As high he ſoar'd; obnoxious, firſt or laſt,

To baſeſt things. Revenge, at firſt though ſweet,
Bitter ere long back on itſelf recoils:
Let it; I reck not, ſo it light well aim'd!
Since higher I fall ſhort, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favorite
Of Heav'n, this man of clay, ſon of deſpite,
Whom, us the more to ſpite, his maker rais'd
From duſt, ſpite then with ſpite is beſt repaid.
So ſaying, through each thicket, dank or dry,
Like a black miſt low creeping, he held on
His midnight ſearch, where ſooneſt he might find
The ſerpent: him faſt ſleeping ſoon he found,
In labyrinth of many a round ſelf-roll'd;
His head the midſt, well ſtor'd with ſubtle wiles:
Not yet in horrid ſhade, or diſmal den,
Nor nocent yet; but, on the graſſy herb,
Fearleſs unfear'd he ſlept. In at his mouth
The Devil enter'd; and his brutal ſenſe,
In heart, or head, poſſeſſing, ſoon inſpir'd
With act intelligential; but his ſleep
Diſturb'd not, waiting cloſe th' approach of morn.
Now when as ſacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breath'd
Their morning incenſe, when all things that breathe,
From th' earth's great altar ſend up ſilent praiſe
To the Creator, and his noſtrils fill
With grateful ſmell, forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worſhip to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice: that done, partake
The ſeaſon, prime for ſweeteſt ſcents and airs:
Then commune, how that day they beſt may ply
Their growing work, for much their work outgrew
The hands diſpatch of two, gard'ning ſo wide,
And Eve firſt to her huſband thus began.
Adam, well may we labor ſtill to dreſs
This garden, ſtill to tend plant, herb and flow'r,
Our pleaſant taſk injoin'd; but 'till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labor grows

Luxu-

Luxurious by reſtraint: what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now adviſe,
Or hear what to my mind firſt thoughts preſent:
Let us divide our labors: thou, where choice
Leads thee, or where moſt needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbor, or direct
The claſping ivy where to climb: while I,
In yonder ſpring of roſes, intermix'd
With myrtle, find what to redreſs till noon.
For while ſo near each other thus all day
Our taſk we chooſe, what wonder if ſo near
Looks intervene, and ſmiles, or object new
Caſual diſcourſe draw on; which intermits
Our day's-work, brought to little, though begun
Early, and th' hour of ſupper comes unearn'd.
To whom mild anſwer Adam thus return'd.
Sole Eve, aſſociate ſole, to me beyond
Compare, above all living creatures dear!
Well haſt thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,
How we might beſt fulfil the work, which here
God hath aſſign'd us; nor of me ſhalt paſs
Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to ſtudy houſehold good,
And good works in her huſband to promote.
Yet not ſo ſtrictly hath our Lord impos'd
Labor, as to debar us when we need
Refreſhment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this ſweet intercourſe
Of looks and ſmiles, for ſmiles from reaſon flow,
To brute deny'd, and are of love the food;
Love, not the loweſt end of human life.
For not to irkſome toil, but to delight
He made us, and delight to reaſon join'd.
Theſe paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderneſs with eaſe, as wide
As we need walk; till younger hands ere long

Aſſiſt

Assist us. But, if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return.
But, other doubt possesses me; least harm
Befall thee sever'd from me: for thou know'st
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
Envying our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault: and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish, and best advantage, us asunder;
Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need;
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God; or to disturb
Conjugal love; than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more:
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonor lurks,
Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
Who guards her, or with her the worst indures.
To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus reply'd.
Offspring of Heav'n and earth, and all earth's Lord!
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn,
And from the parting Angel over-heard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then return'd at shut of ev'ning flow'rs.
But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such
As we, not capable of death, or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.

His

His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith, and love,
Can by his fraud be ſhaken or ſeduc'd;
Thoughts, which how found they harbor in thy breaſt,
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee ſo dear?
To whom with healing words Adam reply'd.
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!
For ſuch thou art, from ſin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I diſſuade
Thy abſence from my ſight, but to avoid
Th' attempt itſelf, intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, though in vain, at leaſt aſperſes
The tempted with diſhonor foul; ſuppos'd
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Againſt temptation. Thou thyſelf with ſcorn
And anger would'ſt reſent the offer'd wrong,
Though ineffectual found: misdeem not then,
If ſuch affront I labor to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or daring, firſt on me th' aſſault ſhall light.
Nor thou his malice and falſe guile contemn;
Subtile 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-reach'd,
Would utwoſt vigor raiſe, and rais'd unite.
Why ſhouldſt not thou like ſenſe within thee feel
When I am preſent, and the tryal chuſe
With me, beſt witneſs of thy virtue try'd?
So ſpake domeſtic Adam in his care,
And matrimonial love: but Eve, who thought
Leſs attributed to her faith ſincere,
Thus her reply with accent ſweet renew'd.
If this be our condition, thus to dwell

In

In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not indued
Single with like defence, where ever met,
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe
Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity; his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonor on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honor gain
From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
Favor from Heav'n, our witness from th' event.
And what is faith, love, virtue unassay'd
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
Let us not then suspect our happy state
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
As not secure to single, or combin'd:
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,
And Eden were no Eden thus expos'd.
To whom thus Adam fervently reply'd,
O woman! best are all things as the will
Of God ordain'd them: His creating hand
Nothing imperfect or deficient left
Of all that he created; much less man,
Or ought that might his happy state secure:
Secure from outward force; within himself
The danger lies, yet lies within his pow'r.
Against his will he can receive no harm.
But God left free the will; for what obeys
Reason, is free; and reason he made right:
But bid her well beware, and still erect,
Left by some fair appearing good surpris'd,
She dictate false, and misinform the will
To do what God expressly hath forbid.
Not then mistrust, but tender love injoins,
That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
Since reason not impossible may meet

Some

Some ſpecious object, by the foe ſuborn'd;
And fall into deception unaware,
Not keeping ſtricteſt watch, as ſhe was warn'd.
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
Were better; and moſt likely, if from me
Thou ſever not; trial will come unſought.
Wouldſt thou approve thy conſtancy? approve
Firſt thy obedience; th' other who can know,
Not ſeeing thee attempted? who attеſt?
But if thou think, trial unſought may find
Us both ſecurer, than thus warn'd thou ſeem'ſt ——.
Go! for thy ſtay, not free, abſents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence! rely
On what thou haſt of virtue; ſummon all:
For God tow'rds thee hath done his part, do thine.
So ſpake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
Perſiſted, yet ſubmiſs, though laſt, reply'd.
With thy permiſſion then, and thus forewarn'd,
Chiefly by what thy own laſt reaſoning words
Touch'd only; that our tryal, when leaſt ſought,
May find us both perhaps far leſs prepar'd,
The willinger I go: nor much expect
A foe ſo proud will firſt the weaker ſeek;
So bent, the more ſhall ſhame him his repulſe.
Thus ſaying, from her huſband's hand her hand
Soft ſhe withdrew; and like a Wood-Nymph light
Oread, or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves: but Delia's ſelf
In gait ſurpaſs'd, and Goddeſs-like deport;
Though not, as ſhe, with bow and quiver arm'd;
But with ſuch gard'ning tools as art, yet rude,
Guiltleſs of fire had form'd, or Angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona thus adorn'd,
Likelieſt ſhe ſeem'd, Pomona, when ſhe fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proſerpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye perſu'd
Delighted, but deſiring more her ſtay.

Oft

Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd
To be return'd by noon amid the bow'r;
And all things in best order, to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceiv'd, much failling, hapless Eve!
Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose!
Such ambush, laid among sweet flow'rs, and shades,
Waited with hellish rancor imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss! ——
For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind; but in them
The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
In bow'r and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove, or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance or plantation for delight,
By fountain, or by shady rivulet.
He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc'd: when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half-spy'd, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glow'd; half-stooping to support
Each flow'r of slender stalk, whose head though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,
Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays
Gently with myrtle-band; mindless the while
Herself, though fairest, unsupported flow'r,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh!
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers'd
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine or palm;
Then voluble and bold; now hid, now seen,

Among

Among thick-woven arborets and flow'rs
Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than thoſe gardens feign'd
Or of reviv'd Adonis: or renown'd
Alcinous, hoſt of old Laertes' ſon;
Or that, not myſtic, where the ſapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian ſpouſe.
Much he the place admir'd, the perſon more:
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houſes thick and ſewers annoy the air,
Forth iſſuing on a ſummer's morn, to breathe
Among the pleaſant villages, and farms
Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight;
The ſmell of grain, or tedded graſs, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural ſight, each rural ſound;
If chance, with Nymphlike ſtep, fair virgin paſs,
What pleaſing ſeem'd, for her now pleaſes more;
She moſt, and in her look ſums all delight:
Such pleaſure took the ſerpent to behold
This flow'ry plat, the ſweet receſs Eve
Thus early, thus alone: her heav'nly form
Angelic, but more ſoft, and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of geſture or leaſt action overaw'd
His malice, and with rapine ſweet bereav'd
His fierceneſs of the fierce intent it brought.
That ſpace the Evil-one abſtracted ſtood
From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
Stupidly good; of enmity diſarm'd,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge;
But the hot hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid Heav'n, ſoon ended his delight;
And tortures him now more, the more he ſees
Of pleaſure not for him ordain'd: then ſoon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of miſchief, gratulating, thus excites.
Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what ſweet
Compulſion thus tranſported to forget

What hither brought us! hate, not love, nor hope
Of Paradiſe for Hell, hope here to taſte
Of pleaſure, but all pleaſure to deſtroy,
Save what is in deſtroying; other joy
To me is loſt. Then let me not let paſs
Occaſion which now ſmiles; behold alone
The woman, opportune to all attempts!
Her huſband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whoſe higher intellectual more I ſhun,
And ſtrength, of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terreſtrial mold,
Foe not informidable! exempt from wound;
I not: ſo much hath Hell debas'd, and pain
Infeebled me, to what I was in Heav'n!
She fair, divinely fair! fit love for Gods;
Not terrible, though terror be in love
And beauty, not approach'd by ſtronger hate;
Hate, ſtronger under ſhew of love well feign'd;
The way which to her ruin now I tend.
So ſpake the enemy of mankind, inclos'd
In ſerpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve
Addreſs'd his way: not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as ſince; but on his rear,
Circular baſe of riſing folds, that tower'd
Fold above fold, a ſurging maze! His head
Creſted aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burniſh'd neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidſt his circling ſpires, that on the graſs
Floated redundant: pleaſing was his ſhape,
And lovely! Never ſince of ſerpent-kind
Lovelier; not thoſe that in Illyria chang'd
Hermione and Cadmus; or the God
In Epidaurus: nor to which transform'd
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was ſeen;
He, with Olympias; this with her who bore
Scipio the height of Rome. With tract oblique
At firſt, as one who ſought acceſs, but fear'd
To interrupt, ſide-long he works his way:

As

As when a ſhip, by ſkilfull ſteers-man 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 tortous train
Curl'd many a wanton wreath, in ſight of Eve,
To lure her eye: ſhe buſied, heard the ſound
Of ruſling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
To ſuch diſport before her through the field,
From every beaſt; more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd diſguis'd.
He bolder now, uncall'd before her ſtood;
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
His turret creſt; and ſleeck enamel'd neck,
Fawning, and lick'd the ground whereon ſhe trod.
His gentle dumb expreſſion turn'd at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he glad
Of her attention gain'd, with ſerpent-tongue
Organic, or impulſe of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began.
Wonder not, ſov'reign Miſtreſs! if perhaps
Thou canſt, who art ſole wonder; much leſs arm
Thy looks, the Heav'n of mildneſs, with diſdain,
Diſpleas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Infatiate; I thus ſingle; nor have fear'd
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
Faireſt reſemblance of thy Maker fair!
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celeſtial beauty adore,
With raviſhment beheld! there beſt beheld,
Where univerſally admir'd: but here
In this incloſure wild, theſe beaſts among,
Beholders rude, and ſhallow to diſcern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
Who ſees thee, and what is one! who ſhouldſt be ſeen
A Goddeſs among Gods, ador'd and ſerv'd
By Angels numberleſs, thy daily train.
So glozd the tempter, and his proem tun'd:
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,

Though at the voice much marvelling: at length,
Not unamaz'd, she thus in answer spake.
What may this mean? Language of man pronounc'd
By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?
The first, at least, of these I thought deny'd
To beasts; whom God, on their creation-day,
Created mute to all articulate sound:
The latter I demur; for in their look,
Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
Thee, serpent, subtlest beast of all the field
I knew, but not with human voice indued.
Redouble then this miracle, and say,
How cam'st thou speakable of mute; and how
To me so friendly grown above the rest
Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight?
Say! for such wonder claims attention due.
To whom the guileful tempter thus reply'd:
Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be obey'd.
I was at first as other beasts that grace
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food! nor ought but food discern'd
Or sex; and apprehended nothing high;
Till on an day roving the field, I chanc'd
A goodly tree far distant to behold,
Loaden with fruit of fairest colors mix'd,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odor blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense
Than smell of sweetest fenel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at ev'n,
Unsuck'd of lamb, or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd
Not to defer: hunger and thirst at once,
Pow'rful persuaders! quicken'd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.

About

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 evying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spar'd not; for such pleasure till that hour
At feed, or fountain, never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward pow'rs; and speech
Wanted not long; though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to speculations high, or deep,
I turn'd my thoughts; and with capacious mind
Consider'd all things visible in heav'n,
Or earth, or middle; all things fair and good!
But all that fair and good, in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray
United I beheld: no fair to thine
Equivalent, or second! which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee, of right declar'd
Sov'reign of creatures, universal dame!
So talk'd the spirited sly snake: and Eve,
Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus reply'd.
Serpent! thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd.
But say, where grows the tree, from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us, in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd:
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden nature of her birth.
To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad:
Empress! the way is ready, and not long,

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

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

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

So

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 mus'd.
Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits!
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd,
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first 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 booth of good and evil:
Forbids us then to taste: but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown, sure is not had; or had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. —— But if death
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die. ——
How dies the serpent? he hath eat'n and lives.
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns;
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us deny'd
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted, envies not, but brings with joy
The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then, rather what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of god or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine!
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then

To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat:
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat
Sighing through all her works gave sign of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicker shunk
The guilty serpent, and well might, for Eve
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancy'd so, through expectation high
Of knowledge; nor was God-head from her thought.
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating death. Satiate at length,
And high'ten'd as with wine, jocund and boon
Thus to herself she pleasingly began.
O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience! hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created: but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertil burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all:
Till dieted by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know:
Though others envy what they cannot give;
For had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
In ignorance, thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret: Heav'n is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thingh 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

Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me? or rather not;
But keep the odds of knowledge in my pow'r,
Without copartner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal, and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior: for inferior who is free?
This may be well. —— But, what if God hath seen,
And death ensue? Then I shall be no more,
And Adam wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her injoying, I extinct;
A death to think! Confirm'd then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him, all deaths
I could indure; without him live no life.
So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd,
But first low reverence done, as to the Pow'r
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
Into the plant sciential sap, deriv'd
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flow'rs a garland, to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labors crown:
As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay'd:
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him; he the faltring measure felt;
And forth to meet her went, the way she took
That morn, when first they parted. By the Tree
Of knowledge he must pass; there be her met,
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,
New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
To him she hasted; in her face excuse
Came prologue, and apology too prompt;

Which,

Which with bland words at will she thus addrest.
Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
Thy presence, agony of love till now
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
Mean I to try, what rash untry'd I sought,
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear,
This tree is not as we are told, a Tree
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
Op'ning the way; but of divine effect
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;
And hath been tasted such. The serpent wise,
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become
Not dead, as we are threaten'd; but thenceforth
Indued with human voice, and human sense,
Reasoning to admiration: and with me
Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
Have also tasted, and have also found
Th' effects to correspond: opener mine eyes,
Dim erst; dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise:
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss:
Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us; equal joy, as equal love:
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when fate will not permit.
Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
Astonied stood and blank; while horror chill
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd:
From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve

Down

Down dropt, and all the faded Roſes ſhed:
Speechleſs he ſtood and pale! till thus at length
Firſt to himſelf he inward ſilence broke.
O faireſt of creation, laſt and beſt
Of all God's works! Creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to ſight or thought be form'd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or ſweet!
How art thou loſt, how on a ſudden loſt
Defac'd, deflowr'd, and now to death devote?
Rather how haſt thou yielded to tranſgreſs
The ſtrict forbiddance! how, to violate
The ſacred fruit forbidd'n! ſome curſed fraud
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown;
And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee
Certain my reſolution is to die!
How can I live without thee! how forgo
Thy ſweet converſe and love, ſo dearly join'd,
To live again in theſe wild woods forlorn!
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loſs of thee
Would never from my heart! no, no! I feel
The link of nature draw me: fleſh of fleſh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy ſtate
Mine never ſhall be parted, bliſs or woe!
So having ſaid, as one from ſad diſmay
Recomforted, and, after thoughts diſturb'd,
Submitting to what ſeem'd remedileſs,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd.
Bold deed thou haſt preſum'd, adventrous Eve!
And peril great provok'd, who thus haſt dar'd,
Had it been only conveting to eye
That ſacred fruit, ſacred to abſtinence;
Much more to taſte it under ban to touch.
But paſt who can recall, or done undo?
Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate: yet ſo
Perhaps thou ſhalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not ſo heinous now, foretaſted fruit,
Profan'd firſt by the ſerpent, by him firſt

Made common and unhallow'd e're our taste:
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives,
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live as man
Higher degree of life: inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent; which cannot be
But to be Gods, or Angels, Demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise!
Though threatning, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures; dignified so high,
Set over all his works; which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependent made: so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labor lose;
Not well conceiv'd of God: who tho' his pow'r
Creation could repeat, yet would be loath
Us to abolish; lest the Adversary
Triumph and say: „Fickle their state whom God
„Most favors! who can please him long? Me first
„He ruin'd, now mankind: whom will he next?"
Matter of scorn, not to be giv'n the Foe.
However I with thee have fix'd my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: if death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life:
So forcible within my hearth I feel
The bond of nature draw me to my own,
My own in in thee! for what thou art is mine:
Our state cannot be sever'd, we are one,
One flesh; tho lose thee were to lose myself.
So Adam; and thus Eve to him reply'd.
O glorious tryal of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high,
Ingaging me to emulate! but short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung?
And gladly of or union hear thee speak,
One heart one soul in both! whereof good proof
This day affords; declaring thee resolv'd,

Rather

Rather than death or ought than death more dread,
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear!
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit:
Whose virtue, for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion, hath presented
This happy trial of thy love; which else
So eminently never had been known.
Were it I thought Death menanc'd would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee; rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace, chiefl assur'd
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful love unequal'd; but I feel
Far otherwise th' event, not death, but life
Augmented; open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine! that what of sweet before
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds.
So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy
Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice t' incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense, for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits, from the bough
She gave him of that fair inticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupl'd not to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembl'd from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan.
Sky lour'd, and mutt'ring thunder, some sad drops
Wept, at compleating of the mortal sin
Original! while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass fear'd; the more to sooth

Him,

Him, with her lov'd ſociety: that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They ſwim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings,
Wherewith to ſcorn the earth. But that falſe fruit
Far other operation firſt diſplay'd,
Carnal deſire inflaming: he on Eve
Began to caſt laſcivious eyes; ſhe him
As wantonly repaid; in luſt they burn:
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.
Eve, now I ſee thou art exact of taſte,
And elegant, of ſapience no ſmall part;
Since to each meaning ſavor we apply,
And palate call judicious: I the praiſe
Yield thee, ſo well this day thou haſt purvey'd.
Much pleaſure we have loſt, while we abſtain'd
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True reliſh, taſting: if ſuch pleaſure be
In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wiſh'd,
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, ſo well refreſh'd, now let us play,
As meet is, after ſuch delicious fare:
For never did thy beauty ſince the day
I ſaw thee firſt, and wedded thee, adorn'd
With all perfections, ſo inflame my ſenſe
With ardor to enjoy thee; fairer now
Than ever, bounty of this virtuous tree!
So ſaid he, and forbore not glance, or toy
Of amorous intent; well underſtood
Of Eve, whoſe eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he ſaiz'd and to a ſhady bank,
Thick over-head with verdant roof imbowr'd,
He led her nothing loath: flowr's were the couch,
Panſies, and violets, and aſphodel,
And hyacinth, earth's freſheſt ſofteſt lap.
There they their fill of love, and love's diſport
Took largely: of their mutual guilt the ſeal,
The ſolace of their ſin: till dewy ſleep

Oppreſs'd

Oppreſs'd them, wearied with their amorous play.
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapor bland
About their ſpirits had play'd, and inmoſt pow'rs
Made err, was now exhal'd; and groſſer ſleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conſcious dreams
Incumber'd, now had left them; up they roſe
As from unreſt, and each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
How darken'd! Innocence, that, as a veil
Had ſhadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone:
Juſt confidence, and native righteouſneſs
And honor from about them, naked left
To guilty ſhame: he cover'd, but his robe
Uncover'd more. So roſe the Danite ſtrong,
Herculean Sampſon, from the harlot-lap
Of Philiſtéan Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his ſtrength. They, deſtitute, and bare
Of all their virtue: ſilent, and in face
Confounded, long they ſat, as ſtrucken mute:
Till Adam, though no leſs than Eve abaſh'd,
At length gave utterance to theſe words conſtrain'd.
O Eve! in evil hour thou didſt give ear
To that falſe worm, of whomſoever taught
To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,
Falſe in our promis'd riſing: ſince our eyes
Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
Both Good and Evil; Good loſt, and Evil got.
Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
Our wonted ornaments, now ſoil'd and ſtain'd!
And in our faces evident the ſigns
Of foul concupiſcence; whence evil ſtore;
Ev'n ſhame, the laſt of evils; of the firſt
Be ſure then.——How ſhall I behold the face
Henceforth of God or Angel, erſt with joy
And rapture ſo oft beheld? thoſe heav'nly ſhapes

Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
Insufferably bright. O, might I here
In solitude live savage, in some glade
Obscur'd, where highest woods impenetrable
To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
And brown as evening! Cover me, ye Pines!
Ye Cedars, with innumerable boughs
Hide me, where I may never see them more!
But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
What best may for the present serve to hide
The parts of each from other, that seem most
To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen:
Some tree, whose broath smooth leaves together sow'd,
And girded on our loins, may cover round
Those middle parts, that this new comer, Shame,
There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.
So counsel'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
The Fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd;
But such as at this day, to Indians known
In Malabar, or Decan, spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
There oft the Indian herdsman shunning heat
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loopholes cut thro' thickest shade: those leaves
They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe,
And with what skill they had, together sow'd,
To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt, and dreaded shame! O, how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found th' American, so girt
With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild
Among the trees, on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part
Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind.

They ſat them down to weep! nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes; but high winds worſe within
Began to riſe, high paſſions, anger, hate,
Miſtruſt, ſuſpicion, diſcord, and ſhook ſore
Their inward ſtate of mind; calm region once
And full of peace; now toſt and turbulent!
For underſtanding rul'd not, and the will
Heard not her lore; but in ſubjection now
To ſenſual appetite, who from beneath
Uſurping, over ſov'reign reaſon claim'd
Superior ſway: from thus diſtemper'd breaſt
Adam eſtrang'd in look and alter'd ſtyle,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd.

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

To whom, ſonn mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve:
What words have paſs'd thy lips, Adam ſevere!
Imput'ſt thou that to my default, or will
Of wand'ring, as thou call'ſt it, which who knows,
But might as ill have happen'd thou being by;
Or to thyſelf perhaps: hadſt thou been there,
Or here th' attempt, thou could'ſt not have diſcern'd
Fraud in the ſerpent, ſpeaking as he ſpake;
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he ſhould mean me ill, or ſeek to harm.
Was I to have never parted from thy ſide?
As good have grown there ſtill a lifeleſs rib.
Being as I am, why didſt not thou, the Head,
Command me abſolutely not to go,
Going into ſuch danger, as thou ſaid'ſt?
Too facil then, thou didſt not much gainſay,

Nay didſt permit, approve, and fair diſmiſs.
Hadſt thou been firm, and fix'd in thy diſſent,
Neither had I tranſgreſs'd, nor thou with me.
To whom then firſt incens'd Adam reply'd:
Is this the love, is this the recompenſe
Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! expreſs'd
Immutable, when thou wert loſt, not I;
Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliſs:
Yet willingly choſe rather death with thee.
And am I now upbraided, as the cauſe
Of thy tranſgreſſing? Not enough ſevere,
It ſeems, in my reſtraint! What could I more?
I warn'd thee, I admoniſh'd thee; foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait: beyond this had been force;
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on; ſecure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial: and perhaps
I alſo err'd, in overmuch admiring
What ſeem'd in thee ſo perfect, that I thought
No evil durſt attempt thee: but I rue
That error now, which is become my crime;
And thou th' accuſer! Thus it ſhall befall
Him, who to worth in woman overtruſting,
Lets her will rule: reſtraint ſhe will not brook;
And left to herſelf, if evil thence enſue,
She firſt his weak indulgence will accuſe.——
Thus they in mutual accuſation ſpent
The fruitleſs hours; but neither ſelf-condemning:
And of their vain conteſt appear'd no end.

The End of the Ninth Book.

BOOK X.

Man while the hainous and deſpiteful act
Of Satan, done in Paradiſe, and how
He, in the ſerpent had perverted Eve,

Her

Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in Heav'n: for what can 'scape the eye
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient? Who, in all things wise and just,
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd
Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend:
For still they knew, and ought t' have still remember'd,
The high injunction, not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted: which they not obeying,
Incurr'd, what could they less? the penalty,
And manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.
Up into Heav'n from Paradise in haste
Th' Angelic Guards ascended, mute and sad
For man; for of his state by this they knew:
Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n
Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
From earth arriv'd at Heaven gate, displeas'd
All were who heard: dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages; yet mix'd
With pity, violated not their bliss.
About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes
Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know
How all befel: they towards the Throne supreme
Accountable made haste to make appear
With righteous plea their utmost vigilance;
And easily approv'd: when the Most High
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud
Amidst, in thunder utter'd thus his voice.
Assembled Angels, and ye Pow'rs return'd
From unsuccessful charge! be not dismay'd,
Nor troubl'd at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from Hell.
I told you then he should prevail, and speed
On his bad errand; Man should be seduc'd,

And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
Againſt his Maker: no decree of mine
Concurring to neceſſitate his fall,
Or touch with lighteſt moment of impulſe
His free will, to her own inclining left
In even ſcale. But fall'n he is: and now
What reſts, but that the mortal Sentence paſs
On his tranſgreſſion, death denounc'd that day;
Which he preſumes already vain and void,
Becauſe not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
By ſome immediate ſtroke: but ſoon ſhall find
Forbearance no acquittance e're day end.
Juſtice ſhall not return, as bounty, ſcorn'd.
But whom ſend I to judge them? whom, but thee
Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd
All judgment, whether in Heav'n, or Earth, or Hell,
Eaſy it may be ſeen that I intend
Mercy collegue with juſtice, ſending thee,
Man's friend, his mediator, his deſign'd
Both ranſom and redeemer voluntary;
And deſtin'd man himſelf, to judge man fall'n.
So ſpake the Father, and unfolding bright
Tow'rd the right hand his Glory, on the Son
Blaz'd forth unclouded Deity: He full
Reſplendent all his Father manifeſt
Expreſs'd, and thus divinely anſwer'd mild.
Father Eternal! Thine is to decree;
Mine both in Heav'n and Earth to do thy will
Supreme; that thou in me thy Son belov'd
Mayſt ever reſt well pleas'd. I go to judge
On earth theſe thy tranſgreſſors; but thou know'ſt,
Whoever judg'd, the worſt on me muſt light,
When time ſhall be; for ſo I undertook
Before thee; and not repenting, this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
On me deriv'd: yet I ſhall temper ſo
Juſtice with Mercy, as may illuſtrate moſt
Them fully ſatisfy'd, and thee appeaſe.

Atten-

Attendance none ſhall need, nor train, where none
Are to behold the judgment, but the judg'd,
Thoſe two: the third beſt abſent is condemn'd;
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law;
Conviction to the ſerpent none belongs.
Thus ſaying, from his radiant ſeat he roſe
Of high collateral glory: Him Thrones, and Pow'rs,
Princedoms, and Dominations miniſtrant,
Accompanied to Heaven-gate; from whence
Eden, and all the coaſt in proſpect lay.
Down he deſcended ſtraight: the ſpeed of Gods
Time counts not, tho' with ſwifteſt minutes wing'd.
Now was the Sun in weſtern cadence low
From noon; and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now wak'd, and uſher in
The ev'ning cool; when he, from wrath more cool,
Came, the mild Judge, and Interceſſor both,
To ſentence man: the voice of God they heard,
Now walking in the garden, by ſoft winds
Brought to their ears, while day declin'd: they heard,
And from his preſence hid themſelves, among
The thickeſt trees, both man and wife: till God
Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud.
Where art thou Adam, wont with joy to meet
My coming ſeen far off? I miſs thee here,
Not pleas'd; thus entertain'd with ſolitude,
Where obvious duty e're-while appear'd unſought:
Or come I leſs conſpicuous? Or what change
Abſents thee? Or what change detains? Come forth:
He came, and with him Eve, more loth, tho' firſt
To offend; diſcountenanc'd both, and diſcompos'd:
Love was not in their looks, either to God
Or to each other; but apparent guilt,
And ſhame, and perturbation, and deſpair,
Anger, and obſtinacy, and hate, and guile:
Whence Adam, fault'ring long, thus anſwer'd brief
I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myſelf.—— To whom

The gracious Judge without revile reply'd.
My voice thou oft haſt heard, and haſt not fear'd,
But ſtill rojoic'd: how is it now become
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who
Hath told thee? Haſt thou eaten of the tree,
Whereof I gave thee charge thou ſhouldſt not eat?
To whom thus Adam ſore beſet reply'd,
O Heav'n! in evil ſtrait this day I ſtand
Before my Judge, either to undergo
Myſelf the total crime or to accuſe
My other ſelf, the partner of my life:
Whoſe failing, while her faith to me remains,
I ſhould conceal, and not expoſe to blame
By my complaint. But ſtrict neceſſity
Subdues me, and calamitous conſtraint!
Leſt on my head both ſin and puniſhment,
However inſupportable, be all
Devolv'd. Though ſhould I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldſt eaſily detect what I conceal ——
This Woman, whom thou mad'ſt to be my help,
And gav'ſt me as thy perfect gift, ſo good,
So fit, ſo acceptable, ſo divine,
That from her hand I could ſuſpect no ill;
And what ſhe did, whatever in itſelf,
Her doing ſeem'd to juſtify the deed;
She gave me of the tree,—— and I did eat.
To whom the Sov'reign Preſence thus reply'd.
Was ſhe thy God, that her thou didſt obey
Before his voice? Or was ſhe made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal; that to her
Thou didſt reſign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God ſet thee above her, made of thee;
And for thee; whoſe perfection far excell'd
Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
She whas indeed, and lovely to attract
Thy love; not thy ſubjection: and her gifts
Were ſuch, as under government well-ſeem'd;
Unſeemly to bear rule, which was thy part,
And

And perſon, hadſt thou known thyſelf aright.
So having ſaid, he thus to Eve in few:
Say, woman, what is this which thou haſt done?
To whom ſad Eve, with ſhame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confeſſing ſoon; yet not before her Judge
Bold, or loquacious, thus abaſh'd reply'd.——
The ſerpent me beguil'd, and I did eat!
Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgment He proceeded on th' accus'd
Serpent though brute; unable to transfer
The guilt on him, who made him inſtrument
Of miſchief, and polluted from the end
Of his creation; juſtly then accurs'd,
As vitiated in nature. More to know
Concern'd not man, ſince he no further knew,
Nor alter'd his offence: yet God at laſt
To Satan firſt in ſin his doom apply'd,
Though in myſterious terms, judg'd as then beſt:
And on the Serpent thus his curſe let fall.
Becauſe thou haſt done this, thou art accurſt
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 verify'd
When Jeſus ſon of Mary, ſecond Eve,
Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from Heav'n,
Prince of the air: then riſing from his grave
Spoil'd Principalities and Pow'rs, triumph'd
In open ſhew; and, with aſcenſion bright,
Captivity led captive through the air,
The realm itſelf of Satan, long uſurp'd;
Whom He ſhall tread at laſt under our feet:
Ev'n He who now foretold his fatal bruiſe;
And to the woman thus his ſentence turn'd.
Thy ſorrow I will greatly multiply

By thy conception; children thou ſhalt bring
In ſorrow forth; and to thy huſband's will
Thine ſhall ſubmit: he over thee ſhall rule.
On Adam laſt thus judgment he pronounc'd:
Becauſe thou haſt hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree, concerning which
I charg'd thee, ſaying, thou ſhalt not eat thereof:
Curs'd is the ground for thy ſake: thou in ſorrow
Shalt eat thereof all the days of thy life:
Thorns alſo and thiſtles it ſhall bring thee forth
Unbid; and thou ſhalt eat th' herb of the field,
In the ſweat of thy face ſhalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
Out of the ground waſt taken, know thy birth,
For duſt thou art, and ſhalt to duſt return.
So judg'd he Man, both Judge and Saviour ſent;
And th' inſtant ſtroke of Death, denunc'd that day,
Remov'd far off: then, pitying how they ſtood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Muſt ſuffer change, diſdain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of ſervant to aſſume:
As when he waſh'd his ſervants feet; ſo now
As father of his family he clad
Their nakedneſs with ſkins of beaſts; or ſlain,
Or, as the ſnake, with youthful coat repaid:
And thought not much to clothe his enemies.
Nor he their outward only, with the ſkins
Of beaſts, but inward nakedneſs, much more
Opprobrious! with his robe of righteouſneſs
Arraying cover'd from his Father's ſight.
To him with ſwift aſcent he up return'd,
Into his bliſsful boſom reaſſum'd
In glory as of old; to him appeas'd
All, tho' all-knowing, what had paſt with man
Recounted, mixing interceſſion ſweet.
Mean while, ere thus was ſinn'd and judg'd on earth,
Within the gates of Hell ſat Sin and Death,
In counterview within the gates, that now

Stood

Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the Fiend past through,
Sin opening: who thus now to Death began.
O son! why sit we here each other viewing
Idly, while Satan our great author thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us his offspring dear? It cannot be
But that success attends him: if mishap,
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven
By his avengers, since no place like this
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large
Beyond this deep: whatever draws me on,
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
Pow'rful at greatest distance to unite
With secret amity things of like kind
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
Inseparable, must with me along:
For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.
But lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious; let us try
Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from Hell to that new world,
Where Satan now prevails, a monument
Of merit high to all th' infernal host;
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new felt attraction and instinct.
Whom thus the meager Shadow answer'd soon.
Go whither fate and inclination strong
Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading, such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savor of Death from all things there that live.

Nor

Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.
So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battel, to a field,
Where armies lie incamp'd, come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcasses, design'd
For death the following day, in bloody fight:
So scented the grim Feature, and upturn'd
His nostrils wide into the murky air,
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
Then both from out Hell-gates; into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverse, and with pow'r, their pow'r was great,
Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell:
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive
Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagin'd way
Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote; and fix'd as firm
As Delos floating once: the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigor not to move:
And with Asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of Hell the gather'd beach
They fasten'd; and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high arch'd; a bridge,
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now fenceless world,
Forfeit to Death. From hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.
So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
Xerxes, the Liberty of Grece to yoke.

From

From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
Came to the sea; and over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd;
And scourg'd with many a stroke th' indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work, by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendent rock
Over the vex'd Abyss, following the track
Of Satan, to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos to the outside bare
Of this round world: with pins of adamant
And chains they made all fast; too fast they made,
And durable: And now in little space
The confines met of empyrean Heav'n
And of this world, and on the left hand hell,
With long reach interpos'd: three sev'ral ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.
And now their way to earth they had descry'd
To Paradise first tending; when, behold!
Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
His zenith, while the Sun in Aries rose:
Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk
Into the wood fast by; and changing shape
T' observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
Upon her husband; saw their shame, that sought
Vain covertures: but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrify'd
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shunn'd
The present; fearing guilty what his wrath
Might suddenly inflict: that past, return'd
By night; and listening where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
Thence gather'd his own doom: which understood
Not instant, but of future time, with joy

And

And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd:
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Inchanting daugther, thus the silence broke.
O parent! these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies, which thou view'st as not thine own;
Thou art their author, and prime architect.
For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks
Now also evidence, but 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 her bounds;
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure,
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast atchiev'd our liberty, confin'd
Within Hell gates till now: Thou us impower'd
To fortify thus far, and over-lay
With this portentous bridge the dark Abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not: thy wisdom gain'd,
With odds what war hath lost: and fully aveng'd
Our foil in Heav'n: here thou shalt Monarch reign,
There didst not: there let him still victor sway,
As battel hath adjudg'd, from this new world
Retiring, by his own doom alienated:
And henceforth Monarchy with thee divide
Of all things, parted by th' empyreal bounds,
His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;
Or try thee now more dang'rous to his throne.
Whom thus the Prince of darkness answer'd glad.

Fair

Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both!
High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race
Of Satan, for I glory in the name,
Antagoniſt of Heav'n's Almighty King,
Amply have merited of me, of all
Th' infernal empire, that, ſo near Heav'n's door
Triumphal with triumphal act have met,
Mine with this glorious work; and made one realm
Hell and this world, our realm, one continent
Of eaſy thorough-fare. Therefore while I
Deſcend through darkneſs, on your road with eaſe,
To my aſſociate Pow'rs, them to acquaint
With theſe ſucceſſes, and with them rejoice,
You two this way, among theſe numerous Orbs,
All yours! right down to Paradiſe deſcend:
There dwell and reign in bliſs; thence on the earth
Dominion exerciſe, and in the air,
Chiefly on Man, ſole Lord of all declar'd:
Him firſt make ſure your thrall, and laſtly kill.
My ſubſtitutes I ſend you, and create
Plenipotent on earth, of matchleſs might
Iſſuing from me: on your joint vigor now
My hold of this new kingdom all depends;
Through ſin to death expos'd by my exploit.
If your joint pow'r prevail, th' affairs of hell
No detriment need fear; go and be ſtrong.
So ſaying he diſmiſs'd them; they with ſpeed
Their courſe through thickeſt conſtellations held,
Spreading their bane: the blaſted ſtars look'd wan,
And Planets, planet-ſtruck, real Eclipſe
Then ſuffer'd. Th' other way, Satan went down
The cauſey to Hell gate: on either ſide,
Diſparted Chaos over built exclaim'd,
And with rebounding ſurge the bars aſſail'd,
That ſcorn'd his indignation. Through the gate,
Wide-open and unguarded, Satan paſs'd,
And all about found deſolate: for thoſe
Appointed to ſit there, had left their charge,

Flown

Flown to the upper world: the rest were all
Far to th' inland retir'd, about the walls
Of Pandaemonium, city and proud seat
Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd,
Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd.
There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand
In council sat, sollicitous what chance
Might intercept their Emperor sent: so he
Departing gave command, and they observ'd
As when the Tartar from his Russian foe
By Astracan over the snowy plains,
Retires: or Bactrian Sophy from de horns
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
To Taurus, or Caspean: so these, the late
Heav'n-banish'd host, left desert utmost Hell
Many a dark league, reduc'd in careful watch
Round their Metropolis; and now expecting
Each hour their great adventurer from the search
Of foreign worlds: he through the midst unmark'd,
In shew plebeian Angel militant
Of lowest order, past; and from the door
Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
Ascended his high throne; which under state
Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down a while
He sat, and round about him saw unseen.
At last as from a cloud his fulgent head
And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter, clad
With what permissive glory since his fall
Was left him, or false glitter: all amaz'd
At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
Their mighty Chief return'd: loud was th' acclame!
Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting Peers,
Rais'd from their dark Divan, and with like joy
Congratulant approach'd him, who with hand
Silence, and with these words attention won.

Thro-

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

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

Sub-

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

Till their loſt ſhape, permitted, they reſum'd:
Yearly injoin'd, ſome ſay, to undergo
This annual humbling certain number'd days,
To daſh their pride, and joy for man ſeduc'd.
However ſome tradition they diſpers'd
Among the Heathen of their purchaſe got,
And fabled how the ſerpent, whom they call'd
Ophion with Eurynome, the wide
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had firſt de rule
Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driv'n,
And Ops, e're yet Dictaean Jove was born.
Mean while in Paradiſe the helliſh pair
Too ſoon arriv'd, Sin, there in pow'r before,
Once actual; now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant; behind her Death,
Cloſe following pace for pace, not mounted yet,
On his pale horſe: to whom Sin thus began.
Second of Satan ſprung, all conquering Death,
What think'ſt thou of our empire now? Tho' earn'd
With travel difficult, not better far
Than ſtill at Hell's dark threſhold t' have ſat watch,
Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyſelf half ſtarv'd?
Whom thus the ſin-born monſter anſwer'd ſoon:
To me, who with eternal famine pine,
Alike, is Hell, or Paradiſe, or Heav'n;
There beſt, where moſt with ravin I may meet:
Which here, tho' plenteous, all too little ſeems
To ſtuff this maw, this vaſt unhide-bound corps.
To whom th' inceſtuous mother thus reply'd:
Thou therefore on theſe herbs, and fruits, and flowers
Feed firſt; on each beaſt next, and fiſh, and fowl;
No homely morſels! and whatever thing
The ſcithe of Time mowes down, devour unſpar'd:
Till I in man reſiding, through the race,
His thoughts, his looks, words, actions all infect;
And ſeaſon him thy laſt and ſweeteſt prey.
This ſaid, they both betook them ſeveral ways,
Both to deſtroy, or unimmortal make

All

All kinds; and for deſtruction to mature
Sooner or later: which th' Almighty ſeeing,
From his tranſcendent ſeat the Saints among,
To thoſe bright Orders utter'd thus his voice.
See with what heat theſe dogs of hell advance
To waſte and havock yonder world, which I
So fair and good created; and had ſtill
Kept in that ſtate, had not the folly of man
Let in theſe waſteful Furies; who impute
Folly to me: ſo doth the prince of Hell
And his adherents, that with ſo much eaſe
I ſuffer them to enter and poſſeſs
A place ſo heav'nly, and conniving ſeem
To gratify my ſcornful enemies,
That laugh, as if, tranſported with ſome fit,
Of paſſion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their miſrule:
And know not that I call'd and drew them thither,
My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth
Which man's polluting ſin with taint hath ſhed
On what was pure, till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burſt,
With ſuck'd and glutted offal, at one ſling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleaſing Son,
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave at laſt
Through Chaos hurl'd, obſtruct the mouth of Hell
For ever, and ſeal up his ravenous jaws.
Then heav'n and earth renew'd, ſhall be made pure
To ſanctity, that ſhall receive no ſtain:
Till then the curſe pronounc'd on both precedes.
He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
Sung Hallelujah, as the ſound of ſeas,
Through multitude that ſung! „Juſt are thy ways,
„Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
„Who can extenuate Thee? next, to the Son,
„Deſtin'd reſtorer of mankind, by whom
„New heav'n and earth ſhall to the ages riſe,
„Or down from Heav'n deſcend." Such was their ſong,
While the Creator calling forth by name

His mighty Angels, gave them several charge,
As sorted best with present things. The Sun
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
As might affect the earth with cold, and heat,
Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call
Decrepit Winter; from the south to bring,
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc moon
Her office they prescrib'd; to th' other five
Their planetary motions and aspects
In Sextile, Square, and Trine, and Opposite,
Of noxious efficacy; and when to join
In synod unbenign: and taught the fix'd
Their influence malignant when to show'r,
Which of them rising with the Sun, or falling,
Should prove tempestuous. To the winds they set
Their corners; when with bluster to confound
Sea, air, and shore: the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark aereal hall.
Some say he bid his Angels turn ascanse
The Poles of earth twice ten degrees and more
From the Sun's axle; they with labor push'd
Oblique the centric globe: some say the Sun
Was bid turn from th' equinoctial road
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the sev'n
Atlantic sisters, and the Spartan Twins
Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain
By Leo and the Virgin and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorn, to bring in change
Of seasons to each clime: else had the spring
Perpetual smil'd on earth with vernant flowers,
Equal in days and nights, except to those
Beyond the Polar circles: to them day
Had unbenighted shone, while the low Sun
To recompense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still th' horizon, and not known
Or east or west; which had forbid the snow
From cold Estotiland, and south as far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit

The

The sun, as from Thyéstean banquet, turn'd
His course intended; else how had the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
These changes in the Heavn's, though slow, produc'd
Like change on sea and land; sideral blast,
Vapor, and mist, and exhalation hot;
Corrupt, and pestilent! Now from the north
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice
And snow and hail and stormy gust and flaw,
Boreas and Caecias and Argestes loud
And Thrascias rend the woods and seas upturn:
With adverse blast upturns them from the south
Notus and Afer black with thundrous clouds
From Sierra Liona: thwart of these as fierce
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds
Eurus and Zephyr; with their lateral noise,
Sirocco, and Libecchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things: but Discord first,
Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational
Death introduc'd through fierce antipathy:
Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish: to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
Of man, but fled him, or with count'nance grim
Glar'd on him passing. These were from without
The growing miseries which Adam saw
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within,
And in a troubled sea of passion tost,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.
O miserable of happy! is this the end
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accurs'd of blessed? Hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my height
Of happiness! yet well, if here would end

The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
My own deservings; but this will not serve!
All that I eat, or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice once heard
Delightfully, *Increase and multiply*;
Now death to hear! For what can I increase,
Or multiply, but curses on my head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure!
For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks
Shall be the execration: so besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me redound:
On me as on their natural centre light
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay,
To mold me man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious garden? As my will
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd; unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
Thy justice seems.——Yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest: then should have been refus'd
Those terms whatever, when they were propos'd:
Thou didst accept them; wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? And though God
Made thee without thy leave; what if thy son
Prove disobedient, and reprov'd, retort,
Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not!
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee

That

That proud excuſe? Yet him, not thy election,
But natural neceſſity begot.
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To ſerve him; thy reward was of his grace,
Thy puniſhment then juſtly is at his will.
Be it ſo! for I ſubmit; his doom is fair,
That duſt I am, and ſhall to duſt return:
O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
His hand to execute, what his decree
Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
To deathleſs pain? How gladly would I meet
Mortality my ſentence, and be earth
Inſenſible! How glad would lay me down,
As in my mother's lap! There I ſhould reſt,
And ſleep ſecure: His dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears: no fear of worſe
To me and to my offspring would torment me
With cruel expectation.——Yet one doubt
Perſues me ſtill, leſt all I cannot die;
Leſt that pure breath of life, the ſpirit of man
Which God inſpir'd, cannot together periſh
With this corporeal clod: then, in the grave,
Or in ſome other diſmal place, who knows
But I ſhall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath
Of life that ſinn'd: what dies but what had life
And ſin? The body properly hath neither.
All of me then ſhall die; let this appeaſe
The doubt, ſince human reach no further knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath alſo? Be it! Man is not ſo,
But mortal doom'd. How can he exerciſe
Wrath without end on man whom death muſt end?
Can he make deathleſs death? That were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himſelf
Impoſſible is held; as argument
Of weakneſs, not of pow'r. Will he draw out,

For anger's ſake, finite to infinite,
In puniſh'd man, to ſatisfy his rigor,
Satisfy'd never? That where to extend
His ſentence beyond duſt and nature's law:
By which all cauſes elſe according ſtill
To the reception of their matter act
Not to th' extent of their own ſphere. But ſay
That Death be not one ſtroke, as I ſuppos'd,
Bereaving ſenſe: but endleſs miſery
From this day onward: which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me, and ſo laſt
To perpetuity.———Ay me! That fear
Comes thund'ring back with dreadful revolution
On my defenſeleſs head: both Death and I
Am found eternal, and incorparate both,
Nor I on my part ſingle, in me all
Poſterity ſtands curs'd! Fair patrimony
That I muſt leave ye, ſons; O were I able
To waſte it all myſelf, and leave ye none!
So diſinherited, how would you bleſs
Me now your curſe! Ah, why ſhould all mankind
For one man's fault thus guiltleſs be condemn'd,
If guiltleſs? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt, both mind and will deprav'd,
No to do only, but to will the ſame
With me? How can they then acquitted ſtand
In ſight of God? Him after all diſputes
Forc'd I abſolve: all my evaſions vain
And reaſonings, though thro' mazes, lead me ſtill
But to my own conviction: firſt and laſt
On me, me only, as the ſource and ſpring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due:
So might the wrath. Fond wiſh! couldſt thou ſupport
That burden heavier; than the earth to bear;
Than all the world much heavier; though divided
With that bad woman? Thus what thou deſir'ſt
And what thou fear'ſt, alike deſtroys all hope
Of refuge; and concludes thee miſerable,

Beyond

Beyond all past example, and future:
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O Conscience! into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driv'n me? Out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!
Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
Through the still night, not now, as ere man fell,
Wholesome and cool, and mild; but with black air
Accompanied: with damps and dreadful gloom;
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror. On the ground
Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
Curs'd his creation; Death as oft accus'd
Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,
Said he, with one thrice acceptable stroke
To end me? shall truth fail to keep her word,
Justice divine not hasten to be just?
But Death comes not at call, justice divine
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
O woods, o fountains, *) hillocks, dales, and bow'rs!
With other echo late I taught your shades
To answer, and resound far other song! ——
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd:
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.
Out of my sight, thou serpent! —— That name best
Befits thee with him leagu'd; thyself as false
And hateful: nothing wants, but that thy shape,
Like his, and color serpentine, may show
Thy inward fraud; to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended
To hellish falsehood, snare them! But for thee
I had persisted happy; had not thy pride
And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd

Not

*) *Perhaps it should be*, Hills, Rocks,

Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
Though by the Devil himself; him overweening
To over-reach: but with the serpent meeting
Fool'd and beguil'd, by him thou, I by thee
To trust thee from my side; imagin'd wife,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
And understood not all was but a show
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. O! why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heav'n
With spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at once
With men as Angels without feminine,
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? This mischief had not then befall'n,
And more that shall befall: innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares,
And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
He never shall find out fit mate; but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perverseness; but shall see her gain'd
By a far worse: or if she love, withheld
By parents; or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound
To a fell adversary, his hate, or shame:
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound.

He added not, and from her turn'd; But Eve
Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing,
And tresses all disorder'd, at his feed
Fell humble; and embracing them besought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.

Forsake me not thus, Adam! Witness Heav'n

What

What love ſincere, and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceiv'd! thy ſuppliant
I beg, and claſp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live! thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counſel in this uttermoſt diſtreſs,
My only ſtrength and ſtay! Forlorn of thee,
Whither ſhall I betake me, where ſubſiſt?
While yet we live, ſcarce one ſhort hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace, both joining,
As join'd in injuries, one enmity
Againſt a foe by doom expreſs aſſign'd us,
That cruel ſerpent! On me exerciſe not
Thy hatred for this miſery befall'n:
On me already loſt! Me, than thyſelf
More miſerable! both have ſinn'd; but thou
Againſt God only; I againſt God, and thee:
And to the place of judgment will return.
There with my cries importune Heav'n, that all
The ſentence, from thy head remov'd, may light
On me, ſole cauſe to thee of all this woe,
Me, me only, juſt object of his ire!
She ended weeping; and her lowly plight
Immoveable till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowledg'd, and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
Commiſeration: ſoon his heart relented
Towards her, his life ſo late and ſole delight,
Now at his feet ſubmiſſive in diſtreſs!
Creature ſo fair his reconcilement ſeeking,
His counſel, whom ſhe had diſpleas'd, his aid!
As one diſarm'd, his anger all he loſt;
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her ſoon.
Unwary, and too deſirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'ſt not, who deſir'ſt
The puniſhment all on thyſelf! Alas!
Bear thine own firſt; ill able to ſuſtain
His full wrath, whoſe thou feel'ſt as yet leaſt part,
And my diſpleaſure bear'ſt ſo ill. If pray'rs

Could

Could alter high decrees, I to that place
Would ſpeed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be viſited,
Thy frailty and infirmer ſex forgiv'n,
To me committed and by me expos'd.
But riſe; let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other; blam'd enough elſewhere! But ſtrive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden, in our ſhare of woe:
Since this day's death denounc'd, if ought I ſee,
Will prove no ſudden but a ſlow-pac'd evil;
A long day's dying to augment our pain,
And to our ſeed, O hapleſs ſeed! deriv'd.
To whom thus Eve, recov'ring heart, reply'd.
Adam by ſad experiment, I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found ſo erroneous; thence by juſt event
Found ſo unfortunate; nevertheleſs,
Reſtor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the ſole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet breaſt are ris'n:
Tending to ſome relief of our extremes,
Or end, though ſharp and ſad, yet tolerable
As in our evils, and of eaſier choice.
If care of our deſcent perplex us moſt,
Which muſt be born to certain woe, devour'd
By Death at laſt; and miſerable it is
To be to others cauſe of miſery,
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
Into this curſed world a woeful race;
That after wretched life muſt be at laſt
Food for ſo foul a monſter: in thy pow'r
It lies, yet e're conception to prevent
The race unbleſt, to being yet unbegot.
Childleſs thou art, childleſs remain: ſo Death
Shall be deceiv'd his glut; and with us two

Be forc'd to satisfy his rav'nous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet,
And with desire to languish without hope,
Before the present object languishing
With like desire, which would be misery,
And torment less than none of what we dread;
Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free
From what we fear for both, let us make short,
Let us seek Death: or he not found, supply
With our own hands his office on ourselves,
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
That show no end but death; and have the pow'r
Of many ways to die the shortest choosing
Destruction with destruction to destroy?——
She ended here, or vehement despair
Broke off the rest: so much of death her thoughts
Had entertain'd, as dy'd her cheeks with pale.
But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway'd,
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Lab'ring had rais'd; and thus to Eve reply'd.
Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee something more sublime,
And excellent than what thy mind contemns.
But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
That excellence thought in thee: and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
Of misery; so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounc'd; doubt not but God
Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire, than so
To be forestall'd: much more I fear lest death,
So snatch'd will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay. Rather such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live! Then, let us seek

Some

Some safer resolution; which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed
Part of our sentence, that „*thy seed shall bruise*
„*The Serpent's head*:“ Piteous amends! unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe
Satan: who in the Serpent hath contriv'd
Against us this deceit: to crush his head
Would be revenge indeed, which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves; or childless days
Resolv'd, as thou proposest: so, our foe
Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd; and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
No more be mention'd then of violence
Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope; and favors only
Rancor and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God, and his just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard and judg'd
Without wrath, or reviling: we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day, when lo! to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth, soon recompens'd with joy,
Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
Glanc'd on the ground; with labor I must earn
My bread: what harm? Idleness had been worse:
My labor will sustain me: and lest cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath unbesought provided; and his hands
Cloth'd us unworthy; pitying while he judg'd.
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail and snow;
Which now the sky with various face begins
To shew us in this mountain; while the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks

Of

Of thoſe fair ſpreading trees; which bids us ſeek
Some better ſhrowd, ſome better warmth to cheriſh
Our limbs benumm'd; e're this diurnal ſtar
Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd beams
Reflected, may with matter ſere foment
Or by colliſion of two bodies grind
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds
Juſtling, or puſh'd with winds, rude in their ſhock
Tine the ſlant lightning; whoſe thwar flame driv'n down,
Kindles the gummy bark of Fir, and Pine,
And ſends a comfortable heat from far,
Which might ſupply the Sun, Such fire to uſe,
And what may elſe be remedy or cure
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
He will inſtruct us praying, and of grace
Beſeeching him. So as we need not fear
To paſs commodiouſly this life, ſuſtain'd
By him with many comforts; till we end
In duſt, our final reſt, and native home.
What better can we do, than to the place
Repairing where he judg'd us, proſtrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confeſs
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
Wat'ring the ground, and with our ſighs the air
Frequenting, ſent from hearts contrite, in ſign
Of ſorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
Undoubtedly he will relent and turn
From his diſpleaſure: in whoſe look ſerene,
When angry moſt he ſeem'd and moſt ſevere,
What elſe but favor, grace, and mercy ſhone?
So ſpake our father penitent: nor Eve
Felt leſs remorſe. They forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judg'd them, proſtrate fell
Before him reverent; and both confeſs'd
Humbly their faults; and pardon begg'd, with tears
Wat'ring the ground; and with their ſighs the air
Frequenting, ſent from hearts contrite; in ſign
Of ſorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

The End of the Tenth Book.

BOOK XI.

Thus they in lowlieſt plight repentant ſtood
Praying; for from the mercy-ſeat above,
Prevenient grace deſcending, had remov'd
The ſtony from their hearts, and made new fleſh
Regenerate grow inſtead; that ſighs now breath'd
Unutterable, which the ſpirit of pray'r
Inſpir'd, and wing'd for Heav'n with ſpeedier flight
Than loudeſt oratory. Yet their port
Not of mean ſuitors; nor important leſs
Seem'd their petition, than when th' ancient pair
In fables old, leſs ancient yet than theſe,
Deucalion and chaſte Pyrrha, to reſtore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the ſhrine
Of Themis ſtood devout. To Heav'n their pray'rs
Flew up, nor miſs'd the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond, or fruſtrate: in they paſs'd
Dimenſionleſs thro' heav'nly doors; then clad
With incenſe, where the golden altar fum'd,
By their great Interceſſor, came in ſight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Preſenting, thus to intercede began.
See, Father, what firſt fruits on earth are ſprung
From thy implanted grace in man! theſe ſighs
And pray'rs, which in this golden cenſer, mix'd
With incenſe, I thy Prieſt before thee bring:
Fruits of more pleaſing ſavor from thy ſeed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than thoſe
Which his own hand manuring all the trees
Of Paradiſe could have produc'd, e're fall'n
From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear
To ſupplication; hear his ſighs though mute!
Unſkilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him; me, his advocate
And propitiation; all his works on me,
Good or not good ingraft: My merit thoſe
Shall

Shall perfect; and for these my death shall pay.
Accept me; and in me from these receive
The smell of peace tow'rd mankind: let him live
Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
Number'd, tho' sad, till Death, his doom, which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse,
To better life shall yield him; where with me
All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss;
Made one with me, as I with thee am one.
To whom the Father, without cloud, serene.
All thy request for man, accepted Son,
Obtain; all thy request was my decree.
But longer in that Paradise to dwell,
The law I gave to nature him forbids.
Those pure immortal elements, that know
No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
Eject him tainted now; and purge him off
As a distemper, gross to air as gross,
And mortal food, as may dispose him best
For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
Distemper'd all things; and of incorrupt
Corrupted. I at first with two fair gifts
Created him endow'd, with happiness
And immortality: that fondly lost,
This other serv'd but to eternize woe,
Till I provided Death: so Death becomes
His final remedy: and after life,
Try'd in sharp tribulation, and refin'd
By faith and faithful works, to second life,
Wak'd in the renovation of the just,
Resigns him up with heav'n and earth renew'd.
But let Us call to synod all the Blest,
Thro' Heav'n's wide bounds: from them I will not hide
My judgments, how with mankind I proceed;
As how with peccant Angels late they saw,
And in their state, tho' firm, stood more confirm'd.
He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch'd: he blew

His trumpet, heard in Orep ſince perhaps
When God deſcended; and perhaps once more
To ſound at general doom. Th' Angelic blaſt
Fill'd all the regions: from their bliſsful bow'rs
Of amarantin ſhade, fountain or ſpring,
By the waters of life, where'er they ſat
In fellowſhips of joy, the ſons of light
Haſted, reſorting to the ſummons high,
And took their ſeats: till from his throne ſupreme
Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his ſov'reing will.
O Sons! like one of Us man is become
To know both good and evil, ſince his taſte
Of that defended fruit: but let him boaſt
His knowledge of good loſt, and evil got:
Happier! had it ſuffic'd him to have known
Good by itſelf; and evil not at all.
He ſorrows now, repents and prays contrite!
My motions in him: longer than they move,
His heart I know how variable and vain
Self-left. Leſt therefore his now bolder hand
Reach alſo of the Tree of Life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at leaſt to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And ſend him from the garden forth, to till
The ground whence he was taken; fitter ſoil.
Michael, this my beheſt have thou in charge!
Take to thee from among the Cherubim
Thy choice of flaming warriors; leſt the Fiend,
Or in behalf of man, or to invade
Vacant poſſeſſion, ſome new trouble raiſe.
Haſte thee! and from the Paradiſe of God
Without remorſe drive out the ſinful pair;
From hallow'd ground th' unholy; and denounce
To them and to their progeny from thence
Perpetual baniſhment. Yet leſt they faint,
At the ſad ſentence rigorouſly urg'd,
For I behold them ſoften'd, and with tears
Bewailing their exceſs, all terror hide.

If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee inlighten: intermix
My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd:
So send them forth, tho' sorrowing, yet in peace.
And on the east-side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch; and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the Tree of Life:
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey;
With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude.
He ceas'd; and th' archangelic Pow'r prepar'd
For swift descent: with him the cohort bright
Of watchful Cherubim: four faces each
Had, like a double Janus; all their shape
Spangled with eyes, more numerous than those
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drouse,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean while
To resalute the world with sacred light
Leucothea wak'd; and with fresh dews inbalm'd
The earth; when Adam, and first matron Eve,
Had ended now their orisons; and found
Strength added from above; new hope to spring
Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet link'd:
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd.
Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
The good which we enjoy, from Heav'n descends:
But that from us ought should ascend to Heav'n
So prevalent, as to concern the mind
Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem: yet this will pray'r,
Or one short sigh of human breath, up-born
Ev'n to the seat of God. For since I sought
By pray'r th' offended Deity t' appease,

Kneel'd, and before him humbl'd all my heart,
Methought I saw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear: persuasion in me grew
That I was heard with favor; peace return'd
Home to my breast; and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe:
Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of Death
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee!
Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
Mother of all things living, since by thee
Man is to live; and all things live for man!
  To whom thus Eve, with sad demeanour meek:
Ill worthy I such title should belong
To me transgressor, who, for thee ordain'd
A help, became thy snare; to me reproach
Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise.
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd
The source of life: next favourable thou,
Who highly thus t' intitle me vouchsaf'st:
Far other name deserving! But the field
To labor calls us now with sweat impos'd,
Though after sleepless night: for see! the morn,
All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth;
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Where'er our days work lies; though now enjoin'd
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
What can be toilsom in these pleasant walks?
Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content!
  So spake, so wish'd much-humbl'd Eve; but fate
Subscrib'd not: Nature first gave signs, impress'd
On bird, beast, air: air suddenly eclips'd
After short blush of morn: nigh in her sight,
The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his aery tour,
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove.
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods

First

First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind:
Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight.
Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
Perfuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake.
O Eve! some further change awaits us nigh,
Which Heav'n by these mute signs in nature shows,
Forerunners of his purpose: or to warn
Us haply too secure of our discharge
From penalty, because from death releas'd
Some days: how long, and what till then our life,
Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
And thither must return and be no more?
Why else this double object in our sight,
Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
One way the self-same hour? Why in the east
Darkness ere day's mid course, and morning light
More orient in yon western cloud, that draws
O'er the blue firmament a radiant white;
And slow descends, with something heav'nly fraught?
He err'd not; for by this the heav'nly bands
Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
In Paradise, and on a hill made halt:
A glorious apparition! had not doubt
And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
Not that more glorious, when the Angels met
Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright:
Nor that which on the flaming mount appear'd
In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
Against the Syrian king; who to surprise
One man, assassin like, had levied war,
War unproclaim'd. The princely Hierarch
In their bright stand there left his Pow'rs, to seise
Possession of the garden: he alone,
To find where Adam sheltor'd, took his way;
Not unperceiv'd of Adam, who to Eve,
While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake.

Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
Of us will soon determine; or impose
New laws to be observ'd: for I descry,
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill
One of the heav'nly host, and by his gait
None of the meanest: some great Potentate,
Or of the Thrones above; such majesty
Invests him coming! yet not terrible
That I should fear, nor sociably mild,
As Raphael, that I should much confide,
But solemn and sublime: whom not t' offend,
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.
He ended, and th' Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,
Not in his shape celestial, but as man
Clad to meet man: over his lucid arms
A military vest of purple flow'd,
Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
Of Sarra, worn by Kings and Heroes old
In time of truce: Iris had dipt the woof:
His starry helm unbuckl'd, shew'd him prime
In manhood, where youth ended: by his side
As in a glist'ring Zodiac hung the sword,
Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.
Adam bow'd low: he kingly from his state
Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declar'd.
Adam! Heav'n's high behest no preface needs:
Sufficient that thy pray'rs are heard, and Death,
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
Defeated of his seizure many days
Giv'n thee of grace, wherein thou may'st repent,
And one bad act with many deeds well done
May'st cover: well may then thy Lord, appeas'd,
Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim.
But longer in this Paradise to dwell
Permits not; to remove thee I am come,
And send thee from the garden forth, to till
The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.
He added not; for Adam at the news

Heart-

Heart-ſtruck with chilling gripe of ſorrow ſtood,
That all his ſenſes bound! Eve, who unſeen
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Diſcover'd ſoon the place of her retire.
O unexpected ſtroke, worſe than of Death!
Muſt I thus leave thee, Paradiſe? thus leave
Thee, native ſoil, theſe happy walks and ſhades,
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to ſpend,
Quiet though ſad, the reſpit of that day
That muſt be mortal to us both! O flow'rs,
That never will in other climate grow;
My early viſitation, and my laſt
At ev'n, which I bred up with tender hand
From the firſt op'ning bud, and gave you names,
Who now ſhall rear you to the Sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from th' ambroſial fount?
Thee laſtly, nuptial bow'r, by me adorn'd
With what to ſight or ſmell was ſweet, from thee
How ſhall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world; to this obſcure
And wild? How ſhall we breathe in other air
Leſs pure, accuſtom'd to immortal fruits?
Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:
Lament not, Eve, put patiently reſign
What juſtly thou haſt loſt: nor ſet thy heart
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine.
Thy going is not lonely: with thee goes
Thy huſband; him to follow thou art bound:
Where he abides, think there thy native ſoil.
Adam, by this from the cold ſudden damp
Recovering, and his ſcatter'd ſpirits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words addreſs'd.
Celeſtial, whether among the Thrones, or nam'd
Of them the higheſt; for ſuch of ſhape may ſeem
Prince above Princes! gently haſt thou told
Thy meſſage, which might elſe in telling wound,
And in performing end us, what beſides
Of ſorrow, and dejection, and deſpair,

Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes! all places else
Inhospitable appear, and desolate;
Nor knowing us, nor known. And if by pray'r
Incessant, I could hope to change the will
Of him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries.
But pray'r against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind;
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
This most afflicts me, that departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid deprived
His blessed count'nance! Here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd
Presence divine; and to my sons relate:
„On this mount he appear'd; under this tree
„Stood visible; among these pines his voice
„I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd."
So many grateful altars I would rear
Of grassy turf; and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook; in memory,
Or monument to ages: and thereon
Offer sweet smelling gums, and fruits, and flow'rs.
I yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or foo-step trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet recall'd
To life prolong'd, and promis'd race I now
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
Of glory, and far off his steps adore.
To whom thus Michael with regard benign.
Adam! thou know'st Heav'n his, and all the earth,
Not this rock only. His omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual pow'r, and warm'd.
All th' earth he gave thee to possess, and rule:

No

No despicable gift! surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
Of Paradise or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations; and had hither come
From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee their great progenitor,
But this praeeminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons.
Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
God is as here, and will be found alike
Present, and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing the round
With goodness, and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirm'd
Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee and to thy offspring: good with bad
Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow, equally inur'd
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar'd indure
Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
This hill. Let Eve, for I have drench'd her eyes,
Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st,
As once thou slept'st, whilst she to life was form'd.
To whom thus Adam gratefully reply'd,
Ascend, I follow thee, safe Guide! the path
Thou lead'st me; and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
However chast'ning: to the evil turn
My obvious breast; arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labor won:
If so I may attain.——So both ascend,
In the visions of God. It was a hill,

Of

Of Paradise the highest; from whose top
The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken
Stretch'd out to th'amplest reach of prospect lay.
Not higher that hill nor wider looking round,
Whereon for different cause the tempter set
Our second Adam, in the wilderness;
To shew him all earth's kingdoms and their glory.
His eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire! from the distin'd walls
Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Cham:
And Samarchand by Oxus, Tatemir's throne;
To Peking, 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
In Moscow; or the Sultan in Biyance,
Turchestan-born: nor could his eye not ken
*) Th' empire of Negus, to his utmost port
Ercoco; and the less maritim Kings,
Monbaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
And Sofala thought Ophir, to the realm
Of Congo, and Angola farthest south:
Or thence, from Niger flood to Atlas mount
The Kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Suz,
Marocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen:
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoil'd
Guiana; whose **) great city Geryon's sons
Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights,
Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,
Which that false fruit that promis'd clearer sight
Had

*) *Ethiopia.*
**) *Manoa.*

Had bred; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue
The visual nerve, for he had much to see;
And from the well of life three drops instill'd.
So deep the pow'r of these ingredients pierc'd,
Ev'n to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam, now inforc'd to close his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his spirits became intranc'd:
But him the gentle Angel by the hand
Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.
Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
Th' effects which thy original crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee: who never touch'd
Th' excepted tree; nor with the snake conspir'd;
Nor sinn'd thy sin: yet from that sin derive
Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.
His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field.
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves
New reap'd: the other part, sheep-walks and folds:
I' th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
Rustic, of grassy sod: thither anon
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,
Uncull'd, as came to hand. A shepherd next
More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,
Choicest and best: then sacrificing, laid
The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd,
On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd,
His offering soon propitious fire from Heav'n
Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam.
The other's not, for his was not sincere.
Whereat he inly rag'd, and as they talk'd
Smote him into the midriff with a stone,
That beat ut life: he fell, and deadly pale
Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd!
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismay'd, and thus in haste to th' Angel cry'd.
O Teacher! some great mischief hath befall'n
To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd:

Is piety thus, and pure devotion paid?
T' whom Michael thus, he alſo mov'd, reply'd:
Theſe two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins: th' unjuſt the juſt hath ſlain;
For envy, that his brother's offering found
From Heav'n acceptance: but the bloody fact
Will be aveng'd; and th' other's faith approv'd
Loſe no reward, though here thou ſee him die,
Rolling in duſt and gore. To which our ſire.
Alas, both for the deed and for the cauſe!
But have I now ſeen Death? is this the way
I muſt return to native duſt? O ſight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!
To whom thus Michael. Death thou haſt ſeen
In his firſt ſhape on man: but many ſhapes
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave: all diſmal! yet to ſenſe
More terrible at th' entrance than within.
Some, as thou ſaw'ſt, by violent ſtroke ſhall die:
By fire, flood, famine: by intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth ſhall bring
Diſeaſes dire: of which a monſtrous crew
Before thee ſhall appear; that thou may'ſt know
What miſery th' inabſtinence of Eve
Shall bring on men, Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, ſad, noiſome, dark,
A lazar-houſe it ſeem'd; wherein were laid
Numbers of all diſeas'd: all maladies
Of ghaſtly ſpaſm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-ſick agony, all ſev'rous kinds,
Convulſions, epilepſies, fierce catarrhs,
Inteſtin ſtone, and ulcer, cholic pangs,
Daemoniac phrenzy, moaping melancholy,
And moon-ſtruck madneſs, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-waſting peſtilence,
Dropſies, and aſthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the toſſing, deep the groans! Deſpair

Ten-

Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch:
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook; but delay'd to strike, though oft invok'd
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space; till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess,
And scarce recovering words his plaint renew'd.
O miserable mankind! to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd!
Better end here unborn! Why is life giv'n
To be thus wrested from us? rather, why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offer'd; or soon beg to lay it down;
Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
Th' image of God in man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since
To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd,
Under inhuman pains? Why should not man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And for his Maker's image sake exempt?
Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilify'd
To serve ungovern'd appetite: and took
His image whom they serv'd, and brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve:
Therefore so abject is their punishment,
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own:
Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd,
While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves.
I yeild it just, said Adam, and submit!
But is there yet no other way, besides

These

Theſe painful paſſages, how we may come
To death, and mix with our connatural duſt?
There is, ſaid Michael, if thou well obſerve
The rule not of too much; by temperance taught
In what thou eat'ſt and drink'ſt; ſeeking from thence
Due nouriſhment, not gluttonous delight,
Till many years over thy head return:
So mayſt thou live; till like ripe fruit thou drop
Into thy mother's lap: or be with eaſe
Gather'd, not harſhly pluck'd, for death mature.
This is old age: but then, thou muſt outlive
Thy youth, thy ſtrength, thy beauty; which will change
To wither'd, weak, and gray: thy ſenſes then
Obtuſe, all taſte of pleaſure muſt forgo,
To what thou haſt; and for the air of youth,
Hopeful, and chearful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy ſpirits down; and laſt conſume
The balm of life. To whom our anceſtor.
Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much: bent rather how I may be quit
Faireſt and eaſieſt of this cumbrous charge,
Which I muſt keep till my appointed day
Of rendring up, patiently attend
My diſſolution! Michaël reply'd
Nor love thy life, nor hate: but what thou liv'ſt
Live well; how long, or ſhort, permit to Heav'n.
And now prepare thee for another ſight.
He look'd, and ſaw a ſpacious plain, whereon
Were tents of various hue: by ſome, were herds
Of cattle grazing: others, whence the ſound
Of inſtruments, that made melodious chime,
Was heard, of harp, and organ, and who mov'd
Their ſtops and chords was ſeen: his volant touch
Inſtinct through all proportions, low and high,
Fled and perſu'd tranſverſe the reſonant fugue.
In other part ſtood one who at the forge
Lab'ring, two maſſy clods of iron and braſs

Had melted, whether found where casual fire
Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,
Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
To some cav'es mouth, or whether wash'd by stream
From underground, the liquid ore he drain'd
Into fit molds prepar'd, from which he form'd
First his own tools, then, what might else be wrought
Fusil or grav'n in metal. After these,
But on the hither side, a different sort
From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their seat,
Down to the plain descended: by their guise
Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
To worship God aright, and know his works
Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve
Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain
Long had not walk'd, when from the tents behold
A bevy of fair woman, richly gay
In gems and wanton dress; tho th' harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on!
The men, tho' grave, ey'd them, and let their eyes
Rove without rein, till in the amorous net
Fast caught, they lik'd, and each his liking chose:
And now of love they treat, till th' ev'ning star
Love's harbinger, appear'd: then all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd:
With feast and music all the tents resound,
Such happy interview, and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flow'rs.
And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart
Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,
The bent of Nature! which he thus express'd.
True opener of mine eyes, prime angel blest!
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past:
Those were of hate, and death, or pain much worse:
Here Nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.
To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best

By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet,
Created, as thou art, to nobler end
Holy and pure, conformity divine!
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother: studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare;
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledg'd none
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget:
For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good, wherein consists
Woman's domestic honor and chief praise,
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetite; to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye.
To these, that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
Ignobly! to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy,
Erelong to swim at large, and laugh: for which
The world ere long a world of tears must weep!
To whom thus Adam of short joy bereft.
O pity and shame! that they, who to live well
Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread
Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!
But still I see the tenor of man's woe
Hold on the same, from woman to begin.
From man's effeminate slackness it begins;
Said th' Angel, who should better hold his place
By wisdom and superior gifts receiv'd.
But now prepare thee for another scene.
He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
Before him, towns and rural works between:
Cities of men with lofty gates and tow'rs;
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatning war;

Giants

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

Make they but of their brethren; men of men?
But who was that just man, whom had not Heav'n
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?
To whom thus Michael. These are the product
Of those ill-match'd marriages thou saw'st;
Where good with bad were match'd; who of themselves
Abhor to join: and by imprudence mix'd,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants; men of high renown!
For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
And valor and heroic virtue call'd:
To overcome in battel, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory; and for glory done
Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods,
Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be atchiev'd, renown on earth;
And what most merits fame in silence hid.
But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his Saints: him the Most High
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds,
Did, as thou saw'st, receive; to walk with God
High in salvation, and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death: to shew thee what reward
Awaits the good; the rest, what punishment:
Which now direct thine eyes, and soon behold.
He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd:
The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
All noww turn'd to jollity, and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance;
Marrying or prostituting, as befel,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair

Allur'd

Allur'd them: thence from cups, to civil broils.
At length a reverend ſire among them came,
And of their doings great diſlike declar'd,
And teſtify'd againſt their ways: he oft
Frequented their aſſemblies, whereſo met,
Triumphs or feſtivals and to them preach'd
Converſion and repentance: as to ſouls
In priſon under judgments imminent:
But all in vain! which when he ſaw, he ceas'd
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off.
Then from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a veſſel of huge bulk;
Meaſur'd by cubit, length and breadth and height;
Smear'd round with pitch; and in the ſide a door
Contriv'd; and of proviſions laid in large,
For man and beaſt: when lo, o wonder ſtrange!
Of every beaſt, and bird, and inſect ſmall
Came ſevens, and pairs, and enter'd in, as taught
Their order: laſt the ſire, and his three ſons
With their four wives, and God made faſt the door.
Meanwhile the ſouthwind roſe, and with black wings
Wide-hov'ring, all the clouds together drove
From under Heav'n; the hills to their ſupply
Vapor, and exhalation duſk and moiſt,
Sent up amain: and now the thicken'd ſky
Like a dark ceiling ſtood; down ruſh'd the rain
Impetuous: and continu'd till the earth
No more was ſeen: the floating veſſel ſwum
Uplifted; and ſecure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves: all dwellings elſe
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd: ſea cover'd ſea;
Sea without ſhore! and in their palaces
Where luxury late reign'd, ſea-monſters whelp'd
And ſtabled: of mankind, ſo numerous late,
All left, in one ſmall bottom ſwum imbark'd.
How diſt thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offſpring, end ſo ſad,

Depopulation! Thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drown'd,
And sunk thee as thy sons; till gently rear'd
By th' Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Tho' comfortless; as when a father mourns
His children, all in view destroy'd at once:
And scarce to th' Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint.
O visions ill foreseen! Better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future, so had born
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear: those now, that were dispens'd
The burden of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no men seek
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befal
Him or his children: evil he may be sure:
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel;
Grievous to bear! But that care now is past,
Man is not whom to warn: those few escap'd
Famin and anguish will at last consume
Wand'ring that watry desert. I had hope
When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth,
All would have then gone well, peace would have crown'd
With length of happy days the race of man.
But I was far deceiv'd! For now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus? Unfold, celestial guide!
And whether here the race of man will end.
To whom thus Michael. Those whom last thou saw'st.
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they
First seen in acts of prowess eminent
And great exploits; but of true virtue void:
Who having spilt much blood, and done much waste,
Subduing nations; and achiev'd thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey;

Shal

Shall change their courſe to pleaſure, eaſe and ſloth,
Surfeit, and luſt; till wantonneſs and pride
Raiſe out of friendſhip hoſtile deeds in peace.
The conquer'd alſo, and enſlav'd by war,
Shall with their freedom loſt all virtue loſe
And fear of God; from whom their piety feign'd
In ſharp conteſt of battel found no aid
Againſt invaders: therefore cool'd in zeal,
Thenceforth ſhall practiſe how to live ſecure,
Worldly or diſſolute, on what their Lords
Shall leave them to injoy: for th' earth ſhall bear
More than enough, that temperance may be try'd:
So all ſhall turn degenerate, all deprav'd;
Juſtice and temperance, truth and faith forgot!
One man except, the only ſon of light
In a dark age, againſt example good,
Againſt allurement, cuſtom, and a world
Offended, fearleſs of reproach and ſcorn,
Or violence; he of their wicked ways
Shall them admoniſh; and before them ſet
The paths of righteouſneſs, how much more ſafe,
And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come
On their impenitence; and ſhall return
Of them derided. But, of God obſerv'd,
The one juſt man alive, by his command
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheldſt,
To ſave himſelf and houſehold, from amidſt
A world devote to univerſal wrack.
No ſooner he with them of man and beaſt
Seleſt for life ſhall in the ark be lodg'd,
And ſhelter'd round, but all the cataracts
Of Heav'n ſet open on the earth ſhall pour
Rain day and night: all fountains of the deep
Broke up, ſhall heave the ocean to uſurp
Beyond all bounds, till inundation riſe
Above the higheſt hills. Then ſhall this mount
Of Paradiſe, by might of waves be mov'd
Out of his place, puſh'd by the horned flood,

With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root and island salt and bare,
The haunt of Seals, and Orcs, and Sea-mews clang;
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No sanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now what further shall ensue, behold.
He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood,
Which now abated: for the clouds were fled,
Driv'n by a keen north-wind, that blowing dry
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;
And the clear sun on his wide watry glass
Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
As after thirst: which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot tow'rds the deep, who now had stopt
His sluices, as the Heav'n his windows shut.
The Ark no more now flotes, but seems on ground
Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
And now the tops of hills as rocks appear:
With clamor thence the rapid currents drive,
Tow'rds the retreating sea their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
And after him, the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light:
The second time returning, in his bill
An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign!
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends with all his train:
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to Heav'n, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
Conspicuous with three listed colors gay,
Betokening peace from God, and cov'nant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
Greatly rejoyc'd, and thus his joy broke forth.

O thou

O thou who future things canſt repreſent
As preſent, heav'nly inſtructor! I revive
At this laſt ſight, aſſur'd that man ſhall live
With all the creatures, and their ſeed preſerve.
Far leſs I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked ſons deſtroy'd, that I rejoice
For one man found ſo perfect and ſo juſt,
That God vouchſafes to raiſe another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But ſay, what mean thoſe color'd ſtreaks in heav'n
Diſtended as the brow of God appeas'd,
Or ſerve they as a flow'ry verge to bind
The fluid ſkirts of that ſame watry cloud,
Leſt it again diſſolve and ſhow'r the earth?
To whom th' Arch-Angel. Dextrouſly thou aim'ſt;
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting him of man deprav'd;
Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he ſaw
The whole earth fill'd with violence; and all fleſh
Corrupting each their way: yet, thoſe remov'd,
Such grace ſhall one juſt man find in his ſight,
That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
And makes a convenant never to deſtroy
The earth again by flood; nor let the ſea
Surpaſs his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,
With man therein or beaſt: but when he brings
Over the earth a cloud, will therein ſet
His triple-color'd bow, whereon to look,
All 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 Heav'n and Earth wherein the juſt ſhall dwell.

The End of the Eleventh Book.

BOOK XII.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
Tho' bent on speed: so here th' Arch-Angel paus'd,
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
If Adam ought perhaps might interpose:
Then with transition sweet new speech resumes.
Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end,
And man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail: objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense.
Henceforth what is to come I will relate,
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.
This second source of men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgment past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
Lab'ring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine and oil: and from the herd, or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd and dwell
Long time in peace by families and tribes
Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart; who not content
With fair equality, fraternal state;
Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth;
Hunting, and men, not beasts, shall be his game,
With war and hostile snare such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous.
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
Before the Lord; as in despite of Heav'n,

Or

Of from Heav'n claiming second sov'reignty:
And from rebellion shall derive his name;
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden tow'rds the west, shall find
The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of hell.
Of brick, and of that stuff they cast to build
A city and tow'r, whose top may reach to Heav'n;
And get themselves a name: lest far dispers'd
In foreign lands their memory be lost;
Regardless wether good or evil fame.
But God, who oft descends to visit men
Unseen, and through their habitations walks
To mark their doings, them beholding soon,
Comes down to see their city, ere the tow'r
Obstruct Heav'n-tow'rs; and in derision sets
Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase
Quite out their native language: and instead
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown.
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
Among the builders: each to other calls
Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,
As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in Heav'n,
And looking down, to see the hubbub strage,
And hear the din; thus was the building left
Ridiculous; and the work Confusion nam'd.
Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd.
O execrable son! so to aspire
Above his brethren; to himself assuming
Authority usurp'd, from God not giv'n.
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
Dominion absolute; that right we hold
By his donation: but man over men
He made not Lord: such title to himself
Reserving, human left from human free,
But this usurper his encroachment proud

Stays

Stays not on man: to God his tow'r intends
Siege and defiance. Wretched man! What food
Will he convey up thither to sustain
Himself and his rash army; where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross;
And famish him of breath, if not of bread?
To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty: yet know withal,
Since by original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twin'd, and from her hath no dividual being:
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
Immediately inordinate desires
And upstart passions catch the government
From reason; and to servitude reduce
Man till then free. Therefore, since he permits
Within himself unworthy pow'rs to reign
Over free reason; God in judgment just
Subjects him from without to violent lords:
Who oft as undeservedly inthrall
His outward freedom. Tyranny must be;
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
From virtue, which in reason, that no wrong,
But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
Deprives them of their outward liberty;
Their inward lost; witness th' irreverent son
Of him who built the Ark; who for the shame
Done to his father, heard his heavy curse,
„*Servant of Servants*," on his vicious race.
Thus will this latter, as the former world,
Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last
Wearied with their iniquities; withdraw
His presence from among them, and avert
His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways:

And one peculiar nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,
A nation from one faithful man to spring:
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
Bred up in idol-worship. O that men
Canst thou believe? should be so stupid grown,
While yet the Patriarch liv'd, who scap'd the flood,
As to forsake the living God, and fall
To worship their own work in wood and stone
For Gods! yet him God the most High vouchsafes
To call by vision from his father's house,
His kindred and false Gods, into a land
Which he will shew him: and from him will raise
A mighty nation! and upon him show'r
His benediction so, that in his seed
All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys,
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.
I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
He leaves his Gods, his friends, and native soil
Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford
To Haran: after him a cumbrous train
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude:
Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
Pitch'd about Sichem, and the neighb'ring plain
Of Moreh. There by promise he receives
Gift to his progeny of all that land;
From Hamath northward to the desert south;
Things by their names I call, tho yet unnam'd,
From Hermon east, to the great western sea;
Mount Hermon, yonder sea, each place behold
In prospect, as I point them, on the shore
Mount Carmel; here the double-founted stream,
Jordan, true limit eastward: but his sons
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
This ponder, that all nations of the earth
Shall in his seed be blessed: by that seed

Is meant thy great Deliverer, who ſhall bruiſe
The ſerpent's head; whereof to thee anon
Plainlier ſhall be reveal'd. This Patriarch bleſt,
Whom faithful Abraham due time ſhall call,
A ſon, and of his ſon a grand-child leaves;
Like him in faith, is wiſdom, and renown.
The grand-child with twelve ſons increas'd departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
Egypt, divided by the river Nile:
Seere where it flows, disgorging at ſeven mouths
Into the ſea! To ſojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger ſon
In time of dearth; a ſon whoſe worthy deeds
Raiſe him to be the ſecond in that realm
Of Pharaoh: there he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation: and now grown,
Suſpected to a ſequent king, who ſeeks
To ſtop their over-growth, as inmate gueſts
Too numerous; whence of gueſts he makes them ſlaves
Inhoſpitably; and kills their infant males:
Till by two brethren, thoſe two brethren call
Moſes and Aaron, ſent from God to claim
His people from inthralment, they return
With glory and ſpoil back to their promis'd land.
But firſt the lawleſs tyrant who denies
To know their God, or meſſage to regard,
Muſt be compell'd by ſigns and judgment dire:
To blood unſhed the rivers muſt be turn'd;
Frogs, lice, and flies, muſt all his palace fill
With loath'd intruſion, and fill all the land:
His cattle muſt of rot and murren die:
Botches and blains muſt all his fleſh imboſs,
And all his people: thunder mix'd with hail,
Hail mix'd with fire, muſt rend th' Egyptian ſky,
And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darkſome cloud of locuſts ſwarming down
Muſt eat, and on the ground leave nothing green:

Dark-

Darkneſs muſt overſhadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkneſs! and blot out three days:
Laſt, with one midnight ſtroke, all the firſt-born
Of Egypt muſt lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
The river dragon tam'd at length ſubmits
To let his ſojourners depart; and oft
Humbles his ſtubborn heart; but ſtill as ice
More harden'd after thaw: till in his rage
Purſuing whom he late diſmiſs'd, the ſea
Swallows him with his hoſt; but them lets paſs
As on dry land between two chryſtal walls;
Aw'd by the rod of Moſes ſo to ſtand
Divided, till his reſcu'd gain their ſhore:
Such wondrous pow'r God to his ſaint will lend,
Through preſent in his Angel, who ſhall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire,
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while th' obdurate king purſues.
All night he will purſue, but his approach
Darkneſs defends between till morning watch:
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his hoſt,
And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command
Moſes once more his potent rod extends
Over the ſea, the ſea his rod obeys:
On their imbattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war! The race elect,
Safe towards Canaan from the ſhore advance
Through the wild deſert; not the readieſt way,
Leſt entring on the Canaanite alarm'd
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Aegypt, chuſing rather
Inglorious life with ſervitude: for life,
To noble and ignoble is more ſweet
Untrain'd in arms, where raſhneſs leads not on.
This alſo ſhall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderneſs: there they ſhall found

Their

Their goverment, and their great senate choose
Thro' the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd.
God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets sound
Ordain them laws: part such as appertain
To civil justice: part religious rites
Of sacrifice: informing them by types,
And shadows, of that destin'd seed to bruise
The serpent, by what means he shall atchieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful! They beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; He grants what they besought
Instructed that to God is no access
Without mediator, whose high office now
Moses in figure bears, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of Great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Establish'd, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle:
The holy One with mortal men to dwell.
By his prescript a Sanctuary is fram'd
Of cedar, overlaid with gold, therein
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his cov'nant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold between the wings
Of two bright Cherubim: before him burn
Seven lamps as in a zodiac representing
The heav'nly fires: over the tent a cloud
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night,
Save when they journey: and a length they come,
Conducted by his Angel to the land
Promis'd to Abraham and his seed—— The rest
Were long to tell, how many battles fought,
How many Kings destroy'd, and kingdoms won,

Or

Or how the Sun ſhall in mid Heav'n ſtand ſtill
A day entire, and night's due courſe adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, „Sun in Gibeon ſtand,
„And thou moon in the vale of Ajalon,
„Till Iſrael overcome;" ſo call the third
From Abraham, ſon of Iſaac, from him
His whole deſcent, who thus ſhall Canaan win.
Here Adam interpos'd. O ſent from Heav'n,
Inlightner of my darkneſs! gracious things
Thou haſt reveal'd; thoſe chiefly which concern
juſt Abraham and his ſeed: now firſt I find
Mine eyes true op'ning, and my heart much eas'd;
Ere while perplex'd with thoughts what would become
Of me and all mankind: but now I ſee
His day, in whom all nations ſhall be bleſt:
Favor unmerited by me, who ſought
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to thoſe
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth,
So many and ſo various laws are giv'n:
So many laws argue ſo many ſins
Among them: how can God with ſuch reſide?
To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that ſin
Will reign among them, as of thee begot:
And therefore was law giv'n them to evince
Their natural pravity, by ſtirring up
Sin againſt law to fight: that when they ſee
Law can diſcover ſin, but not remove,
Save by thoſe ſhadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious muſt be paid for man;
Juſt for unjuſt: that in ſuch righteouſneſs
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Juſtification towards God, and peace
Of conſcience; which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appeaſe; nor man the moral part
Perform: and not performing, cannot live.
So law appears imperfect, and but giv'n

With purpose to resign them in full time
Up to a better cov'nant; disciplin'd
From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit,
From imposition of strict laws, to free
Acceptance of large grace; from servil fear
To filial; works of law, to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua: whom the Gentiles Jesus call;
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary serpent; and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long wander'd man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Mean while they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd
Long time shall dwell and prosper: but when sins
National interrupt their public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies,
From whom as oft he saves them penitent;
By Judges first, then under Kings: of whom
The second, both for piety renown'd
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever shall indure: the like shall sing
All prophecy, that of the royal stock
Of David, so I name this king, shall rise
A son, the woman's seed to thee foretold:
Foretold to Abraham; as in whom shall trust
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
The last; for of his reign shall be no end.
But first a long succession must ensue,
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
The clouded Ark of God, till then in tents
Wand'ring, shall in a glorious Temple inshrine.
Such follow him as shall be register'd
Part good par bad; of bad the longer scroll:
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults

Heap'd

Heap'd to the popular ſum, will ſo incenſe
God, as to leave them, and expoſe their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,
With all his ſacred things, a ſcorn and prey
To that proud city, whoſe high walls thou ſaw'ſt
Left in confuſion; Babylon thence call'd.
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The ſpace of ſeventy years: then brings them back,
Remembring mercy, and his cov'nant ſworn
To David, ſtabliſhd as the days of heav'n.
Return'd from Babylon, by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God diſpos'd, the Houſe of God
They firſt re-edify: and for a while
In mean eſtate live moderate: till grown
In wealth and multitude, factious they grow;
But firſt, among the prieſts diſſention ſprings;
Men who attend the altar, and ſhould moſt
Endeavour peace: their ſtrife pollution brings
Upon the Temple itſelf: at laſt they ſeiſe
The ſceptre, and regard not David's ſons:
Then loſe it to a ſtranger, that the true
Anointed king Meſſiah might be born
Barr'd of his right: yet at his birth a ſtar
Unſeen before in heav'n proclaims him come,
And guides the eaſtern Sages, who inquire
His place, to offer incenſe, myrrh and gold;
His place of birth a ſolemn Angel tells
To ſimple ſhepherds keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haſte, and by a choir
Of ſquadron'd Angels hear his carol ſung.
A Virgin is his mother, but his ſire
The pow'r of the moſt High! He ſhall aſcend
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
With earth's wide bounds, his glory with the heav'ns.
He ceas'd, diſcerning Adam with ſuch joy
Surcharg'd, as had, like grief, been dew'd in tears,
Without the vent of words; which theſe he breath'd.

O prophet of glad tidings! finisher
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand,
What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain:
Why our great expectation should be call'd
The seed of woman: Virgin Mother, hail!
High in the love of Heav'n! Yet from my loins
Thou shall proceed, and from thy womb the Son
Of God most High; so God with Man unites.
Needs must the serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain: say, where and when
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel?
To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight,
As of a duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel: not therefore joins the Son
Manhood to God-head, with more strength to foil
Thy enemy: nor so is overcome
Satan, whose fall from Heav'n, a deadlier bruise!
Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works,
In thee and in thy seed. Nor can this be,
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
On penalty of death, and suffering death,
The penalty to thy transgression due;
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:
So only can high Justice rest appaid.
The law of God exact he shall fulfil
Both by obedience and by love: though love
Alone fulfill the law: thy punishment
He shall indure, by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life, and curs'd death:
Proclaming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption; and that his obedience
Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits
To save them, not their own, tho' legal works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem'd

Seis'd

Seis'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd,
A ſhameful and accurs'd nail'd to the croſs
By his own nation; ſlain for bringing life.
But to the croſs he nails thy enemies,
The law that is againſt thee, and the ſins
Of all mankind with him there crucify'd,
Never to hurt them more who rightly truſt
In this his ſatisfaction. So he dies,
But ſoon revives; death over him no pow'r
Shall long uſurp: e're the third dawning light
Return, the ſtars of morn ſhall ſee him riſe
Out of his grave, freſh as the dawning light,
The ranſom paid, which man from death redeems,
His death for man, as many as offer'd life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works. This God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou ſhouldſt have dy'd,
In ſin for ever loſt from life: this act
Shall bruiſe the head of Satan, cruſh his ſtrength,
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,
And fix far deeper in his head their ſtings
Than 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 t' appear
To his diſciples; men who in his life
Still follow'd him: to them ſhall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd
And his ſalvation; them who ſhall believe
Baptizing in the profluent ſtream, the ſign
Of waſhing them from guilt of ſin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if ſo befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer dy'd.
All nations they ſhall teach: for from that day,
Not only to the ſons of Abraham's loins
Salvation ſhall be preach'd; but to the ſons

Of Abraham's faith wherever thro' the world:
So in his seed all nations shall be blest.
Then to the heav'n of heav'ns shall he ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The serpent, Prince of air, and drag in chains
Thro' all his realm, and there confounded leave:
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heav'n: and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and pow'r to judge both quick and dead:
To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss;
Whether in heav'n or earth: for then the earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.
So spake th' Arch-Angel Michael, then paus'd,
As at the world's great period: and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus reply'd.
O goodness infinite! goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good! more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done and occasion'd; or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring
To God more glory, more good-will to men
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to Heav'n
Must reascend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among th' unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
His people, who defend? will they not deal
Worse with his followers, than with him they dealt?
Be sure they will, said th' Angel; but from Heav'n
He

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 thro' love, upon their hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth; and also arm
With spiritual armour, able to resist
Satan's assoults, and quench his fiery darts:
What man can do against them, not afraid,
Though to the death; against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompens'd;
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors: for the Spirit
Pour'd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the Nations; then on all
Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts indue
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heav'n: at length
Their Ministry perform'd, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die. But in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves!
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heav'n,
To their own vile advantages shall turn,
Of lucre and ambition; and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood,
Then shall they seek t' avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles; and with these to join
Secular pow'r, though feigning still to act
By spiritual: to themselves appropriating
The Spirit of God, promis'd alike and giv'n
To all believers: and from that pretence
Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force
On every conscience; laws which none shall find

Left them inroll'd; or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart ingrave. What will they then
But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind
His consort liberty? what, but unbuild
His living temples, built by faith to stand,
Their own faith, not another's? for on earth
Who against faith and conscience can be heard
Infallible? Yet many will presume;
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all who in the worship persevere
Of spirit and truth: the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfy'd: truth shall retire
Bestuck with slandrous darts; and works of faith
Rarely be found. So shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign;
Under her own weight groaning; till the day
Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked: at return
Of Him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
The Woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,
Now amplier known thy Saviour, and thy Lord;
Last in the clouds from Heav'n to be reveal'd
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world; then raise
From the conflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
New Heav'ns, new Earth, ages of endless date,
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love,
To bring forth fruits, joy, and eternal bliss.
He ended, and thus Adam last reply'd.
How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest!
Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fix'd? Beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach!
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain,

Beyond

Beyond which was my folly to aſpire
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is beſt,
And love with fear the only God; to walk
As in his preſence, ever to obſerve
His providence, and on him ſole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil; and by ſmall
Accompliſhing great things: by things deem'd weak
Subverting worldly ſtrong, and worldly wiſe
By ſimply meek: that ſuffering for truth's ſake
Is fortitude to higheſt victory,
And to the faithful Death the gate of Life:
Taught this by his example whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever bleſt.
To whom thus alſo th' Angel laſt reply'd:
This having learn'd, thou haſt attain'd the ſum
Of wiſdom; hope no higher, though all the ſtars
Thou knew'ſt by name, and all th' ethereal powr's,
All ſecrets of the deep, all nature's works,
Or works of God in Heav'n, air, earth, or ſea,
And all the riches of this world enjoy'dſt,
And all the rule, one empire: only add
Deeds to thy knowledge anſwerable; add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance add love,
By name to come call'd Charity, the ſoul
Of all the reſt, then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradiſe, but ſhalt poſſeſs
A Paradiſe within thee, happier far.——
Let us deſcend now therefore from this top
Of ſpeculation, for the hour preciſe
Exacts our parting hence: and ſee the guards
By me incamp'd on yonder hill, expect
Their motion; at whoſe front a flaming ſword,
In ſignal of remove, waves fiercely round.
We may no longer ſtay: go! waken Eve:
Her alſo I with gentle dreams have calm'd,
Portending good, and all her ſpirits compos'd

To meek submission: thou at season fit
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard:
Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
The great deliverance by her seed to come,
For by the woman's seed, on all mankind.
That ye may live, which will be many days,
Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,
With cause for evils past, yet much more cheer'd
With meditation on the happy end.
He ended, and they both descend the hill:
Descended, Adam to the bow'r where Eve
Lay sleeping ran before, but found her wak'd,
And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd.
Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;
For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise;
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
Wearied I fell asleep: but now lead on!
In me is no delay; with thee to go,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling: thou to me
Art all things under Heav'n, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
This further consolation yet secure
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
Such favor I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
By me the promis'd seed shall all restore.
So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard
Well pleas'd, but answer'd not: for now too nigh
Th' Arch-Angel stood; and from the other hill
To their fix'd station, all in bright array
The Cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous, as ev'ning mist
Ris'n from a river, o'er the marish glides;
And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd
The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd;

Fierce

Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapors as the Libyan air adust,
Began to parch that temperate clime: whereat
In either hand the haſt'ning Angel caught
Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eaſtern gate
Led them direct; and down the cliff as faſt
To the ſubjected plain; then diſappear'd.
They looking back, all th' eaſtern ſide beheld
Of Paradiſe, ſo late their happy ſeat!
Wav'd over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd and fiery arms.
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them ſoon:
The world was all before them, where to chuſe
Their place of reſt, and Providence their guide.
They, hand in hand, with wand'ring ſteps and ſlow,
Through Eden took their ſolitary way.

THE END.

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