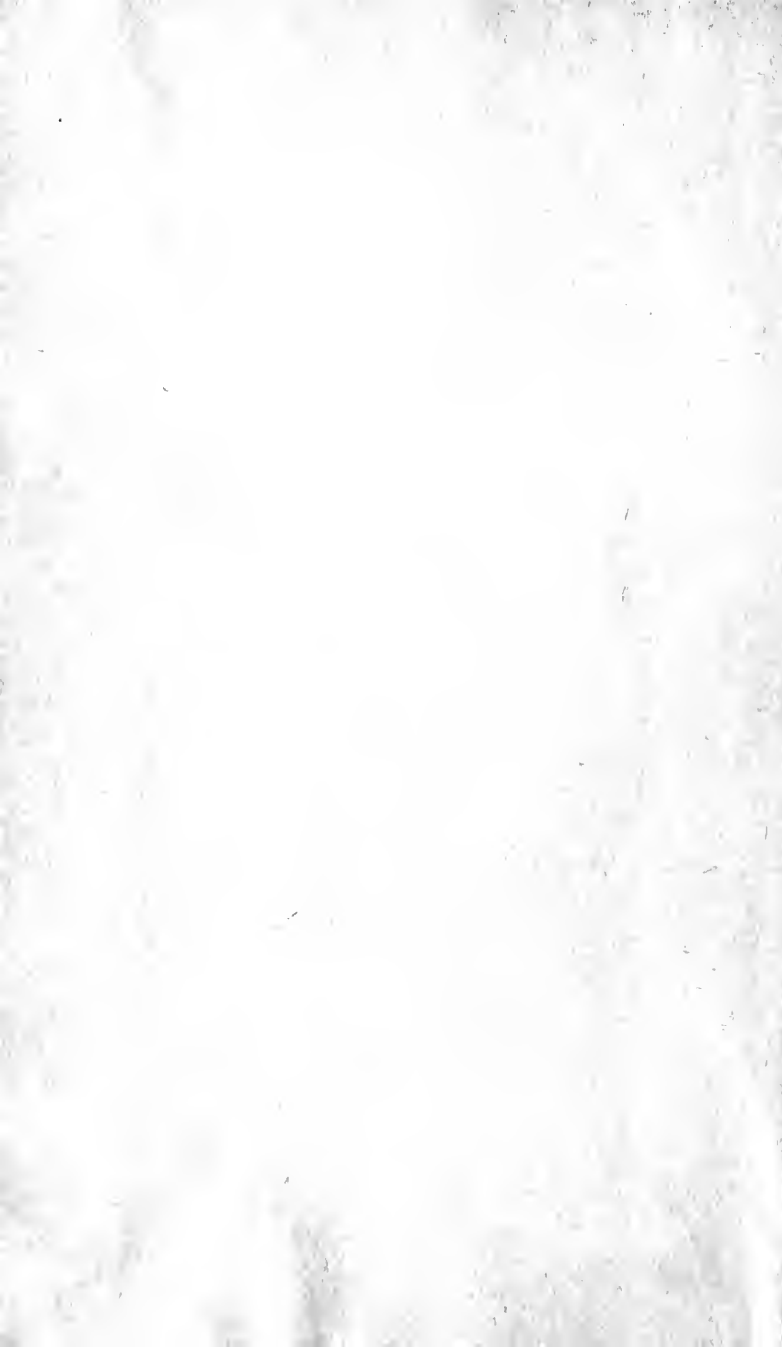


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JOHN MILTON

THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON

WITH INTRODUCTIONS

BY

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10310

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF

JOHN MILTON.¹

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JOHN MILTON was born on Friday, December 9, 1608, in a house designated as "The Spread Eagle," in Bread Street, Cheapside, in the very heart of old London.

His father, also John Milton, belonged to a respectable yeoman family of the neighbourhood of Oxford. Having become a Protestant, he was disinherited by his father, Richard Milton, the second of the name known in the line of the poet's ancestry, and went to London, where he engaged in the lucrative business of a scrivener, which at that time seems to have combined the duties of an attorney and a law stationer.

In 1600, about a year after his admission to the Scrivener's Company, he was married to Sarah, daughter to Paul Jeffrey; or Jeffreys, formerly a merchant tailor of St. Swithin's Parish.

Six children were born to them. John Milton was third. Two—besides John—lived to maturity—Anne, several years older, and Christopher, seven years younger than John.

John Milton was carefully educated, his father, well known as a musical composer of ability, taking personally great pains with him and giving him the advantage of studying under private tutors and in St. Paul's School, where he was for some time a day scholar.

That he was a diligent student is proved by his own statement that from the twelfth year of his age he scarcely ever went from his lessons to bed before midnight, and by his paraphrases on Psalms cxiv and cxxxvi, composed in 1624, his last year at St. Paul's.

His school friendship with Charles Diodati, the son of an exiled Italian physician, probably turned his attention to Italian literature and was afterwards commemorated in beautiful verse.

Italian, French, and Hebrew, as well as Greek and Latin, were a part of his equipment when he entered Christ's College, Cambridge, as a

¹ Details of Milton's literary life will be found in the Introductions to the various poems.

"Lesser Pensioner." From April, 1625, until July, 1632, Milton resided most of the time in the rooms which are still shown, though he made frequent visits to London, and during his first year was suspended owing to an altercation with his tutor, "a man of dry, meagre nature."

By the students — there were about twenty-nine hundred in the sixteen colleges at that time and two hundred and sixty-five in Christ's College — Milton was nicknamed "the Lady," because of his fair complexion, long hair, graceful elegance of appearance, irreproachable morals, and delicacy of taste; he was also unpopular with the authorities, probably because of his outspoken criticism of the University system then in vogue.

Nevertheless his abilities were recognised, and when he took his degree of Master of Arts, which then required seven years' residence, he was regarded as the foremost scholar of the University.

His first intention was to take orders in the Church; had he done so, he might have remained in residence much longer as a clerical Fellow. He indeed subscribed to the Articles on taking his degree, but he had no sympathy with the strict Church discipline represented by Archbishop Laud.

It is evident both from the draft of a letter written to some dissatisfied well-wisher, and from his "Sonnet on arriving at the Age of Twenty-three," that these years were a period of despondency and uncertainty. What career was open to him? He had already written enough poems, in Latin and English, including the "Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity," and the Sonnet to Shakspeare, to make a volume that would surely have established his reputation, but all save two were still in manuscript.

Milton's father had retired to Horton in Buckinghamshire, about twenty miles from London, and here the poet, after leaving Cambridge, lived for five years and eight months, during which he himself says 'he was wholly intent through a period of absolute leisure on a steady perusal of the Greek and Latin writers, but still so that occasionally he exchanged the country for the city either for the purpose of buying books, or for that of learning anything new in mathematics or in music in which he then took delight.'

At Horton, Milton was inspired to compose the best of his shorter poems: the "Sonnet to the Nightingale," the beautifully contrasted pictures in "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," the "Arcades," the masque of "Comus," and the classic lament for "Lycidas." "Comus" was played at Ludlow Castle on Michaelmas Night, 1634, but there is no proof that Milton himself was present. If he had been, he would perhaps have found further inspiration in the historic castle where among other famous memories that of the magnificent installation of Charles I. as Prince of Wales was at that time still vivid.

In 1637 an anonymous edition of "The Masque presented at Ludlow Castle" was published by Milton's friend, the musician, Henry Lawes, and a copy was presented to Sir Henry Wotton or Wootton, Provost of

Eton, who wrote to the author: "I should much commend the tragical part if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Dorique delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language."

In September of that same year Milton wrote to his friend Diodati complaining of his cramped situation in the country and announcing a project of taking chambers in London. The death of his mother undoubtedly had much to do with his discontent, and the quiet though nightingale-haunted banks of the sluggish Colne were not best adapted to satisfy the mind of a young man who was beginning to pine for a wider existence. But before he should take up his residence in London, a period of foreign travel seemed requisite and necessary, and, accordingly, armed with letters of introduction from Sir Henry Wotton and others, he found himself in Paris in April or May, 1638. Here he was kindly received by the English Ambassador, Lord Scudamore, who introduced him to the famous Hugo Grotius, the Swedish envoy. Accompanied by his man servant, Milton leisurely travelled to Italy, making brief stops at Nice, Genoa, Leghorn, and Pisa. At Florence he spent the months of August and September, enjoying the "acquaintance of many noble and learned." He especially mentions seven young Italian literati as distinguished friends of his, and, while none of them left a very deep mark on their native literature, they are remembered for their connection with the English poet. Two of them sent commemorative verses to be inserted in the "Paradise Lost." At Florence, Milton met "the starry Galileo," recently released from confinement at Arcetri and dwelling under the surveillance of the Inquisition. Milton mentions him twice in "Paradise Lost"—once by name—and was unquestionably greatly influenced by "the Tuscan artist's" theories.

From Florence he went by way of Siena to "the Eternal City," where he also spent two months and was received in the most select society. He tells of being present at a magnificent concert at the palace of Cardinal Barberini: "himself waiting at the doors, and seeking me out in so great a crowd, nay, almost laying hold of me by the hand, admitted me within in a truly most honourable manner." At this concert he heard the singer Leonora Baroni, whose singing so impressed him that he composed three Latin epigrams in her honour. A voice inspired him more than all the relics of that antiquity which he had made such a large part of his education.

He spent the two last months of the year at Naples, whither he proceeded in company with "a certain Eremite Friar," by whom he was introduced to the Marquis of Villa, Giovanni Battista Manso, then over eighty years of age.

Manso had been the friend and patron of the poet Tasso, and this title to fame Milton commemorates in a Latin poem wherein he expressed his obligations for hospitality received. In this epistle also he unfolds his project of writing an epic on King Arthur and the Table

Round, and assured Manso that Britain was not wholly barbarous since the Druids had been poets in their day. Chaucer and Shakspeare would probably have seemed to the Italian as little less than barbarians, as did the one to the English contemporary of Milton and Dryden, and the other to Voltaire. He did not mention them.

Manso presented Milton with two silver cups, and remarked that he should have liked him better if he had abstained from religious controversy. Milton was certainly not one to hold his peace when a chance arose to defend his faith. To be sure, he made the resolution not of his own accord "to introduce conversation about religion, but if interrogated about the faith, whatsoever he should suffer, to dissemble nothing." He was not molested, but it is said that in Rome the Jesuits kept their eyes on him.

From Naples Milton intended to cross over to Sicily and to continue his tour even as far as Greece, but as he himself explained: 'The sad news of civil war in England determined him to return, inasmuch as he thought it base to be travelling at his ease for intellectual culture while his fellow-countrymen at home were fighting for their liberty.' The news is supposed to have been the revolt of Scotland and Charles's resolution to put the rebellion down by arms. Later reports seem to have countermanded any haste, for, though he gave up his Eastern journey he spent yet another two months in Rome in spite of the English Jesuits who tried to entrap him in indiscreet utterances. Again he was in Florence during March and April, 1639. He spent May in Venice, whence he sent to England by sea the books that he had bought in Italy. He himself crossed the Pennine Alps to Geneva, taking Bologna and Ferrara on the way. It is possible that he wrote his Italian sonnets at Bologna, the lady to whom they are all addressed being mentioned as an inhabitant of "Reno's grassy vale," but it is not known whether this lady was a myth or a reality.

For a week or two in June, 1639, he was in Geneva, where he spent much time in conversation with Dr. Jean Diodati, the theologian, the uncle of his friend Charles. Thence by way of Paris he returned home, which he reached in August, 1639, after an absence of nearly sixteen months.

His next important step must have been a trial to one who was contemplating "flights above the Aonian mount": his only surviving sister, having been left a widow with two sons, had married again and Milton found it his duty to undertake the education of his two nephews, Edward and John Phillips, aged respectively eight and nine. The younger came to live with his uncle, who "took him a lodging in St. Bride's Churchyard, at the house of one Russel, a tailor." The other went daily from his mother's house to his lessons.

In the memorable year 1640 Milton hired 'a house sufficiently large for himself and his books,' and removed there with his two nephews. His elder nephew describes it as "a pretty garden-house in Aldersgate Street, at the end of an entry, and therefore the fitter for his turn by

reason of the privacy." It was described a few years later as resembling "an Italian street by reason of the spaciousness and uniformity of the buildings and straightness thereof, with the convenient distance of the houses."

Here he hoped to have the leisure to contribute to English literature some lofty work that would make his name famous. But he was to be disappointed. The "Long Parliament" met on the third of November, 1640, and Milton soon saw that his duty was to take part in the broil of politics. "I could not," he said, "be ignorant what is of Divine and what is of human right; I resolved, though I was then meditating certain other matters, to transfer into this struggle all my genius and all the strength of my industry."

This course was to lead him into controversies, but he wished it to be understood with what unwillingness he endured "to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes; put from beholding the bright countenance of truth in the quiet and still air of delightful studies to come into the dim reflection of hollow antiquities sold by the seeming bulk."

Among the first acts of the new Parliament was the trial and execution of Strafford, the impeachment and imprisonment of Laud, and various other proceedings that looked toward the security and permanence of their government. No essential division was manifested till the question arose whether the Church should be governed on an Episcopal or on a Presbyterian basis. Into this important controversy Milton threw himself with all his energy, and within a year brought out five "Anti-Episcopal Pamphlets"—the first general, the others rejoinders to the attacks which it invited. Although these have no longer any interest except to the antiquarian, they contain magnificent specimens of impassioned and poetic prose which are worth study by the student of English. Shortly after, in 1642, the Civil War began. In this Milton took no active part, unless a curiously whimsical one. Once, when there seemed some danger of an assault upon the city, he wrote a sonnet addressed to the "Captain or Colonel, or Knight in Arms," who might chance to seize upon his defenceless doors, begging him to guard them and protect from harms the poet who, in return for such gentle acts, could spread his name over all the world. This appeal to lift not the spear against the Muses' bower, Milton placarded upon his outside door, but the enemy did not come to read it.

Milton, however, brought the war into his own house, and in the same way as his own Samson. In the latter part of May, 1643, Milton made a mysterious journey to the neighbourhood of Oxford, where his ancestors had lived. This region was in the hands of the Royalists. Attached to their cause was Mr. Richard Powell, a justice of the peace, who had been at one time well off, and kept his own carriage. Milton's

father had many years before loaned Powell five hundred pounds, and the interest on this sum was a part of Milton's regular income. Possibly he went down into Oxfordshire to make arrangements for the payment of the principal or to inquire why the interest had stopped. He was gone about a month, and, to use the words of his nephew, "home he returns a married man that went out a bachelor."

Mr. Powell was blessed with a family of eleven children. Mary, the eldest of the five daughters, was a little more than seventeen years old. It is a question whether Milton had ever known her before, but she was made his wife on this memorable journey, Milton's own words implying that either he himself or the young bride felt some hesitancy at such a hasty consummation; he implies that "the persuasion of friends and the argument that increasing acquaintance would amend all" had weight with one or both of them.

Some of Mrs. Milton's relatives accompanied her back to London, and the quiet, philosophic house was given over for some days to "feasting in celebration of the nuptials." When the bride was at length left alone with a husband twice her age, the loneliness and incongruity of her situation probably made her mope. Milton, who had peculiar views of the duties of woman, could not have been at all sympathetic. Indeed, it is charged that he composed his famous treatise on divorce during that most forlorn of honeymoons! Before the summer was over, she returned on a visit to her father's house, Milton consenting on condition that she should return to him before the end of September. But when the appointed time came Mrs. Milton came not. He sent letters and at last a messenger; the letters were unanswered, the messenger brought an insulting answer.

He had already published the first edition of his "Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce"; after his wife's refusal to return, in the February following, he issued a second edition. He argued that incompatibility of mind or temper was equally with infidelity a full and sufficient ground for dissolution of the marriage bond, and that the parties, after divorce, were at liberty to marry again. The second edition was dedicated to Parliament and naturally, in a country where even now a man is not allowed to marry his deceased wife's sister, caused a storm of indignation. He was denounced as a heretic, attacked from the pulpit, denounced in bitter pamphlets. He replied to some of these attacks, and when the Presbyterian divines made public complaint of him, he and his writings became the subject of a special Parliamentary investigation.

Meantime Milton's father had been living with Christopher in Reading, but when Reading surrendered to the Parliamentary forces in April, 1643, Christopher, who sympathised with the Royalists and afterwards became a Roman Catholic, broke up his establishment, and the elder Milton went to live with the poet. He had other additions to his household: a number of pupils came to take advantage of his teaching, and in September, 1645, requiring enlarged quarters, he removed

to Barbican Street, two or three minutes' walk from his former house. Here he lived two years, signalised at the very beginning by two important events. One was the publication of his minor poems by Moseley and the other was the return of Mrs. Milton. Two causes are assigned for this reconciliation. The Civil War was practically terminated in favour of the Parliamentarians by the battle of Naseby in June, 1645. The positions of recalitrants was disagreeable, and it is surmised that the fact of Milton enjoying repute in the opposite and triumphant party caused his wife's family to see in him a possible relief from their troubles. Moreover, Milton had been openly on the way to carrying out his heretical doctrines: he was paying his addresses to "a very handsome and witty gentlewoman, one of Dr. Davis's daughters." Rumours of this may have reached the Powells. One day Milton was calling at the house of a kinsman and "was surprised to see one whom he thought to have never seen more, making submission and begging pardon on her knees before him." Readers of "Samson," and the tenth book of the "Paradise Lost" will discover reminiscences of the dramatic scene that ensued. It ended in reconciliation. Milton magnanimously received to his house not only his recreant wife, but also her father and mother and several of their sons and daughters, the family having been completely ruined by the defeat of the Royalists. The house must have been uncomfortably crowded, for there were also about a dozen pupils under Milton's roof.

Milton's daughter Anne was born July 29, 1646; six months later his father-in-law died, and in March, 1647, his own father died. Shortly after, Milton, who perhaps no longer felt the necessity upon him of giving so much time to teaching, dismissed his pupils and took a smaller house. At the same time the Powells also removed to another part of London where Milton helped to support them. As to himself, he says:—

"No one ever saw me going about, no one ever saw me asking anything among my friends, or stationed at the doors of a Court with a petitioner's face. I kept myself almost entirely at home, managing on my own resources, though in this civil tumult they were often in great part kept from me, and contriving, though burdened with taxes in the main rather oppressive, to lead my frugal life."

Little is known of his life during his residence at Lincoln's Inn Fields, High Holborn, during eighteen months. He had several projects for prose works,—a Latin Dictionary, a System of Divinity taken directly from the Bible, and a History of England. During the prosaic work of collecting materials for these enterprises, stirring events were at hand. Charles I. was executed on the thirteenth of January, 1649. Milton defended this act, and in a pamphlet composed in a little more than a week he argued that it was lawful "for any who have the power to call to account a Tyrant or Wicked King, and after due conviction, to depose and put him to death."

This article brought its reward. The very next month Milton was

appointed Secretary for Foreign Tongues to the Council, at a salary of £300 a year — equivalent to about \$5000 now. The duties were to prepare, and translate into Latin, all despatches to and from foreign governments. In order that he might be near the scene of his labours he removed to Spring Gardens, and was soon afterwards provided with an official residence in Whitehall Palace in Scotland Yard. Shortly after he had occupied the seven or eight rooms of these official quarters the Council voted him some of the hangings of the late king for their decoration.

Milton was soon called upon to employ his talents in the controversies raised by the execution of the king. First came the "Ikonomoklastes or Image Breaker," in reply to the famous "Eikon Basilike or Portraiture of His Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings" — a book popularly supposed to be the work of the king himself, written during his last days, but now known to have been a forgery. It was immensely popular and went through at least fifty editions. Milton's answer to it went through only three. Then a Dutch professor, the learned Salmasius, published his defence of Charles I. and attack on the Commonwealth. It was ordered by the Council of State that Milton should "prepare something in answer to the book of Salmasius." He would gladly have abstained from this task: one eye had become useless and he was in danger of becoming wholly blind. The physicians warned him to desist, but he felt that his duty called him to do the work. "The choice," he says, "lay before me of a supreme duty and loss of eyesight; in such a case I could not listen to the physician, not if Esculapius himself had spoken from his sanctuary; I could not but obey that inward monitor, I know not what, that spoke to me from heaven."

It is to be hoped that the heavenly voice did not impel him to the more than vivacious invectives with which he overwhelmed the unfortunate Salmasius. Personalities could hardly have been carried further. But the work was a great success and it was universally felt that the victory remained with Milton. Every foreigner of note then in London called to congratulate him. Five editions were almost immediately printed in Holland. Copies of the work had the honour of being burned or confiscated in various parts of Europe, and Milton's name was literally blazed through the world.

If the reward was fame, the penalty was blindness. He had recourse to physicians, but with no result. The perpetual darkness to which he was doomed was, as he says in his quaint English, rather whitish than blackish, and his eyes were not disfigured. He was not permitted to resign his situation. Assistants were appointed, but he was retained in his full title, and every day he was to be seen, led by his attendant from his new residence in Petty France across the Park to the meeting of the Council. In this case the Republic belied the proverb of gratitude, but his enemies regarded his affliction as a just punishment.

Milton wrote his sonnets to Vane and Cromwell in the spring of

1652, just at the time when these two leaders were coming to an open rupture. Cromwell expelled Vane and fifty-two other members on April 20, 1653. The Commonwealth was at an end. Henceforth till his death, September 3, 1658, Cromwell was supreme. Milton on the whole approved of the dictatorship, and was therefore continued in the Latin secretaryship. His State letters are remarkable examples of clear, lucid style; one of them — that in remonstrance on the massacre of the Vaudois Protestants by the Duke of Savoy — has a splendid corollary in his greatest sonnet beginning "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints."

In 1654 Milton's wife died, leaving three daughters, the eldest about eight, the youngest an infant. The widowed poet in November, 1658, married Katherine Woodcock, but neither she nor her infant daughter long survived. Milton's sonnet to his late deceased wife implies that he had never seen her with his visual eyes. The same year that this was written he began the composition of "Paradise Lost" projected in dramatic form nearly thirty years before.

During the twenty-one months of Richard Cromwell's inefficient dictatorship Milton was still at his post and receiving his diminished salary of £200 a year. But the majority of the people had declared in favor of the Stuarts. In spite of all Milton's arguments monarchy was to be again the established order. Charles made his re-entry toward the last of May, 1660. Milton was already in hiding in Bartholomew Close, Smithfield. For some time he was actually in danger, but while no severity was spared in apprehending and executing the regicides, Milton's case, by dexterous management in Parliament, was left in abeyance and finally ignored. After the twenty-ninth of August he was legally a free man. Nevertheless by some mistake or by malice he was arrested shortly after and kept for a little time in custody. Toward the middle of December he was ordered to be released on payment of fees of £150. These being considered exorbitant were reduced, and Milton found a temporary refuge on the north side of Holborn till he secured another house in Jewin Street near one of his earlier habitations. Here he lived till 1664. Life must have been gloomy enough to the blind man: the work of twenty years seemingly thrown away, his friends dead or in exile, his property reduced, domestic trials gathering about him.

The relations between Milton and his three daughters are not the least pathetic among the tribulations of his last days, but it seems as if he himself were mainly to blame. His views of the education of women were peculiar; his oldest daughter, who was pretty though slightly deformed, could not even write her own name; the others were taught to read to their father in foreign languages, but it was only mechanically, repeating words without knowing the sense. They combined with the serving maid to cheat him in the marketing; they sold his books, and they made his life miserable. At last he was advised to marry again. He offered himself to Elizabeth Minshull, a young lady

of twenty-four. The marriage took place February 24, 1662-3. His second daughter, Mary, is reported upon oath to have said 'that it was no news to hear of his wedding, but if she could hear of his death that was something.' His third wife proved to be a blessing to him as long as he lived. She was pretty and had golden hair; she sang to his accompaniments on the organ or bass viol, and was sufficiently alive to his intellectual requirements as to like to talk with him about Hobbes and other learned men. Not long after their marriage they went to live in Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields. This was his last residence, and considerable is known about the details of his domestic economy there. He had a man servant named Greene, who, it is said, was able to read aloud to him from the Hebrew Bible. His chief recreations were walking in his garden, swinging in a chair, and making music. Andrew Marvell, Cyriack Skinner, and other distinguished men used often to visit him. He is reported as having been "extremely pleasant in conversation . . . though satirical."

"Paradise Lost" was completed by 1663 and revised during the summer of 1665, while, in order to escape from the plague that was then devastating London, he went with his wife and his three daughters to Chalfont St. Giles in Buckinghamshire. His friend Elwood, the Quaker, lived near there, and to him Milton loaned a copy of the great poem. The Quaker approved of it, but suggested that he had said much of Paradise Lost but nothing of Paradise Found. This suggestion resulted in the shorter epic. The next year — that of Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis* — the great fire still further abridged his fortunes by destroying the house in which he had been born and which he still owned. A few years later his comfort and that of his household was increased by the departure of his daughters, who were sent out to learn embroidery for their own support.

After the publication of his great epic visitors were frequent, and we have several descriptions of his appearance, both as he sat out of doors on his porch and as he was indoors, in a room hung with rusty green, "sitting in an elbow chair, black clothes and neat enough, pale but not cadaverous, his hands and fingers gouty and with chalk stones"; his habits at table were abstemious, but his later days were troubled by gout. His last poem was the perfect Greek tragedy "Samson Agonistes," which has an interesting autobiographic import. This was written in 1671. Three years later "the gout struck in," and he died on November 8, 1674, and was buried beside his father in the Church of St. Giles, Cripplegate. All his learned and great friends in London, and a "friendly concourse of the vulgar," attended the funeral. Milton had intended to cut off his "unkind" and "undutiful" children with only that portion of his estate that was due it from the Powells, but they contested the nuncupative will and received as their share of their father's estate about £100 each, while the widow was left with a pittance of £600. She retired to her native Cheshire, and died in 1727, having survived her husband nearly fifty-three years. Among

her effects were copies of his "Paradise Lost and Regained" and two juvenile portraits. Mary, the younger daughter, died the same year, having married a weaver or silk mercer named Clark, by whom she had ten children, only two of whom survived her to have issue.

The collections made by Milton toward his Latin dictionary have been embodied in later dictionaries. Several of his prose writings were discovered long after his death. In one of them — a Latin treatise on Christian Doctrine which he claims to be founded directly on the Bible — he boldly advanced many theories at variance with the beliefs of the Church — perhaps the most shocking being his arguments in favour of polygamy.

No one can study Milton's life without winning a deep respect and even admiration for the man. To him, duty — "stern daughter of the voice of God" — was ever paramount. Unflinchingly he sacrificed his inclinations and his pleasures in order to take the place whereto he was called in the Councils of the State. If ever a man was anointed by the Muses it was Milton; yet, conscious as he was of his poetic powers, he threw himself heart and soul into the gross battle of politics, and for twenty of the richest years of his life allowed his cherished schemes to slumber. As a man, therefore, he is worthy of reverence, even though we may not entirely sympathise with some of his views or actions.

As a poet he takes rank among the few whom all the world recognises as greatest, — Homer, Vergil, Dante, Chaucer, Shakspeare. His delicate musical ear taught him to modulate his numbers with a skill unknown to any other English poet. Well has he been called "that mighty arc of song — the divine Milton." As Wordsworth says, the sonnet in his hand "became a trumpet whence he blew soul-animating strains"; his minor poems are marvels of elegance and grace, but by his "Paradise Lost" he made himself as it were the prophet of English theology, the work supplementing the Bible in the beliefs of many, and strongly colouring the popular conception of Satan and the fall of man. But aside from its theological import, it is by the grandeur of theme and dignity of treatment almost superhuman — a work of which all who speak the English tongue will be forever proud.

N. H. D.



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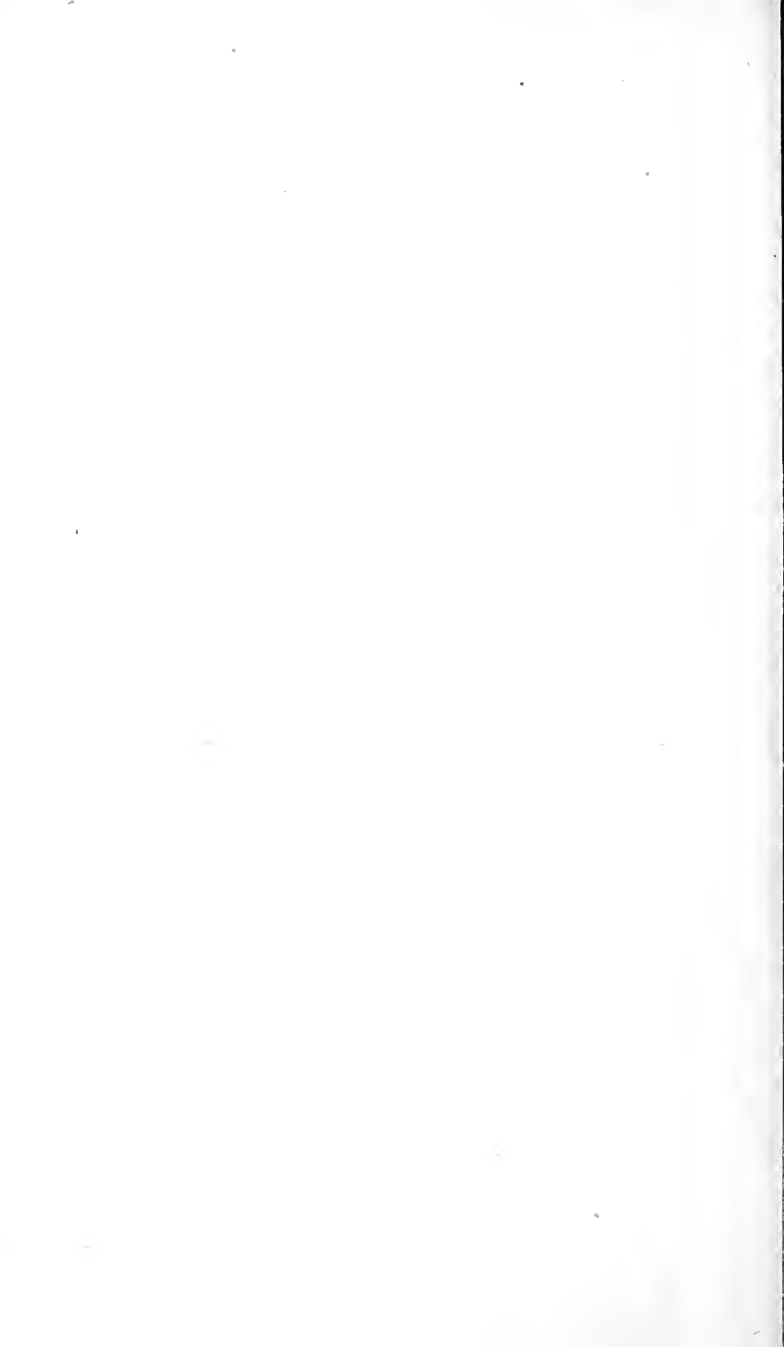
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PREFACE.

THE TEXT of the Poems in this edition will, it is hoped, be found very accurate, having been carefully prepared by the Editor for the larger Library Edition, called "The Cambridge Edition," in three volumes 8vo. The INTRODUCTIONS are, with some revision, the same as those given in "The Golden Treasury Edition" in two volumes 18mo., and are an adaptation of the more extensive editorial matter of "The Cambridge Edition." Their purpose is to elucidate the circumstances, motives, and intention, of each of the Poems individually; they contain, therefore, a great deal of such information as is usually referred to Notes; and, if read in their chronological order, they will be found to supply also, after their fashion, a continuous and rather minute Literary Biography of the Poet. I regret that the wording of the Introduction to Sonnet XXIII. no longer corresponds with fact. When that paragraph was written, the house No. 19 York Street, Westminster, so interesting as having been Milton's residence from 1652 to 1660, was still in existence, as there described; but, when I was last on the spot, only the ruined shell was left, and that too, I hear, is now demolished.

EDINBURGH, *March 1877.*



INTRODUCTION

TO PARADISE LOST.

I. EARLIEST EDITIONS OF THE POEM.

It was possibly just before the Great Fire of London in September, 1666, and it certainly cannot have been very long after that event, when Milton, then residing in Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields, sent the manuscript of his *Paradise Lost* to receive the official licence necessary for its publication. The duty of licensing such books was then vested by law in the Archbishop of Canterbury, who performed it through his chaplains. The Archbishop of Canterbury at that time (1663-1677) was Dr. Gilbert Sheldon; and the chaplain to whom it fell to examine the manuscript of *Paradise Lost* was the Rev. Thomas Tomkyns, M. A. of Oxford, then incumbent of St. Mary Aldermary, London, and afterwards Rector of Lambeth and D. D. He was the Archbishop's domestic chaplain, and a very great favourite of his — quite a young man, but already the author of one or two books or pamphlets. The nature of his opinions may be guessed from the fact that his first publication, printed in the year of the Restoration, had been entitled "The Rebel's Plea Examined; or, Mr. Baxter's Judgment concerning the Late War." A subsequent publication of his, penned not long after he had examined *Paradise Lost*, was entitled "The Inconveniences of Toleration;" and, when he died in 1675, still young, he was described on his tomb-stone as having been "*Ecclesie Anglicanae contra Schismaticos assertor eximius.*" A manuscript by a man of Milton's political and ecclesiastical antecedents could hardly, one would think, have fallen into the hands of a more unpropitious examiner. It is, accordingly, stated that Tomkyns hesitated about giving the licence, and took exception to some passages in the poem — particularly to that (Book I. vv. 594—599) where it is said of Satan in his diminished brightness after his fall, that he still appeared

"as when the Sun, new-risen,
Looks through the horizontal misty air
Shorn of his beams, or, from behind a cloud,
In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
On half the nations, and with fear of change
Perplexes monarchs."

At length, however, Mr. Tomkyns was satisfied. There still exists the first book of the actual manuscript which had been submitted to him.* It is a fairly written copy, in a light, not inelegant, but rather characterless hand of the period -- of course, not that of Milton himself, who had been for fourteen years totally blind. It consists of eighteen leaves of small quarto, stitched together; and on the inside of the first leaf, or cover, is the following official licence to print in Tomkyns's hand:—

Imprimatur: Tho. Tomkyns, Rmo. in Christo Patri ac Domino, Dno. Gilberto, divini Providentiæ Archiepiscopo Cantuariensi, a sacris Domesticis.

The other books of the manuscript having received a similar certificate, or this certificate on the MS. of the first book sufficing for all, the copy was ready for publication by any printer or bookseller to whom Milton might consign it. Having already had many dealings with London printers and booksellers, Milton may have had several to whom he could go; but the one whom he favoured in this case, or who favoured him, was a certain Samuel Simmons, having his shop "next door to the Golden Lion in Aldersgate Street." The date of the transaction between Simmons and Milton is April 27, 1667. On that day an agreement was signed between them to the following effect:— Milton, "in consideration of Five Pounds to him now paid," gives, grants, and assigns to Simmons "all that Book, Copy, or Manuscript of a Poem intituled *Paradise Lost*, or by whatsoever other title or name the same is or shall be called "or distinguished, now lately licensed to be printed;" on the understanding, however, that, at the end of the first impression of the Book—"which impression shall be accounted to be ended when thirteen hundred books of the said whole copy, or manuscript imprinted shall be sold or retailed off to particular reading customers"—Simmons shall pay to Milton or his representatives a second sum of Five Pounds; and further that he shall pay a third sum of Five Pounds at the end of a second impression of the same number of copies, and a fourth sum of Five Pounds at the end of a third impression similarly measured. To allow a margin for presentation copies, we suppose, it is provided that, while in the account between Milton and Simmons each of the three first impressions is to be reckoned at 1,300 copies, in the actual printing of each Simmons may go as high as 1,500 copies. At any reasonable request of Milton or his representatives, Simmons, or his executors and assigns, shall be bound to make oath before a Master in Chancery "concerning his or their knowledge and belief of, or concerning the truth of, the disposing and "selling the said books by retail as aforesaid whereby the said Mr. Milton is to "be entitled to his said money from time to time," or, in default of said oath, to pay the Five Pounds pending on the current impression as if the same were due. †

* The manuscript is described and a facsimile of a portion of it is given, in Mr. S. Leigh Sotheby's "Ramblings in elucidation of the Autograph of Milton," 1861: pp. 196, 197. It was then in the possession of William Baker, Esq. of Bayfordbury, Hertfordshire, to whom it had descended, with other Milton relics, from the famous publishing family of the Tonsons, connected with him by ancestry.

† The original of this document—or rather that one of the two originals which Simmons kept—is now in the British Museum. To the poet's signature "John Milton" (which, however, is written for him by another hand) is annexed his seal, bearing the family arms of the double-headed eagle; and the witnesses are "John Fisher" and "Benjamin Greene, servt. to Mr. Milton."

It has been inferred from the wording of this document that Milton, before his bargain with Simmons, may have begun the printing of the poem at his own expense. There seems no real ground, however, for thinking so, or that what was handed over to Simmons was anything else than the fairly copied manuscript which had received the *imprimatur* of Mr. Tomkyns. With that *imprimatur* Simmons might proceed safely in printing the book and bringing it into the market. Accordingly, on the 20th of August, 1667, or four months after the foregoing agreement, we find this entry in the books of Stationers' Hall:—

August 20, 1667: Mr. Sam. Symons entered for his copie, under the hands of Mr. Thomas Tomkyns and Mr. Warden Royston, a book or copie intituled "Paradise Lost, a Poem in Tenne bookes by J. M."

The date of the above entry in the Stationers' registers fixes the time about which printed copies of the Poem were ready for sale in London. There are few books, however, respecting the circumstances of whose first publication there is room for a greater variety of curious questions. This arises from the fact that, among the numerous existing copies of the First Edition, no two are in all particulars exactly alike. They differ in their title-pages, in their dates, and in minute points throughout the text. There is involved in this, indeed, a fact of general interest to English bibliographers. In the old days of leisurely printing, it was quite common for the printer or the author of a book to make additional corrections while the printing was in progress—of which corrections only part of the total impression would have the benefit. Then, as, in the binding of the copies, all the sheets, having or not having the corrections so made, were jumbled together, there was no end to the combinations of different states of sheets that might arise in copies all really belonging to one edition; besides which, if any change in the proprietorship, or in the author's or publisher's notions of the proper title, arose before all the copies had been bound, it was easy to cancel the first title-page and provide a new one, with a new date if necessary, for the remaining copies. The probability is that these considerations will be found to affect all our early printed books. But they are applicable in a more than usual degree, so far as differences of title-page are concerned, to the First Edition of *Paradise Lost*. Here, for example, is a conspectus of the different forms of title-page and other accompaniments of the text of the Poem that have been recognised among existing copies of the First Edition. We arrange them, as nearly as can be judged, in the order in which they were issued.

First title-page.—"Paradise lost. A Poem written in Ten Books By John Milton. Licensed and Entred according to Order. London Printed, and are to be sold by Peter Parker under Creed Church near Aldgate; And by Robert Boulter at the Turks Head in Bishopsgate-street; And Matthias Walker under St. Dunstons Church in Fleet-street. 1667." 4to. pp. 342.

Second title-page.—Same as above, except that the author's name "John Milton" is in larger type. 1667. 4to. pp. 342.

Third title-page.—"Paradise lost. A Poem in Ten Books. The Author J. M. [initials only]. Licensed and Entred according to Order. London Printed &c. [as before, or nearly so]. 1668. 4to. pp. 342.

Fourth title-page.—Same as the preceding, but the type in the body of the title larger. 1668. 4to. pp. 342.

Fifth title-page.—"Paradise lost. A Poem in Ten Books. The Author John Milton. London, Printed by S. Simmons, and to be sold by S. Thomson at the Bishops-Head in Duck-lane, H. Mortlack at the White Hart in Westminster Hall, M. Walker under St.

Dunstons Church in Fleet-street, and R. Boulter at the Turks-Head in Bishopsgate-street. 1668." 4to. pp. 356. The most notable peculiarity in this issue as compared with its predecessors is the increase of the bulk of the volume by fourteen pages or seven leaves. This is accounted for as follows: — In the preceding issues there had been no Prose Argument, Preface, or other preliminary matter to the text of the poem; but in this there are fourteen pages of new matter interpolated between the title-leaf and the poem. First of all there is this *three-line* advertisement: "The Printer to the Reader. Courteous Reader, There was no Argument at first intended to the Book, but for the satisfaction of many that have desired it, is procured. S. Simmons." Then, accordingly, there follow the prose Arguments to the several Books, doubtless by Milton himself, all printed together in eleven pages; after which, in two pages of large open type, comes Milton's preface, entitled "The Verse," explaining his reasons for abandoning Rime — succeeded on the fourteenth page by a list of "Errata." But this is not all. Simmons's three-line Address to the Reader, as given above, is, it will be observed, not grammatically correct; and, whether because Milton had found out this or not, there are some copies, with this fifth title-page, in which the ungrammatical three-line Address is corrected into a *five-line* Address thus — "The Printer to the Reader. Courteous Reader, "There was no Argument at first intended to the Book, but for the satisfaction of many that "have desired it, I have procur'd it, and withall a reason of that which stumbled many others, "why the Poem Rimes not. S. Simmons."

Sixth title-page. — Same as the preceding, except that instead of four lines of stars under the author's name there is a fleur-de-lis ornament. 1668. 4to. pp. 356. Here we have the same preliminary matter as in the preceding. There seem to be some copies, however, with the incorrect *three-line* Address, and others with the correct *five-line* Address, of the Printer.

Seventh title-page. — "Paradise lost. A Poem in Ten Books. The Author John Milton. London, Printed by S. Simmons, and are to be sold by. T. Helder, at the Angel, in Little-Britain, 1669." 4to. pp. 356. Some copies with this title-page still retain Simmons's incorrect *three-line* Address to the Reader, while others have the *five-line* Address. Rest of preliminary matter as before.

Eighth and Ninth title-pages. — Same as last, except some insignificant changes of capital letters and of pointing in the words of the title. 1669. 4to. pp. 356.

Here are at least nine distinct forms in which, as respects the title-page, complete copies were issued by the binder, from the first publication of the work about August 1667 on to 1669 inclusively; besides which there are the variations among individual copies arising from the two forms of the Printer's Advertisement, and the variations in the text of the poem arising from the indiscriminate binding together of sheets in the different states of correctness in which they were printed off. The variations of this last class are of absolutely no moment — a comma in some copies where others have it not; an error in the numbering of the lines, or of a *with* for an *in* in some copies rectified in others, &c. On the whole, the *text* of any existing copy of the First Edition is as perfect as that of any other — though there is an advantage in having a copy with the small list of Errata and the other preliminary matter. But the variations in the title-page are of greater interest. Why is the author's name given in full in the title-pages of 1667, then contracted into "J. M." in two of those of 1668, and again given in full in two of those of the same year, and in all those of 1669? And why, though Simmons had acquired the copyright in April 1667, and had entered the copyright as his in the Stationers' Books in August 1667, is his name kept out of sight in all the title-pages prior to that one of 1668 which is given as the Fifth in the foregoing list, and which is the first with the preliminary matter — the preceding title-pages showing no printer's name, but only the names of three booksellers at whose shops copies might be had? Finally, why, after Simmons does think it right to appear on the title-page, are there changes in the names of the booksellers — two of the former booksellers first disappearing and giving way to other two, and then the three of 1668 giving way in 1669 to the single bookseller, Helder of Little Britain? Very probably in some of these changes nothing more was involved than

convenience to Simmons in his circumstances at the time. Not impossibly, however, more was involved than this in so much tossing-about of the book within so short a period. May not Simmons have been a little timid about his venture in publishing a book by the notorious Milton, whose attacks on the Church and defences of the execution of Charles I. were still fresh in the memory of all, and some of whose pamphlets had been publicly burned by the hangman after the Restoration? May not his entering the book at Stationers' Hall simply as "a Poem in Ten Books by J. M." have been a caution on his part; and, though, in the first issues, he had ventured on the name "John Milton" in full, may he not have found or thought it advisable, for a subsequent circulation in some quarters, to have copies with only the milder "J. M." upon them?

In any case, the first edition of *Paradise Lost* was a most creditably printed book. It is, as has been mentioned, a small quarto — of 342 pages in such copies as are without the "Argument" and other preliminary matter, and of 356 pages in the copies that have this addition. But the pages are not numbered — only the lines by tens along the margin in each Book. In one or two places there is an error in the numbering of the lines, arising from miscounting. The text in each page is enclosed within lines — single lines at the inner margin and bottom, but double lines at the top for the running title and the number of the Book, and along the outer margin columnwise for the numbering of the lines. Very great care must have been bestowed on the reading of the proofs, either by Milton himself, or by some competent person who had undertaken to see the book through the press for him. It seems likely that Milton himself caused page after page to be read over slowly to him, and occasionally even the words to be spelt out. There are, at all events, certain systematic peculiarities of spelling and punctuation which it seems most reasonable to attribute to Milton's own instructions. Altogether, for a book printed in such circumstances, it is wonderfully accurate; and, in all the particulars of type, paper, and general getting-up, the first appearance of *Paradise Lost* must have been rather attractive than otherwise to book-buyers of that day.

The selling-price of the volume was three shillings — which is perhaps as if a similar book now were published at about 10s. 6d. From the retail-sale of 1,300 copies, therefore, the sum that would come in to Simmons, if we make an allowance for trade-deductions at about the modern rate, would be something under 140*l.* Out of this had to be paid the expenses of printing, &c., and the sum agreed upon with the author; and the balance would be Simmons's profit. On the whole, though he cannot have made anything extraordinary by the transaction, it must have been sufficiently remunerative. For, by the 26th of April 1669, or after the poem had been published a little over eighteen months, the stipulated impression of 1,300 copies had been exhausted. The proof exists in the shape of Milton's receipt (signed for him by another hand) for the additional Five Pounds due to him on that contingency: —

April 26, 1669.

Received then of Samuel Simmons five pounds, being the Second five pounds to be paid mentioned in the Covenant. I say recd. by me.

JOHN MILTON.

Witness, Edmund Upton.

Thus, by the month of April 1669, Milton had received in all Ten Pounds for his *Paradise Lost*. This was all that he was to receive for it in his life.

For, contrary to what might have been expected after a sale of the first edition in eighteen months, there was no second edition for five years more, or till 1674. Either the book was out of print for these five years, or what demand for it there continued to be was supplied out of the surplus of 200 copies which, for some reason or other, Simmons had been authorized to print beyond the 1,300. But in 1674 — the last year of Milton's life — a second edition did appear, with the following title: —

“Paradise Lost. A Poem in Twelve Books. The Author John Milton. The Second Edition Revised and Augmented by the same Author. London, Printed by S. Simmons next door to the Golden Lion in Aldersgate-street, 1674.”

This edition is in small octavo, with the pages numbered, but with no marginal numbering of the lines — the pages of the text as numbered being 333. There are prefixed two sets of commendatory verses — the one in Latin signed “S. B., M. D.,” and written by a certain Samuel Barrow, a physician and a private friend of Milton; the other in English, signed “A. M.,” and written by Andrew Marvel. But the most important difference between this and the previous edition is that, whereas the poem had been arranged in Ten Books in the first, it is here arranged in Twelve. This is accomplished by dividing what had formerly been the two longest Books of the poem — Books VII. and X. — into two Books each. There is a corresponding division in the “Arguments” of these Books; and the “Arguments,” instead of being given in a body at the beginning, are prefixed to the Books to which they severally apply. To smooth over the breaks made by the division of the two Books, the three new lines were added which now form the beginning of Book VIII. and the five that begin Book XII.; and there are one or two other slight additions or alterations, also dictated by Milton, in the course of the text, besides a few verbal variations, such as would arise in reprinting. On the whole the Second Edition, though very correct, is not so nice-looking a book as the First.

Four years sufficed to exhaust the Second Edition; and in 1678 (*i.e.* four years after Milton's death) a Third Edition appeared with this title: “Paradise Lost. A Poem in Twelve Books. The Author John Milton. The Third Edition. Revised and Augmented by the same Author. London, Printed by S. Simmons, next door to the Golden Lion in Aldersgate Street, 1678.” This edition is in small octavo, and in other respects the same as its predecessor, save that there are a few verbal variations in the printing. It is of no independent value — the Second Edition being the last that could have been supervised by Milton himself. From the appearance of a third edition in 1678, however, it is to be inferred that by that time the second of those impressions of 1,300 copies which had to be accounted for to the author was sold off (implying perhaps a total circulation up to that time of 3,000 copies), and that, consequently, had the author been alive, he would have been then entitled to his third sum of Five Pounds, as by the agreement. Milton being dead, the sum was due to his widow. Whether, however, on account of disputes which existed between the widow and Milton's three daughters by his first wife as to the inheritance of his property (disputes which were the subject of a law-suit in 1674-5), or for other reasons, Simmons was in no hurry to pay the third Five Pounds. It was not till the end of 1680 that he settled with the widow, and then in a manner of which the following receipt given by her is a record: —

I do hereby acknowledge to have received of Samuel Symonds, Cittizen and Stationer of London, the Sum of Eight pounds: which is in full payment for all my right, Title, or Interest, which I have, or ever had in the Coppy of a Poem Intituled Paradise Lost in Twelve Bookes in 8vo. By John Milton, Gent., my late husband. Witness my hand this 21st day of December, 1680.

ELIZABETH MILTON.

Witness, William Yapp.
Ann Yapp.

That is to say, Simmons, owing the widow Five Pounds, due since 1678, and in prospect of soon owing her other Five Pounds on the current impression of the Poem, preferred, or consented, to compound for the Ten by a payment of Eight in December 1680. The total sum which he could in any case have been called upon to pay for *Paradise Lost* by his original agreement was 20*l.* (for the agreement did not look beyond three impressions of 1,300 copies each); and the total sum which he did pay was 18*l.* If he thus got off 2*l.* it was probably to oblige the widow, who may have been anxious to realize all she could of her late husband's property at once before leaving town. There is, indeed, a subsequent document from which it would appear as if Simmons feared having farther trouble from the widow. It is a document, dated April 29, 1681, by which she formally releases Samuel Simmons, his heirs, executors, and administrators for ever, from "all and all manner of action and actions, "cause and causes of action, suits, bills, bonds, writings obligatory, debts, "dues, duties, accounts, sum and sums of moneys, judgments, executions, "extents, quarrels either in law or equity, controversies and demands, and all "and every other matter, cause, and thing whatsoever, which against the said "Samuel Simmons" she ever had, or which she, her heirs, executors, or administrators should or might have "by reason or means of any matter, cause, "or thing whatsoever, from the beginning of the world unto the day of these "presents." About the most comprehensive release possible!

From 1680, accordingly, neither Milton's widow, nor his daughters, had any share or interest whatever in the sale of *Paradise Lost*. The sole property in it was vested in the printer Simmons. Nor did he keep it long. Shortly after his last agreement with the widow he transferred his entire interest in the poem to another bookseller, Brabazon Aylmer, for twenty-five pounds. But on the 17th of August, 1683, Aylmer sold half of his right at a considerably advanced price to the famous bookseller, Jacob Tonson, who had begun business in 1677, and was already introducing a new era in the book-trade by his dealings with Dryden and others; and in March, 1690, Tonson bought the other half of the copyright. What are called the fourth, fifth, and sixth editions, accordingly, were all issued by Tonson. The fourth was issued in 1688, in folio, with a portrait by White, and other illustrations, and a list of more than 500 subscribers, including the most eminent persons of the day — some copies including *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, and having the general title of Milton's Poetical Works. The fifth appeared in 1692, also in folio; and with *Paradise Regained* appended. The sixth was published in 1695, also in large folio and with illustrations, both separately, and also bound up with all the rest of the poems under the general title of "The Poetical Works of Mr. John Milton." This edition was accompanied by what is in reality the first commentary on the poem, and also one of the best. It consists of no fewer than 321 folio pages of Annotations, under this title, "Annotations on Milton's "Paradise Lost: wherein the texts of Sacred Writ relating to the Poem are

“quoted; the parallel places and imitations of the most excellent Homer and Virgil cited and compared; all the obscure parts rendered in phrases more familiar; the old and obsolete words, with their originals, explain’d and made easy to the English reader. By P. H., φιλοποιήτης.” The “P. H.” who thus led the way, so largely, carefully, and laboriously, in the work of commentating Milton, was Patrick Hume, a Scotsman, of whom nothing more has been ascertained than that he was then settled as a schoolmaster somewhere near London.

A common statement is that it was Addison’s celebrated series of criticisms on *Paradise Lost* in the *Spectator*, during the years 1711 and 1712, that first awoke people to Milton’s greatness as a poet, and that till then he had been neglected. The statement will not bear investigation. Not only had six editions of the *Paradise Lost* been published before the close of the seventeenth century—three of them splendid folio editions, and one of them with a commentary which was in itself a tribute to the extraordinary renown of the poem; and not only before or shortly after Milton’s death had there been such public expressions of admiration for the poem by Dryden and others as were equivalent to its recognition as one of the sublimest works of English genius; but since the year 1688 these emphatic, if not very discriminating lines, of Dryden, printed by way of motto under Milton’s portrait in Tonson’s edition of that year, had been a familiar quotation in all men’s mouths:—

“ Three Poets in three distant ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of mind surpassed;
The next in majesty; in both the last.
The force of nature could no further go;
To make a third she joined the former two.”

Even before these lines were written the habit of comparing Milton with Homer and Virgil, and of wondering whether the highest greatness might not be claimed for the Englishman, had been fully formed. Addison’s criticisms, therefore, were only a contribution to a reputation already become traditional. Three new editions of the *Paradise Lost*, by itself or otherwise, had been published by Tonson before the appearance of these criticisms—to wit, in 1705, 1707, and 1711; after which Addison’s criticisms may have given an impulse to the sale, visible in the rapid multiplication of subsequent editions.

The Tonson family had an undisturbed monopoly of these editions, and indeed of all Milton’s poetry, till as late as the year 1750. Every one of the numerous editions, in different sizes and forms, published in Great Britain down to that year, bears the name of the Tonson firm on the title-page. This was owing to the state of opinion as to copyright in books. In Great Britain the understanding in the book-trade was that a publisher who had once acquired a book had a perpetual property in it. The understanding did not extend to Ireland; and accordingly there had been three Dublin editions of *Paradise Lost*—in 1724, 1747, and 1748 respectively. But about 1750 the understanding broke down in Great Britain as well—being found inconsistent with the Copyright Act of Queen Anne, passed in 1709; and, accordingly, from 1750 onwards we find London and Edinburgh publishers venturing to put forth editions of Milton to compete with those of the Tonsons. Not, however, till the death,

in 1767, of Jacob Tonson *tertius*, the grand-nephew of the original Tonson, and the last of the famous firm, was the long connexion of the name of Tonson with Milton's poetry broken, and the traffic in Milton's poems really thrown open. From that date to the present the number of editions of *Paradise Lost*, and of Milton's other poems, by different publishers, and in different fashions, is all but past reckoning.

II. ORIGIN OF THE POEM AND HISTORY OF ITS COMPOSITION.

A great deal has been written concerning "the origin" of *Paradise Lost*.

Voltaire, in 1727, suggested that Milton had, while in Italy in 1638-9, seen performed there a Scriptural drama, entitled *Adamo*, written by a certain Giovanni Battista Andreini, and that, "piercing through the absurdity of the performance to the hidden majesty of the subject," he "took from that ridiculous trifle the first hint of the noblest work which the human imagination has ever attempted." The Andreini thus recalled to notice was the son of an Italian actress, and was known in Italy and also in France as a writer of comedies and religious poems, and also of some defences of the drama. He was born in 1578, and, as he did not die till 1652, he may have been of some reputation in Italy as a living author at the time of Milton's visit. His *Adamo*, of which special mention is made, was published at Milan in 1613, again at Milan in 1617; and there was a third edition of it at Perugia in 1641. It is a drama in Italian verse, in five Acts, representing the Fall of Man. Among the characters, besides Adam and Eve, are God the Father, the Archangel Michael, Lucifer, Satan, Beelzebub, the Serpent, and various allegoric personages, such as the Seven Mortal Sins, the World, the Flesh, Famine, Despair, Death; and there are also choruses of Seraphim, Cherubim, Angels, Phantoms, and Infernal Spirits. From specimens which have been given, it appears that the play, though absurd enough on the whole to justify the way in which Voltaire speaks of it, is not destitute of vivacity and other merits, and that, if Milton did read it, or see it performed, he may have retained a pretty strong recollection of it.

The hint that Milton might have been indebted for the first idea of his poem to Andreini opened up one of those literary questions in which ferrets among old books and critics of more ingenuity than judgment delight to lose themselves. In various quarters hypotheses were started as to particular authors to whom, in addition to Andreini, Milton might have been indebted for this or that in his *Paradise Lost*. The notorious William Lauder gave an impulse to the question by his publications, from 1746 to 1755, openly accusing Milton of plagiarism; and, though the controversy in the form in which Lauder had raised it ended with the exposure of his forgeries, the so-called "Inquiry into the Origin of *Paradise Lost*" has continued to occupy to this day critics of a very different stamp from Lauder, and writing in a very different spirit. The result has been that some thirty authors have been cited, as entitled, along with Andreini or apart from him, to the credit of having probably or possibly contributed something to the conception, the plan, or the execution of Milton's great poem. Quite recently, for example, a claim has been advanced for the Dutch poet, Joost van den Vondel (1587—1679), one of whose productions — a

tragedy called "*Lucifer*," acted at Amsterdam, and published in 1654—describes the rebellion of the Angels, and otherwise goes over much of the ground of *Paradise Lost*. Milton, it is argued, must have heard of this tragedy before he began his own Epic, and may have known Dutch sufficiently to read it. Then there was the somewhat older Dutch poet, Jacob Cats (1577—1660), one of whose poems, describing Adam and Eve in Paradise, might have been known to Milton, even though he could not read Dutch, as it had been translated into Latin by Caspar Barlæus, and published at Dordrecht in 1643. Nor, if Vondel and Cats remained unknown to Milton, was it possible that he should not be familiar with *Adamus Exul*, a Latin tragedy by the famous Hugo Grotius, the most learned Dutchman of his age, and whom Milton himself had met in Paris. This poem of Grotius, the work of his youth, had been before the world since 1601. But not from Dutch sources only is Milton supposed to have derived hints. May he not have seen the following Latin works by German authors—the *Bellum Angelicum* of Frederic Taubmann, of which two books and a fragment appeared in 1604; the *Dænomachia* of Odoric Valmarana, published in Vienna in 1627; and the *Sarcotis* of the Jesuit Jacobus Masenius, three books of which were published at Cologne in 1644? Among possible Italian sources of help, better known or less known than Andreini's *Adamo*, there have been picked out the following—Antonio Cornozano, *Discorso in Versi della Creazione del Mondo sino alla Venuta di Gesù Cristo*, 1472; Antonio Alfani, *La Battaglia Celeste tra Michele e Lucifero*, 1568; Erasmo di Valvasone, *Angelada*, 1590; Giovanni Soranzo, *Dell' Adamo*, 1604; Amico Anguifilo, *Il Caso di Lucifero*; Tasso, *Le Sette Giornate del Mondo Creato*, 1607; Gasparo Murtola, *Della Creazione del Mondo: Poema Sacro*, 1608; Felice Passero, *Epamerone; ovvero, L'Opere de sei Giorni*, 1609; Marini, *Strage degli Innocenti*, 1633, and also his *Gerusalemme Distrutta*; Troilo Lancetta, *La Scena Tragica d'Adamo ed Eva*, 1644; Serafino della Salandra, *Adamo Caduto: Trag. Sacra*, 1647. A Spanish poet has been procured for the list in Alonzo de Azevedo, the author of a *Creacion del Mundo*, published in 1615; and a similar poem of the Portuguese Camoens, published in the same year, has also been referred to. Finally, reference has been made to the *Locuste* of the Englishman Phineas Fletcher, a poem in Latin Hexameters published at Cambridge in 1627, and to certain *Poemata Sacra* of the Scottish Latinist, Andrew Ramsay, published at Edinburgh in 1633; as well as, more in detail, to Joshua Sylvester's English translation of the *Divine Weeks and Works* of Du Bartas, originally published in 1605, and thenceforward for nearly half a century one of the most popular books in England, and to the Scriptural Paraphrases of the old Anglo-Saxon poet Cædmon, first edited and made accessible in 1655.

What is to be said of all this? For the most part it is laborious nonsense. That Milton knew most of the books mentioned, and, indeed, a great many more of the same sort, is extremely likely; that Sylvester's Du Bartas had been familiar to him from his childhood is quite certain; that recollections of this book and some of the others are to be traced in the *Paradise Lost* seems distinctly to have been proved; but that in any of the books, or in all of them together, there is to be found "the origin of *Paradise Lost*," in any intelligible sense of the phrase, is utterly preposterous. Indeed, some of the books have been cited less from any knowledge of their contents than from confidence in their titles as casually seen in book-catalogues.

One conclusion, pertinent to the subject, which might have been suggested by the mere titles of so many books, appears to have been missed. The subject of *Paradise Lost*, it would seem, if only on the bibliographical evidence so collected, was one of those which already possessed in a marked degree that quality of hereditary and widely diffused interest which fits subjects for the purposes of great poets. Milton, it may be said, inherited it as a subject with which the imagination of Christendom had long been fascinated, and which had been nibbled at again and again by poets in and out of England, though by none managed to its complete capabilities. There are traces in his juvenile poems — as, for example, in his Latin poem *In Quintum Novembris* — of his very early familiarity, in particular, with some of those conceptions of the personality and agency of Satan, and the physical connexion between Hell and Man's World, which may be said to motive his great epic. Nothing is more certain, however, than that, though thus signalled in the direction of his great subject by early presentiments and experiments, he came to the actual choice of it at last through considerable deliberation. The story of the first conception of *Paradise Lost*, and of the long-deferred execution of the project, is one of the most interesting in the life of Milton.

It was in 1639, after his return from his Italian tour, in his thirty-first year, that Milton, as he tells us, first bethought himself seriously of some great literary work, on a scale commensurate with his powers, and which posterity should not willingly let die. He had resolved that it should be an English poem; he had resolved that it should be an epic; nay, he had all but resolved — as is proved by his Latin poem to Manso, and his *Epitaphium Damonis* — that his subject should be taken from the legendary history of Britain, and should include the romance of Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table. Suddenly, however, this decision was shaken. He became uncertain whether the dramatic form might not be fitter for his purpose than the epic, and, letting go the subject of Arthur, he began to look about for other subjects. The proof exists in the form of a list — written by Milton's own hand in 1640-1, or certainly not later than 1642, and preserved among the Milton MSS. in Trinity College, Cambridge — of about one hundred subjects, many of them Scriptural, and the rest from British History, which he had jotted down, with the intention, apparently, of estimating their relative degrees of capability, and at last fixing on the one, or the one or two, that should appear best. Now at the head of this long list of subjects is PARADISE LOST. There are no fewer than four separate drafts of this subject as then meditated by Milton for dramatic treatment. The first draft consists merely of a list of *dramatis personæ*, as follows: —

“*The Persons*: — Michael; Heavenly Love; Chorus of Angels; Lucifer; Adam, Eve, with the Serpent; Conscience; Death; Labour, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, with others, Mutes; Faith; Hope; Charity.”

This Draft having been cancelled, another is written parallel with it, as follows: —

“*The Persons*: — Moses [originally written ‘Michael or Moses,’ but the words ‘Michael or’ deleted, so as to leave ‘Moses’ as preferable for the drama]; Justice, Mercy, Wisdom; Heavenly Love; the Evening Star, Hesperus; Lucifer; Adam; Eve; Conscience; Labour, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, Fear, Death, [as] Mutes; Faith; Hope; Charity.”

This having also been scored out, there follows a third Draft, more complete, thus:—

“PARADISE LOST:—*The Persons:* Moses *προλογίζει*, recounting how he assumed his true body; that it corrupts not, because of his [being] with God in the mount; declares the like of Enoch and Elijah, besides the purity of the place—that certain pure winds, dews, and clouds preserve it from corruption; whence exhorts to the sight of God; tells them they cannot see Adam in the state of innocence by reason of their sin.—[Act I.]: Justice, Mercy, Wisdom, debating what should become of Man if he fall. Chorus of Angels sing a hymn of the Creation.—Act II.: Heavenly Love; Evening Star. Chorus sing the marriage song and describe Paradise.—Act III.: Lucifer contriving Adam’s ruin. Chorus fears for Adam and relates Lucifer’s rebellion and fall.—Act IV.: Adam, Eve, fallen; Conscience cites them to God’s examination. Chorus bewails and tells the good Adam hath lost.—Act V.: Adam and Eve driven out of Paradise, presented by an Angel with Labour, Grief, Hatred, Envy, War, Famine, Pestilence, Sickness, Discontent, Ignorance, Fear, [as] Mutes—to whom he gives their names—likewise Winter, Heat, Tempest, &c.; Death entered into the world; Faith, Hope, Charity, comfort and instruct him. Chorus briefly concludes.”

This is left standing; but in another part of the MS., as if written at some interval of time, is a fourth Draft, as follows:—

“ADAM UNPARADIZED:—The Angel Gabriel, either descending or entering—showing, since the globe is created, his frequency as much on Earth as in Heaven—describes Paradise. Next the Chorus, showing the reason of his coming—to keep his watch, after Lucifer’s rebellion, by the command of God—and withal expressing his desire to see and know more concerning this excellent and new creature, Man. The Angel Gabriel, as by his name signifying a Prince of Power, passes by the station of the Chorus, and, desired by them, relates what he knew of Man, as the creation of Eve, with their love and marriage.—After this, Lucifer appears, after his overthrow; bemoans himself; seeks revenge upon Man. The Chorus prepares resistance at his first approach. At last, after discourse of enmity on either side, he departs; whereat the Chorus sing of the battle and victory in Heaven against him and his accomplices, as before, after the first Act, was sung a hymn of the Creation.—Here again may appear Lucifer, relating and consulting on what he had done to the destruction of Man. Man next and Eve, having been by this time seduced by the Serpent, appear confusedly, covered with leaves. Conscience, in a shape, accuses him; Justice cites him to the place whither Jehovah called for him. In the meantime the Chorus entertains the stage and is informed by some Angel of the manner of the Fall. Here the Chorus bewails Adam’s fall.—Adam and Eve return and accuse one another; but especially Adam lays the blame to his wife—is stubborn in his offence. Justice appears, reasons with him, convinces him. The Chorus admonishes Adam, and bids him beware Lucifer’s example of impenitence.—The Angel is sent to banish them out of Paradise; but, before, causes to pass before his eyes, in shapes, a masque of all the evils of this life and world. He is humbled, relents, despairs. At last appears Mercy, comforts him, promises him the Messiah; then calls in Faith, Hope, Charity; instructs him. He repents, gives God the glory, submits to his penalty. The Chorus briefly concludes.—Compare this with the former Draft.”

These schemes of a possible drama on the subject of Paradise Lost were written out by Milton as early as between 1639 and 1642, or between his thirty-first and his thirty-fourth year, as a portion of a list of about a hundred subjects which occurred to him, in the course of his reading at that time, as worth considering for the great English Poem which he hoped to give to the world. From the place and the proportion of space which they occupy in the list, it is apparent that the subject of Paradise Lost had then fascinated him more strongly than any of the others, and that, if his notion of an epic on Arthur was then given up, a drama on Paradise Lost had occurred to him as the most likely substitute. It is also more probable than not that he then knew of previous dramas that had been written on the subject, and that, in writing out his own schemes, he had the schemes of some of these dramas in his mind. Vondel’s play was not then in existence; but Andreini’s was. Farther, there

is evidence in Milton's prose pamphlets published about this time that, if he did ultimately fix on the subject he had so particularly been meditating, he was likely enough to make himself acquainted with any previous efforts on the same subject, and to turn them to account for whatever they might be worth. Thus, in his *Reason of Church Government* (1641), taking the public into his confidence in various matters relating to himself, and informing them particularly how his mind had been recently occupied with thoughts of a great English poem (whether an epic or a drama he had not, he hints, quite determined), and with what reluctance he felt himself drawn away from that design to engage in the political controversies of the time, he thus pledges himself that the design, though necessarily postponed, shall not be abandoned: "Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted, as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth, or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amonist, or the trencher-fury of a riming parasite, nor to be obtained by the invocation of Dame Memory and her Siren daughters, but by devout prayer to that Eternal Spirit who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his Seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added *industrious and select reading*, steady observation, insight into all seemly and generous arts and affairs — till which in some measure be compassed, at mine own peril and cost I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loth to hazard so much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them."

There is evidence that, about the time when Milton thus announced to the public his design of some great English poem, to be accomplished at leisure, and when he was privately considering with himself whether a tragedy on the subject of *Paradise Lost* might not best fulfil the conditions of such a design, he had actually gone so far as to write not only the foregoing drafts of the tragedy, but even some lines by way of opening. Speaking of *Paradise Lost*, and of the author's original intention that it should be a tragedy, Milton's nephew, Edward Phillips, tells us in his *Memoir of his uncle* (1694): "In the Fourth Book of the Poem there are six [ten?] verses, which, several years before the Poem was begun, were shown to me, and some others, as designed for the very beginning of the said tragedy." The verses referred to by Phillips are those (P. L. IV. 32-41) that now form part of Satan's speech on first standing on the Earth, and beholding, among the glories of the newly-created World, the Sun in his full splendour in the Heavens: —

" O thou, that, with surpassing glory crowned,
 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 with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O Sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to me remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere,
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
 Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King! "

Phillips's words "several years before the Poem was begun" would not, by themselves, fix the date at which he had seen these lines. But in Aubrey's

earlier Memoir of Milton (1680), containing information which Aubrey had derived from Phillips, this passage occurs: "In the 4th book of *Paradise Lost* there are about 6 verses of Satan's exclamation to the Sun w^{ch} Mr. E. Phi. remembers, about 15 or 16 years before ever his poem was thought of; w^{ch} verses were intended for the beginning of a tragœdie, w^{ch} he had design'd, but was diverted from it by other businesse." Here we have indirectly Phillips's own authority that he had read the verses in question at a date which we shall presently see reason to fix at 1642. He was then a pupil of his uncle, and living with him in his house in Aldersgate Street.

Alas! it was not "for some few years" only, as Milton had thought in 1641, that the execution of the great work so solemnly then promised had to be postponed. For a longer time than he had expected England remained in a condition in which he did not think it right, even had it been possible, that men like him should be writing poems. Only towards the end of Cromwell's Protectorate, when Milton had reached his fiftieth year, and had been for five or six years totally blind, does he seem to have been in circumstances to resume effectually the design to which he had pledged himself seventeen years before. By that time, however, there was no longer any doubt as to the theme he would choose. All the other themes once entertained had faded more or less into the background of memory, and *PARADISE LOST* stood out, bold, clear, and without competitor. Nay more, the dramatic form, for which, when the subject first occurred to him, Milton had felt a preference, had been now abandoned, and it had been resolved that the poem should be an epic. He began this epic in earnest almost certainly before Cromwell was dead — "about 2 years before the "K[ing] came in," says Aubrey on Phillips's authority; that is, in 1658, when, notwithstanding his blindness, he was still in official attendance on Cromwell at Whitehall as his Latin Secretary, and writing occasional letters, in Cromwell's name, to foreign states and princes.

The uncertain state of affairs after Cromwell's death, or, at all events, after the resignation of his son Richard, may have interfered with the progress of the poem; and, when the Restoration came, there was danger for a time that not only the poem but the author's life might be cut short. That danger over, he was at liberty, "on evil days though fallen, and evil tongues," to prosecute his labour in obscurity and comparative peace. He had finished it, according to Aubrey, "about 3 years after the K.'s restauracion," *i.e.* about 1663. If so, he had been five or six years in all engaged on the poem, and the places in which he had successively pursued the task of meditating and dictating it had been mainly these — first, Petty France (now York Street), Westminster, till within a few weeks of the Restoration; next, some friend's house in Bartholomew Close, West Smithfield, where he lay concealed for a while after the Restoration; then, a house in Holborn, near Red Lion Fields, whither he removed as soon as it was safe for him to do so; and, finally, from 1661 onwards, in Jewin Street, close to that part of Aldersgate Street where he had had his house some eighteen or nineteen years before, when *Paradise Lost* first occurred to his thoughts. During the five or six years occupied in the composition of the poem in these places Milton's condition had been that of a widower, — his first wife having died in 1652 or 1653, in the house in Petty France, leaving him three daughters; the second, whom he had married in Nov. 1656, while residing in the same house, having survived the marriage

little more than a year; and his marriage with his third wife, Elizabeth Minshull, not having taken place till February, 1662-63, when, if Aubrey's account is correct, the poem was finished, or nearly so. It is probable, however, that, though Milton may have had the poem in some manner complete in Jewin Street, before his third marriage, there may have still been a good deal to do with the manuscript in the house in Artillery Walk, Bunhill Fields, to which he and his wife removed shortly after their marriage (in 1663 or 1664), and which was the last of Milton's many London residences, and that in which he died. We have an interesting glimpse of this manuscript, at any rate, as in Milton's possession, in a satisfactory state, during the summer of 1665. As the Great Plague was then raging in London, Milton had removed from his house in Artillery Walk to a cottage at Chalfont-St.-Giles, in Buckinghamshire, which had been taken for him, at his request, by Thomas Ellwood, a young Quaker, whose acquaintance with him had begun a year or two before in Jewin Street. Visiting Milton here as soon as circumstances would permit, Ellwood was received in a manner of which he has left an account in his Autobiography. "After some common discourses," he says, "had passed between us, he called for a manuscript of his; which, being brought, he delivered to me, bidding me take it home with me and read it at my leisure, and, when I had so done, return it to him with my judgment thereupon. When I came home, and had set myself to read it, I found it was that excellent poem which he entitled *Paradise Lost*."

The anecdote proves the existence of at least one, and most probably of more than one, complete copy in the autumn of 1665 — which may, accordingly, be taken as the date when the poem was considered ready for press. The delay of publication till two years after that date is easily accounted for. It was not, says Ellwood, till "the sickness was over, and the city well cleansed, and become safely habitable again," that Milton returned to his house in Artillery Walk; then, still farther paralysing business of all sorts, came the Great Fire of Sept. 1666; and there were difficulties, as we have seen, about the licensing of a poem by a person of Milton's political antecedents and principles.

Whether the time spent by Milton in the composition of *Paradise Lost* was five years (1658—1663), or seven or eight years (1658—1665), it is certain that he bestowed on the work all that care and labour which, on his first contemplation of such a work in his earlier manhood, he had declared would be necessary. The "industrious and select reading," which he had then spoken of as one of the many requisites, had not been omitted. Whatever else *Paradise Lost* may be, it is certainly one of the most learned poems in the world. In thinking of it in this character we are to remember, first of all, that, ere his blindness had befallen him (1652), Milton's mind was stored with an amount of various and exact learning such as few other men of his age possessed; so that, had he ceased then to acquire more, he would have still carried in his memory an enormous resource of material out of which to build up the body of his poem. But he did not, after his blindness, cease to add to his knowledge by reading. At the very time when he was engaged on his *Paradise Lost*, he had, as his nephew Phillips informs us, several other great undertakings in progress of a different character, for which daily reading and research were necessary, even if they could have been dispensed with for the poem — to wit, the construction of a Body of Divinity from the Scriptures, the completion

of a History of England, and the collection of materials for a Thesaurus, or Dictionary, of the Latin tongue. Laboriously every day, with a due division of his time from early morning, he pursued these tasks, by a systematic use of assistants whom he kept about him. As at the time when the composition of *Paradise Lost* was begun the eldest daughter, Anne, was but twelve years of age, the second, Mary, but ten, and the youngest, Deborah, but six, and as when the poem was certainly finished their ages were about eighteen, sixteen, and twelve respectively, *their* services as readers during its composition can have been but partial. But, whether with them as his readers, or with young men and grown-up friends performing the part for hire or love, he was able to avail himself for his poem, as well as for the drier works on which he was simultaneously engaged, of any help which books could give. He may, accordingly, at this time, if not before, have made himself acquainted with some of those poems and other works, Italian and Latin, in which his subject, or some portion of it, had been previously treated. He was very likely to do so, and to take any hint he could get.

It would not be difficult to prove, at any rate, that, among the "select readings" engaged in specially for the purposes of *Paradise Lost* while it was in progress, must have been readings in certain books of geography and Eastern travel, and in certain Rabbinical, early Christian, and mediæval commentators on the subjects of Paradise, the Angels, and the Fall. Nothing is more striking in the poem, nothing more touching, than the frequency, and, on the whole, wonderful accuracy, of its references to maps; and, whatever wealth of geographical information Milton may have carried with him into his blindness, there are evidences, I think, that he must have refreshed his recollections of this kind by the eyes of others, and perhaps by their guidance of his finger, after his sight was gone. In short, for the *Paradise Lost*, as well as for the prose labours carried on along with it, there must have been abundance of reading; and, remembering to what a stock of prior learning, possessed before his blindness, all such increments were added, we need have no wonder at the appearance now presented by the poem. To say merely that it is a most learned poem — the poem of a mind full of miscellaneous lore wherewith its grand imagination might work — is not enough. Original as it is, original in its entire conception, and in every portion and passage, the poem is yet full of *flakes* — we can express it no otherwise — full of flakes from all that is greatest in preceding literature, ancient or modern. This is what all the commentators have observed, and what their labours in collecting parallel passages from other poets and prose-writers have served more and more to illustrate. Such labours have been overdone; but they have proved incontestably the tenacity of Milton's memory. In the first place, *Paradise Lost* is permeated from beginning to end with citations from the Bible. Milton must have almost had the Bible by heart; and, besides that some passages of his poem, where he is keeping close to the Bible as his authority, are avowedly coagulations of Scriptural texts, it is possible again and again, throughout the rest, to detect the flash, through his noblest language, of some suggestion from the Psalms, the Prophets, the Gospels, or the Apocalypse. So, though in a less degree, with Homer, the Greek tragedians (Euripides was a special favourite of his), Plato, Demosthenes, and the Greek classics generally, and with Lucretius, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Juvenal, Persius, and the other Latins. So with the Italian writers whom he knew so well — Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, and

others now less remembered. So with modern Latinists of various European countries, still less recoverable. Finally, so with the whole series of preceding English poets, particularly Spenser, Shakespeare, and some of the minor Spenserians of the reigns of James and Charles I., not forgetting that uncouth popular favourite of his boyhood, Sylvester's Du Bartas. In connexion with all which, or with any particularly striking instance of the use by Milton of a thought or a phrase from previous authors, let the reader remember his own Definition of Plagiarism, given in his *Εικονοκλαστης*. "Such kind of borrowing as this," he there says, "*if it be not bettered by the borrower*, among good authors is accounted plagiary." And again, of quotations from the Bible, — "It is not hard for any man who hath a Bible in his hands to borrow good words and holy sayings in abundance; but to make them his own is a work of grace only from above."

How was the poem, as it grew in Milton's mind, committed to paper? It was dictated by parcels of ten, twenty, thirty, or more lines at a time. Even before his blindness, Milton had made use of amanuenses; but, after his blindness, he scarcely wrote at all with his own hand. It would be difficult to produce a genuine autograph of his of later date than 1652. On this matter Phillips is again our most precise authority. "There is another very remarkable passage," he says, "in the composure of this poem, which I have a particular occasion to remember; for, whereas I had the perusal of it from the very beginning, for some years as I went from time to time to visit him, in a parcel of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time — which, being written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want correction as to the orthography and pointing — having, as the summer came on, not been shewed any for a considerable while, and desiring the reason thereof, was answered, that his verse never happily flowed but from the Autumnal Equinoctial to the Vernal [*i.e.* from the end of September to the end of March], and that whatever he attempted [at other times] was never to his satisfaction, though he exerted his fancy never so much; so that, in all the years he was about this poem, he may be said to have spent but half his time therein." The reader ought to correct by this extract, taken in connexion with information already given as to Milton's domestic circumstances, the impressions he may have received from flummery pictures representing the blind poet in a rapt attitude dictating *Paradise Lost* to his attentive and revering daughters. His eldest daughter, Anne, could not write; and though the other two could write, and may occasionally, when the poem was in progress, have acted as his amanuenses, their ages exclude the idea of their having been his chief assistants in this capacity — while we also know that the poor motherless girls had grown up in circumstances to make them regard the services they were required to perform for their father as less a duty than a trouble. On the whole, Phillips's words suggest what is probably the right notion — that Milton dictated his poem in small portions at a time, chiefly within-doors, and more in winter than in summer, to any one that chanced to be about him. Sometimes it may have been one of his daughters; sometimes, latterly, when the poem was nearly complete, it may have been his third wife; frequently it may have been one of the friends or youths who stately read to him. From Phillips's statement it is also clear that *he* assisted Milton in revising the gathered scraps of MS. from time to time. Finally, when all was completed, a clean copy, or clean copies,

must have been made by some practised scribe. One such clean copy was that sent to the licenser, a portion of which, as has been mentioned, still exists. The hand in that manuscript has not been identified.

III. SCHEME AND MEANING OF THE POEM.

Paradise Lost is an Epic. But it is not, like the *Iliad* or the *Æneid*, a national Epic; nor is it an epic after any other of the known types. It is an epic of the whole human species — an epic of our entire planet, or indeed of the entire astronomical universe. The title of the poem, though perhaps the best that could have been chosen, hardly indicates beforehand the full nature or extent of the theme; nor are the opening lines, by themselves, sufficiently descriptive of what is to follow. According to them, the song is to be

“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.”

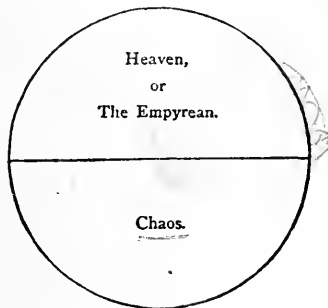
This is a true enough description, inasmuch as the whole story bears on this point. But it is the vast comprehension of the story, both in space and time, as leading to this point, that makes it unique among epics, and entitles Milton to speak of it as involving

“Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.”

It is, in short, a poetical representation, on the authority of hints from the Book of Genesis, of the historical connexion between Human Time and Aboriginal or Eternal Infinity, or between our created World and the immeasurable and inconceivable Universe of Pre-human Existence. So far as our World is concerned, the poem starts from that moment when our newly-created Earth, with all the newly-created starry depths about it, had as yet but two human beings upon it; and these consequently are, on this side of the pre-supposed Infinite Eternity, the main persons of the epic. But we are carried back *into* this pre-supposed Infinite Eternity, and the grand purpose of the poem is to connect, by a stupendous imagination, certain events or courses of the inconceivable history that had been unfolding itself there with the first fortunes of that new azure World which is familiar to us, and more particularly with the first fortunes of that favoured ball at the centre whereon those two human creatures walked. Now the person of the epic through the narration of whose acts this connexion is established is Satan. He, as all critics have perceived, and in a wider sense than most of them have perceived, is the real hero of the poem. He and his actions are the link between that new World of Man the infancy of which we behold in the poem and that boundless antecedent Universe of Pre-human Existence which the poem assumes. For he was a *native* of that Pre-human Universe — one of its greatest and most conspicuous natives; and what we follow in the poem, when its story is taken chronologically, is the life of this great being, from the time of his yet unimpaired primacy or archangelship among the Celestials, on to that time when, in pursuit of a scheme of revenge, he flings himself into the new experimental World, tries the strength of the new race at its fountain-head, and, by success

in his attempt, vitiates Man's portion of space to his own nature, and wins possession of it for a season. The attention of the reader is particularly requested to the following remarks and diagrams. The diagrams are not mere illustrations of what Milton *may* have conceived in his scheme of his poem. They are what he *did* conceive and most tenaciously keep before his mind from first to last; and, unless they are thoroughly grasped, the poem will not be understood as a whole, and many portions of it will be misinterpreted.

Aboriginally, or in primeval Eternity, before the creation of our Earth or the Starry Universe to which it belongs, universal space is to be considered, according to the requisites of the poem, not as containing stars or starry systems at all, but as, so to say, a sphere of infinite radius, divided equatorially into two hemispheres, thus —



The upper of these two hemispheres of primeval Infinity is HEAVEN, or THE EMPYREAN — a boundless, unimaginable region of Light, Freedom, Happiness, and Glory, in the midst whereof Deity, though omnipresent, has His immediate and visible dwelling, and where He is surrounded by a vast population of beings, called "the Angels," or "Sons of God," who draw near to His throne in worship, derive thence their nurture and their delight, and yet live dispersed through all the ranges and recesses of the region, leading severally their mighty lives and performing the behests of Deity, but organized into companies, orders, and hierarchies. Milton is careful to explain that all that he says of Heaven is said symbolically, and in order to make conceivable by the human imagination what in its own nature is inconceivable; but, this being explained, he is bold enough in his use of terrestrial analogies. Round the immediate throne of Deity, indeed, there is kept a blazing mist of vagueness, which words are hardly permitted to pierce, though the Angels are represented as from time to time assembling within it, beholding the Divine Presence and hearing the Divine Voice. But Heaven at large, or portions of it, are figured as tracts of a celestial Earth, with plain, hill, and valley, wherein the myriads of the Sons of God expatiate, in their two orders of Seraphim and Cherubim, and in their descending ranks as Archangels or Chiefs, Princes of various degrees, and individual Powers and Intelligences. Certain differences, however, are implied as distinguishing these Celestials from the subsequent race of

Mankind. As they are of infinitely greater prowess, immortal, and of more purely spiritual nature, so their ways even of physical existence and action transcend all that is within human experience. Their forms are dilatable or contractible at pleasure; they move with incredible swiftness; and, as they are not subject to any law of gravitation, their motion, though ordinarily represented as horizontal over the Heavenly ground, may as well be vertical or in any other direction, and their aggregations need not, like those of men, be in squares, oblongs, or other plane figures, but may be in cubes, or other rectangular or oblique solids, or in spherical masses. These and various other particulars are to be kept in mind concerning Heaven and its pristine inhabitants. As respects the other half or hemisphere of the primeval Intinity, though it too is inconceivable in its nature, and has to be described by words which are at best symbolical, less needs be said. For it is CHAOS, or the Uninhabited — a huge, limitless ocean, abyss, or quagmire, of universal darkness and lifelessness, wherein are jumbled in blustering confusion the elements of all matter, or rather the crude embryos of all the elements, ere as yet they are distinguishable. There is no light there, nor properly Earth, Water, Air, or Fire, but only a vast pulp or welter of unformed matter, in which all these lie tempestuously intermixed. Though the presence of Deity is there potentially too, it is still, as it were, actually retracted thence, as from a realm unorganized and left to Night and Anarchy; nor do any of the Angels wing down into its repulsive obscurities. The crystal floor or wall of Heaven divides them from it; underneath which, and unvisited of light, save what may glimmer through upon its nearer strata, it howls and rages and stagnates eternally.

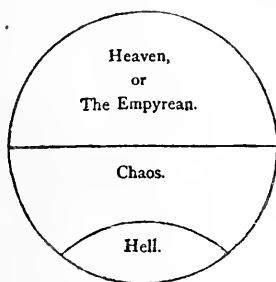
Such is and has been the constitution of the Universal Infinitude from ages immemorial in the Angelic reckoning. But lo! at last a day in the annals of Heaven when the grand monotony of existence hitherto is disturbed and broken. On a day — “such a day as Heaven’s great year brings forth” (v. 582, 583) — all the Empyrean host of Angels, called by imperial summons from all the ends of Heaven, assemble innumerable before the throne of the Almighty; beside whom, imbosomed in bliss, sat the Divine Son. They had come to hear this divine decree: —

“Hear, all ye Angels, Progeny of Light,
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Hear my decree which unrevoked shall stand!
This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand. Your Head I him appoint;
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord.”

With joy and obedience is this decree received throughout the hierarchies, save in one quarter. One of the first of the Archangels in Heaven, if not the very first — the coequal of Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael, if not their superior — is the Archangel known afterwards (for his first name in Heaven is lost) as Satan, or Lucifer. In him the effect of the decree is rage, envy, pride, the resolution to rebel. He conspires with his next subordinate, known afterwards as Beelzebub; and there is formed by them that faction in Heaven which includes at length one third of the entire Heavenly host. Then ensue the wars in Heaven — Michael and the loyal Angels warring against Satan and the rebel

Angels, so that for two days the Empyrean is in uproar. But on the third day the Messiah himself rides forth in his chariot of power, and armed with ten thousand thunders. Right on he drives, in his sole might, through the rebel ranks, till they are trampled and huddled, in one indiscriminate flock, incapable of resistance, before him and his fires. But his purpose is not utterly to destroy them, — only to expel them from Heaven. Underneath their feet, accordingly, the crystal wall or floor of Heaven opens wide, rolling inwards, and disclosing a spacious gap into the dark Abyss or Chaos. Horrorstruck they start back; but worse urges them behind. Headlong they fling themselves down, eternal wrath burning after them, and driving them still down, down, through Chaos, to the place prepared for them.

The place prepared for them! Yes, for now there is a modification in the map of Universal Space to suit the changed conditions of the Universe. At the bottom of what has hitherto been Chaos there is now marked out a kind of Antarctic region, distinct from the body of Chaos proper. This is HELL—



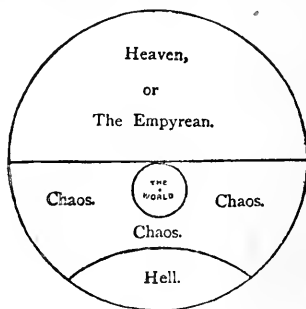
a vast region of fire, sulphurous lake, plain, and mountain, and of all forms of fiery and icy torment. It is into this nethermost and dungeon-like portion of space, separated from Heaven by a huge belt of intervening Chaos, that the Fallen Angels are thrust. For nine days and nights they have been falling through Chaos, or rather being driven down through Chaos by the Messiah's pursuing thunders, before they reach this new home (vi. 871). When they do reach it, the roof closes over them and shuts them in. Meanwhile the Messiah has returned in triumph into highest Heaven, and there is rejoicing over the expulsion of the damned.

For the moment, therefore, there are three divisions of Universal Space — HEAVEN, CHAOS, and HELL. Almost immediately, however, there is a fourth. Not only have the expelled Angels been nine days and nights in falling through Chaos to reach Hell; but, after they have reached Hell and it has closed over them, they lie for another period of nine days and nights (i. 50—53) stupefied and bewildered in the fiery gulf. It is during this second nine days that there takes place a great event, which farther modifies the map of Infinitude. Long had there been talk in Heaven of a new race of beings to be created at some time by the Almighty, inferior in some respects to the Angels, but in the history of whom and of God's dealings with them there was to be a display of the divine power and love which even the Angels might contem-

plate with wonder. The time for the creation of this new race of beings has now arrived. Scarcely have the Rebel Angels been enclosed in Hell, and Chaos has recovered from the turmoil of the descent of such a rout through its depths, when the Paternal Deity, addressing the Son, tells him that, in order to repair the loss caused to Heaven, the predetermined creation of Man and of the World of Man shall now take effect. It is for the Son to execute the will of the Father. Straightway he goes forth on his creating errand. The everlasting gates of Heaven open wide to let him pass forth; and, clothed with majesty, and accompanied with thousands of Seraphim and Cherubim, anxious to behold the great work to be done, he does pass forth — far into that very Chaos through which the Rebel Angels have so recently fallen, and which now intervenes between Heaven and Hell. At length he stays his fervid wheels, and, taking the golden compasses in his hands, centres one point of them where he stands and turns the other through the obscure profundity around (VII. 224—231). Thus are marked out, or cut out, through the body of Chaos, the limits of the new Universe of Man — that Starry Universe which to us seems measureless and the same as Infinity itself, but which is really only a beautiful azure sphere or drop, insulated in Chaos, and hung at its topmost point or zenith from the Emyrean. But, though the limits of the new experimental Creation are thus at once marked out, the completion of the Creation is a work of Six Days (VII. 242, 550). On the last of these, to crown the work, the happy Earth received its first human pair — the appointed lords of the entire new Creation. And so, resting from his labours, and beholding all that he had made, that it was good, the Messiah returned to his Father, reascending through the golden gates, which were now just over the zenith of the new World, and were its point of suspension from the Emyrean Heaven; and the Seventh Day or Sabbath was spent in songs of praise by all the Heavenly hosts over the finished work, and in contemplation of it as it hung beneath them,

“another Heaven,
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline.”

And now, accordingly, this was the diagram of the Universal Infinitude:—



There are the three regions of HEAVEN, CHAOS, and HELL as before; but there is also now a fourth region, hung drop-like into Chaos by an attachment to Heaven at the north pole or zenith. This is the NEW WORLD, or the

STARRY UNIVERSE — all that Universe of orbs and galaxies which man's vision can reach by utmost power of telescope, and which even to his imagination is illimitable. And yet as to the proportions of this World to the total map Milton dares to be exact. The distance from its nadir or lowest point to the upper boss of Hell is exactly equal to its own radius; or, in other words, the distance of Hell-gate from Heaven-gate is exactly three semidiameters of the Human or Starry Universe (I. 73, 74).

Meanwhile, just as this final and stupendous modification of the map of Infinitude has been accomplished, Satan and his rebel adherents in Hell begin to recover from their stupor — Satan the first, and the others at his call. There ensue Satan's first speech to them, their first surveys of their new domain, their building of their palace of Pandemonium, and their deliberations there in full council as to their future policy. Between Moloch's advice for a renewal of open war with Heaven, and Belial's and Mammon's counsels, which recommend acquiescence in their new circumstances and a patient effort to make the best of them, Beelzebub insinuates the proposal which is really Satan's, and which is ultimately carried. It is that there should be an excursion from Hell back through Chaos, to ascertain whether that new Universe, with a new race of beings in it, of which there had been so much talk in Heaven, and which there was reason to think might come into existence about this time, *had* come into existence. If it had, might not means be found to vitiate this new Universe and the favourite race that was to possess it, and to drag them down to the level of Hell itself? Would not such a ruining of the Almighty's new experiment at its outset be a revenge that would touch Him deeply? Would it not be easier than open war? And on the stepping-stone of such a success might they not raise themselves to further victory, or at least to an improvement of their present condition, and an extent of empire that should include more than Hell?

Satan's counsel having been adopted, it is Satan himself that adventures the perilous expedition up through Chaos in quest of the new Universe. He is detained for a while at Hell-gate by the ghastly shapes of Sin and Death who are there to guard it; but, the gates being at length opened to him, never to shut again, he emerges into the hideous Chaos overhead. His journey up through it is arduous. Climbing, swimming, wading, flying, through the boggy consistency — now falling plumb-down thousands of fathoms, again carried upwards by a gust or explosion — he reaches at length, about midway in his journey, the central throne and pavilion where Chaos personified and Night have their government. There he receives definite intelligence that the new World he is in search of has actually been created. Thus encouraged, and directed on his way, again he springs upward, "like a pyramid of fire," through what of Chaos remains; and, after much farther flying, tacking, and steering, he at last reaches the upper confines of Chaos, where its substance seems thinner, so that he can wing about more easily, and where a glimmering dawn of the light from above begins also to appear. For a while in this calmer space he weighs his wings to behold at leisure (II. 1046) the sight that is breaking upon him. And what a sight!

"Far off the Empyrean Heaven extended wide
 In crescent, undetermined square or round,
 With opal towers and battlements adorned
 Of living sapphire, once his native seat,
 And, fast by, hanging in a golden chain,
 This pendent World, in bigness as a star
 Of smallest magnitude close by the moon."

Care must be taken not to misinterpret this passage. Even Addison misinterpreted it. He speaks of Satan's distant discovery "of the Earth that hung close by the Moon" as one of the most "wonderfully beautiful and poetical" passages of the poem. But it is more wonderfully beautiful and poetical than Addison thought. For, as even a correct reading of the passage by itself would have shown, the "pendent World" which Satan here sees is not the Earth at all, but the entire Starry Universe, or Mundane Sphere, hung drop-like by a golden touch from the Empyrean above it. In proportion to this Empyrean, at the distance whence Satan gazes, even the Starry Universe pendent from it is but as a star of smallest magnitude seen on the edge of the full or crescent moon.

At length (III. 418—422) Satan alights on the opaque outside, or convex shell, of the new Universe. As he had approached it, what seemed at first but as a star had taken the dimensions of a globe; and, when he had alighted, and begun to walk on it, this globe had become, as it seemed, a boundless continent of firm land, exposed, dark and starless, to the stormy Chaos blustering round like an inclement sky. Only on the upper convex of the shell, in its angles towards the zenith, some reflection of light was gained from the wall of Heaven. Apparently it was on this upper convex of the outside of the New World, and not at its nadir, or the point nearest Hell, that Satan first alighted and walked (compare II. 1034—1053, III. 418—430, X. 312—349). At all events he had to reach the zenith before he could begin the real business of his errand. For only at this point — only at the point of attachment or suspension of the new Universe to the Empyrean — was there an opening into the interior of the Universe. All the outer shell, save at that point, was hard, compact, and not even transpicuous to the light within, as the spherical glass round a lamp is, but totally opaque, or only glistening faintly on its upper side with the reflected light of Heaven. Accordingly — after wandering on this dark outside of the Universe long enough to allow Milton that extraordinary digression (III. 440—497) in which he finds one of the most magnificently grotesque uses for the outside of the Universe that it could have entered into the imagination of any poet to conceive — the Fiend is attracted in the right direction to the opening at the zenith. What attracts him thither is a gleam of light from the mysterious structure or staircase (III. 501 *et seq.*) which there serves the Angels in their descents from Heaven's gate into the Human Universe, and again in their ascents from the Universe to Heaven's gate. Sometimes these stairs are drawn up to Heaven and invisible; but at the moment when Satan reached the spot they were let down, so that, standing on the lower stair, and gazing down through the opening right underneath, he could suddenly behold the whole interior of the Starry Universe at once. He can behold it in all directions — both in the direction of latitude, or depth from the pole where he stands to the opposite pole or nadir; and also longitudinally,

"from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon."

At this point, and before following the Fiend in his flight down into the interior of our Astronomical Universe, it is necessary to describe the system or constitution of that interior as it is conceived by Milton and assumed through-

out the poem. Let us attend, therefore, more particularly now to that small central circle of our last diagram, hanging drop-like from the Emyrean, which we have as yet described no farther than by saying that, small as it is, it represents our vast Starry Universe in Milton's total scheme of Infinitude. Although a great part of the action of the poem takes place in the Emyrean, in Chaos, and in Hell, much of it also takes place within the bounds of this Starry Universe; so that, if there is any peculiarity in Milton's conception of the interior arrangements of this Universe, that peculiarity must be understood before many parts of the poem are intelligible. Such a peculiarity there is; and a distinct exposition of it is nearly all that is farther desirable in this Introduction to the Poem.

Milton's Astronomy, or, at least, the astronomical system which he thought proper to employ in his *Paradise Lost*, is not our present Copernican system — which, in his time, was not generally or popularly accepted. It is the older Astronomical System, now usually called “the Ptolemaic,” because it had been set forth in its main features by the astronomer Ptolemy of Alexandria, who lived in the second century.

According to this “Ptolemaic system,” the Earth was the fixed centre of the Mundane Universe, and the apparent motions of the other celestial bodies were caused by the real revolutions of successive Heavens, or Spheres of Space, enclosing the central Earth at different distances. First, and nearest to the Earth, were the Spheres or Orbs of the Seven Planets then known, in this order — the Moon (treated as a planet), Mercury, Venus, the Sun (treated as a planet — the “glorious planet Sol,” Shakespeare calls it, *Troil. and Cress.* Act I. Scene 3), Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Beyond these, as an Eighth Sphere or Orb, was the Firmament or Heaven of all the fixed stars. These eight Spheres or Heavens had sufficed till Aristotle's time, and beyond it, for all the purposes of astronomical explanation. The outermost or Eighth Sphere was supposed to wheel diurnally, or in twenty-four hours, from East to West, carrying in it all the fixed stars, and carrying with it also all the seven interior Heavens or Spheres — which Spheres, however, had also separate and slower motions of their own, giving rise to those apparent motions of the Moon (months), Mercury, Venus, the Sun (years), Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn, which could not be accounted for by the revolution of the Starry Sphere alone. But, later observations having discovered irregularities in the phenomena of the heavens which the supposed motions of even the Eight Spheres could not account for, two extra Spheres had been added. To account for the very slow change called “the precession of the equinoxes,” the discovery of which was prepared by Hipparchus in the second century B.C., it had been necessary to imagine a Ninth Sphere, called “the Crystalline Sphere,” beyond that of the Fixed Stars; and, finally, for farther reasons, it had been necessary to suppose all enclosed in a Tenth Sphere, called “the Primum Mobile,” or “first moved.” These two outermost spheres, or at least the Tenth Sphere, had been added in the Middle Ages; and, indeed, the Ptolemaic system, so completed up to the final number of Ten Spheres, may be called rather the “Alphonsine System,” as having been adopted and taught by the famous King and astronomer, Alphonso X. of Castille (1252—1284). It need only be added that the Spheres were not necessarily supposed to be actual spheres of solid matter. It was enough if they were conceived as spheres of invisible or transpicuous

space. Perhaps only the outermost Sphere, or Primum Mobile, enclosing the whole Universe from absolute Infinity or Nothingness, had to be thought of as in any sense a material or impenetrable shell.

The utter strangeness of this Ptolemaic system to our present habits of thought causes us to forget how long it lasted. Although it was in 1543 that Copernicus had propounded the other system, and although the views of Copernicus struggled gradually into the belief of subsequent astronomers, and had further demonstration given them by Galileo (1610—1616), the Ptolemaic or Alphonsine system, with its ten Spheres enclosing the stationary Earth at different distances, and wheeling round it in a complex combination of their separate motions, retained its prevalence in the popular mind of Europe, and even in the scientific world, till the end of the seventeenth century. Hence all the literature of England, and of other countries, down to that date, is latently cast in the imaginative mould of that system, and is full of its phraseology and of suggestions from it. When Shakespeare speaks of the "stars starting from their spheres," he means from the Ptolemaic Spheres; and, similarly, the word "sphere" in our old poetry has generally this meaning. Indeed, it retains this meaning in some of our still current expressions, as "This is not my sphere," "You are out of your sphere," &c. A full examination of our old literature in the light of the principle of criticism here suggested — *i.e.* with the recollection that it was according to the Ptolemaic conception of the Universe, and not according to the Copernican, that our old poets thought of things and expressed their thoughts — might lead to curious results. We are concerned at present, however, with Milton only.

In Milton's case we are presented with the interesting phenomenon of a mind apparently uncertain to the last which of the two systems, the Ptolemaic or the Copernican, was the true one, or perhaps beginning to be persuaded of the higher probability of the Copernican, but yet retained the Ptolemaic for poetical purposes. For Milton's life (1608—1674) coincides with the period of the struggle between the two systems. In his boyhood and youth he had, doubtless, inherited the general or Ptolemaic belief — that in which Shakespeare died. Here, for example, is what everybody was reading during Milton's youth in that favourite book, Sylvester's Translation of Du Bartas: —

"As the ague-sick upon his shivering pallet
 Delays his health oft to delight his palate,
 When wilfully his tasteless taste delights
 In things unsavoury to sound appetites,
 Even so some brain-sicks live there now-a-days
 That lose themselves still in contrary ways —
 Preposterous wits that cannot row at ease
 On the smooth channel of our common seas;
 And such are those, in my conceit at least,
 Those clerks that think — think how absurd a jest! —
 That neither heavens nor stars do turn at all
 Nor dance about this great round Earthly Ball,
 But the Earth itself, this massy globe of ours,
 Turns round about once every twice-twelve hours."

Du Bartas had been a French Protestant, and his English translator, Sylvester, was a Puritan. It was not, therefore, only to the Roman Inquisition or to Roman Catholics that Galileo must have seemed a "brain-sick" and "a preposterous wit" when he advocated the Copernican theory. In 1638 Milton had himself conversed with Galileo, then old and blind, near Florence.

"There it was," he wrote in 1644 (*Areopag.*), "that I found and visited the "famous Galileo, grown old, a prisoner to the Inquisition, for thinking in "Astronomy otherwise than the Franciscan and Dominican licensers thought." And yet, despite this passage, and other passages showing how strongly the character and history of Galileo had fascinated him, it may be doubted whether Milton even then felt himself entitled to reject the system which Galileo had impugned. His friends and literary associates, the *Smectymnuans*, at all events, in their answer to Bishop Hall's "Humble Remonstrance" (1641), had cited the Copernican doctrine as an unquestionable instance of a supreme absurdity. "There is no more truth in this assertion," they say of one of Bishop Hall's statements, "than if he had said, with Anaxagoras, "'Snow is black,' or with Copernicus, 'The Earth moves, and the Heavens "stand still.'" There cannot be a more distinct proof than this incidental passage affords, of the utter repulsiveness of the Copernican theory to even the educated English intellect as late as the middle of the seventeenth century. Milton was probably even then, if we may judge from the above-quoted reference to Galileo, in advance of his contemporaries on this question; and in the interval between that time and the completion of his *Paradise Lost* his Copernicanism may have become decided. There are, at any rate, two passages in *Paradise Lost* where he shows his perfect acquaintance with the Copernican theory, and with the arguments in its behalf. The one (IV. 592—597) is an incidental passage; in the other and much longer passage (VIII. 15—178) he makes the question a subject of express conversation between Raphael and Adam. In this last passage Adam is represented as arriving by intuition at the Copernican theory, or at least as perceiving its superior simplicity over the Ptolemaic; and, though the drift of the Angel's reply is that the question is an abstruse one, and that it is of no great consequence for man's real duty in the world which system is the true one, yet the balance of the Angel's remarks is also Copernican. There is no doubt that these two passages were inserted by Milton to relieve his own mind on the subject, and by way of caution to the reader that the scheme of the physical Universe adopted in the construction of the poem is not to be taken as more than a hypothesis for the imagination.

That scheme is, undoubtedly, the Ptolemaic or Alphonsine. Accordingly the little central circle, hung drop-like from the Empyrean in our last diagram — and there representing the dimensions of the total Creation of the six days, or, in other words, of our Starry Universe — may be exhibited now on a magnified scale, by simply reproducing one of the diagrams of the Heavens which were given in all the old books of Astronomy. The following is a copy (a little neater than the original, but otherwise exact) from a woodcut which we find in an edition, in 1610, of the *Sphæra* of the celebrated middle-age astronomer, Joannes a Sacrobosco, or John Holywood. This treatise, originally written in the thirteenth century, and amended or added to by subsequent writers, was the favourite manual of astronomy throughout Europe down to Milton's time. He himself used it as a text-book, as we learn from his nephew Phillips. The cut, the reader ought to understand, represents the interior of the Mundane System in equatorial section as looked *down* into from the pole of the ecliptic. It is, in short, a view *down* from the opening at the pole in the preceding cut.

This, literally this, so far as mere diagram can represent it, is the World or Mundane Universe, as Milton keeps it in his mind's eye throughout the poem.

It is an enormous azure round of space scooped or carved out of Chaos, and communicating aloft with the Empyrean, but consisting within itself of ten Orbs or hollow Spheres in succession, wheeling one within the other, down to the stationary nest of our small Earth at the centre, with the elements of water, air, and fire, that are immediately around it. It is according to this scheme that Milton virtually describes the process of creation in the first, the second, and the fourth of the six days of Genesis (VII. 232—275 and 339—386)—the only deviation being that the word “Firmament” is not there applied specifically to the eighth or Starry Sphere, but is used for the whole continuous depth of all the heavens as far as the Primum Mobile. As if to



prevent any mistake, however, there is one passage in which the Ten Spheres are actually enumerated. It is that (III. 481—483) where the attempted ascent of ambitious souls from Earth to the Empyrean by their own effort is described. In order to reach the opening into the Empyrean at the World's zenith, what are the successive stages of their flight?

“They pass the Planets Se ven, and pass the Fixed,
And that Crystalline Sphere whose balance weighs
The trepidation talked, and that First Moved.”

Here we have the Alphonsine heavens in their order, and with their exact names. But all through the poem the language assumes the same astronomical system. Where the words Orb and Sphere occur, for example, they almost invariably — not *quite* invariably — mean Orb or Sphere in the Ptolemaic sense. Yet, to make all safe, Milton, as we have seen, inserts two passages at least in which the Copernican theory of the heavens is distinctly suggested as a possible or probable alternative; and, moreover, even while using the language of the other theory, he so arranges that it need not be supposed he does so for any other reason than *poetical* preference.

In one respect the diagram must fail to convey Milton's complete notion of the World or Mundane Universe at that moment where he supposes the Fiend first gazing down into it from the glorious opening at the zenith, and then plunging precipitate through its azure depths (III. 561—565) in quest of that particular spot in it where Man had his abode. That small Earth which is so conspicuous in the diagram, as being at the centre, either was not visible even to angelic eyes from such an amazing distance as the opening at the zenith of the Primum Mobile, or was not yet marked. The luminary that attracts Satan first, from its all-surpassing splendour, is the Sun. Though the tenant only of the fourth of the Spheres, this luminary so far surpasses all others in majesty that it seems like the King not only of the seven planetary Orbs, but of all the ten. It seems the very God of the whole new Universe — shooting its radiance even through the beds of the stars, as far as the Primum Mobile itself (III. 571—587). It is thither, accordingly, that Satan bends his flight; it is on this of all the bodies in the new Universe that he first alights; and it is only after the Angel Uriel, whom he there encounters, and who does not recognise him in his disguise, has pointed out to him the Earth shining at a distance in the sunlight (III. 722—724) that he knows the exact scene of his further labours. Thus informed, he wings off again from the Sun's body, and, wheeling his steep flight towards the Earth, alights at length on the top of Niphates, near Eden.

There is no need to follow the action of the poem farther in this Introduction. All that takes place after the arrival of Satan on the Earth — all that portion of the story that is enacted within the bounds of Eden or of Paradise — the reader can without difficulty make out for himself; or any such incidental elucidation as may be requisite will easily occur to him. It is necessary only to take account here of certain final modifications in Milton's imaginary physical structure of the Universe, which take place after the Tempter has succeeded in his enterprise and Man has fallen: — In the first place there is then established — what did not exist before — a permanent communication between Hell and the new Universe. When Satan had come up through Chaos from Hell-gate, he had done so with toil and difficulty, as one exploring his way; but no sooner had he succeeded in his mission than Sin and Death, whom he had left at Hell-gate, felt themselves instinctively aware of his success, and of the necessity there would thenceforward be for a distinct road between Hell and the new World, by which all the Infernals might go and come. Accordingly (X. 282—324) they construct such a road — a wonderful causeway or bridge from Hell-gate, right through or over Chaos, to that exact part of the outside of the new Universe where Satan had first alighted, — *i.e.* not to its nadir, but to some point near its zenith, where there is the break or orifice in the Primum

Mobile towards the Empyrean. And what is the consequence of this vast alteration in the physical structure of the Universe? The consequence is that the Infernal host are no longer confined to Hell, but possess also the new Universe, like an additional island or pleasure-domain, up in Chaos, and on the very confines of their former home, the Empyrean. Preferring this conquest to their proper empire in Hell, they are thenceforward perhaps more frequently in our World than in Hell, winging through its various Spheres, but chiefly inhabiting the Air round our central Earth. But this causey from Hell to the World, constructed by Sin and Death, is not the only modification of the physical Universe consequent on the Fall. The interior of the Human World as it hangs from the Empyrean receives some alterations for the worse by the decree of the Almighty Himself. The elements immediately round the Earth become harsher and more malignant; the planetary and starry Spheres are so influenced that thenceforward planets and stars look inward upon the central Earth with aspects of malevolence; nay, perhaps it was now first that, either by a heaving askance of the Earth from its former position, or by a change in the Sun's path, the ecliptic became oblique to the equator (x. 651—691). All this is apart from changes in the actual body of the Earth, including the obliteration of the site of the desecrated Paradise, and the outbreak of virulence among all things animate.

↓ From the foregoing sketch, it will be seen that, while the poem is properly enough, as the name *Paradise Lost* indicates, the tragical story of the temptation and fall of the human race in its first parents, yet this story is included in a more comprehensive epic, of which the rebel Archangel is the hero, and the theatre of which is nothing less than Universal Infinitude. While the consummation, as regards Man, is the loss of innocence and Eden, and the liability to Death, the consummation, as regards Satan, is more in the nature of a triumph. He has succeeded in *his* enterprise. He has vitiated the new World at its beginning, and he has added it as a conquest to the Hell which had been assigned to him and his for their only proper realm. True, in the very hour of his triumph a curse has been pronounced upon him; he and his host experience a farther abasement of their being by transmutation into the image of the Serpent; and he and they are left with the expectation of a time when their supposed conquest will be snatched from them, and they will be driven in ignominy back to whence they came. Still, for the present, and until that "greater Man" arise who is to restore the human race, and be the final and universal victor, they are left in successful possession. Whatever the sequel is to be (and it is foreshadowed in vision in the two last books), the Epic has here reached its natural close. Its purpose was to furnish the imagination with such a story of transcendent construction as should connect the mysteries of the inconceivable and immeasurable universe anterior to Time and to Man with the traditions and experience of our particular planet. This is accomplished by fastening the imagination on one great being, supposed to belong to the thronging multitudes of the angelic race that peopled the Empyrean before our World was created; by following this being in his actions as a rebel in Heaven and then as an exile into Hell; and by leaving him at last so far in possession of the new Universe of Man that thenceforward his part as an Archangel is well-nigh forgotten, and he is content with his new and degraded function as the Devil of mere terrestrial regions. Thenceforward

he and his are to dwell more in these terrestrial regions, and particularly in the air, than in Hell—mingling themselves devilishly in human affairs, and even, by a splendid stroke of diabolic policy, enjoying the worship of men while securing their ruin, by passing themselves off as gods and demigods of all kinds of mongrel mythologies. That this is the main course and purport of the Epic will be perceived all the more clearly if the reader will note how much of the action, though it all bears ultimately on the fate of Earth, takes place away from the Earth altogether, and at a rate different from that of earthly causation—in the Empyrean, in Hell, in Chaos, or among the orbs and starry interspaces of the entire Cosmos. The portions of the poem which are occupied with descriptions of Eden and Paradise and the relation of events there are attractive from their peculiar beauty, but they amount to but a fragment of the whole.

One result which ought to follow from a right understanding of the scheme of the Poem, as it has been here exhibited, is a truer idea of the place which Milton's Epic holds among the great poems of the world, and also of its relation to his total mind and life. What is that in any man which is highest, deepest, and most essential in him—which governs all, reveals all, gives the key to all that he thinks or is? What but his way of thinking or feeling, whatever it may be, respecting the relation or non-relation of the whole visible or physical world to that which is boundless, invisible, unfeared, metaphysical? What he thinks or feels on this subject is essentially his philosophy; if he abstains from thinking on it at all, then that very abstinence is equally his philosophy. And what greater character can there be in a poem, or in any other work of art, than that it truly conveys the author's highest mind or mood on this subject—his theory, if he has one, or his antipathy to any theory, should that be the case? It may be doubted whether the world ever has taken a poem to its larger heart, or placed it in the list of the poems spoken of as great, except from a perception, more or less conscious, that it possessed, in a notable degree, this characteristic—that it was the expression, in some form or other, under whatever nominal theme, and with whatever intermixture of matter, of the intimate personal philosophy of a great living mind. To suppose, at all events, that Milton could have put forth any poem of large extent uninformed by his deepest and most serious philosophy of life and of the world, is to know nothing whatever about him. The ingenious construction of a fiction that should anyhow entertain the world, and which the author might behold floating away, detached from himself, as a beautifully-blown bubble—this was not *his* notion of poesy. Into whatever he wrote he was sure to put as much of *himself* as possible; and into that work which he intended to be his greatest it would have been safe to predict that he would studiously put the very most of himself. It would have been safe to predict that he would make it not only a phantasy or tale of majestic proportions, with which the human race might regale its leisure, but also a bequest of his own thoughts and speculations on the greatest subjects interesting to man—a kind of testament to posterity that it was thus and thus that he, Milton, veteran and blind, had learnt to think on such subjects, and dared advise the world for ever to think also. True, from the nature of the case, a poet must express himself on such subjects not so much in direct propositions addressed to the reason as in figurative conceptions, phantasmagories, or allegories, imagined

individually and connectedly in accordance with his intellectual intention. In as far, therefore, as *Paradise Lost* is an expression of Milton's habitual mode of thought respecting Man and History in relation to an eternal and unknown Infinity, it is so by way of what the Germans call *Vorstellung* (popular image or representation), and not by way of *Begriff* (pure or philosophic notion). Whether on such subjects it is possible to address the human mind at all except through visual or other sensuous images, and whether the most abstract language of philosophers consists of anything else than such images reduced to dust and made colourless, needs not here be inquired. Whatever might have been Milton's abstract theory on any such subject, it was certainly in the nature of his genius to express it in a *Vorstellung*. He had faith in this method as that by which the collective soul of man had been impressed and ruled in all ages, and would be impressed and ruled to the end of time. He more than once inserts in the poem passages cautioning the reader that his descriptions and narratives of supra-mundane scenes and events are not to be taken literally, but only symbolically. Thus, when the Archangel Raphael, yielding to Adam's request, begins, after a pause, his narration of the events that had taken place in the Empyrean Heaven before the creation of Man and his Universe, he is made (v. 563—576) to preface the narration with these words:—

“ High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of Men —
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense the invisible exploits
 Of varying 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 dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best — though what if Earth
 Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
 Each to other like more than on Earth is thought? ”

Let *Paradise Lost*, then, be called a *Vorstellung*. But what a *Vorstellung* it is! That World of Man, the world of all our stars and starry transparencies, hung but drop-like after all from the Empyrean; the great Empyrean itself, “undetermined square or round,” so that, though we do diagram it for form's sake, it is beyond all power of diagram; Hell, far beneath but still measurably far, with its outcast infernal Powers tending disastrously upwards or tugging all downwards; finally, between the Empyrean and Hell, that blustering blackness of an unimaginable Chaos, roaring around the Mundane Sphere, and assaulting everlastingly its outermost bosses, but unable to break through, or to disturb the serenity of the golden poise that steadies it from the zenith — what phantasmagory more truly all-significant than this has the imagination of poet ever conceived? What expanse of space, comparable to this for vastness, has any other poet presumed to occupy with a coherent story? The physical universe of Dante's great poem would go into a nutshell as compared with that to which the imagination must stretch itself out in *Paradise Lost*. In this respect — in respect of the extent of physical immensity through which the poem ranges, and which it orbs forth with soul-dilating clearness and divides with never-to-be-obliterated accuracy before the eye — no possible poem can ever overpass it. And then the story itself! What story mightier, or

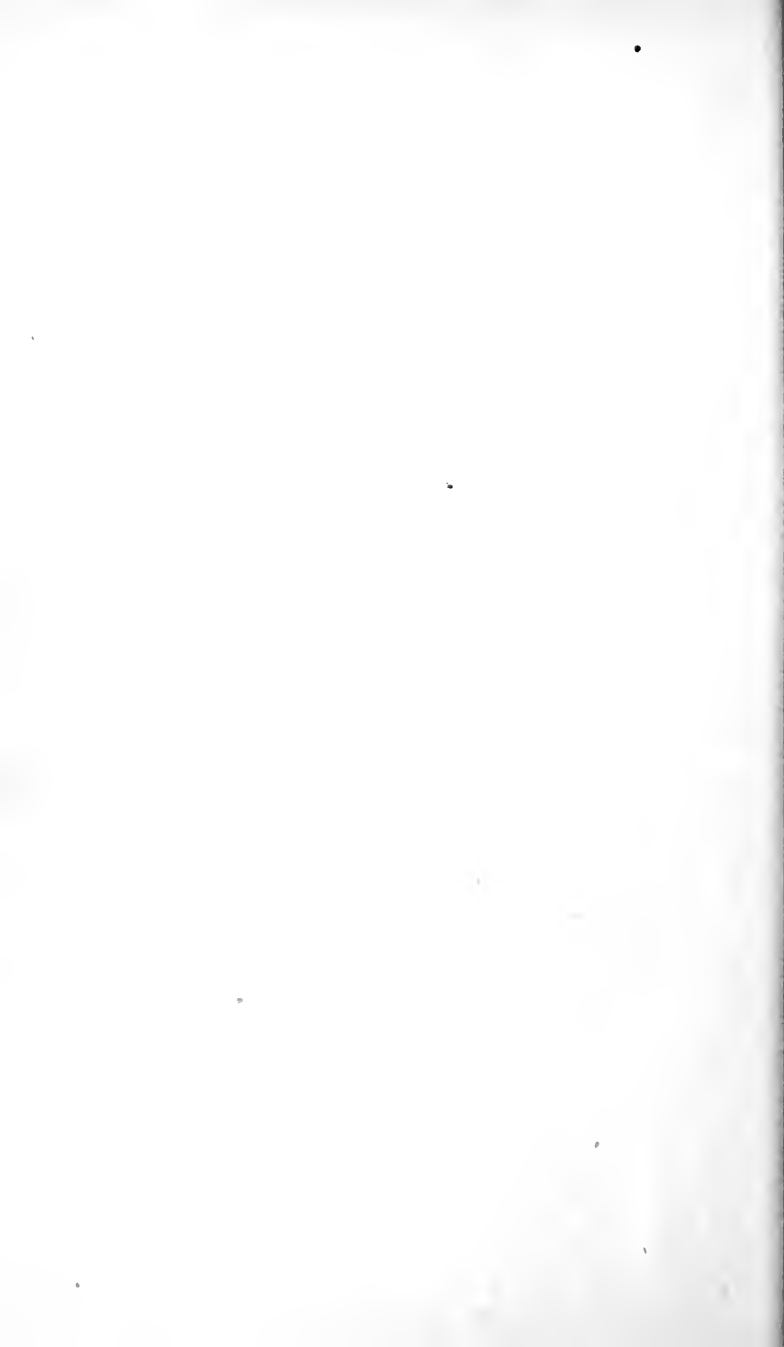
more full of meaning, can there ever be than that of the Archangel rebelling in Heaven, degraded from Heaven into Hell, reascending from Hell to the Human Universe, winging through the starry spaces of that Universe, and at last possessing himself of our central Earth, and impregnating its incipient history with the spirit of Evil? Vastness of scene and power of story, together, little wonder that the poem should have so impressed the world: little wonder that it should now be Milton's Satan, and Milton's narrative of the Creation in its various transcendental connexions, that are in possession of the British imagination, rather than the strict Biblical accounts from which Milton so scrupulously derived the hints to which he gave such marvellous expansion!

But will the power of the poem be permanent? Grand conception as it is, was it not a conception framed too much in congruity with special beliefs and modes of thinking of Milton's own age to retain its efficiency for ever? If the matters it symbolized are matters which the human imagination, and the reason of man in its most exalted mood, must ever strive to symbolize in some form or other, may not the very definiteness, the blazing visual exactness, of Milton's symbolization jar on modern modes of thought? Do we not desire, in our days also, to be left to our own liberty of symbolizing in these matters, and may it not be well to prefer, in the main, symbolisms the least fixed, the least sensuous, the most fluent and cloud-like, the most tremulous to every touch of new idea or new feeling? To this objection — an objection, however, which would apply to all great Poetry and Art whatever, and would affect the paintings of Michael Angelo, for example, as much as the *Paradise Lost* of Milton — something must be conceded. Changes in human ideas since the poem was written *have* thrown the poem, or parts of it, farther out of keeping with the demands of the modern imagination than it can have been with the requirements of Milton's contemporaries. Not to speak of the direct traces in it of a peculiar theology in the form of speeches and arguments (in which kind, however, there is less that need really be obsolete than some theological critics have asserted), the Ptolemaism of Milton's astronomical scheme would alone put the poem somewhat in conflict with the educated modern conceptions of physical Nature. No longer now is the Mundane Universe thought of as a definite succession of Orbs round the globe of Earth. No longer now can the fancy of man be stayed at any distance, however immense, by an imaginary Primum Mobile or outermost shell, beyond which all is Chaos. The Primum Mobile has been for ever burst; and into the Chaos supposed to be beyond it the imagination has voyaged out and still out, finding no Chaos, and no sign of shore or boundary, but only the same ocean of transparent space, with firmaments for its scattered islands, and such islands still rising to view on every farthest horizon. Thus accustomed to the idea of Nature as boundless, the mind, in one of its moods, may *refuse* to conceive it as bounded, and may regard the attempt to do so as a treason against pure truth. All this must be conceded, though the effects of the concession will not stop at *Paradise Lost*. But there are other moods of the mind — moral and spiritual moods — which poesy is bound to serve; and, just as Milton, in the interest of these, knowingly and almost avowedly repudiated the obligation of consistency with physical science as known to himself, and set up a great symbolic phantasy, so to this day the phantasy which he did set up has, for those anyway like-minded to him, lost none of its sublime significance. For all such is not that physical

Universe, which we have learnt not to bound, still, in its inconceivable totality, but as a drop hung from the Empyrean; is not darkness around it; is not Hell beneath it? And what though all are not such? Is it not the highest function of a book to perpetuate like-mindedness to its author after he is gone, and may not *Paradise Lost* be doing this? Nay, and what though the relevancy of the poem to the present soul of the world should have been more impaired by the lapse of time and the change of ideas than we have admitted it to be, and much of the interest of it, as of all the other great poems of the world, should now be *historical*? Even so what interest it possesses! What a portrait, what a study, of a great English mind of the seventeenth century it brings before us! "I wonder not so much at the poem itself, though worthy "of all wonder," says Bentley in the preface to his Edition of the poem, "as "that the author could so abstract his thoughts from his own troubles as to "be able to make it — that, confined in a narrow and to him a dark chamber, "surrounded with cares and fears, he could expatiate at large through the "compass of the whole Universe, and through all Heaven beyond it, and "could survey all periods of time from before the creation to the consum- "mation of all things. This theory, no doubt, was a great solace to him "in his affliction, but it shows in him a greater strength of spirit, that made "him capable of such a solace. And it would almost seem to me to be "peculiar to him, had not experience by others taught me that there is that "power in the human mind, supported with innocence and *conscia virtus*, "that can make it shake off all outward uneasiness and involve itself secure "and pleased in its own integrity and entertainment." It is refreshing to be able to quote from the great scholar and critic words showing so deep an appreciation by him of the real significance of the poem which, as an editor, he mangled. Whatever the *Paradise Lost* is, it is, as Bentley here points out, a monument of almost unexampled magnanimity.

THE VERSE.

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



COMMENDATORY VERSES,

PREFIXED TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN *PARADISUM AMISSAM* SUMMI POETÆ
JOHANNIS MILTONI.

QUI legis *Amissam Paradisum*, grandia magni
Carmina Miltoni, quid nisi cuncta legis?
Res cunctas, et cunctarum primordia rerum,
Et fata, et fines, continet iste liber.
Intima panduntur magni penetralia Mundi,
Scribitur et toto quicquid in Orbe latet;
Terræque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum,
Sulphureumque Erebi flammivomumque specus;
Quæque colunt terras, pontumque, et Tartara cæca,
Quæque colunt summi lucida regna poli;
Et quodcunque ullis conclusum est finibus usquam;
Et sine fine Chaos, et sine fine Deus;
Et sine fine magis, si quid magis est sine fine,
In Christo erga homines conciliatus amor.
Hæc qui speraret quis crederet esse futurum?
Et tamen hæc hodie terra Britannia legit.
O quantos in bella duces, quæ protulit arma!
Quæ canit, et quantâ prælia dira tubâ!
Cœlestes acies, atque in certamine Cœlum!
Et quæ cœlestes pugna deceret agros!
Quantus in ætheriis tollit se Lucifer armis,
Atque ipso graditur vix Michaelis minor!
Quantis et quam funestis concurritur iris,
Dum ferus hic stellas protegit, ille rapit!
Dum vulsos montes ceu tela reciproca torquent,
Et non mortali desuper igne pluunt,
Stat dubius cui se parti concedat Olympus,
Et metuit pugnae non superesse suæ.
At simul in cœlis Messiaë insignia fulgent,
Et currus animæ, armaque digna Deo.
Horrendumque rotæ strident, et sæva rotarum
Erumpunt torvis fulgura luminibus,
Et flammæ vibrant, et vera tonitrua rauco
Admistis flammis insonuere polo,

Excidit attonitis mens omnis, et impetus omnis,
 Et cassis dextris irrita tela cadunt;
 Ad pœnas fugiunt, et, ceu foret Orcus asyllum,
 Infernis certant condere se tenebris.
 Cedite, Romani Scriptores; cedite, Graii;
 Et quos fama recens vel celebravit anus:
 Hæc quicumque leget tantum cecinisse putabit
 Mæonidem ranas, Virgilium culices.

S. B., M.D.

ON PARADISE LOST.

WHEN I beheld the Poet blind, yet bold,
 In slender book his vast design unfold —
 Messiah crowned, God's reconciled decree,
 Rebelling Angels, the Forbidden Tree,
 Heaven, Hell, Earth, Chaos, All — the argument
 Held me a while misdoubting his intent,
 That he would ruin (for I saw him strong)
 The sacred truths to fable and old song
 (So Samson groped the temple's posts in spite),
 The world o'erwhelming to revenge his sight.

Yet, as I read, soon growing less severe,
 I liked his project, the success did fear —
 Through that wide field how he his way should find
 O'er which lame Faith leads Understanding blind;
 Lest he perplexed the things he would explain,
 And what was easy he should render vain.

Or, if a work so infinite he spanned,
 Jealous I was that some less skilful hand
 (Such as disquiet always what is well,
 And by ill-imitating would excel,
 Might hence presume the whole Creation's day
 To change in scenes, and show it in a play.

Pardon me, mighty Poet; nor despise
 My causeless, yet not impious, surmise.
 But I am now convinced, and none will dare
 Within thy labours to pretend a share.
 Thou hast not missed one thought that could be fit,
 And all that was improper dost omit;
 So that no room is here for writers left,
 But to detect their ignorance or theft.

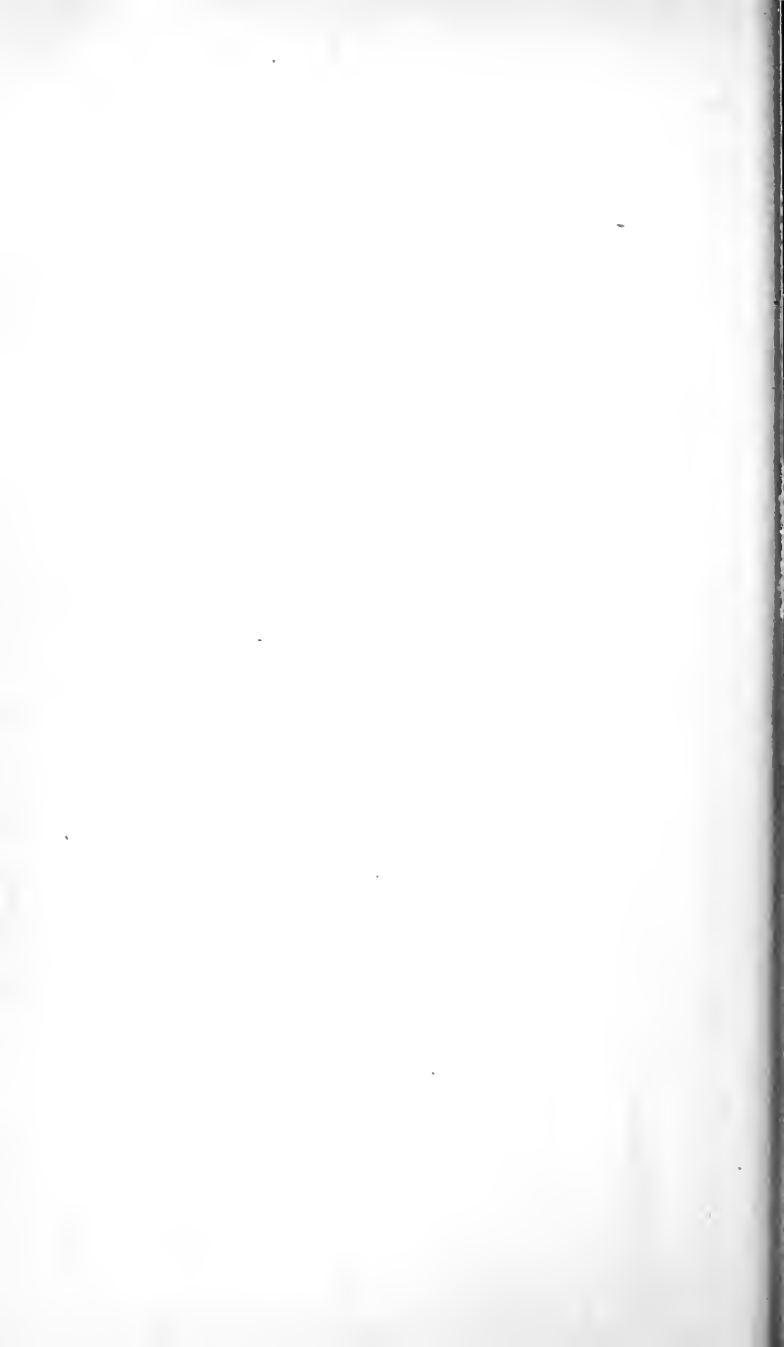
The majesty which through thy work doth reign
 Draws the devout, deterring the profane.
 And things divine thou treat'st of in such state
 As them preserves, and thee, inviolate.
 At once delight and horror on us seize;

Thou sing'st with so much gravity and ease,
And above human flight dost soar aloft
With plume so strong, so equal, and so soft.
The bird named from the Paradise you sing
So never flags, but always keeps on wing.

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

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

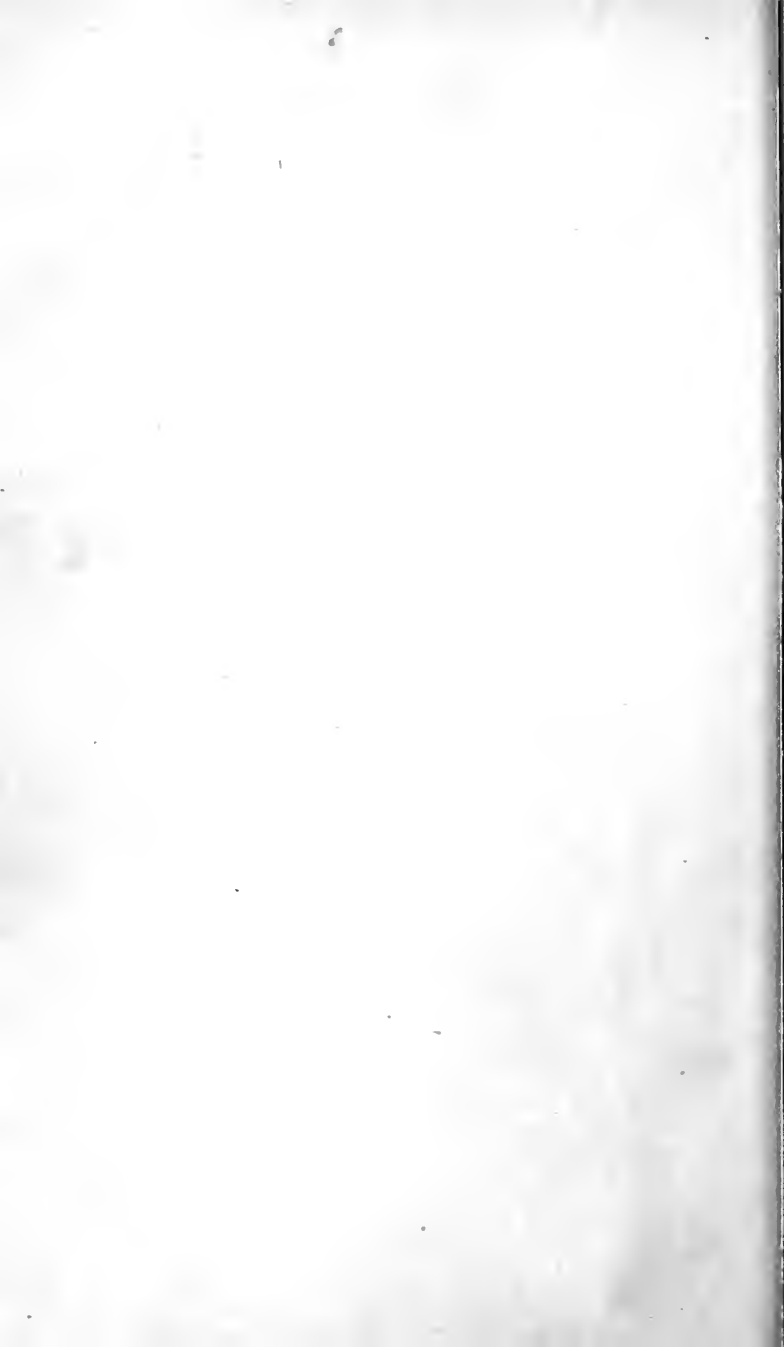
A. M.



PARADISE LOST:

A POEM IN TWELVE BOOKS.

THE AUTHOR
JOHN MILTON.



PARADISE LOST.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

OF MAN'S first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed
In the beginning how the heavens and earth
Rose out of Chaos; or, if Sion hill
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

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And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer
 Before all temples the upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
 Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread, 20
 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 highth of this great argument,
 I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to men.

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

The infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,
 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host
 Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,
 He trusted to have equalled the Most High, 40
 If he opposed, and, with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,
 Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky,
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
 In adamant chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.

Nine times the space that measures day and night 50
 To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,
 Lay vanquished, rolling in the fiery gulf,
 Confounded, though immortal. But his doom
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.
 At once, as far as Angel's ken, he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild. 60
 A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames
 No light; but rather darkness visible

Served only to discover sights of woe,
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes
That comes to all, but torture without end
Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
With ever-burning sulphur unconsumed.

Such place Eternal Justice had prepared
For those rebellious; here their prison ordained
In utter darkness, and their portion set,
As far removed from God and light of Heaven
As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.

Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell!

There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed

With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,

He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,

One next himself in power, and next in crime,

Long after known in Palestine, and named

BEELZEBUB. To whom the Arch-Enemy,

And thence in Heaven called SATAN, with bold words

Breaking the horrid silence, thus began: —

“If thou beest he — but Oh how fallen! how changed

From him! — who, in the happy realms of light,

Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine

Myriads, though bright — if he whom mutual league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope

And hazard in the glorious enterprise,

Joined with me once, now misery hath joined

In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest

From what highth fallen: so much the stronger proved

He with his thunder: and till then who knew

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

Nor what the potent Victor in his rage

Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,

Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,

And high disdain from sense of injured merit,

That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,

And to the fierce contention brought along

Innumerable force of Spirits armed,

That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,

His utmost power with adverse power opposed

In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,

And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?

All is not lost — the unconquerable will,

And study of revenge, immortal hate,

And courage never to submit or yield:

And what is else not to be overcome.

That glory never shall his wrath or might

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Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power
 Who, from the terror of this arm, so late
 Doubted his empire — that were low indeed;
 That were an ignominy and shame beneath
 This downfall; since, by fate, the strength of Gods,
 And this empyreal substance, cannot fail;
 Since, through experience of this great event,
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanced,
 We may with more successful hope resolve
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand Foe,
 Who now triumphs, and in the excess of joy
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven.”

120

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

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

130

As far as Gods and Heavenly Essences
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns,
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.

140

But what if He our Conqueror (whom I now
 Of force believe almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o’erpowered such force as ours)
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire,
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his 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 undiminished, or eternal being
 To undergo eternal punishment?”

150

Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied:—
 “Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,

Doing or suffering: but of this be sure—
 To do aught good never will be our task,
But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160
 As being the contrary to His high will
 Whom we resist. If then his providence
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,
 Our labour must be to pervert that end,
 And out of good still to find means of evil;
 Which ofttimes may succeed so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.
 But see! the angry Victor hath recalled
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
 Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid
 The fiery surge that from the precipice
 Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,
 Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage,
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.
 Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn
 Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe. 180
 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, 190
 If not what resolution from despair.”
 Thus Satan, talking to his nearest mate,
 With head uplift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
 Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,
 Briareos or Typhon, whom the den
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200
 Leviathan, which God of all his works
 Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream.
 Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,
 The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,

Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell,
 With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind,
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays.
 So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,
 Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence
 Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought
 Evil to others, and enraged might see
 How all his malice served but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shewn
 On Man by him seduced, but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured. 210

Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rolled
 In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
 He lights—if it were land that ever burned
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,
 And such appeared in hue as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
 Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
 And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,
 Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
 And leave a singèd bottom all involved
 With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next mate;
 Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood
 As* gods, and by their own recovered strength, 240
 Not by the sufferance of supernal power.

“Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,”
 Said then the lost Archangel, “this the seat
 That we must change for Heaven?—this mournful gloom
 For that celestial light? Be it so, since He
 Who now is sovran can dispose and bid
 What shall be right: farthest from Him is best,
 Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
 Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail,
Infernal World!—and thou, profoudest Hell, 250

Receive thy new possessor — one who brings
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.
 The mind is its own place, and in itself
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven.

What matter where, if I be still the same,

And what I should be, all but less than he
 Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least

We shall be free; the Almighty hath not built

Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:

Here we may reign secure; and, in my choice,

To reign is worth ambition, though in Hell:

Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.

But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,

The associates and co-partners of our loss,

Lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool,

And call them not to share with us their part

In this unhappy mansion, or once more

With rallied arms to try what may be yet

Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?"

260

270

So Satan spake; and him Beelzebub

Thus answered: — "Leader of those armies bright

Which, but the Omnipotent, none could have foiled!

If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge

Of hope in fears and dangers — heard so oft

In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge

Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults

Their surest signal — they will soon resume

New courage and revive, though now they lie

Grovvelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire,

As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;

No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth!"

280

He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend

Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous shield,

Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round,

Behind him cast. The broad circumference

Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb

Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views

At evening, from the top of Fesolè,

Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands,

Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.

His spear — to equal which the tallest pine

Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast

Of some great ammiral, were but a wand —

He walked with, to support uneasy steps

Over the burning marle, not like those steps

On Heaven's azure; and the torrid clime

Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire.

290

- Nathless he so endured, till on the beach
 Of that inflamèd sea he stood, and called 300
 His legions — Angel Forms, who lay entranced
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades
 High over-arched embower; or scattered sedge
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed
 Hath vexed the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'ertrew
 Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld 310
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses
 And broken chariot-wheels. So thick bestrown,
 Abject and lost, lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He called so loud that all the hollow deep
 Of Hell resounded: — “Princes, Potentates,
 Warriors, the Flower of Heaven — once yours; now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn
 To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds
 Cherub and Seraph rolling in the flood
 With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon
 His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern
 The advantage, and, descending, tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linkèd thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf? —
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!” 330
- They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch,
 On duty sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
 Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy cloud 340
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like Night, and darkened all the land of Nile;
 So numberless were those bad Angels seen
 Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell,

'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;
 Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain:
 A multitude like which the populous North
 Poured never from her frozen loins to pass
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the South, and spread
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands.

350

Forthwith, from every squadron and each band,
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
 Their great Commander—godlike Shapes, and Forms
 Excelling human; princely Dignities;

360

And Powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones,
 Though of their names in Heavenly records now
 Be no memorial, blotted out and rased
 By their rebellion from the Books of Life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 Got them new names, till, wandering o'er the earth,
 Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
 God their Creator, and the invisible
 Glory of Him that made them to transform
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorned
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,
 And devils to adore for deities:

370

Then were they known to men by various names,
 And various idols through the Heathen World.

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

380

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

390

Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
 Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,
 Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire
 To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
 Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,
 In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
 Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400
 Of Solomon he led by fraud to build
 His temple right against the temple of God
 On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
 And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell.
 Next *Chemos*, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,
 From Aroar to Nebo and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
 The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines,
 And Elealè to the Asphaltic Pool: 410
 Peor his other name, when he enticed
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate,
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.
 With these came they who, from the bordering flood
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*—those male,
 These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure,
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condensed, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their aery purposes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their Living Strength, and unrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To bestial gods; for which their heads, as low
 Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came *Astoreth*, whom the Phœnicians called
 Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;

To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood
 Her temple on the offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious king whose heart, though large,
 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell
 To idols foul. *Thammuz* came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day,
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
 Of *Thammuz* yearly wounded: the love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led,
 His eye surveyed the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one
 Who mourned in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,
 In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge, 460
 Where he fell flat and shamed his worshipers:
Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
 And downward fish; yet had his temple high
 Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon,
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him followed *Rimmon*, whose delightful seat
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.
 He also against the house of God was bold: 470
 A leper once he lost, and gained a king—
 Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew
 God's altar to disparage and displace
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn
 His odious offerings, and adore the gods
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared
 A crew who, under names of old renown—
Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train—
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused 480
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek
 Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape
 The infection, when their borrowed gold composed
 The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan,
 Likening his Maker to the grazèd ox—

Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed
From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke
Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.

Belial came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd

490

Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love

Vice for itself. To him no temple stood

Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he

In temples and at altars, when the priest

Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled

With lust and violence the house of God?

In courts and palaces he also reigns,

And in luxurious cities, where the noise

Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,

And injury and outrage; and, when night

500

Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons

Of *Belial*, flown with insolence and wine.

Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night

In Gibeah, where the hospitable door

Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape.

These were the prime in order and in might:

The rest were long to tell; though far renowned

The Ionian gods—of Javan's issue held

Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,

Their boasted parents;—*Titan*, Heaven's first-born,

510

With his enormous brood, and birthright seized

By younger *Saturn*: he from mightier Jove,

His own and Rhea's son, like measure found;

So *Jove* usurping reigned. These, first in Crete

And *Ida* known, thence on the snowy top

Of cold Olympus ruled the middle air,

Their highest heaven; or on the Delphian cliff,

Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds

Of Doric land; or who with Saturn old

Fled over Adria to the Hesperian fields,

520

And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost Isles.

All these and more came flocking; but with looks

Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared

Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief

Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost

In loss itself; which on his countenance cast

Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride

Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore

Semblance of worth, not substance, gently raised

Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears:

530

Then straight commands that, at the warlike sound

Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared

His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed

Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
 The imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich emblazed,
 Seraphic arms and trophies; all the while
 Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds: 540
 At which the universal host up-sent
 A shout that tore Hell's concave, and beyond
 Frighted the reign of Chaos and old Night.
 All in a moment through the gloom were seen
 Ten thousand banners rise into the air,
 With orient colours waving: with them rose
 A forest huge of spears; and thronging helms
 Appeared, and serried shields in thick array
 Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move
 In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 550
 Of flutes and soft recorders—such as raised
 To highth of noblest temper heroes old
 Arming to battle, and instead of rage
 Deliberate valour breathed, firm, and unmoved
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat;
 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 fixèd thought, 560
 Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now
 Advanced in view they stand—a horrid front
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
 Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield,
 Awaiting what command their mighty Chief
 Had to impose. He through the armèd files
 Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse
 The whole battalion views—their order due,
 Their visages and stature as of gods; 570
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,
 Glories: for never, since created Man,
 Met such embodied force as, named with these,
 Could merit more than that small infantry
 Warred on by cranes—though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
 Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580

... with British and Armoric knights;
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,
 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 observed
 Their dread Commander. He, above the rest
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent,
 Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost
 All her original brightness, nor appeared
 Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen
 Looks through the horizontal misty air
 Shorn of his beams, or, from behind the moon,
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
 Perplexes monarchs. Darkened so, yet shone
 Above them all the Archangel: but his face
 Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
 Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast
 Signs of remorse and passion, to behold
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
 (Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned
 For ever now to have their lot in pain—
 Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced
 Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung
 For his revolt—yet faithful how they stood,
 Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire
 Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,
 With singèd top their stately growth, though bare,
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared
 To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.
 Thrice he assayed, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
 Tears, such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last
 Words interwove with sighs found out their way:—

“O myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers
 Matchless, but with the Almighty!—and that strife
 Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,
 As this place testifies, and this dire change,
 hateful to utter. But what power of mind,
 Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth

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Of knowledge past or present, could have feared
 How such united force of gods, how such
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile
 Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to re-ascend,
 Self-raised, and re-possess their native seat?
 For me, be witness all the host of Heaven,
 If counsels different, or danger shunned
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns
 Monarch in Heaven till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,
 Consent or custom, and his regal state 640
 Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed—
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war provoked: our better part remains
To work in close design, by fraud or guile;
 What force effected not; that he no less
 At length from us may find, Who overcomes
By force hath overcome but half his foe.
 Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife 650
 There went a fame in Heaven that He ere long
 Intended to create, and therein plant
 A generation whom his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven.
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps
 Our first eruption—thither, or elsewhere;
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired;
 For who can think submission? War, then, war 660
 Open or understood, must be resolved.”
 He spake; and, to confirm his words, out-flew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze
 Far round illumined Hell. Highly they raged
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.
 There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top
 Belched fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf—undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
 The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed, 670

A numerous brigad hastened: as when bands
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickaxe armed,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on—
 Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell 680
 From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
 Were always downward bent, admiring more
 The riches of Heaven's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed
 In vision beatific. By him first
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught,
 Ransacked the Centre, and with impious hands
 Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew
 Opened into the hill a spacious wound,
 And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire 690
 That riches grow in Hell; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame,
 And strength, and art, are easily outdone
 By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they, with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable, scarce perform. 700
 Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepared,
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
 Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.
 A third as soon had formed within the ground
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet—
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid
 With golden architrave; nor did there want
 Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven:
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence
 Equalled in all their glories, to enshrine
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat 720
 Their kings, when Egypt with Assyria strove

In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile
 Stood fixed her stately highth; and straight the doors,
 Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
 Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth
 And level pavement: from the archèd 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 entered; and the work some praise,
 And some the architect. His hand was known
 In Heaven by many a towered structure high,
 Where sceptred Angels held their residence,
 And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the Orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unadored
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land
 Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell
 From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day, and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star,
 On Lemnos, the Ægæan isle. Thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor aught availed him now
 To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent,
 With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.

Palace of Jove

730

740

750

Meanwhile the wingèd Haralds, by command
 Of sovran power, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 A solemn council forthwith to be held
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called
 From every band and squarèd regiment
 By place or choice the worthiest: they anon
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came
 Attended. All access was thronged; the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
 (Though like a covered field, where champions bold
 Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's chair
 Defied the best of Panim chivalry
 To mortal combat, or career with lance),
 Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,
 Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees

760

In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770
 In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer
 Their state-affairs: so thick the aery crowd
 Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,
 Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed
 In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room 780
 Throng numberless—like that pygmean race
 Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while overhead the Moon
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth
 Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms
 Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large, 790
 Though without number still, amidst the hall
 Of that infernal court. But far within,
 And in their own dimensions like themselves,
 The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
 In close recess and secret conclave sat,
 A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,
 Frequent and full. After short silence then,
 And summons read, the great consult began.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK II.

THE ARGUMENT.

The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle be to be hazarded for the recovery of Heaven: some advise it, others dissuade. A third proposal is preferred, mentioned before by Satan — to search the truth of that prophecy or tradition in Heaven concerning another world, and another kind of creature, equal, or not much inferior, to themselves, about this time to be created. Their doubt who shall be sent on this difficult search: Satan, their chief, undertakes alone the voyage; is honoured and applauded. The council thus ended, the rest betake them several ways and to several employments, as their inclinations lead them, to entertain the time till Satan return. He passes on his journey to Hell-gates; finds them shut, and who sat there to guard them; by whom at length they are opened, and discover to him the great gulf between Hell and Heaven. With what difficulty he passes through, directed by Chaos, the Power of that place, to the sight of this new World which he sought.

HIGH on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat, by merit raised
To that bad eminence; and, from despair
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
Vain war with Heaven; and, by success untaught,
His proud imaginations thus displayed:—

10

“Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heaven!—
For, since no deep within her gulf can hold
Immortal vigour, though oppressed and fallen,
I give not Heaven for lost: from this descent
Celestial Virtues rising will appear
More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
And trust themselves to fear no second fate!—
Me though just right, and the fixed laws of Heaven,
Did first create your leader—next, free choice,
With what besides in council or in fight
Hath been achieved of merit—yet this loss,
Thus far at least recovered, hath much more

20

Established in a safe, unenvied throne,
 Yielded with full consent. The happier state
 In Heaven, which follows dignity, might draw
 Envy from each inferior; but who here
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes
 Foremost to stand against the Thunderer's aim
 Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
 Of endless pain? Where there is, then, no good 30
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
 From faction: for none sure will claim in Hell
 Precedence; none whose portion is so small
 Of present pain that with ambitious mind
 Will covet more! With this advantage, then,
 { To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
More than can be in Heaven, we now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old,
 Surer to prosper than prosperity
 Could have assured us; and by what best way, 40
 Whether of open war or covert guile,
 We now debate. Who can advise may speak."

He ceased; and next him Moloch, sceptred king,
 Stood up — the strongest and the fiercest Spirit
 That fought in Heaven, now fiercer by despair. ✓
 His trust was with the Eternal to be deemed
 Equal in strength, and rather than be less
 Cared not to be at all; with that care lost
 Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse,
 He recked not, and these words thereafter spake: — 50

“My sentence is for open war. Of wiles,
 • More unexpert, I boast not: them let those
 Contrive who need, or when they need; not now. ✓
 For, while they sit contriving, shall the rest —
 Millions that stand in arms, and longing wait
 The signal to ascend — sit lingering here,
 Heaven's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
 Accept this dark opprobrious den of shame,
 The prison of His tyranny who reigns
 By our delay? No! let us rather choose, 60
 Armed with Hell-flames and fury, all at once
 O'er Heaven's high towers to force resistless way,
 Turning our tortures into horrid arms
 Against the Torturer; when, to meet the noise
 Of his almighty engine, he shall hear
 Infernal thunder, and, for lightning, see
 Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
 Among his Angels, and his throne itself
 Mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire,

His own invented torments. But perhaps 70
 The way seems difficult, and steep to scale
 With upright wing against a higher foe! ✓
 Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench
 Of that forgetful lake benumb not still,
 That in our proper motion we ascend
 Up to our native seat; descent and fall
 To us is adverse. Who but felt of late,
 When the fierce foe hung on our broken rear
 Insulting, and pursued us through the Deep,
 With what compulsion and laborious flight 80
 We sunk thus low? The ascent is easy, then;
 The event is feared! Should we again provoke
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
 To our destruction, if there be in Hell
 Fear to be worse destroyed! What can be worse
 Than to dwell here, driven out from bliss, condemned
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
 Where pain of unextinguishable fire
 Must exercise us without hope of end
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge 90
 Inexorably, and the torturing hour,
 Calls us to penance? More destroyed than thus,
 We should be quite abolished, and expire. ✓
 What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
 His utmost ire? which, to the highth enraged,
 Will either quite consume us, and reduce
 To nothing this essential—happier far
 Than miserable to have eternal being!—
 Or, if our substance be indeed divine,
 And cannot cease to be, we are at worst 100
 On this side nothing; and by proof we feel
 Our power sufficient to disturb his Heaven,
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
 Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
 Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.” ✓
 He ended frowning, and his look denounced
 Desperate revenge, and battle dangerous
 To less than gods. On the other side up rose
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane.
 A fairer person lost not Heaven; he seemed 110
 For dignity composed, and high exploit. ✓
 But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
 Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low—
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds

Timorous and slothful. Yet he pleased the ear,
And with persuasive accent thus began:—

“I should be much for open war, O Peers,
As not behind in hate, if what was urged 120
Main reason to persuade immediate war
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast
Ominous conjecture on the whole success;
When he who most excels in fact of arms,
In what he counsels and in what excels
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
And utter dissolution, as the scope
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge. ✓
First, what revenge? The towers of Heaven are filled
With armèd watch, that render all access 130
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
Heaven’s purest light, yet our great Enemy,
All incorruptible, would on his throne
Sit unpolluted, and the ethereal mould, 140
Incapable of stain, would soon expel
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
Victorious. Thus repulsed, our final hope
Is flat despair: we must exasperate
The Almighty Victor to spend all his rage;
And that must end us; that must be our cure—
To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
To perish rather, swallowed up and lost 150
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, 160
Reserved, and destined to eternal woe;
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
What can we suffer worse?’ Is this, then, worst—

Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
 What when we fled amain, pursued and strook
 With Heaven's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The Deep to shelter us? This Hell then seemed
 A refuge from those wounds. Or when we lay
 Chained on the burning lake? That sure was worse. ✓
 What if the breath that kindled those grim fires, 170
 Awaked, should blow them into sevenfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames; or from above
 Should intermitted vengeance arm again
 His red right hand to plague us? What if all
 Her stores were opened, and this firmament
 Of Hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
 Impendent horrors, threatening hideous fall
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest, shall be hurled, 180
 Each on his rock transfixed, 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, unreprieved,
 Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse. ✓
 War, therefore, open or concealed, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With Him, or who deceive His mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? He from Heaven's highth 190
 All these our motions vain sees and derides,
 Not more almighty to resist our might
 Than wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles. ✓
 Shall we, then, live thus vile—the race of Heaven
 Thus trampled, thus expelled, to suffer here
 Chains and these torments? Better these than worse,
 By my advice; since fate inevitable
 Subdues us, and omnipotent decree,
 The Victor's will. To suffer, as to do,
 Our strength is equal; nor the law unjust 200
 That so ordains. This was at first resolved,
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall. ✓
 I laugh when those who at the spear are bold
 And venturous, if that fail them, shrink, and fear
 What yet they know must follow—to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqueror. This is now
 Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
 Our Supreme Foe in time may much remit 210

His anger, and perhaps, thus far removed,
 Not mind us not offending, satisfied
 With what is punished; whence these raging fires
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
 Our purer essence then will overcome
 Their noxious vapour; or, inured, not feel;
 Or, changed at length, and to the place conformed
 In temper and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat; and, void of pain,
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light; 220
 Besides what hope the never-ending flight
 Of future days may bring, what chance, what change
 Worth waiting—since our present lot appears
 For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,
 If we procure not to ourselves more woe.” ✓
 Thus Belial, with words clothed in reason's garb,
 Counsell'd ignoble ease and peaceful sloth,
 Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:—
 “Either to disenthronè the King of Heaven
 We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
 Our own right lost. Him to unthrone we then
 May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yield
 To fickle Chance, and Chaos judge the strife.
 The former, vain to hope, argues as vain
 The latter; for what place can be for us
 Within Heaven's bound, unless Heaven's Lord Supreme
 We overpower? Suppose he should relent,
 And publish grace to all, on promise made
 Of new subjection; with what eyes could we
 Stand in his presence humble, and receive 240
 Strict laws imposed, to celebrate his throne
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
 Forced Halleluiahs, while he lordly sits
 Our envied sovràn, and his altar breathes
 Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers,
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task
 In Heaven, this our delight. How wearisome
 Eternity so spent in worship paid
 To whom we hate! Let us not then pursue,
 By force impossible, by leave obtained 250
 Unacceptable, though in Heaven, our state
 Of splendid vassalage; but rather seek
 Our own good from ourselves, and from our own
 Live to ourselves, though in this vast recess,
 Free and to none accountable, preferring
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear

Then most conspicuous when great things of small,
Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse,
We can create, and in what place soe'er 260
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain
Through labour and endurance. This deep world
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst
Thick clouds and dark doth Heaven's all-ruling Sire
Choose to reside, his glory unobscured,
And with the majesty of darkness round
Covers his throne, from whence deep thunders roar,
Mustering their rage, and Heaven resembles Hell!
As He our darkness, cannot we His light
Imitate when we please? This desert soil 270
Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
Nor want we skill or art from whence to raise
Magnificence; and what can Heaven show more?
Our torments also may, in length of time,
Become our elements, these piercing fires
As soft as now severe, our temper changed
Into their temper; which must needs remove
The sensible of pain. All things invite
To peaceful counsels, and the settled state 280
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 finished, when such murmur filled
The assembly as when hollow rocks retain
The sound of blustering winds, which all night long
Had roused the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
Seafaring men o'erwatched, whose bark by chance,
Or pinnace, anchors in a craggy bay
After the tempest. Such applause was heard 290
As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleased,
Advising peace: for such another field
They dreaded worse than Hell; so much the fear
Of thunder and the sword of Michaël
Wrought still within them; and no less desire
To found this nether empire, which might rise,
By policy and long process of time,
In emulation opposite to Heaven.
Which when Beëlzebub perceived—than whom,
Satan except, none higher sat—with grave 300
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seemed
A pillar of state. Deep on his front engraven
Deliberation sat, and public care;
And princely counsel in his face yet shone,

Majestic, though in ruin. Sage he stood,
 With Atlantean shoulders, fit to bear
 The weight of mightiest monarchies; his look
 Drew audience and attention still as night
 Or summer's noontide air, while thus he spake:—
 “Thrones and Imperial Powers, Offspring of Heaven, 310
 Ethereal Virtues! or these titles now
 Must we renounce, and, changing style, be called
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines—here to continue, and build up here
 A growing empire; doubtless! while we dream,
 And know not that the King of Heaven hath doomed
 This place our dungeon—not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From Heaven's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne, but to remain 320
 In strictest bondage, though thus far removed,
 Under the inevitable curb, reserved
 His captive multitude. For He, be sure,
 In highth or depth, still first and last will reign
 Sole king, and of his kingdom lose no part
 By our revolt, but over Hell extend
 His empire, and with iron sceptre rule
 Us here, as with his golden those in Heaven.
 What sit we then projecting peace and war?
 War hath determined us and foiled with loss 330
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsafed or sought; for what peace will be given
 To us enslaved, but custody severe,
 And stripes and arbitrary punishment
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return,
 But, to our power, hostility and hate,
 Untamed reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
 Yet ever plotting how the Conqueror least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice 340
 In doing what we most in suffering feel?
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dangerous expedition to invade
 Heaven, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
 Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find
 Some easier enterprise? There is a place
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in Heaven
 Err not)—another World, the happy seat
 Of some new race, called Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less
 In power and excellence, but favoured more 350
 Of Him who rules above; so was His will

Pronounced among the gods, and by an oath
 That shook Heaven's whole circumference confirmed.
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould
 Or substance, how endued, and what their power
 And where their weakness: how attempted best,
 By force or subtlety. Though Heaven be shut,
 And Heaven's high Arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie exposed, 360
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left
 To their defence who hold it: here, perhaps,
 Some advantageous act may be achieved
 By sudden onset — either with Hell-fire
 To waste his whole creation, or possess
 All as our own, and drive, as we are driven,
 The puny habitants; or, if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
 Common revenge, and interrupt His joy
 In our confusion, and our joy 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 devised
 By Satan, and in part proposed: for whence, 380
 But from the author of all ill, could spring
 So deep a malice, to confound the race
 Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell
 To mingle and involve, done all to spite
 The great Creator? But their spite still serves
 His glory to augment. The bold design
 Pleased highly those Infernal States, and joy
 Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews: —
 "Well have ye judged, well ended long debate, 390
 Synod of Gods, and, like to what ye are,
 Great things resolved, which from the lowest deep
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat — perhaps in view
 Of those bright confines, whence, with neighbouring arms,
 And opportune excursion, we may chance
 Re-enter Heaven; or else in some mild zone
 Dwell, not unvisited of Heaven's fair light,

Secure, and at the brightening orient beam
 Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air, 400
 To heal the scar of these corrosive fires,
 Shall breathe her balm. But, first, whom shall we send
 In search of this new World? whom shall we find
 Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandering feet
 The dark, unbottomed, infinite Abyss,
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncouth way, or spread his aery flight,
 Upborne with indefatigable wings
 Over the vast Abruapt, ere he arrive
 The happy Isle? What strength, what art, can then 410
 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 appeared
 To second, or oppose, or undertake
 The perilous attempt. But all sat mute, 420
 Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In other's countenance read his own dismay,
 Astonished. None among the choice and prime
 Of those Heaven-warring champions could be found
 So hardy as to proffer or accept,
 Alone, the dreadful voyage; till, at last,
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory raised
 Above his fellows, with monarchical pride
 Conscious of highest worth, unmoved thus spake:—
 “O Progeny of Heaven! Empyrean Thrones! 430
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seized us, though undismayed. Long is the way
 And hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light.
 Our prison strong, this huge convex of fire,
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round
 Ninefold; and gates of burning adamant,
 Barred over us, prohibit all egress.
 These passed, if any pass, the void profound
 Of unessential Night receives him next,
 Wide-gaping, and with utter loss of being 440
 Threatens him, plunged in that abortive gulf.
 If thence he scape, into whatever world,
 Or unknown region, what remains him less
 Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
 But I should ill become this throne, O Peers,

And this imperial sovrantry, adorned
 With splendour, armed with power, if aught proposed
 And judged of public moment in the shape
 Of difficulty or danger, could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume
 These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike

450

To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more as he above the rest
 High honoured sits? Go, therefore, mighty Powers,
 Terror of Heaven, though fallen; intend at home,
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease
 The present misery, and render Hell

460

More tolerable; if there be cure or charm
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
 Deliverance for us all. This enterprise
 None shall partake with me." Thus saying, rose

The Monarch, and prevented all reply;
 Prudent lest, from his resolution raised,
 Others among the chief might offer now,
 Certain to be refused, what erst they feared,

470

And, so refused, might in opinion stand
 His rivals, winning cheap the high repute
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
 Dreaded not more the adventure than his voice
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose.
 Their rising all at once was as the sound
 Of thunder heard remote. Toward him they bend
 With awful reverence prone, and as a God
 Extol him equal to the Highest in Heaven.

Nor failed they to express how much they praised
 That for the general safety he despised
 His own: for neither do the Spirits damned
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
 Their specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,
 Or close ambition varnished o'er with zeal.

480

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

490

Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings.
 O shame to men! Devil with devil damned
 Firm concord holds; men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope
 Of heavenly grace, and, God proclaiming peace,
 Yet live in hatred; enmity, and strife 500
 Among themselves, and levy cruel wars
 Wasting the earth, each other to destroy:
 As if (which might induce us to accord)
 Man had not hellish foes enow besides,
 That day and night for his destruction wait!
 The Stygian council thus dissolved; and forth
 In order came the grand Infernal Peers:
 Midst came their mighty Paramount, and seemed
 Alone the antagonist of Heaven, nor less
 Than Hell's dread Emperor, with pomp supreme, 510
 And god-like imitated state: him round
 A globe of fiery Seraphim enclosed
 With bright emblazonry, and horrent arms.
 Then of their session ended they bid cry
 With trumpet's regal sound the great rest:
 Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
 By harald's voice explained; the hollow Abyss
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of Hell
 With deafening shout returned them loud acclaim. 520
 Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat raised
 By false presumptuous hope, the rangèd Powers
 Disband; and, wandering, each his several way
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him perplexed, where he may likeliest find
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
 Upon the wing or in swift race contend,
 As at the Olympian games or Pythian fields; 530
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigads form:
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
 Waged in the troubled sky, and armies rush
 To battle in the clouds; before each van
 Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears,
 Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
 From either end of heaven the welkin burns.
 Others, with vast Typhœan rage, more fell,

Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
 In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wild uproar: --
 As when Alcides, from Æchalia crowned
 With conquest, felt the envenomed robe, and tore
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
 And Lichas from the top of Æta threw
 Into the Euboic sea. Others, more mild,
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing
 With notes angelical to many a harp
 Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
 By doom of battle, and complain that Fate 550
 Free Virtue should enthral to Force or Chance.
 Their song was partial; but the harmony
 (What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)
 Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment
 The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet
 (For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the Sense)
 Others apart sat on a hill retired,
 In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
 Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate —
 Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute — 560
 And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
 Of good and evil much they argued then,
 Of happiness and final misery,
 Passion and apathy, and glory and shame:
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy! —
 Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
 Pain for a while or anguish, and excite
 Fallacious hope, or arm the obdurèd breast
 With stubborn patience as with triple steel.
 Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 570
 On bold adventure to discover wide
 That dismal world, if any clime perhaps
 Might yield them easier habitation, bend
 Four ways their flying march, along the banks
 Of four infernal rivers, that disgorge
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams —
 Abhorrèd Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
 Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
 Cocytus, named of lamentation loud
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegeton, 580
 Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
 Far off from these, a slow and silent stream,
 Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
 Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets —
 Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.

Beyond this flood a frozen continent
 Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms
 Of whirlwind and dire hail, which on firm land
 Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems 590
 Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
 Betwixt Damiatra and Mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
 Burns frore, and cold performs the effect of fire.
 Thither, by harpy-footed Furies haled,
 At certain revolutions all the damned
 Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce, 600
 From beds of raging fire to starve in ice
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immovable, infixed, and frozen round
 Periods of time, — thence hurried back to fire.
 They ferry over this Lethean sound
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment,
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
 All in one moment, and so near the brink;
 But Fate withstands, and, to oppose the attempt, 610
 Medusa with Gorgonian terror guards
 The ford, and of itself the water flies
 All taste of living wight, as once it fled
 The lip of Tantalus. Thus roving on
 In confused march forlorn, the adventurous bands,
 With shuddering horror pale, and eyes aghast,
 Viewed first their lamentable lot, and found
 No rest. Through many a dark and dreary vale
 They passed, and many a region dolorous,
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 620
 Rocks, caves, lakes, fens, bogs, dens, and shades of death —
 A universe of death, which God by curse
 Created evil, for evil only good;
 Where all life dies, death lives, and Nature breeds,
 Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse
 Than fables yet have feigned or fear conceived,
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimæras dire.
 Meanwhile the Adversary of God and Man,
 Satan, with thoughts inflamed of highest design, 630
 Puts on swift wings, and toward the gates of Hell
 Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
 He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left:

Now shaves with level wing the deep, then soars
Up to the fiery concave towering high.
As when far off at sea a fleet descried
Hangs in the clouds, by equinoctial winds
Close sailing from Bengala, or the isles
Of Ternate and Tidore, whence merchants bring
Their spicy drugs; they on the trading flood, 640
Through the wide Ethiopian to the Cape,
Ply stemming nightly toward the pole: so seemed
Far off the flying Fiend. At last appear
Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
And thrice threefold the gates; three folds were brass,
Three iron, three of adamantine rock,
Impenetrable, impaled with circling fire,
Yet unconsumed. Before the gates there sat
On either side a formidable Shape.
The one seemed woman to the waist, and fair, 650
But ended foul in many a scaly fold,
Voluminous and vast—a serpent armed
With mortal sting. About her middle round
A cry of Hell-hounds never-ceasing barked
With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung
A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
If aught disturbed their noise, into her womb,
And kennel there; yet there still barked and howled
Within unseen. Far less abhorred than these
Vexed Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts 660
Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore;
Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, called
In secret, riding through the air she comes,
Lured with the smell of infant blood, to dance
With Lapland witches, while the labouring moon
Eclipses at their charms. The other Shape—
If shape it might be called that shape had none
Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
Or substance might be called that shadow seemed,
For each seemed either—black it stood as Night, 670
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,
And shook a dreadful dart: what seemed his head
The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
The monster moving onward came as fast
With horrid strides; Hell trembled as he strode.
The undaunted Fiend what this might be admired—
Admired, not feared (God and his Son except,
Created thing naught valued he nor shunned),
And with disdainful look thus first began:— 680
“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 assured, without leave asked of thee.
 Retire; or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
 Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heaven."

To whom the Goblin, full of wrath, replied:—
 "Art thou that Traitor-Angel, art thou he,
 Who first broke peace in Heaven and faith, till then
 Unbroken, and in proud rebellious arms
 Drew after him the third part of Heaven's sons,
 Conjured against the Highest—for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemned
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain?
 And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of Heaven,
 Hell-doomed, and breath'st 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 lingering, or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before."

690

700

So spake the grisly Terror, and in shape,
 So speaking and so threatening, grew tenfold
 More dreadful and deform. On the other side,
 Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
 Unterrified, and like a comet burned,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Levelled his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend; and such a frown
 Each cast at the other as when two black clouds,
 With heaven's artillery fraught, come rattling on
 Over the Caspian,—then stand front to front
 Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid-air.
 So frowned the mighty combatants that Hell
 Grew darker at their frown; so matched they stood;
 For never but once more was either like
 To meet so great a foe. And now great deeds
 Had been achieved, whereof all Hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky Sorceress, that sat
 Fast by Hell-gate and kept the fatal key,
 Risen, and with hideous outcry rushed between.

710

720

"O father, what intends thy hand," she cried,
 "Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart

Against thy father's head? And know'st for whom? 730
 For Him who sits above, and laughs the while
 At thee, ordained his drudge to execute
 Whate'er his wrath, which He calls justice, bids—
 His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both!"

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

"So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
 Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 What it intends, till first I know of thee 740
 What thing thou art, thus double-formed, and why,
 In this infernal vale first met, thou 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."

To whom thus the Portress of Hell-gate replied:—

"Hast thou forgot me, then; and do I seem
 Now in thine eyes so foul?—once deemed so fair
 In Heaven, when at the assembly, and in sight
 Of all the Seraphim with thee combined 750
 In bold conspiracy against Heaven's King,
 All on a sudden miserable pain

Surprised thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzy swum
 In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast
 Threw forth, till on the left side opening wide,
 Likest to thee in shape and countenance bright,
 Then shining heavenly fair, a goddess armed,
 Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized
 All the host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid
 At first, and called me *Sin*, and for a sign 760
 Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
 I pleased, and with attractive graces won

The most averse—thee chiefly, who, full oft
 Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
 Becam'st enamoured: and such joy thou took'st
 With me in secret that my womb conceived
 A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
 And fields were fought in Heaven: wherein remained
 (For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
 Clear victory; to our part loss and rout 770

Through all the Empyrean. Down they fell,
 Driven headlong from the pitch of Heaven, down
 Into this Deep; and in the general fall
 I also: at which time this powerful key
 Into my hands was given, with charge to keep
 These gates for ever shut, which none can pass
 Without my opening. Pensive here I sat

Alone; but long I sat not, till my womb,
 Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown,
 Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes. 780
 At last this odious offspring whom thou seest,
 Thine own begotten, breaking violent way,
 Tore through my entrails, that, with fear and pain
 Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew
 Transformed: but he my inbred enemy
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart,
 Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out *Death!*
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sighed
 From all her caves, and back resounded *Death!*
 I fled; but he pursued (though more, it seems,
 790
 Inflamed with lust than rage), and, swifter far,
 Me overtook, his mother, all dismayed,
 And, in embraces forcible and foul
 Engendering with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry
 Surround me, as thou saw'st—hourly conceived
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me: for, when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl, and gnaw
 800
 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 involved, and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
 Whenever that shall be: so Fate pronounced.
 But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun
 810
 His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though tempered heavenly; for that mortal dint,
 Save He who reigns above, none can resist.”
 She finished; and the subtle Fiend his lore
 Soon learned, now milder, and thus answered smooth:-
 “Dear daughter—since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
 Of dalliance had with thee in Heaven, and joys
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change
 820
 Befallen 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 Heavenly host
 Of Spirits that, in our just pretences armed,

Fell with us from on high. From them I go
 This uncouth errand sole, and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 The unfounded Deep, and through the void immense
 To search, with wandering quest, a place foretold 830
 Should be — and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created vast and round — a place of bliss
 In the purlieus of Heaven; and therein placed
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room, though more removed,
 Lest Heaven, surcharged with potent multitude,
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this, or aught
 Than this more secret, now designed, I haste
 To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
 And bring ye to the place where thou and Death 840
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
 Wing silently the buxom air, embalmed
 With odours. There ye shall be fed and filled
 Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey.”

He ceased; for both seemed highly pleased, and Death
 Grinned horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
 His famine should be filled, and blessed his maw
 Destined to that good hour. No less rejoiced
 His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire: —

“The key of this infernal Pit, by due 850
 And by command of Heaven’s all-powerful King,
 I keep, by Him forbidden to unlock
 These adamantine gates; against all force
 Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
 Fearless to be o’ermatched by living might.
 But what owe I to His commands above,
 Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
 Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
 To sit in hateful office here confined,
 Inhabitant of Heaven and heavenly-born — 860
 Here in perpetual agony and pain,
 With terrors and with clamours compassed round
 Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
 Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
 My being 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.” 870

Thus saying, from her side the fatal key,
 Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;
 And, towards the gate rolling her bestial train,

Forthwith the huge portcullis high up-drew,
 Which, but herself, not all the Stygian Powers
 Could once have moved; then in the key-hole turns
 The intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
 Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
 Unfastens. On a sudden open fly,
 With impetuous recoil and jarring sound, 880
 The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
 Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
 Of Erebus. She opened; but to shut
 Excelled her power: the gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a bannered host,
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
 With horse and chariots ranked in loose array;
 So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth
 Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
 Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890
 The secrets of the hoary Deep — a dark
 Illimitable ocean, without bound,
 Without dimension; where length, breadth, and highth,
 And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
 And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold
 Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
 Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
 For Hot, Cold, Moist, and Dry, four champions fierce,
 Strive here for mastery, and to battle bring
 Their embryon atoms: they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light-armed or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumbered as the sands
 Of Barca or 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, 910
 The womb of Nature, and perhaps her grave,
 Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,
 But all these in their pregnant causes mixed
 Confusedly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless the Almighty Maker them ordain
 His dark materials to create more worlds —
 Into this wild Abyss the wary Fiend
 Stood on the brink of Hell and looked a while,
 Pondering his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less pealed 920
 With noises loud and ruinous (to compare

Great things with small) than when Bellona storms
 With all her battering engines, bent to rase
 Some capital city; or less than if this frame
 Of heaven were falling, and these elements
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The steadfast Earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 He spreads for flight, and, in the surging smoke
 Uplifted, spurns the ground; thence many a league,
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 930
 Audacious; but, that seat soon failing, meets
 A vast vacuity. All unawares,
 Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb-down he drops
 Ten thousand fathom deep, and to this hour
 Down had been falling, had not, by ill chance,
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
 Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
 As many miles aloft. That fury stayed—
 Quenched in a boggy Syrtis, neither sea,
 Nor good dry land—nigh foundered, on he fares, 940
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
 As when a gryphon through the wilderness
 With wingèd course, o'er hill or moory dale,
 Pursues the Arimaspians, who by stealth
 Had from his wakeful custody purloined
 The guarded gold; so eagerly the Fiend
 O'er bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or rare,
 With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
 And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies. 950
 At length a universal hubbub wild
 Of stunning sounds, and voices all confused,
 Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
 With loudest vehemence. Thither he plies
 Undaunted, to meet there whatever Power
 Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
 Bordering on light; when straight behold the throne
 Of *Chaos*, and his dark pavilion spread 960
 Wide on the wasteful Deep! With him enthroned
 Sat sable-vested *Night*, eldest of things,
 The consort of his reign; and by them stood
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
 Of Demogorgon; Rumour next, and Chance,
 And Tumult, and Confusion, all embroiled,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

To whom Satan, turning boldly, thus:—“Ye Powers
 And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,

Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy 970
 With purpose to explore or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint
 Wandering this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
 Alone and without guide, half lost, I seek,
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Confine with Heaven; or, if some other place,
 From your dominion won, the Ethereal King
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound. Direct my course: 980
 Directed, no mean recompense it brings
 To your behoof, if I that region lost,
 All usurpation thence expelled, reduce
 To her original darkness and your sway
 (Which is my present journey), and once more
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night.
 Yours be the advantage all, mine the revenge!"
 Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
 With faltering speech and visage incomposea,
 Answered: - "I know thee, stranger, who thou art — 990
 That mighty leading Angel, who of late
 Made head against Heaven's King, though overthrown.
 I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
 Fled not in silence through the frightened Deep,
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,
 Confusion worse confounded; and Heaven-gates
 Poured out by millions her victorious bands,
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve
 That little which is left so to defend, 1000
 Encroached on still through our intestine broils
 Weakening the sceptre of old Night: first, Hell,
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
 Now lately Heaven and Earth, another world
 Hung o'er my realm, linked in a golden chain
 To that side Heaven from whence your legions fell!
 If that way be your walk, you have not far;
 So much the nearer danger. Go, and speed;
 Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain."
 He ceased; and Satan staid not to reply, 1010
 But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacrity and force renewed
 Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
 Into the wild expanse, and through the shock
 Of fighting elements, on all sides round
 Environed, wins his way; harder beset
 And more endangered than when Argo passed

Through Bosphorus betwixt the justling rocks,
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunned
 Charybdis, and by the other Whirlpool steered. 1020
 So he with difficulty and labour hard
 Moved on. With difficulty and labour he;
 But, he once passed, soon after, when Man fell,
 Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain,
 Following his track (such was the will of Heaven)
 Paved after him a broad and beaten way
 Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endured a bridge of wondrous length,
 From Hell continued, reaching the utmost Orb
 Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse. 1030
 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; 1040
 That Satan with less toil, and now with ease,
 Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light,
 And, like a weather-beaten vessel, holds
 Gladly the port, though shrouds and tackle torn;
 Or in the emptier waste, resembling air,
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
 Far off the Empyrean Heaven, extended wide
 In circuit, undetermined square or round.
 With opal towers and battlements adorned
 Of living sapphire, once his native seat, 1050
 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,
 Accurst, and in a cursed hour, he hies.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

God, sitting on his throne, sees Satan flying towards this World, then newly created; shows him to the Son, who sat at his right hand; foretells the success of Satan in perverting mankind; clears his own justice and wisdom from all imputation, having created Man free, and able enough to have withstood his Tempter; yet declares his purpose of grace towards him, in regard he fell not of his own malice, as did Satan, but by him seduced. The Son of God renders praises to his Father for the manifestation of his gracious purpose towards Man: but God again declares that grace cannot be extended towards Man without the satisfaction of Divine Justice; Man hath offended the majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore, with all his progeny, devoted to death, must die, unless some one can be found sufficient to answer for his offence, and undergo his punishment. The Son of God freely offers himself a ransom for Man: the Father accepts him, ordains his incarnation, pronounces his exaltation above all names in Heaven and Earth; commands all the Angels to adore him. They obey, and, hymning to their harps in full quire, celebrate the Father and the Son. Meanwhile Satan alights upon the bare convex of this World's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place since called the Limbo of Vanity; what persons and things fly up thither; thence comes to the gate of Heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it. His passage thence to the orb of the Sun: he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner Angel, and, pretending a zealous desire to behold the new Creation, and Man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: Alights first on Mount Niphates.

HAIL, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first-born!
Or of the Eternal coeternal beam
May I express thee unblamed? since God is light,
And never but in unapproachèd 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 Heavens, thou wert, and at the voice
Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest
The rising World of waters dark and deep,
Won from the void and formless Infinite!
Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
Escaped the Stygian Pool, though long detained
In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight,

Through utter and through middle Darkness borne,
With other notes than to the Orphean lyre
I sung of Chaos and eternal Night,
Taught by the Heavenly Muse to venture down
The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 20
Though hard and rare. Thee I revisit safe,
And feel thy sovran vital lamp; but thou
Revisit'st not these eyes, that roll in vain
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;
So thick a drop serene hath quenched their orbs,
Or dim suffusion veiled. Yet not the more
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt
Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief 30
Thee, Sion, and the flowery brooks beneath,
That wash thy hallowed feet, and warbling flow,
Nightly I visit: nor sometimes forget
Those other two equalled with me in fate,
So were I equalled with them in renown,
Blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,
And 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 40
Seasons return; but not to me returns
Day, or the sweet approach of even or morn
Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
But cloud instead and ever-during dark
Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
Cut off, and, for the book of knowledge fair,
Presented with a universal blank
Of Nature's works, to me expunged and rased,
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 50
So much the rather thou, Celestial Light,
Shine inward, and the mind through all her powers
Irradiate; there plant eyes; all mist from thence
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell
Of things invisible to mortal sight. 55

Now had the Almighty Father from above,
From the pure Empyrean where He sits
High throned above all highth, bent down his eye,
His own works and their works at once to view:
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven 60
Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
Beatitude past utterance; on his right

The radiant image of his glory sat,
 His only Son. On Earth he first beheld
 Our two first parents, yet the only two
 Of mankind, in the Happy Garden placed,
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivalled love,
 In blissful solitude. He then surveyed
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there
 Coasting the wall of Heaven on this side Night, 70
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now
 To stoop, with wearied wings and willing feet,
 On the bare outside of this World, that seemed
 Firm land imbosomed without firmament,
 Uncertain which, in ocean or in air.
 Him God beholding from his prospect high,
 Wherein past, present, future, he beholds,
 Thus to His only Son foreseeing spake:—
 “Only-begotten Son, seest thou what rage 80
 Transports our Adversary? whom no bounds
 Prescribed, no bars of Hell, nor all the chains
 Heaped on him there, nor yet the main Abyss
 Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
 Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
 Not far off Heaven, in the precincts of light,
 Directly towards the new-created World,
 And Man there placed, with purpose to assay 90
 If him by force he can destroy, or, worse,
 By some false guile pervert: And shall pervert;
 For Man will hearken to his glozing lies,
 And easily transgress the sole command,
 Sole pledge of his obedience: so will fall
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have; I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.
 Such I created all the Ethereal Powers 100
 And Spirits, both them who stood and them who failed;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have given sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith, or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appeared,
 Not what they would? What praise could they receive,
 What pleasure I, from such obedience paid,
 When Will and Reason (Reason also is Choice),
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoiled,

Made passive both, had served Necessity,
 Not Me?) They, therefore, as to right belonged 110
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if Predestination overruled
 Their will, disposed by absolute decree
 Or high foreknowledge. They themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I. If I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less proved certain unforeknown.

So without least impulse or shadow of fate,
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all,
 Both what they judge and what they choose; for so
 I formed them free, and free they must remain
 Till they enthrall themselves: I else must change
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordained
 Their freedom; they themselves ordained their fall.

The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
 Self-tempted, self-depraved; Man falls, deceived 130
 By the other first: Man, therefore, shall find grace;
 The other, none. In mercy and justice both,
 Through Heaven and Earth, so shall my glory excel;
 But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine."

Thus while God spake ambrosial fragrance filled
 All Heaven, and in the blessed Spirits elect
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffused.
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious; in him all his Father shone
 Substantially expressed; and in his face 140
 Divine compassion visibly appeared,
 Love without end, and without measure grace;
 Which uttering, thus He to his Father spake:—

“O Father, gracious was that word which closed
 Thy sovran sentence, that Man should find grace:
 For which both Heaven and Earth shall high extol
 Thy praises, with the innumerable sound
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Encompassed shall resound thee ever blest.

For, should Man finally be lost—should Man, 150
 Thy creature late so loved, thy youngest son,
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though joined
 With his own folly—! That be from thee far,
 That far be from thee, Father, who art judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right!
 Or shall the Adversary thus obtain

His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom
 Yet with revenge accomplished, 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 questioned and blasphemed without defence.”
 To whom the great Creator thus replied:—
 “O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might,
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed.
 Man shall not quite be lost, but saved who will;
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 Freely vouchsafed. Once more I will renew
 His lapsèd powers, though forfeit, and enthralled
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires:
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe—
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail
 His fallen condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
 Elect above the rest; so is my will:
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warned
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 The incensèd Deity, while offered grace
 Invites; for I will clear their senses dark
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts
 To pray, repent, and bring obedience due.
 To prayer, repentance, and obedience due,
 Though but endeavoured with sincere intent,
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
 And I will place within them as a guide
 My umpire Conscience; whom if they will hear,
 Light after light well used they shall attain,
 And to the end persisting safe arrive.
 This my long suffrance, and my day of grace,
 They who neglect and scorn shall never taste;
 But hard be hardened, 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,

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Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of Heaven,
 Affecting Godhead, and, so losing all,
 To expiate his treason hath naught left,
 But, to destruction sacred and devote,
 He with his whole posterity must die; —
 Die he or Justice must; unless for him
 Some other, able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.

Say, Heavenly Powers, where shall we find such love?
 Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
 Man's mortal crime, and just, the unjust to save?
 Dwells in all Heaven charity so dear?"

He asked, but all the Heavenly Quire stood mute,
 And silence was in Heaven: on Man's behalf
 Patron or intercessor none appeared —
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.

And now without redemption all mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudged to Death and Hell
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine,
 His dearest mediation thus renewed: —

“Father, thy word is passed, Man shall find grace;
 And shall Grace not find means, that finds her way,
 The speediest of thy wingèd messengers,
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all
 Comes unprevented, unimplored, 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 pleased; on me let Death wreak all his rage.

Under his gloomy power I shall not long
 Lie vanquished. Thou hast given me to possess
 Life in myself for ever; by thee I live;
 Though now to Death I yield, and am his due,
 All that of me can die, yet, that debt paid,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
 For ever with corruption there to dwell;
 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue

My vanquisher, spoiled of his vaunted spoil.
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarmed;
 I through the ample air in triumph high
 Shall lead Hell captive maugre Hell, and show
 The powers of Darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
 Pleas'd, out of Heaven shalt look down and smile,
 While, by thee raised, I ruin all my foes—
 Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave;
 Then, with the multitude of my redeemed, 260
 Shall enter Heaven, long absent, and return,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assured
 And reconcilment: wrath shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire."

His words here ended; but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breathed immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone

Filial obedience: as a sacrifice

Glad to be offered, he attends the will 270
 Of his great Father. Admiration seized
 All Heaven, what this might mean, and whither tend,
 Wondering; but soon the Almighty thus replied:—

“O thou in Heaven and Earth the only peace
 Found out for mankind under wrath, O thou
 My sole complacence! well thou 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! 280
 Thou, therefore, whom thou only canst redeem,
 Their nature also to thy nature join;
 And be thyself Man among men on Earth,
 Made flesh, when time shall be, of virgin seed,
 By wondrous birth; be thou in Adam's room
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restored
 As many as are restored; without thee, none.

His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit, 290
 Imputed, shall absolve them who renounce
 Their own both righteous and unrighteous deeds,
 And live in thee transplanted, and from thee
 Receive new life. So Man, as is most just,
 Shall satisfy for Man, be judged and die,
 And dying rise, and, rising, with him raise
 His brethren, ransomed with his own dear life.

So Heavenly love shall outdo Hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redeem,
 So dearly to redeem what Hellish hate 300
 So easily destroyed, and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, though throned in highest bliss
 Equal to God, and equally enjoying
 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, 310
 Far more than great or high; because in thee
 Love hath abounded more than glory abounds;
 Therefore thy humiliation shall exalt
 With thee thy manhood also to this throne:
 Here shalt thou sit incarnate, here shalt reign
 Both God and Man, Son both of God and Man,
 Anointed universal King. All power
 I give thee; reign for ever, and assume
 Thy merits; under thee, as Head Supreme,
 Thrones, Princedoms, Powers, Dominions, I reduce: 320
 All knees to thee shall bow of them that bide
 In Heaven, or Earth, or, under Earth, in Hell.
 When thou, attended gloriously from Heaven,
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 The summoning Archangels to proclaim
 Thy dread tribunal, forthwith from all winds
 The living, and forthwith the cited dead
 Of all past ages, to the general doom
 Shall hasten; such a peal shall rouse their sleep.
 Then, all thy Saints assembled, thou shalt judge 330
 Bad men and Angels; they arraigned shall sink
 Beneath thy sentence; Hell, her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
 The World shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 New Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell,
 And, after all their tribulations long,
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With Joy and Love triumphing, and fair Truth.
 Then thou thy regal sceptre shalt lay by;
 For regal sceptre then no more shall need; 340
 God shall be all in all. But all ye Gods,
 Adore him who, to compass all this, dies;
 Adore the Son, and honour him as me.”
 (No sooner had the Almighty ceased but — all

The multitude of Angels, with a shout
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
 As from blest voices, uttering joy—Heaven rung
 With jubilee, and loud hosannas filled
 The eternal regions. Lowly reverent
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground
 With solemn adoration down they cast 350
 Their crowns, inwove with amarant and gold,—
 Immortal amarant, a flower which once
 In Paradise, fast by the Tree of Life,
 Began to bloom, but, soon for Man's offence
 To Heaven removed where first it grew, there grows
 And flowers aloft, shading the Fount of Life,
 And where the River of Bliss through midst of Heaven
 Rolls o'er Elysian flowers her amber stream!
 With these, that never fade, the Spirits elect 360
 Bind their resplendent locks, inwreathed with beams.
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with celestial roses smiled.
 Then, crowned again, their golden harps they took—
 Harps ever tuned, that glittering by their side
 Like quivers hung; and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high:
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 370
 Melodious part; such concord is in Heaven.
 Thee, Father, first they sung, Omnipotent,
 Immutable, Immortal, Infinite,
 Eternal King; thee, Author of all being,
 Fountain of light, thyself invisible
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
 Throned inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
 The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380
 Yet dazzle Heaven, that brightest Seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
 Thee next they sang, of all creation first,
 Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
 In whose conspicuous countenance, without cloud
 Made visible, the Almighty Father shines,
 Whom else no creature can behold: on thee
 Impressed the effulgence of his glory abides;
 Transfused on thee his ample Spirit rests.
 He Heaven of Heavens, and all the Powers therein, 390
 By thee created; and by thee threw down

The aspiring Dominations. Thou that day
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot-wheels, that shook
 Heaven's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks
 Thou drov'st of warring Angels disarrayed.
 Back from pursuit, thy Powers with loud acclaim
 Thee only extolled, Son of thy Father's might,
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes.

Not so on Man: him, through their malice fallen,
 Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom
 So strictly, but much more to pity incline.

No sooner did thy dear and only Son
 Perceive thee purposed not to doom frail Man
 So strictly, but much more to pity inclined,
 He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discerned,

Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
 Second to thee, offered himself to die
 For Man's offence. O unexampled love!

Love nowhere to be found less than Divine!
 Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! Thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin!

Thus they in Heaven, above the Starry Sphere,
 Their happy hours in joy and hymning spent.

Meanwhile, upon the firm opacous globe
 Of this round World, whose first convex divides
 The luminous inferior Orbs, enclosed

From Chaos and the inroad of Darkness old,
 Satan alighted walks. A globe far off

It seemed; now seems a boundless continent,
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of Night
 Starless exposed, and ever-threatening storms
 Of Chaos blustering round, inclement sky,

Save on that side which from the wall of Heaven,
 Though distant far, some small reflection gains
 Of glimmering air less vexed with tempest loud.

Here walked the Fiend at large in spacious field.

As when a vulture, on Imaus bred,
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
 Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,

To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanling kids
 On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams,
 But in his way lights on the barren plains
 Of Sericana, where Chineses drive

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With sails and wind their cany waggons light ;
 So, on this windy sea of land, the Fiend 440
 Walked up and down alone, bent on his prey :
 Alone, for other creature in this place,
 Living or lifeless, to be found was none ; —
 None yet ; but store hereafter from the Earth
 Up hither like aerial vapours flew
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
 With vanity had filled the works of men —
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
 Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
 Or happiness in this or the other life. 450
 All who have their reward on earth, the fruits
 Of painful superstition and blind zeal,
 Naught seeking but the praise of men, here find
 Fit retribution, empty as their deeds ;
 All the unaccomplished works of Nature's hand,
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mixed,
 Dissolved on Earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
 Till final dissolution, wander here —
 Not in the neighbouring Moon, as some have dreamed :
 Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
 Translated Saints, or middle Spirits hold,
 Betwixt the angelical and human kind.
 Hither, of ill-joined sons and daughters born,
 First from the ancient world those Giants came,
 With many a vain exploit, though then renowned :
 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 deemed 470
 A god, leaped fondly into Ætna flames,
 Empedocles ; and he who, to enjoy
 Plato's Elysium, leaped into the sea,
 Cleombrotus ; and many more, too long,
 Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars,
 White, black, and grey, with all their trumpery.
 Here pilgrims roam, that strayed so far to seek
 In Golgotha him dead who lives in Heaven ;
 And they who, to be sure of Paradise,
 Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguised. 480
 They pass the planets seven, and pass the fixed,
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talked, and that first moved ;
 And now Saint Peter at Heaven's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot

Of Heaven's ascent they lift their feet, when, lo!
 A violent cross wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry,
 Into the devious air. Then might ye see
 Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost
 And fluttered into rags; then reliques, beads,
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds: all these, upwhirled aloft,
 Fly o'er the backside of the World far off
 Into a Limbo large and broad, since called
 The Paradise of Fools; to few unknown
 Long after, now unpeopled and untrod.

490

All this dark globe the Fiend found as he passed;

And long he wandered, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turned thitherward in haste
 His travelled steps. Far distant he descries,
 Ascending by degrees magnificent

500

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

The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw
 Angels ascending and descending, bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
 To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz

510

Dreaming by night under the open sky,
 And waking cried, *This is the gate of Heaven.*
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
 There always, but drawn up to Heaven sometimes
 Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flowed
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon

Who after came from Earth sailing arrived
 Wafted by Angels, or flew o'er the lake
 Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.

520

The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
 The Fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss:
 Direct against which opened from beneath,
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,

A passage down to the Earth—a passage wide;
 Wider by far than that of after-times

Over Mount Sion, and, though that were large,
 Over the Promised Land to God so dear,
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,

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On high behests his Angels to and fro
Passed frequent, and his eye with choice regard
From Paneas, the fount of Jordan's flood,
To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
Borders on Egypt and the Arabian shore.
So wide the opening seemed, where bounds were set
To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
Satan from hence, now on the lower stair, 540
That scaled by steps of gold to Heaven-gate,
Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
Of all this World at once. As when a scout,
Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn
Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
Which to his eye discovers unaware
The goodly prospect of some foreign land
First seen, or some renowned metropolis
With glistening spires and pinnacles adorned, 550
Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams;
Such wonder seized, though after Heaven seen,
The Spirit malign, but much more envy seized,
At sight of all this World beheld so fair.
Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood
So high above the circling canopy
Of Night's extended shade) from eastern point
Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
Andromeda far off Atlantic seas
Beyond the horizon; then from pole to pole 560
He views in breadth, — and, without longer pause,
Down right into the World's first region throws
His flight precipitant, and winds with ease
Through the pure marble air his oblique way
Amongst innumerable stars, that shone
Stars distant, but nigh-hand seemed other worlds.
Or other worlds they seemed, or happy isles,
Like those Hesperian Gardens famed of old,
Fortunate fields, and groves, and flowery vales;
Thrice happy isles! But who dwelt happy there 570
He staid not to inquire: above them all
The golden Sun, in splendour likest Heaven,
Allured his eye. Thither his course he bends,
Through the calm firmament (but up or down,
By 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 580
 Days, months, and years, towards his all-cheering lamp
 Turn swift their various motions, or are turned
 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 glazed optic tube yet never saw. 590
 The place he found beyond expression bright,
 Compared with aught on Earth, metal or stone —
 Not all parts like, but all alike informed
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire.
 If metal, part seemed gold, part silver clear;
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
 Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides,
 Imagined rather oft than elsewhere seen —
 That stone, or like to that, which here below 600
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought;
 In vain, though by their powerful art they bind
 Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drained through a limbec to his native form.
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when, with one virtuous touch,
 The arch-chemic Sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mixed, 610
 Here in the dark so many precious things
 Of colour glorious and effect so rare?
 Here matter new to gaze the Devil met
 Undazzled. Far and wide his eye commands;
 For sight no obstacle found here, nor shade,
 But all sunshine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from the equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and the air,
 Nowhere so clear, sharpened his visual ray 620
 To objects distant far, whereby he soon
 Saw within ken a glorious Angel stand,
 The same whom John saw also in the Sun.
 His back was turned, but not his brightness hid;
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind

Illustrious on his shoulders fledge with wings
 Lay waving round: on some great charge employed
 He seemed, or fixed in cogitation deep.
 Glad was the Spirit impure, as now in hope 630
 To find who might direct his wandering flight
 To Paradise, the happy seat of Man,
 His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,
 Which else might work him danger or delay:
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smiled celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffused; so well he feigned.
 Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
 In curls on either cheek played; wings he wore
 Of many a coloured plume sprinkled with gold,
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.
 He drew not nigh unheard; the Angel bright,
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turned,
 Admonished by his ear, and straight was known
 The Archangel Uriel — one of the seven
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
 That run through all the Heavens, or down to the Earth
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land. Him Satan thus accosts: —
 “Uriel! for thou of those seven Spirits that stand
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright,
 The first art wont his great authentic will
 Interpreter through highest Heaven to bring,
 Where all his Sons thy embassy attend,
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye 660
 To visit oft this new Creation round —
 Unspeakable desire to see and know
 All these his wondrous works, but chiefly Man,
 His chief delight and favour, him for whom
 All these his works so wondrous he ordained,
 Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim
 Alone thus wandering. Brightest Seraph, tell
 In which of all these shining orbs hath Man
 His fixèd seat — or fixèd seat hath none,
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell — 670
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze
 Or open admiration him behold
 On whom the great Creator hath bestowed

Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces poured;
 That both in him and all things, as 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!" 680

So spake the false dissembler unperceived;
 For neither man nor angel can discern
 Hypocrisy—the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone,
 By his permissive will, through Heaven and Earth;
 And oft, though Wisdom wake, Suspicion sleeps
 At Wisdom's gate, and to Simplicity
 Resigns her charge, while Goodness thinks no ill
 Where no ill seems: which now for once beguiled
 Uriel, though Regent of the Sun, and held 690
 The sharpest-sighted Spirit of all in Heaven;

Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
 In his uprightness, answer thus returned:—
 "Fair Angel, thy desire, which tends to know
 The works of God, thereby to glorify
 The great Work-master, leads to no excess
 That reaches blame, but rather merits praise
 The more it seems excess, that led thee hither
 From thy empyreal mansion thus alone,
 To witness with thine eyes what some perhaps, 700
 Contented with report, hear only in Heaven:

For wonderful indeed are all his works,
 Pleasant to know, and worthiest to be all
 Had in remembrance always with delight!
 But what created mind can comprehend
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite
 That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
 I saw when, at his word, the formless mass,
 This World's material mould, came to a heap:
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild Uproar 710
 Stood ruled, stood vast Infinitude confined;
 Till, at his second bidding, Darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung.
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 The cumbrous elements—Earth, Flood, Air, Fire;
 And this ethereal quintessence of Heaven
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 That rolled orbicular, and turned to stars
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move:

Each had his place appointed, each his course; 720

The rest in circuit walls this Universe.
Look downward on that globe, whose hither side
With light from hence, though but reflected, shines:
That place is Earth, the seat of Man; that light
His day, which else, as the other hemisphere,
Night would invade; but there the neighbouring Moon
(So call that opposite fair star) her aid
Timely interposes, and, her monthly round
Still ending, still renewing, through mid-heaven,
With borrowed light her countenance triform
Hence fills and empties, to enlighten the Earth,
And in her pale dominion checks the night.
That spot to which I point is Paradise,
Adam's abode; those lofty shades his bower.
Thy way thou canst not miss; me mine requires."

730

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

740

THE END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IV.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, now in prospect of Eden, and nigh the place where he must now attempt the bold enterprise which he undertook alone against God and Man, falls into many doubts with himself, and many passions — fear, envy, and despair; but at length confirms himself in evil; journeys on to Paradise, whose outward prospect and situation is described; overleaps the bounds; sits, in the shape of a cormorant, on the Tree of Life, as highest in the Garden, to look about him. The Garden described; Satan's first sight of Adam and Eve; his wonder at their excellent form and happy state, but with resolution to work their fall; overhears their discourse; thence gathers that the Tree of Knowledge was forbidden them to eat of under penalty of death, and thereon intends to found his temptation by seducing them to transgress; then leaves them a while, to know further of their state by some other means. Meanwhile Uriel, descending on a sunbeam, warns Gabriel, who had in charge the gate of Paradise, that some evil Spirit had escaped the Deep, and passed at noon by his Sphere, in the shape of a good Angel, down to Paradise, discovered after by his furious gestures in the mount. Gabriel promises to find him ere morning. Night coming on, Adam and Eve discourse of going to their rest: their bower described; their evening worship. Gabriel, drawing forth his bands of night-watch to walk the rounds of Paradise, appoints two strong Angels to Adam's bower, lest the evil Spirit should be there doing some harm to Adam or Eve sleeping: there they find him at the ear of Eve, tempting her in a dream, and bring him, though unwilling, to Gabriel; by whom questioned, he scornfully answers; prepares resistance; but, hindered by a sign from Heaven, flies out of Paradise.

○ FOR that warning voice, which he who saw
The Apocalypse heard cry in Heaven aloud,
Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
Came furious down to be revenged on men,
Woe to the inhabitants on Earth! that now,
While time was, our first parents had been warned
The coming of their secret foe, and scaped,
Haply so scaped, his mortal snare! For now
Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,
The tempter, ere the accuser, of mankind,
To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss
Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell.
Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
Begins his dire attempt; which, nigh the birth
Now rolling, boils in his tumultuous breast,

And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself. Horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir
 The hell within him; for within him Hell
 He brings, and round about him, nor from Hell
 One step, no more than from himself, can fly
 By change of place. Now conscience wakes despair
 That slumbered; wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue!
 Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad;
 Sometimes towards Heaven and the full-blazing Sun,
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower:
 Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began:—

“O thou that, with surpassing glory crowned,
 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 with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O Sun, to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere,
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down,
 Warring in Heaven against Heaven's matchless King!
 Ah, wherefore? He deserved no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard.
 What could be less than to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
 How due? Yet all his good proved ill in me,
 And wrought but malice. Lifted up so high,
 I sdained 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 received;
 And understood not that a grateful mind
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharged—what burden then?
 Oh, had his powerful destiny ordained
 Me some inferior Angel, I had stood
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised
 Ambition. Yet why not? Some other Power
 As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,
 Drawn to his part. But other Powers as great

20

30

40

50

60

Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
 Or from without to all temptations armed!
 Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?
 Thou hadst. Whom hast thou then, or what, to accuse,
 But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?
 Be then his love accursed, since, love or hate,
 To me alike it deals eternal woe.

70

Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.

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

O, then, at last relent! Is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left?

80

None left but by submission; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced
 With other promises and other vaunts

Than to submit, boasting I could subdue
 The Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
 Under what torments inwardly I groan.

While they adore me on the throne of Hell,
 With diadem and sceptre high advanced,

90

The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery: such joy ambition finds!

But say I could repent, and could obtain,
 By act of grace, my former state; how soon
 Would highth recal high thoughts, how soon unsay
 What feigned 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 pierced so deep);

100

Which would but lead me to a worse relapse
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission, bought with double smart.

This knows my Punisher; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging, peace.
 All hope excluded thus, behold, instead

Of us, outcast, exiled, his new delight,
 Mankind, created, and for him this World!
 So farewell hope, and, with hope, farewell fear,
 Farewell remorse! All good to me is lost;

Evil, be thou my Good: by thee at least

110

Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
 As Man ere long, and this new World, shall know."

Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face,
 Thrice changed with pale — ire, envy, and despair;
 Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:

For Heavenly minds from such distempers foul
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware
 Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first

120

That practised falsehood under saintly show,
 Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge:
 Yet not enough had practised to deceive
 Uriel, once warned; whose eye pursued him down
 The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount
 Saw him disfigured, more than could befall
 Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
 He marked and mad demeanour, then alone,
 As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen.

130

So on he fares, and to the border comes
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound, the champain head
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides
 With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild,
 Access denied; and overhead up-grew
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,
 A 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 neighbouring round.

140

And higher than that wall a circling row
 Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
 Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed;
 On which the sun more glad impressed his beams
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
 When God hath showered the earth: so lovely seemed
 That landskip. And of pure now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
 All sadness but despair. Now gentle gales,
 Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense

150

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 160
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabean odours from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the Blest, with such delay
 Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league
 Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles;
 So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend-
 Who came their bane, though with them better pleased
 Than Asmodæus with the fishy fume
 That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.

Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none; so thick entwined,
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed
 All path of man or beast that passed that way.
 One gate there only was, and that looked east
 On the other side. Which when the Arch-Felon saw,
 Due entrance he disdained, and, in contempt, 180
 At one slight bound high overleaped all bound
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve,
 In hurdled cotes amid the field secure,
 Leaps o'er the fence with ease into the fold;
 Or as a thief, bent to unhoard the cash
 Of some rich burgher, whose substantial doors,
 Cross-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles;
 So clomb this first grand Thief into God's fold:
 So since into his Church lewd hirelings climb.
 Thence up he flew, and on the Tree of Life,
 The middle tree and highest there that grew,
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
 Thereby regained, but sat devising death
 To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought
 Of that life-giving plant, but only used
 For prospect what, well used, had been the pledge 200
 Of immortality. So little knows
 Any, but God alone, to value right
 The good before him, but perverts best things
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.

Beneath him, with new wonder, now he views,
 To all delight of human sense exposed,
 In narrow room Nature's whole wealth; yea, more!—
 A Heaven on Earth: for blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east
 Of Eden planted. Eden stretched her line 210
 From Auran eastward to the royal towers
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,
 Or where the sons of Eden long before
 Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordained.
 Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
 Of vegetable gold; and next to life, 220
 Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grew fast by—
 Knowledge of good, bought dear by knowing ill.
 Southward through Eden went a river large,
 Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill
 Passed underneath ingulfed; for God had thrown
 That mountain, as his garden-mould, high raised
 Upon the rapid current, which, through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst up-drawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Watered the garden; thence united fell 230
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,
 Which from his darksome passage now appears,
 And now, divided into four main streams,
 Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm
 And country whereof here needs no account;
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell
 How, from that sapphire fount the crispèd brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendent shades
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art
 In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon
 Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
 Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierced shade
 Imbrowned the noontide bowers. Thus was this place,
 A happy rural seat of various view:
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm;
 Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,
 Hung amiable—Hesperian fables true, 250
 If true, here only—and of delicious taste.

Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,
Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap
Of some irriguous valley spread her store,
Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.
Another side, umbrageous grotts and caves
Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine
Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps
Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall 260
Down the slope hills dispersed, or in a lake,
That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned
Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune
The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field
Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flowers,
Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis 270
Was gathered—which cost Ceres all that pain
To seek her through the world—nor that sweet grove
Of Daphne, by Orontes and the inspired
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, 280
Mount Amara (though this by some supposed
True Paradise) under the Ethiop line
By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,
A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend
Saw undelighted all delight, all kind
Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.
Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
God-like erect, with native honour clad
In naked majesty, seemed lords of all, 290
And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine
The image of their glorious Maker shone,
Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure—
Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,
Whence true authority in men: though both
Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;
For contemplation he and valour formed,
For softness she and sweet attractive grace;

He for God only, she for God in him.
 His fair large front and eye sublime declared 300
 Absolute rule; and hyacinthine locks
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
 She, as a veil down to the slender waist,
 Her unadornèd golden tresses wore
 Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved
 As the vine curls her tendrils—which implied
 Subjection, but required with gentle sway,
 And by her yielded, by him best received
 Yielded, with coy submission, modest pride, 310
 And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
 Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed;
 Then was not guilty shame. Dishonest shame
 Of Nature's works, honour dishonourable.
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
 And banished from man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence!
 So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight
 Of God or Angel; for they thought no ill: 320
 So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in love's embraces met—
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons; the fairest of her daughters Eve.
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain-side,
 They sat them down; and, after no more toil
 Of their sweet gardening labour than suffice
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and make ease
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330
 More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell—
 Nectarine fruits, which the compliant boughs
 Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline
 On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers.
 The 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 linked in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking played 340
 All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den.
 Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant,

To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile
 Gave proof unheeded. Others on the grass 350
 Couched, and, now filled with pasture, gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
 Declined, was hastening now with prone career
 To the Ocean Isles, and in the ascending scale
 Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose:
 When Satan, still in gaze as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad:—
 “O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold?
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanced
 Creatures of other mould—Earth-born perhaps, 360
 Not Spirits, yet to Heavenly Spirits bright
 Little inferior—whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love; so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured.
 Ah! gentle pair, ye little think how nigh
 Your change approaches, when all these delights
 Will vanish, and deliver ye to woe—
 More woe, the more your taste is now of joy:
 Happy, but for so happy ill secured 370
 Long to continue, and this high seat, your Heaven,
 Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe
 As now is entered; yet no purposed foe
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
 Though I unpitied. League with you I seek,
 And mutual anity, so strait, so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me,
 Henceforth. My dwelling, haply, may not please,
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
 Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me, 380
 Which I as freely give. Hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,
 And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous offspring; if no better place,
 Thank him who puts me, loath, to this revenge
 On you, who wrong me not, for him who wronged.
 And, should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, as I do, yet public reason just—
 Honour and empire with revenge enlarged 390
 By conquering this new World—compels me now
 To do what else, though damned, I should abhor.”

So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,
 The tryant's plea, excused his devilish deeds.
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree
 Down he alights among the sportful herd
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
 Now other, as their shape served best his end
 Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,
 To mark what of their state he more might learn . 400
 By word or action marked. About them round
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;

Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,
 Straight crouches close; then, rising, changes oft
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both
 Griped in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
 To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
 Turned him all ear to hear new utterance flow:— 410

“Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,
 Dearer thyself than all, needs must the Power
 That made us, and for us this ample World,
 Be infinitely good, and of his good
 As liberal and free as infinite;
 That raised us from the dust, and placed us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
 From us no other service than to keep 420
 This one, this easy charge—of all the trees
 In Paradise that bear delicious fruit
 So various, not to taste that only Tree
 Of Knowledge, planted by the Tree of Life;
 So near grows Death to Life, whate'er Death is—
 Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
 God hath pronounced it Death to taste that Tree:
 The only sign of our obedience left
 Among so many signs of power and rule
 Conferred upon us, and dominion given 430
 Over all other creatures that possess
 Earth, Air, and Sea. Then let us not think hard
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice
 Unlimited of manifold delights;
 But let us ever praise him, and extol
 His bounty, following our delightful task,
 To prune these growing plants, and tend these flowers;
 Which, were it toilsome, yet with thee were sweet.”

To whom thus Eve replied:—“O thou for whom
And from whom I was formed flesh of thy flesh, 440
And without whom am to no end, my guide
And head! what thou hast said is just and right.
For we to him, indeed, all praises owe,
And daily thanks—I chiefly, who enjoy
So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
Like consort to thyself canst nowhere find.
That day I oft remember, when from sleep
I first awaked, and found myself reposed, 450
Under a shade, on flowers, much wondering where
And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound
Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
Into a liquid plain; then stood unmoved,
Pure as the expanse of Heaven. I thither went
With unexperienced thought, and laid me down
On the green bank, to look into the clear
Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.
As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
A shape within the watery gleam appeared,
Bending to look on me. I started back,
It started back; but pleased I soon returned,
Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks
Of sympathy and love. There I had fixed
Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,
Had not a voice thus warned me: ‘What thou seest,
What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
With thee it came and goes: but follow me,
And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470
Thy coming, and thy soft embraces—he
Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy
Inseparably thine; to him shalt bear
Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called
Mother of human race.’ What could I do,
But follow straight, invisibly thus led?
Till I espied thee, fair, indeed, and tall,
Under a platane; yet methought less fair,
Less winning soft, less amiably mild,
Than that smooth watery image. Back I turned; 480
Thou, following, cried’st aloud, ‘Return, fair Eve;
Whom fliest thou? Whom thou fliest, of him thou art,
His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
Substantial life, to have thee by my side
Henceforth an individual solace dear:

Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
 My other half.' With that thy gentle hand
 Seized mine: I yielded, and from that time see
 How beauty is excelled by manly grace 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."

So spake our general mother, and, with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unproved,
 And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned
 On our first father; half her swelling breast
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid. He, in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
 Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles when he impregns the clouds 500
 That shed May flowers, and pressed her matron lip
 With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turned
 For envy; yet with jealous leer malign
 Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained:—

"Sight hateful, sight tormenting! Thus these two,
 Imparadised in one another's arms,
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Among our other torments not the least, 510
 Still unfulfilled, with pain of longing pines!
 Yet let me not forget what I have gained
 From their own mouths. All is not theirs, it seems;
 One fatal tree there stands, of Knowledge called,
 Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden?
 Suspicious, reasonless! Why should their Lord
 Envy them that? Can it be sin to know?
 Can it be death? And do they only stand
 By ignorance? Is that their happy state,
 The proof of their obedience and their faith? 520
 O fair foundation laid whereon to build
 Their ruin! Hence I will excite their minds
 With more desire to know, and to reject
 Envious commands, invented with design
 To keep them low, whom knowledge might exalt
 Equal with gods. Aspiring to be such,
 They taste and die: what likelier can ensue?
 But first with narrow search I must walk round
 This garden, and no corner leave unspied;
 A chance but chance may lead where I may meet 530
 Some wandering Spirit of Heaven, by fountain-side,
 Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw
 What further would be learned. Live while ye may,

Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
Short pleasures; for long woes are to succeed!"

So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,
But with sly circumspection, and began
Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.

Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where Heaven
With Earth and Ocean meets, the setting Sun
Slowly descended, and with right aspect

Against the eastern gate of Paradise
Levelled his evening rays. It was a rock
Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,
Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent
Accessible from Earth, one entrance high;
The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
Still as it rose, impossible to climb.

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

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

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

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

This day at highth of noon came to my sphere
A Spirit, zealous, as he seemed, to know
More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,
God's latest image. I described his way

Bent all on speed, and marked his aery gait,
But in the mount that lies from Eden north,
Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks
Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured.

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

To whom the winged Warrior thus returned:—

"Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
Amid the Sun's bright circle where thou sitt'st,
See far and wide. In at this gate none pass
The vigilance here placed, but such as come

Well known from Heaven; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence. If Spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'erleaped 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 promised he; and Uriel to his charge
 Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised 590
 Bore him slope downward to the Sun, now fallen
 Beneath the Azores; whether the Prime Orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither rolled
 Diurnal, or this less volúbil Earth,
 By shorter flight to the east, had left him there
 Arraying with reflected purple and gold
 The clouds that on his western throne attend.

Now came still Evening on, and Twilight gray
 Had in her sober livery all things clad;
 Silence accompanied; for beast and bird, 600
 They to their grassy couch, these to their nests
 Were slunk, all but the wakeful nightingale.

She all night long her amorous descant sung:
 Silence was pleased. Now glowed the firmament
 With living sapphires; Hesperus, that led
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the Moon,
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw;

When Adam thus to Eve:—"Fair consort, the hour 610
 Of night, and all things now retired to rest,
 Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
 Labour and rest, as day and night, to men
 Successive, and the timely dew of sleep,

Now falling with soft slumberous weight, inclines
 Our eye-lids. Other creatures all day long
 Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,

And the regard of Heaven on all his ways; 620
 While other animals unactive range,
 And of their doings God takes no account.
 To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
 With first approach of light, we must be risen,
 And at our pleasant labour, to reform
 Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,

That mock our scant manuring, and require
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth.
 Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630
 That lie bestrewn, unsightly and unsmooth,
 Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease.
 Meanwhile, as Nature wills, Night bids us rest."

To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorned:—
 "My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st
 Unargued I obey. So God ordains:

God is thy law, thou mine: to know no more
 Is woman's happiest knowledge, and her praise.
 With thee conversing, I forget all time,
 All seasons, and their change; all please alike. 640

Sweet is the breath of Morn, her rising sweet,
 With charm of earliest birds; pleasant the Sun,
 When first on this delightful land he spreads
 His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,
 Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile Earth
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming-on
 Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night,
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair Moon,
 And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:
 But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends 650
 With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun
 On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
 Glistening 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 replied:—

"Daughter of God and Man, accomplished Eve, 660
 Those have their course to finish round the Earth
 By morrow evening, and from land to land
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,
 Ministering light prepared, 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 670
 Their stellar virtue on all kinds that grow
 On Earth, made hereby apter to receive
 Perfection from the Sun's more potent ray.
 These, then, though unbeheld in deep of night,

Shine not in vain. Nor think, though men were none,
 That Heaven would want spectators, God want praise.
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the Earth
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold
 Both day and night. How often, from the steep 680
 Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,
 Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
 Singing their great Creator! Oft in bands
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds
 In full harmonic number joined, their songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven."

Thus talking, hand in hand alone they passed
 On to their blissful bower. It was a place 690
 Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed
 All things to Man's delightful use. The roof
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
 Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamine,
 Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought
 Mosaic; under foot the violet, 700

Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
 Broïdered the ground, more coloured than with stone
 Of costliest emblem. Other creature here,
 Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;
 Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower
 More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
 Espoused Eve decked first her nuptial bed, 710
 And heavenly choirs the hymenæan sung,
 What day the genial Angel to our sire
 Brought her, in naked beauty more adorned,
 More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods
 Endowed with all their gifts; and, O! too like
 In sad event, when, to the unwiser son
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged
 On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.

Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood, 720
 Both turned, and under open sky adored

The God that made both Sky, Air, Earth, and Heaven,
 Which they beheld, the Moon's resplendent globe,
 And starry Pole:—"Thou also madest the Night,
 Maker Omnipotent; and thou the Day,
 Which we, in our appointed work employed,
 Have finished, happy in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
 Ordained by thee; and this delicious place,
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
 But thou hast promised from us two a race
 To fill the Earth, who shall with us extol
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep."

730

This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure,
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
 Handed they went; and, eased the putting-off
 These troublesome disguises which we wear,
 Straight side by side were laid; nor turned, I ween,
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
 Mysterious of connubial love refused:

740

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!

750

By thee adulterous lust was driven from men
 Among the bestial herds to range; by thee,
 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure,
 Relations dear, and all the charities
 Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
 Far be it that I should write thee sin or blame,
 Or think thee unbecfitting holiest place,
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets,
 Whose bed is undefiled and chaste pronounced,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile
 Of harlots—loveless, joyless, unendeared,
 Casual fruition; nor in court amours,
 Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,

760

Or serenate, which the starved lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770
 These, lulled by nightingales, embracing slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flowery roof
 Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on,
 Blest pair! and, O! yet happiest, if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more!
 Now had Night measured with her shadowy cone
 Half-way up-hill this vast sublunar vault,
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim
 Forth issuing, at the accustomed hour, stood armed
 To their night-watches in warlike parade; 780
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake:—
 “Uzziel, 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 called
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:—
 “Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged speed
 Search through this Garden; leave unsearched no nook;
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
 This evening from the Sun’s decline arrived
 Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?), escaped
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad, no doubt:
 Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.”
 So saying, on he led his radiant files,
 Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct
 In search of whom they sought. Him there they found
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 800
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge
 Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams;
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint
 The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise,
 At least distempered, discontented thoughts,
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
 Blown up with high conceits engendering pride.
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810
 Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns
 Of force to its own likeness. Up he starts,
 Discovered and surprised. As, when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid

Fit for the tun, some magazine to store
 Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain,
 With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air;
 So started up, in his own shape, the Fiend.
 Back stept those two fair Angels, half amazed
 So sudden to behold the grisly King;
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon:—

“Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell
 Com'st thou, escaped thy prison? and, transformed,
 Why satt'st thou like an enemy in wait,
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?”

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

To whom thus Zephon, answering scorn with scorn:—

“Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same,
 Or undiminished brightness, to be known
 As when thou stood'st in Heaven upright and pure.
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul.
 But come; for thou, be sure, shalt give account
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.”

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

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

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

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

87c

He scarce had ended, when those two approached,
And brief related whom they brought, where found,
How busied, in what form and posture couched.
To whom, with stern regard, thus Gabriel spake:—
“Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed
To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge
Of others, who approve not to transgress
By thy example, but have power and right
To question thy bold entrance on this place;
Employed, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?”

88o

To whom thus Satan, with contemptuous brow:—
“Gabriel, thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise;
And such I held thee; but this question asked
Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,
Though thither doomed? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt,
And boldly venture to whatever place
Farthest from pain, where thou mightst hope to change
Torment with ease, and soonest recompense
Dole with delight; which in this place I sought:
To thee no reason, who know'st only good,
But evil hast not tried. And wilt object
His will who bound us? Let him surer bar
His iron gates, if he intends our stay
In that dark durance. Thus much what was asked:
The rest is true; they found me where they say;
But that implies not violence or harm.”

89o

90o

Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel moved,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied:—
“O loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew,
And now returns him from his prison scaped,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise
Or not who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed!

So wise he judges it to fly from pain
 However, and to scape his punishment! 910
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrath,
 Which thou incur'st by flying, meet thy flight
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,
 Which taught thee yet no better that no pain
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.

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

To which the Fiend thus answered, frowning stern:—

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

But still thy words at random, as before, 930
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves,
 From hard assays and ill successes past,
 A faithful leader—not to hazard all
 Through ways of danger by himself untried.

I, therefore, I alone, first undertook
 To wing the desolate Abyss, and spy
 This new-created World, whereof in Hell
 Fame is not silent, here in hope to find
 Better abode, and my afflicted Powers
 To settle here on Earth, or in mid Air; 940
 Though for possession put to try once more
 What thou and thy gay legions dare against;
 Whose easier business were to serve their Lord
 High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,
 And practised distances to cringe, not fight."

To whom the Warrior-Angel soon replied:—

"To say and straight unsay, pretending first
 Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
 Argues no leader, but a liar traced,
 Satan; and couldst thou 'faithful' add? O name, 950
 O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!

Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head!
 Was this your discipline and faith engaged,
 Your military obedience, to dissolve
 Allegiance to the acknowledged Power Supreme:

And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored
 Heaven's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope 960
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
 But mark what I areed thee now: Avaunt!
 Fly thither whence thou fledd'st. If from this hour
 Within these hallowed limits thou appear,
 Back to the Infernal Pit I drag thee chained,
 And seal thee so as henceforth not to scorn
 The facile gates of Hell too slightly barred."
 So threatened he; but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage, replied:—
 "Then, when I am thy captive, talk of chains, 970
 Proud liminary Cherub! but ere then
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel
 From my prevailing arm, though Heaven's King
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy compeers,
 Used to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels
 In progress through the road of Heaven star-paved."
 While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright
 Turned fiery red, sharpening in moonèd horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round 980
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded grove of ears which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands
 Lest on the threshing-floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On the other side, Satan, alarmed,
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:
 His stature reached the sky, and on his crest
 Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp
 What seemed both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds 990
 Might have ensued; nor only Paradise,
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of Heaven perhaps, or all the Elements
 At least, had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon
 The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astræa and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weighed,
 The pendulous round Earth with balanced air 1000
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
 Battles and realms. In these he put two weights,
 The sequel each of parting and of fight:

The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam;
Which Gabriel spying thus bespake the Fiend:—
“Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine,
Neither our own, but given; what folly then
To boast what arms can do! since thine no more
Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now
To trample thee as mire. For proof look up,
And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak
If thou resist.” The Fiend looked up, and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring; and with him fled the shades of Night.

1010

THE END OF THE FOURTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK V.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

NOW Morn, her rosy steps in the eastern clime
Advancing, sowed the earth with orient pearl,
When Adam waked, so custom'd; for his sleep
Was aery light, from pure digestion bred,
And temperate vapours bland, which the only sound
Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
Lightly dispersed, and the shrill matin song
Of birds on every bough. So much the more
His wonder was to find unwakened Eve,
With tresses discomposed, and glowing cheek, 10
As through unquiet rest. He, on his side
Leaning half raised, with looks of cordial love
Hung over her 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, whispered thus: — "Awake,
My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
Heaven's last, best gift, my ever-new delight!
Awake! the morning shines, and the fresh field 20
Calls us; we lose the prime to mark how spring

Our tended plants, how blows the citron grove,
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
 How Nature paints her colours, how the bee
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet."

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

"O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
 My glory, my perfection! glad I see
 Thy face, and morn returned; for I this night
 (Such night till this I never passed) have dreamed,
 If dreamed, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design;
 But of offence and trouble, which my mind
 Knew never till this irksome night. Methought
 Close at mine ear one called me forth to walk
 With gentle voice; I thought it thine. It said,
 'Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
 The cool, the silent, save where silence yields

30

To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
 Tunes sweetest his love-laboured song; now reigns
 Full-orbed the moon, and, with more pleasing light,
 Shadowy sets off the face of things—in vain,
 If none regard. Heaven wakes with all his eyes;
 Whom to behold but thee, Nature's desire,
 In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
 Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze?'

40

I rose as at thy call, but found thee not:
 To find thee I directed then my walk;
 And on, methought, alone I passed through ways
 That brought me on a sudden to the tree
 Of interdicted knowledge. Fair it seemed,
 Much fairer to my fancy than by day;

50

And, as I wondering looked, beside it stood
 One shaped and winged like one of those from Heaven
 By us oft seen: his dewy locks distilled
 Ambrosia. On that tree he also gazed;
 And, 'O fair plant,' said he, 'with fruit surcharged,
 Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
 Nor God nor Man? Is knowledge so despised?

60

Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
 Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold.
 Longer thy offered good, why else set here?'
 This said, he paused not, but with venturous arm
 He plucked, he tasted. Me damp horror chilled
 At such bold words vouched with a deed so bold;
 But he thus, overjoyed: 'O fruit divine,
 Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus crompt,

Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
 For gods, yet able to make gods of men! 70
 And why not gods of men, since good, the more
 Communicated, more abundant grows,
 The author not impaired, but honoured more?
 Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve!
 Partake thou also: happy though thou art,
 Happier thou may'st be, worthier canst not be.
 Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
 Thyself a goddess; not to Earth confined,
 But sometimes in the Air, as we; sometimes
 Ascend to Heaven, by merit thine, and see 80
 What life the gods live there, and such live thou.'
 So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
 Even to my mouth of that same fruit held part
 Which he had plucked: the pleasant savoury smell
 So quickened appetite that I, methought,
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld
 The Earth outstretched immense, a prospect wide
 And various. Wondering at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation, suddenly 90
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep; but, O, how glad I waked
 To find this but a dream!" Thus Eve her night
 Related, and thus Adam answered sad:—
 "Best image of myself, and dearer half,
 The trouble of thy thoughts this night in sleep
 Affects me equally; nor can I like
 This uncouth dream—of evil sprung, I fear;
 Yet evil whence? In thee can harbour none,
 Created pure. But know that in the soul 100
 Are many lesser faculties, that serve
 Reason as chief. Among these Fancy next
 Her office holds; of all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes,
 Which Reason, joining or disjoining, frames
 All what we affirm or what deny, and call
 Our knowledge or opinion; then retires
 Into her private cell when Nature rests.
 Oft, in her absence, mimic Fancy wakes 110
 To imitate her; but, misjoining shapes,
 Wild work produces oft, and most in dreams,
 Ill matching words and deeds long past or late.
 Some such resemblances, methinks, I find
 Of our last evening's talk in this thy dream,

But with addition strange. Yet be not sad:
 Evil into the mind of God or Man
 May come and go, so unapproved, and leave
 No spot or blame behind; which gives me hope
 That what in sleep thou didst abhor to dream 120
 Waking thou never wilt consent to do.

Be not disheartened, then, nor cloud those looks,
 That wont to be more cheerful and serene
 Than when fair Morning first smiles on the world;
 And let us to our fresh employments rise
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers,
 That open now their choicest bosomed smells,
 Reserved from night, and kept for thee in store."

So cheered he his fair spouse; and she was cheered,
 But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
 From either eye, and wiped them with her hair:
 Two other precious drops that ready stood,
 Each in their crystal sluice, he, ere they fell,
 Kissed as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
 And pious awe, that feared to have offended.

So all was cleared, and to the field they haste.
 But first, from under shady arborous roof
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight
 Of day-spring, and the Sun — who, scarce uprisen,
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim, 140
 Shot parallel to the Earth his dewy ray,
 Discovering in wide landskip all the east
 Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains —
 Lowly they bowed, adoring, and began
 Their orisons, each morning duly paid
 In various style; for neither various style
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounced, or sung
 Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
 Flowed from their lips, in prose or numerous verse, 150
 More tuneable than needed lute or harp
 To add more sweetness: And they thus began:—

"These are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
 Almighty! thine this universal frame,
 Thus wondrous fair: Thyself how wondrous then!
 Unspeakable! who sitt'st above these heavens
 To us invisible, or dimly seen
 In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine.
 Speak, ye who best can tell, ye Sons of Light, 160
 Angels — for ye behold him, and with songs
 And choral symphonies, day without night,

Circle his throne rejoicing — ye in Heaven ;
 On Earth join, all ye creatures, to extol
 Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
 Fairest of Stars, last in the train of Night,
 If better thou belong not to the Dawn,
 Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
 With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere
 While day arises, that sweet hour of prime. 170
 Thou Sun, of this great World both eye and soul,
 Acknowledge him thy greater ; sound his praise
 In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
 And when high noon hast gained, and when thou fall'st.
 Moon, that now meet'st the orient Sun, now fliest,
 With the fixed Stars, fixed in their orb that flies ;
 And ye five other wandering Fires, that move
 In mystic dance, not without song, resound
 His praise who out of Darkness called up Light.
 Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth 180
 Of Nature's womb, that in quaternion run
 Perpetual circle, multiform, and mix
 And nourish all things, let your ceaseless change
 Vary to our great Maker still new praise.
 Ye Mists and Exhalations, that now rise
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,
 Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
 In honour to the World's great Author rise ;
 Whether to deck with clouds the uncoloured sky,
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 190
 Rising or falling, still advance his praise.
 His praise, ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,
 Breathe soft or loud ; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
 With every Plant, in sign of worship wave.
 Fountains, and ye, that warble, as ye flow,
 Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
 Join voices, all ye living Souls. Ye Birds,
 That, singing, up to Heaven-gate ascend,
 Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise.
 Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk 200
 The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
 Witness if *I* be silent, morn or even,
 To hill or valley, fountain, or fresh shade,
 Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
 Hail, universal Lord ! Be bounteous still
 To give us only good ; and, if the night
 Have gathered aught of evil, or concealed,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark."
 So prayed they innocent, and to their thoughts

Firm peace recovered soon, and wonted calm. 210
 On to their morning's rural work they haste,
 Among sweet dews and flowers, where any row
 Of fruit-trees, over-woody, reached too far
 Their pampered boughs, and needed hands to check
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine
 To wed her elm; she, spoused, about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dower, the adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employed beheld
 With pity Heaven's high King, and to him called 220
 Raphael, the sociable Spirit, that deigned
 To travel with Tobias, and secured
 His marriage with the seven-times-wedded maid.
 "Raphael," said he, "thou hear'st what stir on Earth
 Satan, from Hell scaped through the darksome Gulf,
 Hath raised in Paradise, and how disturbed
 This night the human pair; how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.
 Go, therefore; half this day, as friend with friend,
 Converse with Adam, in what bower or shade 230
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retired
 To respite his day-labour with repast
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on
 As may advise him of his happy state —
 Happiness in his power left free to will,
 Left to his own free will, his will though free
 Yet mutable. Whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not; too secure; tell him withal
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
 Late fallen himself from Heaven, is plotting now 240
 The fall of others from like state of bliss.
 By violence? no, for that shall be withstood;
 But by deceit and lies. This let him know,
 Lest, wilfully transgressing, he pretend
 Surprisal, unadmonished, unforewarned."
 So spake the Eternal Father, and fulfilled
 All justice. Nor delayed the wingèd Saint
 After his charge received; but from among
 Thousand celestial Ardours, where he stood
 Veiled with his gorgeous wings, upspringing light, 250
 Flew through the midst of Heaven. The angelic quires,
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all the empyreal road, till, at the gate
 Of Heaven arrived, the gate self-opened wide,
 On golden hinges turning, as by work
 Divine the sovran Architect had framed.

From hence — no cloud or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interposed, however small — he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth, and the Garden of God, with cedars crowned 260
 Above all hills; as when by night the glass
 Of Galileo, less assured, observes
 Imagined lands and regions in the Moon;
 Or pilot from amidst the Cyclades
 Delos or Samos first appearing kens,
 A cloudy spot. Down thither prone in flight
 He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
 Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing
 Now on the polar winds; then with quick fan
 Winnows the buxom air, till, within soar 270
 Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
 A phoenix, gazed by all, as that sole bird,
 When, to enshrine his relics in the Sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on the eastern cliff of Paradise
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns,
 A Seraph winged. Six wings he wore, to shade
 His lineaments divine: the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament; the middle pair 280
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold
 And colours dipt in heaven; the third his feet
 Shadowed from either heel with feathered mail,
 Sky-tinctured grain. Like Maia's son he stood,
 And shook his plumes, that heavenly fragrance filled
 The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
 Of Angels under watch, and to his state
 And to his message high in honour rise;
 For on some message high they guessed him bound. 290
 Their glittering tents he passed, and now is come
 Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
 And flowering odours, cassia, nard, and balm,
 A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
 Wantoned as in her prime, and played at will
 Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,
 Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.
 Him, through the spicy forest onward come,
 Adam discerned, as in the door he sat
 Of his cool bower, while now the mounted Sun 300
 Shot down direct his fervid rays, to warm
 Earth's inmost womb, more warmth than Adam needs,
 And Eve, within, due at her hour, prepared

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

“Haste hither, Eve, and, worth thy sight, behold
 Eastward among those trees what glorious Shape
 Comes this way moving; seems another morn
 Risen on mid-noon. Some great behest from Heaven
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
 And what thy stores contain bring forth, and pour
 Abundance fit to honour and receive
 Our heavenly stranger; well we may afford
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
 From large bestowed, where Nature multiplies
 Her fertile growth, and by disburdening grows
 More fruitful; which instructs us not to spare.”

To whom thus Eve: — “Adam, Earth’s hallowed mould,
 Of God inspired, small store will serve where store,
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
 Save what, by frugal storing, firmness gains
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes.
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
 Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
 To entertain our Angel-guest as he,
 Beholding, shall confess that here on Earth
 God hath dispensed his bounties as in Heaven.”

So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,
 What order so contrived as not to mix
 Tastes, not well joined, inelegant, but bring
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change:
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
 In India East or West, or middle shore
 In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where
 Alcinoüs reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat
 Rough or smooth rined, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand. For drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed
 She tempers dulcet creams — nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strews the ground
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfumed.

Meanwhile our primitive great Sire, to meet

His godlike guest, walks forth, without more train
 Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections; in himself was all his state,
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long
 Of horses led and grooms besmeared with gold
 Dazzles the crowd and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence, Adam, though not awed,
 Yet with submissive approach and reverence meek,
 As to a superior nature, bowing low.

360

Thus said:—“Native of Heaven (for other place
 None can than Heaven such glorious Shape contain),
 Since, by descending from the Thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deigned a while
 To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us,
 Two only, who yet by sovran gift possess
 This spacious ground, in yonder shady bower
 To rest, and what the Garden choicest bears
 To sit and taste, till this meridian heat
 Be over, and the sun more cool decline.”

370

Whom thus the angelic Virtue answered mild:—
 “Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though Spirits of Heaven,
 To visit thee. Lead on, then, where thy bower
 O’ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will.” So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona’s arbour smiled,
 With flowerets decked and fragrant smells. But Eve,
 Undecked, save with herself, more lovely fair
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feigned
 Of three that in Mount Ida naked strove,
 Stood to entertain her guest from Heaven; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
 Altered her cheek. On whom the Angel “Hail!”
 Bestowed—the holy salutation used
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve:—

380

“Hail! Mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God
 Have heaped this table!” Raised of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
 And on her ample square, from side to side,
 All Autumn piled, though Spring and Autumn here
 Danced hand-in-hand. A while discourse they hold—
 No fear lest dinner cool—when thus began
 Our Author:—“Heavenly Stranger, please to taste

390

These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasured-out, descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caused 400
 The Earth to yield: 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 410
 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 sustained and fed. Of Elements
 The grosser feeds the purer: Earth the Sea;
 Earth and the Sea feed Air; the Air those Fires
 Ethereal, and, as lowest, first the Moon;
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
 Vapours not yet into her substance turned. 420

Nor doth the Moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher Orbs.
 The Sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimantal recompense
 In humid exhalations, and at even
 Sups with the Ocean. Though in Heaven the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield nectar—though from off the boughs each morn
 We brush mellifluous dews and find the ground
 Covered with pearly grain—yet God hath here 430
 Varied his bounty so with new delights

As may compare with Heaven; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice." So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
 The Angel, nor in mist—the common gloss
 Of theologians—but with keen 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 alchemist 440
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
 As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
 Ministered naked, and their flowing cups

With pleasant liquors crowned. O innocence
 Deserving Paradise! If ever, then,
 Then had the Sons of God excuse to have been
 Enamoured at that sight. But in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injured lover's hell.

450

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

460

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

To whom the wingèd Hierarch replied:—

“O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return,
 If not depraved from good, created all
 Such to perfection; one first matter all,
 Endued with various forms, various degrees
 Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;
 But more refined, more spiritous and pure,
 As nearer to him placed or nearer tending
 Each in their several active spheres assigned,
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
 Proportioned to each kind. So from the root

470

Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
 More aery, last the bright consummate flower
 Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,
 Fancy and understanding; whence the Soul
 Reason receives, and Reason is her being,
 Discursive, or Intuitive: Discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same.

480

Wonder not, then, what God for you saw good

490

If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance. Time may come when Men
 With Angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;
 And from these corporal nutriments, perhaps,
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improved by tract of time, and wing'd ascend
 Ethereal, as we, or may at choice
 Here or in heavenly paradises dwell,
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire
 Whose progeny you are. Meanwhiie enjoy,
 Your fill, what happiness this happy state
 Can comprehend, incapable of more."

500

To whom the Patriarch of Mankind replied:—
 "O favourable Spirit, propitious guest,
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of Nature set
 From centre to circumference, whereon,
 In contemplation of created things,
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
 What meant that caution joined, *If ye be found
 Obedient?* Can we want obedience, then,
 To him, or possibly his love desert,
 Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
 Human desires can seek or apprehend?"

510

To whom the Angel:— "Son of Heaven and Earth,
 Attend! That thou art happy, owe to God;
 That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
 That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.
 This was that caution given thee; be advised.
 God made thee perfect, not immutable;
 And good he made thee; but to persevere
 He left it in thy power—ordained thy will
 By nature free, not over-ruled by fate
 Inextricable, or strict necessity.
 Our voluntary service he requires,
 Not our necessitated. Such with him
 Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
 Can hearts not free be tried whether they serve
 Willing or no, who will but what they must
 By destiny, and can no other choose?
 Myself, and all the Angelic Host, that stand
 In sight of God enthroned, our happy state
 Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds.
 On other surety none: freely we serve,

520

530

Because we freely love, as in our will
 To love or not; in this we stand or fall. 540
 And some are fallen, to disobedience fallen,
 And so from Heaven to deepest Hell. 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 neighbouring hills
 Aërial music send. Nor knew I not
 To be, both will and deed, created free.
 Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
 Our Maker, and obey him whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assured me, and still assure; though what thou tell'st
 Hath passed in Heaven some doubt within me move,
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent,
 The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard.
 And we have yet large day, for scarce the Sun
 Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begins
 His other half in the great zone of heaven." 560

Thus Adam made request; and Raphael,
 After short pause assenting, thus began:—
 "High matter thou enjoïn'st me, O prime of Men—
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense the invisible exploits
 Of warring Spirits? how, without remorse,
 The ruin of so many, glorious once
 And perfect while they stood? how, last, unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal? Yet for thy good 570
 This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best—though what if Earth
 Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
 Each to other like more than on Earth is thought!

"As yet this World was not, and Chaos wild
 Reigned where these heavens now roll, where Earth now rests
 Upon her centre poised, when on a day
 (For Time, though in Eternity, applied 580
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future), on such day
 As Heaven's great year brings forth, the empyreal host
 Of Angels, by imperial summons called,
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne

Forthwith from all the ends of Heaven appeared
Under their hierarchs in orders bright.

Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards 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 emblazed
Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs

590

Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
Orb within orb, the Father Infinite,
By whom in bliss embosomed sat the Son,
Amidst, as from a flaming mount, whose top
Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:—

“Hear, all ye Angels, Progeny of Light,
Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand!

600

This day I have begot whom I declare
My only Son, and on this holy hill
Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
At my right hand. Your head I him appoint,
And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord.
Under his great vicegerent reign abide,
United as one individual soul,

610

For ever happy. Him who disobeys
Me disobeys, breaks union, and, that day,
Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
Into utter darkness, deep engulfed, his place
Ordained without redemption, without end.’

“So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words
All seemed well pleased; all seemed, but were not all.
That day, as other solemn days, they spent
In song and dance about the sacred hill—

Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
Of planets and of fixed in all her wheels
Resembles nearest; mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular

620

Then most when most irregular they seem;
And in their motions harmony divine
So smooths her charming tones that God’s own ear
Listens delighted. Evening now approached

(For we have also our evening and our morn—
We ours for change delectable, not need),

Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
Desirous: all in circles as they stood,

630

Tables are set, and on a sudden piled

With Angels' food; and rubied nectar flows
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
 On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crowned,
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure
 Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
 Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who showered 640
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
 Now when ambrosial Night, with clouds exhaled
 From that high mount of God whence light and shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed
 To grateful twilight (for Night comes not there
 In darker veil), and roseate dews disposed
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest,
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous Earth in plain outspread
 (Such are the courts of God), the Angelic throng, 650
 Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life—
 Pavilions numberless and sudden reared,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept,
 Fanned with cool winds; save those who, in their course,
 Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
 Alternate all night long. But not so waked
 Satan—so call him now; his former name
 Is heard no more in Heaven. He, of the first,
 If not the first Archangel, great in power, 660
 In favour, and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honoured by his great Father, and proclaimed
 Messiah, King Anointed, could not bear,
 Through pride, that sight, and thought himself impaired.
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipped, unobeyed, the Throne supreme, 670
 Contemptuous, and, his next subordinate
 Awakening, thus to him in secret spake:—
 “Sleep'st thou, companion dear? what sleep can close
 Thy eyelids? and rememberest what decree,
 Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips
 Of Heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts
 Wast wont, I mine to thee was wont, to impart;
 Both waking we were one; how, then, can now
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;

New laws from him who reigns new minds may raise 680
 In us who serve—new counsels, to debate
 What doubtful may ensue. More in this place
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
 Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
 Tell them that, by command, ere yet dim Night
 Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
 And all who under me their banners wave,
 Homeward with flying march where we possess
 The quarters of the North, there to prepare
 Fit entertainment to receive our King, 690
 The great Messiah, and his new commands,
 Who speedily through all the Hierarchies
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.'
 "So spake the false Archangel, and infused
 Bad influence into the unwary breast
 Of his associate. He together calls,
 Or several one by one, the regent Powers,
 Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
 That, the Most High commanding, now ere Night,
 Now ere dim Night had disencumbered Heaven, 700
 The great hierarchal standard was to move;
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
 Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
 Or taint integrity. But all obeyed
 The wonted signal, and superior voice
 Of their great Potentate; for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in Heaven:
 His countenance, as the morning-star that guides
 The starry flock, allured them, and with lies
 Drew after him the third part of Heaven's host. 710
 Meanwhile, the Eternal Eye, whose sight discerns
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him, saw without their light
 Rebellion rising—saw in whom, how spread
 Among the Sons of Morn, what multitudes
 Were banded to oppose his high decree;
 And, smiling, to his only Son thus said:—
 " 'Son, thou in whom my glory I behold
 In full resplendence, Heir of all my might, 720
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
 Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of deity or empire: such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious North;

Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
 In battle what our power is or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
 In our defence, lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.'

"To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear
 Lightening 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 they hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal power
 Given me to quell their pride, and in event 740
 Know whether I be dextrous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven.'

"So spake the Son; but Satan with his Powers
 Far was advanced on winged speed, an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night,
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops which the sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
 Regions they passed, the mighty regencies
 Of Seraphim and Potentates and Thrones
 In their triple degrees—regions to which 750
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth
 And all the sea, from one entire globose
 Stretched into longitude; which having passed,
 At length into the limits of the North
 They came, and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far-blazing, as a mount
 Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers

From diamond quarries hewn and rocks of gold—
 The palace of great Lucifer (so call
 That structure, in the dialect of men
 Interpreted) which, not long after, he,
 Affecting all equality with God,
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,
 The Mountain of the Congregation called;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded to consult
 About the great reception of their King
 Thither to come, and with calumnious art
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:— 760

" 'Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers—
 If these magnificent titles yet remain 770

If these magnificent titles yet remain

Not merely titular, since by decree
 Another now hath to himself engrossed
 All power, and us eclipsed under the name
 Of King Anointed; for whom all this haste
 Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult, how we may best,
 With what may be devised of honours new, 780
 Receive him coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!
 Too much to one! but double how endured—
 To one and to his image now proclaimed?
 But what if better counsels might erect
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke!
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
 Natives and Sons of Heaven possessed before 790
 By none, and, if not equal all, yet free,
 Equally free; for orders and degrees
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.
 Who can in reason, then, or right, assume
 Monarchy over such as live by right
 His equals—if in power and splendour less,
 In freedom equal? or can introduce
 Law and edict on us, who without law
 Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
 And look for adoration, to the abuse 800
 Of those imperial titles which assert
 Our being ordained to govern, not to serve!
 “Thus far his bold discourse without control
 Had audience, when, among the Seraphim,
 Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
 The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
 The current of his fury thus opposed:—
 “‘O argument blasphemous, false, and proud—
 Words which no ear ever to hear in heav’n 810
 Expected; least of all from thee, ingrate,
 In place thyself so high above thy peers!
 Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
 The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
 That to his only Son, by right endued
 With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
 Confess him rightful King? Unjust, thou say’st,
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
 And equal over equals to let reign, 820

One over all with unsucceeded power!
 Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
 With Him the points of liberty, who made
 Thee what thou art, and formed the Powers of Heaven
 Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?
 Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
 And of our good and of our dignity
 How provident, he is — how far from thought
 To make us less; bent rather to exalt
 Our happy state, under one head more near 830
 United. But — to grant it thee unjust
 That equal over equals monarch reign —
 Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
 Or all angelic nature joined in one,
 Equal to him, begotten Son, by whom,
 As by his Word, the mighty Father made
 All things, even thee, and all the Spirits of Heaven
 By him created in their bright degrees,
 Crowned them with glory, and to their glory named
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers? — 840
 Essential Powers; nor by his reign obscured,
 But more illustrious made; since he, the head,
 One of our number thus reduced becomes;
 His laws our laws; all honour to him done
 Returns our own. Cease, then, this impious rage,
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease
 The incensèd Father and the incensèd Son
 While pardon may be found, in time besought.
 “So spake the fervent Angel; but his zeal 850
 None seconded, as out of season judged,
 Or singular and rash. Whereat rejoiced
 The Apostate, and, more haughty, thus replied: —
 “That we were formed, then, say'st thou? and the work
 Of secondary hands, by task transferred
 From Father to his Son? Strange point and new!
 Doctrine which we would know whence learned! Who saw
 When this creation was? 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 860
 By our own quickening power when fatal course
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native Heaven. Ethereal Sons.
 Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
 Who is our equal. Then thou shalt behold
 Whether by supplication we intend

Address, and to begirt the Almighty Throne
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,
 These tidings, carry to the Anointed King;
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.' 870

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

“‘O alienate from God, O Spirit accursed,
 Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
 Determined, and thy hapless crew involved
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 880

Both of thy crime and punishment. Henceforth
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
 Of God's Messiah. Those indulgent laws
 Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees
 Against thee are gone forth without recall;
 That golden sceptre which thou didst reject
 Is now an iron rod to bruise and break

Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;
 Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
 These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath 890
 Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
 Distinguish not: for soon expect to feel
 His thunder on thy head, devouring fire.

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

“So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found;
 Among the faithless faithful only he;
 Among innumerable false unmoved,
 Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified, 900
 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 passed,
 Long way through hostile scorn which he sustained
 Superior, nor of violence feared aught;
 And with retorted scorn his back he turned
 On those proud towers, to swift destruction doomed.”

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

“ ALL night the dreadless Angel, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champaign held his way, till Morn,
Waked by the circling Hours, with rosy hand
Unbarred the gates of Light. There is a cave
Within the Mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where Light and Darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns—which makes through Heaven
Grateful vicissitude, like day and night;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious Darkness enters, till her hour
To veil the heaven, though darkness there might well
Seem twilight here. And now went forth the Morn
Such as in highest heaven, arrayed in gold
Empyrean; from before her vanished Night,
Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain
Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,
Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view.
War he perceived, war in procinct, and found
Already known what he for news had thought
To have reported. Gladly then he mixed
Among those friendly Powers, who him received

10

20

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

“ ‘Servant of God, well done! Well hast thou fought
The better fight, who single hast maintained 30
Against revolted multitudes the cause
Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms,
And for the testimony of truth hast borne
Universal reproach, far worse to bear
Than violence; for this was all thy care —
To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
Judged thee perverse. The easier conquest now
Remains thee—aided by this host of friends,
Back on thy foes more glorious to return
Than scorned thou didst depart; and to subdue 40
By force who reason for their law refuse—
Right reason for their law, and for their King
Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
Go, Michael, of celestial armies prince,
And thou, in military prowess next,
Gabriel; lead forth to battle these my sons
Invincible; lead forth my armed Saints,
By thousands and by millions ranged for fight,
Equal in number to that godless crew 50
Rebellious. Them with fire and hostile arms
Fearless assault; and, to the brow of Heaven
Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss
Into their place of punishment, the gulf
Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
His fiery chaos to receive their fall.’

“ So spake the Sovran Voice; and clouds began
To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
In dusky wreaths reluctant flames, the sign
Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud
Ethereal trumpet from on high gan blow. 60
At which command the Powers Militant
That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined
Of union irresistible, moved on
In silence their bright legions to the sound
Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds
Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
Of God and his Messiah. On they move,
Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,

Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides 70
 Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground
 Their march was, and the passive air upbore
 Their nimble tread. As when the total kind
 Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
 Came summoned over Eden to receive
 Their names of thee; so over many a tract
 Of Heaven they marched, and many a province wide,
 Tenfold the length of this terrene. At last,
 Far in the horizon, to the north, appeared
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretched 80
 In battailous aspect; and, nearer view,
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable
 Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields
 Various, with boastful argument portrayed,
 The banded Powers of Satan hasting on
 With furious expedition: for they weened
 That self-same day, by fight or by surprise,
 To win the Mount of God, and on his throne
 To set the envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer. But their thoughts proved fond and vain 90
 In the mid-way; though strange to us it seemed
 At first that Angel should with Angel war,
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
 Hymning the Eternal Father. But the shout
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst, exalted as a God,
 The Apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
 Idol of majesty divine, enclosed
 With flaming Cherubim and golden shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne — for now
 'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval, and front to front
 Presented stood, in terrible array
 Of hideous length. Before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battle ere it joined,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,
 Came towering, armed in adamant and gold. 110
 Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores:—
 “‘O Heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and realty
 Remain not! Wherefore should not strength and might

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

120

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

130

“‘Proud, art thou met? Thy hope was to have reached
 The highth of thy aspiring unopposed—
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandoned at the terror of thy power
 Or potent tongue. Fool! not to think how vain
 Against the Omnipotent to rise in arms;
 Who, out of smallest things, could without end
 Have raised incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly; or with solitary hand,
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow,
 Unaided could have finished thee, and whelmed
 Thy legions under darkness! But thou seest
 All are not of thy train; there be who faith
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then
 To thee not visible when I alone
 Seemed in thy world erroneous to dissent
 From all: my Sect thou seest; now learn too late
 How few sometimes may know when thousands err.’

140

“Whom the grand Foe, with scornful eye askance,
 Thus answered:—‘Ill for thee, but in wished hour
 Of my revenge, first sought for, thou return'st
 From flight, seditious Angel, to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue,
 Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose
 A third part of the Gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert: who, while they feel
 Vigour divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none. But well thou com'st
 Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
 From me some plume, that thy success may show
 Destruction to the rest. This pause between
 (Unanswered lest thou boast) to let thee know.—

150

160

At first I thought that Liberty and Heaven
 To heavenly souls had been all one; but now
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Ministering Spirits, trained up in feast and song:
 Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of heaven—
 Servility with freedom to contend,
 As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.' 170

"To whom, in brief, thus Abdiel stern replied:—
 'Apostate! still thou err'st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote.
 Unjustly thou depriv'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 the unwise, or him who hath rebelled
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;
 Yet lewdly dar'st our ministering upbraid.
 Reign thou in Hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
 In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed.
 Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect: meanwhile,
 From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive.'
 "So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 190
 On the proud crest of Satan that no sight,
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
 Such ruin intercept. Ten paces huge
 He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee
 His massy spear upstayed: as if, on earth,
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
 Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat,
 Half-sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
 The rebel Thrones, but greater rage, to see
 Thus foiled their mightiest; ours joy filled, and shout, 200
 Presage of victory, and fierce desire
 Of battle: whereat Michaël bid sound
 The Archangel trumpet. Through the vast of Heaven
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
 Hosannah to the Highest; nor stood at gaze
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous joined
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
 And clamour such as heard in Heaven till now
 Was never; arms on armour clashing brayed
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210

Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss
Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
And, flying, vaulted either host with fire.
So under fiery cope together rushed
Both battles main with ruinous assault
And inextinguishable rage. All Heav'n
Resounded; and, had Earth been then, all Earth
Had to her centre shook. What wonder, when
Millions of fierce encountering Angels fought 220
On either side, the least of whom could wield
These elements, and arm him with the force
Of all their regions? How much more of power
Army against army numberless to raise
Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
Had not the Eternal King Omnipotent
From his strong hold of Heaven high overruled
And limited their might, though numbered such
As each divided legion might have seemed 230
A numerous host, in strength each armed hand
A legion! Led in fight, yet leader seemed
Each warrior single as in chief; expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war. No thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear; each on himself relied
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame 240
Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
That war, and various: sometimes on firm ground
A standing fight; then, soaring on main wing,
Tormented all the air; all air seemed then
Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale
The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
No equal, ranging through the dire attack
Of fighting Seraphim confused, at length
Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled 250
Squadrons at once: with huge two-handed sway
Brandished aloft, the horrid edge came down
Wide-wasting. Such destruction to withstand
He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
A vast circumference. At his approach
The great Archangel from his warlike toil

Surceased, and, glad, as hoping here to end
 Intestine war in Heaven, the Arch-foe subdued,
 Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile frown 260
 And visage all inflamed, first thus began:—

“‘Author of Evil, unknown till thy revolt,
 Unnamed in Heaven, now plenteous as thou seest
 These acts of hateful strife—hateful to all,
 Though heaviest, by just measure, on thyself
 And thy adherents—how hast thou disturbed
 Heaven’s blessed peace, and into Nature brought
 Misery, uncreated till the crime
 Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instilled
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
 And faithful, now proved false! But think not here
 To trouble holy rest; Heaven casts thee out
 From all her confines; Heaven, the seat of bliss,
 Brooks not the works of violence and war.
 Hence, then, and Evil go with thee along,
 Thy offspring, to the place of Evil, Hell—
 Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils!
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance, winged from God,
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain.’ 280

“So spake the Prince of Angels; to whom thus
 The Adversary:—‘Nor think thou with wind
 Of airy threats to awe whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of these
 To flight—or, if to fall, but that they rise
 Unvanquished—easier to transact with me
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
 To chase me hence? Err not that so shall end
 The strife which thou call’st evil, but we style
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win, 290
 Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell
 Thou fablest; here, however, to dwell free,
 If not to reign. Meanwhile, thy utmost force—
 And join him named Almighty to thy aid—
 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh.’

“They ended parle, and both addressed for fight
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
 Of Angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on Earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such highth 300
 Of godlike power? for likest gods they seemed,
 Stood they or moved, in stature, motion, arms,
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
 Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air

Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
Blazed opposite, while Expectation stood
In horror; from each hand with speed retired,
Where erst was thickest fight, the Angelic throng,
And left large field, unsafe within the wind
Of such commotion: such as (to set forth
Great things by small) if, Nature's concord broke,
Among the constellations war were sprung,
Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound.
Together both, with next to almighty arm
Uplifted imminent, one stroke they aimed
That might determine, and not need repeat
As not of power, at once; nor odds appeared
In might or swift prevention. But the sword
Of Michael from the armoury of God
Was given him tempered so that neither keen
Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stayed,
But, with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared
All his right side. Then Satan first knew pain,
And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore
The griding sword with discontinuous wound
Passed through him. But the ethereal substance closed,
Not long divisible; and from the gash
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flowed
Sanguine, such as celestial Spirits may bleed,
And all his armour stained, erewhile so bright,
Forthwith, on all sides, to his aid was run
By Angels many and strong, who interposed
Defence, while others bore him on their shields
Back to his chariot where it stood retired
From off the files of war: there they him laid
Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame
To find himself not matchless, and his pride
Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
His confidence to equal God in power.
Yet soon he healed; for Spirits, that live throughout
Vital in every part—not, as frail Man,
In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins—
Cannot but by annihilating die;
Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
All intellect, all sense; and as they please

They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size
Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.

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

360

Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow
Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence

370

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

380

“And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,
With many an inroad gored; deformed rout
Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground
With shivered armour strown, and on a heap
Chariot and charioteer lay overturned,
And fiery foaming steeds; what stood recoiled,
O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host,
Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised —
Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain —
Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
By sin of disobedience, till that hour
Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
Far otherwise the inviolable Saints

390

In cubic phalanx firm advanced entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably armed; 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes — not to have sinned,
 Not to have disobeyed; in fight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained
 By wound, though from their place by violence moved.
 “Now Night her course began, and, over Heaven
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,
 And silence on the odious din of war.
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,
 Victor and vanquished. On the foughten field 410
 Michaël and his Angels, prevalent
 Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on the other part,
 Satan with his rebellious disappeared,
 Far in the dark dislodged, and, void of rest,
 His potentates to council called by night,
 And in the midst thus undismayed began:—
 ““O now in danger tried, now known in arms
 Not to be overpowered, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone— 420
 Too mean pretence—but, what we more affect,
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
 Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight
 (And, if one day, why not eternal days?)
 What Heaven’s Lord had powerfulest to send
 Against us from about his throne, and judged
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought! True is, less firmly armed, 430
 Some disadvantage we endured, and pain—
 Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemned;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable, and, though pierced with wound,
 Soon closing, and by native vigour healed.
 Of evil, then, so small as easy think
 The remedy: perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us and worse our foes, 440
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In nature none. If other hidden cause
 Left them superior, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds, and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose.’

“He sat; and in the assembly next upstood
Nisroch, of Principalities the prime.

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

450

“Deliverer from new Lords, leader to free
Enjoyment of our right as Gods! yet hard
For Gods, and too unequal work, we find
Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
Against unpained, impassive; from which evil
Ruin must needs ensue. For what avails
Valour or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain,
Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands

Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine.

460

But live content— which is the calmest life;
But pain is perfect misery, the worst
Of evils, and, excessive, overturns
All patience. He who, therefore, can invent
With what more forcible we may offend
Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
No less than for deliverance what we owe.’

“Whereto, with look composed, Satan replied:—
‘Not uninvited that, which thou aright
Believ’st so main to our success, I bring.

470

Which of us who beholds the bright surface
Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand—
This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned
With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems and gold—
Whose eye so superficially surveys

These things as not to mind from whence they grow
Deep under ground: materials dark and crude,

Of spiritous and fiery spume, till, touched
With Heaven’s ray, and tempered, they shoot forth
So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?

480

These in their dark nativity the Deep
Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
Which, into hollow engines long and round
Thick-rammed, at the other bore with touch of fire
Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth

From far, with thundering noise, among our foes
Such implements of mischief as shall dash
To pieces and o’erwhelm whatever stands

Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmed
The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.

490

Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn

Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel joined
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.
 "He ended; and his words their drooping cheer
 Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.
 The invention all admired, and each how he
 To be the inventor missed; so easy it seemed
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought 500
 Impossible! Yet, haply, of thy race,
 In future days, if malice should abound,
 Some one, intent on mischief, or inspired
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
 None arguing stood; innumerable hands
 Were ready; in a moment up they turned
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510
 The originals of Nature in their crude
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art
 Concocted and adusted, they reduced
 To blackest grain, and into store conveyed.
 Part hidden veins digged up (nor hath this Earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone.
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious Night,
 Secret they finished, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection, unespied.
 "Now, when fair Morn orient in Heaven appeared,
 Up rose the victor Angels, and to arms
 The matin trumpet sung. In arms they stood
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
 Looked round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe, 530
 Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt. Him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
 But firm battalion: back with speediest sail
 Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing,
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried:—
 "Arm, Warriors, arm for fight! The foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud

He comes, and settled in his face I see 540
 Sad resolution and secure. Let each
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield,
 Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
 But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.'

"So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment.

Instant, without disturb, they took alarm,
 And onward move embattled: when, behold, 550
 Not distant far, with heavy pace the foe
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
 Training his devilish enginery, impaled
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
 A while; but suddenly at head appeared
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud:—

"Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold,

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

"So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce

Had ended, when to right and left the front 570
 Divided, and to either flank retired;

Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid
 On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
 Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,
 With branches lopt, in wood or mountain felled),
 Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
 With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
 Portending hollow truce. At each, behind,

A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed 580
 Stood waving tipt with fire; while we, suspense,
 Collected stood within our thoughts amused.

Not long! for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
 But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appeared,
 From those deep-throated engines belched, whose roar

Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail
 Of iron globes; which, on the victor host
 Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote, 590
 That whom they hit none on their feet might stand,
 Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
 By thousands, Angel on Archangel rolled,
 The sooner for their arms. Unarmed, they might
 Have easily, as Spirits, evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove; but now
 Foul dissipation followed, and forced rout;
 Nor served it to relax their serried files.
 What should they do? If on they rushed, repulse 600
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow

Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
 And to their foes a laughter—for in view
 Stood ranked of Seraphim another row,
 In posture to displode their second tire
 Of thunder; back defeated to return
 They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,
 And to his mates thus in derision called:—
 “O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
 Erewhile they fierce were coming; and, when we,
 To entertain them fair with open front 610
 And breast (what could we more?), propounded terms
 Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
 As they would dance. Yet for a dance they seemed
 Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps
 For joy of offered peace. But I suppose,
 If our proposals once again were heard,
 We should compel them to a quick result.’

“To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood:— 620
 ‘Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
 Of hard contents, and full of force urged home,
 Such as we might perceive amused them all,
 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, highthened in their thoughts beyond
 All doubt of victory; Eternal Might 630
 To match with their inventions they presumed
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
 And all his host derided, while they stood

A while in trouble. But they stood not long;
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
 Which God hath in his mighty Angels placed!)
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
 (For Earth hath this variety from Heaven
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale) 640
 Light as the lightning-glimpse they ran, they flew;
 From their foundations, loosening to and fro,
 They plucked the seated hills, with all their load,
 Rocks, waters, woods, and, by the shaggy tops
 Uplifting, bore them in their hands. Amaze,
 Be sure, and terror, seized the rebel host,
 When coming towards them so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turned,
 Till on those cursed engines' triple row 650
 They saw them whelmed, and all their confidence
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
 Main promontories flung, which in the air
 Came shadowing, and oppressed whole legions armed.
 Their armour helped their harm, crushed in and bruised,
 Into their substance pent — which wrought them pain
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,
 Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
 Out of such prison, though Spirits of purest light, 660
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
 The rest, in imitation, to like arms
 Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore;
 So hills amid the air encountered hills,
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire,
 That underground they fought in dismal shade:
 Infernal noise! war seemed a civil game
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped
 Upon confusion rose. And now all Heaven
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread, 670
 Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
 Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advised,
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
 To honour his Anointed Son, avenged
 Upon his enemies, and to declare
 All power on him transferred. Whence to his Son,
 The assessor of his throne, he thus began:—
 “‘Efulgence of my glory, Son beloved, 680

Son in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by Deity I am,
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second Omnipotence! two days are passed,
 Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,
 Since Michael and his Powers went forth to tame
 These disobedient. Sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was when two such foes met armed:
 For to themselves I left them; and thou know'st
 Equal in their creation they were formed, 690
 Save what sin hath impaired — which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom:
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found.
 War wearied hath performed what war can do,
 And to disordered rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains, as with weapons, armed; which makes
 Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main.
 Two days are, therefore, passed; the third is thine:
 For thee I have ordained it, and thus far 700
 Have suffered, that the glory may be thine
 Of ending this great war, since none but thou
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
 Immense I have transfused, that all may know
 In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare,
 And this perverse commotion governed thus,
 To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
 Of all things — to be Heir, and to be King
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right. 710
 Go, then, thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might;
 Ascend my chariot; guide the rapid wheels
 That shake Heaven's basis; bring forth all my war;
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms,
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
 Pursue these Sons of Darkness, drive them out
 From all Heaven's bounds into the utter Deep;
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God, and Messiah his anointed King.'

"He said, and on his Son with rays direct
 Shone full. He all his Father full expressed
 Ineffably into his face received;
 And thus the Filial Godhead answering spake:—
 "O Father, O Supreme of Heavenly Thrones,
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best, thou always seek'st
 To glorify thy Son; I always thee,
 As is most just. This I my glory account,
 My exaltation, and my whole delight, 720

That thou in me, well pleased, declar'st thy will
 Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
 Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume, 730
 And gladlier shall resign when in the end
 Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
 For ever, and in me all whom thou 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,
 Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled,
 To their prepared ill mansion driven down,
 To chains of darkness and the undying worm,
 That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.
 Then shall thy Saints, unmixed, and from the impure
 Far separate, circling thy holy Mount,
 Unfeigned halleluiahs to thee sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.'
 "So said, he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose
 From the right hand of Glory where he sat;
 And the third sacred morn began to shine,
 Dawning through Heaven. Forth rushed with whirlwind
 sound
 The chariot of Paternal Deity, 750
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel; undrawn,
 Itself instinct with spirit, but convoyed
 By four cherubic Shapes. Four faces each
 Had wondrous; as with stars, their bodies all
 And wings were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels
 Of beryl, and careering fires between;
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber and colours of the showery arch.
 He, in celestial panoply all armed 760
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended; at his right hand Victory
 Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow,
 And quiver, with three-bolted thunder stored;
 And from about him fierce effusion rolled
 Of smoke and bickering flame and sparkles dire.
 Attended with ten thousand thousand Saints,
 He onward came; far off his coming shone;
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen. 770
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
 On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned—
 Illustrious far and wide, but by his own

First seen. Them unexpected joy surprised
 When the great ensign of Messiah blazed
 Aloft, by Angels borne, his sign in Heaven;
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced
 His army, circumfused on either wing,
 Under their Head embodied all in one.
 Before him Power Divine his way prepared; 780
 At his command the uprooted hills retired
 Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
 Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renewed,
 And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled.
 "This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,
 And to rebellious fight rallied their Powers,
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
 In Heavenly Spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move the obdurate to relent? 790
 They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took envy, and, aspiring to his highth,
 Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last; and now
 To final battle drew, disdainng flight,
 Or faint retreat: when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake:— 800
 "Stand still in bright array, ye Saints; here stand,
 Ye Angels armed; this day from battle rest.
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
 And, as ye have received, so have ye done,
 Invincibly. But of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs;
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints.
 Number to this day's work is not ordained,
 Nor multitude; stand only and behold 810
 God's indignation on these godless poured
 By me. Not you, but me, they have despised,
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, to whom in Heaven supreme
 Kingdom and power and glory appertains,
 Hath honoured me, according to his will.
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned,
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves — they all,
 Or I alone against them; since by strength 820
 They measure all, of other excellence

Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.'

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

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

830

He on his impious foes right onward drove,
Gloomy as Night. Under his burning wheels
The steadfast Empyrean shook throughout,
All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
Among them he arrived, in his right hand
Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
Before him, such as in their souls infixed
Plagues. They, astonished, all resistance lost,
All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode
Of Thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
That wished the mountains now might be again
Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.

840

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

850

Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked
His thunder in mid-volley; for he meant
Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven.
The overthrown he raised, and, as a herd
Of goats or timorous flock together thronged,
Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
With terrors and with furies to the bounds
And crystal wall of Heaven; which, opening wide,
Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
Into the wasteful Deep. The monstrous sight
Strook them with horror backward; but far worse
Urged them behind: headlong themselves they threw
Down from the verge of Heaven: eternal wrath
Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

860

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

Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound. 870
 Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roared,
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild Anarchy; so huge a rout
 Encumbered him with ruin. Hell at last,
 Yawning, received them whole, and on them closed—
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburdened Heaven rejoiced, and soon repaired
 Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.
 Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes 880
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turned.
 To meet him all his Saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee advanced; and, as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
 Worthiest to reign. He celebrated rode,
 Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father throned 890
 On high; who into glory him received,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.
 “Thus, measuring things in Heaven by things on Earth,
 At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
 By what is past, to thee I have revealed
 What might have else to human race been hid—
 The discord which befell, and war in Heaven
 Among the Angelic Powers, and the deep fall
 Of those too high aspiring who rebelled
 With Satan: he who envies now thy state, 900
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that, with him
 Bereaved of happiness, thou may'st partake
 His punishment, eternal misery;
 Which would be all his solace and revenge,
 As a despite done against the Most High,
 Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
 But listen not to his temptations; warn
 Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard,
 By terrible example, the reward 910
 Of disobedience. Firm they might have stood,
 Yet fell. Remember, and fear to transgress.”

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

DESCEND from Heaven, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegasean wing!
The meaning, not the name, I call; for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heavenly-born,
Before the hills appeared or fountain flowed,
Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleased
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee,
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presumed,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy tempering. With like safety guided down,
Return me to my native element;
Lest, from this flying steed unreined (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime)
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible Diurnal Sphere.
Standing on Earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,

10

20

On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues,
 In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
 And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when Morn
 Purples the East. Still govern thou my song, 30
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned
 Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou who thee implores;
 For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.
 Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphael, 40
 The affable Archangel, had forewarned
 Adam, by dire example, to beware
 Apostasy, by what befell in Heaven
 To those apostates, lest the like befall
 In Paradise to Adam or his race,
 Charged not to touch the interdicted Tree,
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
 So easily obeyed amid the choice
 Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
 Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve, 50
 The story heard attentive, and was filled
 With admiration and deep muse, to hear
 Of things so high and strange—things to their thought
 So unimaginable as hate in Heaven,
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
 With such confusion; but the evil, soon
 Driven back, redounded as a flood on those
 From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed
 The doubts that in his heart arose; and, now 60
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
 What nearer might concern him—how this World
 Of heaven and earth conspicuous first began;
 When, and whereof, created; for what cause;
 What within Eden, or without, was done
 Before his memory—as one whose drouth,
 Yet scarce allayed, still eyes the current stream,
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
 Proceeded thus to ask his Heavenly Guest:—
 “Great things, and full of wonder in our ears, 70
 Far differing from this World, thou hast revealed,
 Divine Interpreter! by favour sent

Down from the Empyrean to forewarn
 Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach;
 For which to the infinitely Good we owe
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
 Receive with solemn purpose to observe
 Immutably his sovran will, the end
 Of what we are. But, since thou hast vouchsafed 80
 Gently, for our instruction, to impart
 Things above Earthly thought, which yet concerned
 Our knowing, as to highest Wisdom seemed,
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate
 What may no less perhaps avail us known —
 How first began this Heaven which we behold
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorned
 Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
 All space, the ambient Air, wide interfused,
 Embracing round this florid Earth; what cause 90
 Moved the Creator, in his holy rest
 Through all eternity, so late to build
 In Chaos; and, the work begun, how soon
 Absolved: if unforbid thou may'st unfold
 What we not to explore the secrets ask
 Of his eternal empire, but the more
 To magnify his works the more we know.
 And the great Light of Day yet wants to run
 Much of his race, though steep. Suspense in heaven
 Held by thy voice, thy potent voice he hears, 100
 And longer will delay, to hear thee tell
 His generation, and the rising birth
 Of Nature from the unapparent Deep: /
 Or, if the Star of Evening and the Moon
 Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring
 Silence, and Sleep listening to thee will watch;
 Or we can bid his absence till thy song
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine."
 Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
 And thus the godlike Angel answered mild:— 110
 "This also thy request, with caution asked,
 Obtain; though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
 To glorify the Maker, and infer
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
 Thy hearing. Such commission from above
 I have received, to answer thy desire

Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain 120
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
 Things not revealed, which the invisible King,
 Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night,
 To none communicable in Earth or Heaven.
 Enough is left besides to search and know;
 But Knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temperance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain;
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind. 130

"Know then that, after Lucifer from Heaven
 (So call him, brighter once amidst the host
 Of Angels than that star the stars among)
 Fell with his flaming legions through the Deep
 Into his place, and the great Son returned
 Victorious with his Saints, the Omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:—
 "At least our envious foe hath failed, who thought
 All like himself rebellious; by whose aid 140
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,
 He trusted to have seized, and into fraud
 Drew many whom their place knows here no more.
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
 Their station: Heaven, yet populous, retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms.
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due and solemn rites.
 But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm 150
 Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven—
 My damage fondly deemed—I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 Another world; out of one man a race
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here, till, by degrees of merit raised,
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried,
 And Earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven to Earth, 160
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye Powers of Heaven;
 And thou, my Word, begotten Son, by thee
 This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!
 My overshadowing Spirit and might with thee
 I send along; ride forth, and bid the Deep

Within appointed bounds be heaven and earth.
 Boundless the Deep, because I am who fill
 Infinitude; nor vacuous the space,
 Though I, uncircumscribed, myself retire, 170
 And put not forth my goodness, which is free
 To act or not. Necessity and Chance
 Approach not me, and what I will is Fate.'

"So spake the Almighty; and to what he spake
 His Word, the Filial Godhead, gave effect.
 Immediate are the acts of God, more swift
 Than time or motion, but to human ears
 Cannot without process of speech be told,
 So told as earthly notion can receive.
 Great triumph and rejoicing was in Heaven 180
 When such was heard declared the Almighty's will.
 Glory they sung to the Most High, good-will
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace—
 Glory to Him whose just avenging ire
 Had driven out the ungodly from his sight
 And the habitations of the just; to Him
 Glory and praise whose wisdom had ordained
 Good out of evil to create—instead
 Of Spirits malign, a better race to bring
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.

"So sang the Hierarchies. Meanwhile the Son
 On his great expedition now appeared,
 Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
 Of majesty divine, sapience and love
 Immense; and all his Father in him shone.
 About his chariot numberless were poured
 Cherub and Seraph, Potentates and Thrones,
 And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots winged 200
 From the armoury of God, where stand of old
 Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodged
 Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,
 Celestial equipage; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them Spirit lived,
 Attendant on their Lord. Heaven opened wide
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
 And Spirit coming to create new worlds.
 On Heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore 210
 They viewed the vast immeasurable Abyss,
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
 Up from the bottom turned by furious winds

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

“‘Silence, ye troubled waves, and, thou Deep, peace!’
Said then the omnific Word: ‘your discord end!’

Nor stayed; but, on the wings of Cherubim

Uplifted, in paternal glory rode

Far into Chaos and the World unborn; 220

For Chaos heard his voice. Him all his train

Followed in bright procession, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.

Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in his hand

He took the golden compasses, prepared

In God's eternal store, to circumscribe

This Universe, and all created things.

One foot he centred, and the other turned

Round through the vast profundity obscure,

And said, ‘Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds; 230

This be thy just circumference, O World!’

Thus God the Heaven created, thus the Earth,

Matter unformed and void. Darkness profound

Covered the Abyss; but on the watery calm

His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,

And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth,

Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged

The black, tartareous, cold, infernal dregs,

Adverse to life; then founded, then conglobed,

Like things to like, the rest to several place 240

Disparted, and between spun out the Air,

And Earth, self-balanced, on her centre hung.

“‘Let there be Light!’ said God; and forthwith Light

Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,

Sprung from the Deep, and from her native East

To journey through the aery gloom began,

Sphered in a radiant cloud — for yet the Sun

Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle

Sojourned the while. God saw the Light was good;

And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250

Divided: Light the Day, and Darkness Night,

He named. Thus was the first Day even and morn;

Nor passed uncelebrated, nor unsung

By the celestial quires, when orient light

Exhaling first from darkness they beheld,

Birth-day of Heaven and Earth. With joy and shout

The hollow universal orb they filled,

And touched their golden harps, and hymning praised

God and his works; Creator him they sung,

Both when first evening was, and when first morn. 260

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

270

"The Earth was formed, but, in the womb as yet
 Of waters, embryon immature, involved,
 Appeared not; over all the face of Earth
 Main ocean flowed, not idle, but, with warm
 Prolific humour softening all her globe,
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,
 Satiated with genial moisture; when God said,
 'Be gathered now, ye waters under heaven,
 Into one place, and let dry land appear!'
 Immediately the mountains huge appear
 Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
 Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky.
 So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
 Capacious bed of waters. Thither they
 Hasted with glad precipitance, uprolled,
 As drops on dust conglobing, from the dry:
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
 For haste; such flight the great command impressed
 On the swift floods. As armies at the call
 Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
 Troop to the standard, so the watery throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found —
 If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
 Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill;
 But they, or underground, or circuit wide
 With serpent error wandering, found their way,
 And on the washy ooze deep channels wore:
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
 All but within those banks where rivers now
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
 The dry land Earth, and the great receptacle

280

290

300

Of congregated waters he called Seas;
 And saw that it was good, and said, 'Let the Earth
 Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 310
 And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
 Whose seed is in herself upon the Earth!'

He scarce had said when the bare Earth, till then
 Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorned,
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
 Her universal face with pleasant green;
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered,
 Opening their various colours, and made gay
 Her bosom, smelling sweet; and, these scarce blown,
 Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept 320
 The smelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
 Embattled in her field: add the humble shrub,
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemmed
 Their blossoms. With high woods the hills were crowned,
 With tufts the valleys and each fountain-side,
 With borders long the rivers, that Earth now
 Seemed like to Heaven, a seat where gods might dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330
 Her sacred shades; though God had yet not rained
 Upon the Earth, and man to till the ground
 None was, but from the Earth a dewy mist
 Went up and watered all the ground, and each
 Plant of the field, which ere it was in the Earth
 God made, and every herb before it grew
 On the green stem. God saw that it was good;
 So even and morn recorded the third Day.

"Again the Almighty spake, 'Let there be Lights
 High in the expanse of Heaven, to divide 340
 The Day from Night; and let them be for signs,
 For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
 And let them be for lights, as I ordain
 Their office in the firmament of heaven,
 To give light on the Earth!' and it was so.
 And God made two great Lights, great for their use
 To Man, the greater to have rule by day,
 The less by night, altern; and made the Stars,
 And set them in the firmament of heaven
 To illuminate the Earth, and rule the day 350
 In their vicissitude, and rule the night,
 And light from darkness to divide. God saw,
 Surveying his great work, that it was good;
 For, of celestial bodies, first the Sun

A mighty sphere he framed, unlightsome first,
 Though of ethereal mould; then formed the Moon
 Globose, and every magnitude of Stars,
 And sowed with stars the heaven thick as a field.
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed 360
 In the Sun's orb, made porous to receive
 And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
 Her gathered beams, great palace now of Light.
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
 Repairing in their golden urns draw light,
 And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;
 By tincture or reflection they augment
 Their small peculiar, though, from human sight
 So far remote, with diminution seen.
 First in his east the glorious lamp was seen, 370
 Regent of day, and all the horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
 His longitude through heaven's high road; the grey
 Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danced,
 Shedding sweet influence. Less bright the Moon,
 But opposite in levelled west, was set,
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him; for other light she needed none
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps 380
 Till night; then in the east her turn she shines,
 Revolved on heaven's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared
 Spangling the hemisphere. Then first adorned
 With her bright luminaries, that set and rose,
 Glad evening and glad morn crowned the fourth Day.
 "And God said, 'Let the waters generate
 Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul;
 And let Fowl fly above the earth, with wings
 Displayed on the open firmament of heaven!' 390
 And God created the great whales, and each
 Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
 The waters generated by their kinds,
 And every bird of wing after his kind,
 And saw that it was good, and blessed them, saying,
 'Be fruitful, multiply, and, in the seas,
 And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
 And let the fowl be multiplied on the earth!'
 Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
 With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 400
 Of fish that, with their fins and shining scales,

Glide under the green wave in sculls that oft
 Bank the mid-sea. Part, single or with mate.
 Graze the sea-weed, their pasture, and through groves
 Of coral stray, or, sporting with quick glance,
 Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold,
 Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
 Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food
 In jointed armour watch; on smooth the seal
 And bended dolphins play: part, huge of bulk, 410
 Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
 Tempest the ocean. There leviathan,
 Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
 Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
 And seems a moving land, and at his gills
 Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
 Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
 Their brood as numerous hatch from the egg, that soon,
 Bursting with kindly rupture, forth disclosed
 Their callow young; but feathered soon and fledge 420
 They summed their pens, and, soaring the air sublime,
 With clang despised the ground, under a cloud
 In prospect. There the eagle and the stork
 On cliffs and cedar-tops their eyries build.
 Part loosely wing the region; part, more wise,
 In common, ranged in figure, wedge their way,
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their aery caravan, high over seas
 Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
 Easing their flight: so steers the prudent crane 430
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds: the air
 Floats as they pass, fanned with unnumbered plumes.
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings,
 Till even; nor then the solemn nightingale
 Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft lays.
 Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bathed
 Their downy breast; the swan, with arched neck
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit 440
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
 The mid aerial sky. Others on ground
 Walked firm — the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours, and the other, whose gay train
 Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
 With Fish replenished, and the air with Fowl,
 Evening and morn solemnized the fifth Day.

"The sixth, and of Creation last, arose
 With evening harps and matin; when God said, 450
 'Let the Earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
 Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth,
 Each in their kind!' The Earth obeyed, and, straight
 Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth
 Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,
 Limbed and full-grown. Out of the ground up rose,
 As from his lair, the wild beast, where he wons
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den —
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked;
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green: 460
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
 Pasturing at once and in broad herds, upsprung.
 The grassy clods now calved; now half appeared
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts — then springs, as broke from bonds,
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,
 The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks; the swift stag from underground
 Bore up his branching head; scarce from his mould 470
 Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved
 His vastness; fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,
 As plants; ambiguous between sea and land,
 The river-horse and scaly crocodile.
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
 Insect or worm. Those waved their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
 In all the liveries decked of summer's pride,
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green;
 These as a line their long dimension drew, 480
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace: not all
 Minims of nature; some of serpent kind,
 Wondrous in length and corpulence, involved
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
 The parsimonious emmet, provident
 Of future, in small room large heart enclosed —
 Pattern of just equality perhaps
 Hereafter — joined in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty. Swarming next appeared
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stored. The rest are numberless,
 And thou their 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 Heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled
Her motions, as the great First Mover’s hand
First wheeled their course; Earth, in her rich attire
Consummate, lovely smiled; Air, Water, Earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked,
Frequent; and of the sixth Day yet remained.

500

There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done — a creature who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and, upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing, and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion, to adore

510

And worship God Supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works. Therefore the Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not He
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake:—

‘Let us make now Man in our image, Man
In our similitude, and let them rule
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!’

520

This said, he formed thee, Adam, thee, O Man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express, and thou becam’st a living soul.

Male he created thee, but thy consort
Female, for race; then blessed mankind, and said,
‘Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the Earth;
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
And every living thing that moves on the Earth!’

530

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

540

Gave thee. All sorts are here that all the earth yields,
 Variety without end; but of the tree
 Which tasted works knowledge of good and evil
 Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest.
 Death is the penalty imposed; beware,
 And govern well thy appetite, lest Sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant, Death.

“Here finished He, and all that he had made
 Viewed, and, behold! all was entirely good.

So even and morn accomplished the sixth Day;

550

Yet not till the Creator, from his work
 Desisting, though unwearied, up returned,
 Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his high abode,
 Thence to behold this new-created World,
 The addition of his empire, how it showed
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
 Answering his great idea. Up he rode,

Followed with acclamation, and the sound
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tuned
 Angelic harmonies. The Earth, the Air

560

Resounded (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st),
 The heavens and all the constellations rung,
 The planets in their stations listening stood,
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.

‘Open, ye everlasting gates!’ they sung;

‘Open, ye Heavens, your living doors! let in

The great Creator, from his work returned

Magnificent, his six days' work, a World!

Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign

To visit oft the dwellings of just men

570

Delighted, and with frequent intercourse

Thither will send his winged messengers

On errands of supernal grace.’ So sung

The glorious train ascending. He through Heaven,

That opened wide her blazing portals, led

To God's eternal house direct the way—

A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,

And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear

Seen in the Galaxy, that milky way

Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest

580

Powdered with stars. And now on Earth the seventh

Evening arose in Eden—for the sun

Was set, and twilight from the east came on,

Forerunning night—when at the holy mount

Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne

Of Godhead, fixed for ever firm and sure,

The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down
With his great Father; for he also went
Invisible, yet stayed (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence) and the work ordained, 590
Author and end of all things, and, from work
Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh Day,
As resting on that day from all his work;
But not in silence holy kept: the harp
Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice
Choral or unison; of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid the Mount. 600
Creation and the Six Days' acts they sung:—
'Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee — greater now in thy return
Than from the Giant-angels? Thee that day
Thy thunders magnified; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, mighty King, or bound
Thy empire? Easily the proud attempt
Of Spirits apostate, and their counsels vain, 610
Thou hast repelled, while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshipers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose, serves
To manifest the more thy might; his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made World, another Heaven
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars 620
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destined habitation — but thou know'st
Their seasons; among these the seat of men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced,
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him, and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshipers 630
Holy and just! thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!'

“So sung they, and the Empyrean rung
With halleluiahs. Thus was Sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked
How first this World and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning, that posterity,
Informed by thee, might know. If else thou seek'st
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.”

640

THE END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

THE Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood fixed to hear;
Then, as new-waked, thus gratefully replied:—

“What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal, have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
This friendly condescension to relate
Things else by me unsearchable — now heard
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 Heaven and Earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes — this Earth, a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the Firmament compared
And all her numbered stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
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

10

20

Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
 So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold, to this one use,
 For aught appears, and on their Orbs impose 30
 Such restless revolution day by day
 Repeated, while the sedentary Earth,
 That better might with far less compass move,
 Served by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion, and receives,
 As tribute, such a sunless journey brought
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light:
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails."
 So spake our Sire, and by his countenance seemed
 Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve 40
 Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
 To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.
 Yet went she not as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high. Such pleasure she reserved, 50
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;
 Her husband the relater she preferred
 Before the Angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
 With conjugal caresses: from his lip
 Not words alone pleased her. Oh, when meet now
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honour joined?
 With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
 Not unattended; for on her as Queen 60
 A pomp of winning Graces waited still,
 And from about her shot darts of desire
 Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
 And Raphael now to Adam's doubt proposed
 Benevolent and facile thus replied:—
 "To ask or search I blame thee not; for Heaven
 Is as the Book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years.
 This to attain, whether Heaven move or Earth 70
 Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
 From Man or Angel the great Architect
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge

His secrets, to be scanned by them who ought
Rather admire. Or, if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heavens
Hath left to their disputes—perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter, when they come to model Heaven,
And calculate the stars; how they will wield 80
The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances; how gird the Sphere
With Centric and Eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and Epicycle, Orb in Orb.
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heaven such journeys run,
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit. Consider, first, that great 90
Or bright infers not excellence. The Earth,
Though, in comparison of Heaven, so small,
Nor glistening, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the Sun that barren shines,
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful Earth; there first received,
His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to Earth are those bright luminaries
Officious, but to thee, Earth's habitant.
And, for the Heaven's wide circuit, let it speak 100
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his line stretched out so far,
That Man may know he dwells not in his own—
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those Circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
That to corporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual. Me thou think'st not slow, 110
Who since the morning-hour set out from Heaven
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived
In Eden—distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show
Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved;
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Placed Heaven from Earth so far, that earthly sight, 120

If it presume, might err in things too high,
 And no advantage gain. What if the Sun
 Be centre to the World, and other Stars,
 By his attractive virtue and their own
 Incited, dance about him various rounds?
 Their wandering course, now high, now low, then hid,
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
 In six thou seest; and what if, seventh to these,
 The planet Earth, so steadfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move? 130
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Moved contrary with thwart obliquities,
 Or save the Sun his labour, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,
 Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
 Of Day and Night; which needs not thy belief,
 If Earth, industrious of herself, fetch Day,
 Travelling east, and with her part averse
 From the Sun's beam meet Night, her other part
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light, 140
 Sent from her through the wide transpicious air,
 To the terrestrial Moon be as a star,
 Enlightening her by day, as she by night
 This Earth — reciprocal, if land be there,
 Fields and inhabitants? Her spots thou seest
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her softened soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there; and other Suns, perhaps,
 With their attendant Moons, thou wilt descry,
 Communicating male and female light — 150
 Which two great sexes animate the World,
 Stored in each Orb perhaps with some that live.
 For such vast room in Nature unpossessed
 By living soul, desert and desolate,
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
 Each Orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far
 Down to this habitable, which returns
 Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
 But whether thus these things, or whether not —
 Whether the Sun, predominant in heaven, 160
 Rise on the Earth, or Earth rise on the Sun;
 He from the east his flaming road begin,
 Or she from west her silent course advance
 With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
 On her soft axle, while she paces even,
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along —
 Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid:

Leave them to God above; him serve and fear.
 Of other creatures as him pleases best,
 Wherever placed, let him dispose; joy thou 170
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high
 To know what passes there. Be lowly wise;
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree —
 Contented that thus far hath been revealed
 Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven."

To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied: — 180
 "How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure
 Intelligence of Heaven, Angel serene,
 And, freed from intricacies, taught to live
 The easiest way, nor with perplexing thoughts
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
 And not molest us, unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain!
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Unchecked; and of her roving is no end,
 Till, warned, or by experience taught, she learn 190
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom: what is more is fume,
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
 And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise 200
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deigned.
 Thee I have heard relating what was done
 Ere my remembrance; now hear me relate
 My story, which, perhaps, thou hast not heard.
 And day is 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 Heaven; 210
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of palm-tree, pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
 Of sweet repast. They satiate, and soon fill,

Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."

To whom thus Raphael answered, heavenly meek:—

"Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of Men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also poured, 220

Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee, and each word, each motion, forms.

Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on Earth

Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire

Gladly into the ways of God with Man;

For God, we see, hath honoured thee, and set

On Man his equal love. Say therefore on;

For I that day was absent, as befell,

Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230

Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell,

Squared in full legion (such command we had),

To see that none thence issued forth a spy

Or enemy, while God was in his work,

Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,
Destruction with Creation might have mixed.

Not that they durst without his leave attempt;

But us he sends upon his high behests

For state, as sovran King, and to inure

Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut, 240

The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong,

But, long ere our approaching, heard within

Noise, other than the sound of dance or song—

Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.

Glad we returned up to the coasts of Light

Ere Sabbath-evening; so we had in charge.

But thy relation now; for I attend,

Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine."

So spake the godlike Power, and thus our Sire:—

"For Man to tell how human life began 250

Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?

Desire with thee still longer to converse

Induced me. As new-waked from soundest sleep,

Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,

In balmy sweat, which with his beams the Sun

Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.

Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turned,

And gazed a while the ample sky, till, raised

By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,

As thitherward endeavouring, and upright 260

Stood on my feet. About me round I saw

Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,
Creatures that lived and moved, and walked or flew,
Birds on the branches warbling: all things smiled;
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.
Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led;
But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
Knew not. To speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obeyed, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. 'Thou Sun,' said I, 'fair light,
And thou enlightened Earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here!
Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in power pre-eminent.
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore, 280
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know!'
While thus I called, and strayed I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light, when answer none returned,
On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
Pensive I sat me down. There gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seized
My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state 290
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently moved
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And lived. One came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, 'Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
First Man, of men innumerable ordained
First father! called by thee, I come thy guide
To the Garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.'
So saying, by the hand he took me, raised, 300
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain, whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees
Planted, with walks and bowers, that what I saw
Of Earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree
Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to the eye
Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite

To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
 Had lively shadowed. Here had new begun
 My wandering, had not He who was my guide
 Up hither from among the trees appeared,
 Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
 In adoration at his feet I fell
 Submiss. He reared me, and, 'Whom thou sought'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. 320
 Of every tree that in the Garden grows
 Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth.
 But of the tree whose operation brings
 Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set,
 The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
 Amid the garden by the Tree of Life—
 Remember what I warn thee—shun to taste,
 And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
 The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
 Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die, 330
 From that day mortal, and this happy state
 Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world
 Of woe and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
 Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect
 Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed:—
 'Not only these fair bounds, but all the Earth
 To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
 Possess it, and all things that therein live, 340
 Or live in sea or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
 In sign whereof, each bird and beast behold
 After their kinds; I bring them to receive
 From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
 With low subjection. Understand the same
 Of fish within their watery residence,
 Not hither summoned, since they cannot change
 Their element to draw the thinner air.'
 As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
 Approaching two and two—these cowering low 350
 With blandishment; each bird stooped on his wing.
 I named them as they passed, and understood
 Their nature; with such knowledge God endued
 My sudden apprehension. But in these
 I found not what methought I wanted still,

And to the Heavenly Vision thus presumed:—

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

360

Thus I, presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
As with a smile more brightened, thus replied:—

“‘What call’st thou solitude? Is not the Earth
With various living creatures, and the Air,
Replenished, and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee? Know’st thou not
Their language and their ways? They also know,
And reason not contemptibly; with these
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.’
So spake the Universal Lord, and seemed
So ordering. I, with leave of speech implored,
And humble deprecation, thus replied:—

370

“‘Let not my words offend thee, Heavenly Power;
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?

380

Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Given and received; but, in disparity,
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate

390

All rational delight, wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort. They rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl,
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
Worse, then, can man with beast, and least of all.’

“Whereto the Almighty answered, not displeased:—

‘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.

400

What think'st thou, then, of me, and this my state?
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possessed
 Of happiness, or not, who am alone
 From all eternity? for none I know
 Second to me or like, equal much less.
 How have I, then, with whom to hold converse,
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those
 To me inferior infinite descents
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?' 410

“He ceased. I lowly answered:—‘To attain
 The highth and depth of thy eternal ways
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of Things!
 Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
 Is no deficiencie found. Not so is Man,
 But in degree—the cause of his desire
 By conversation with his like to help
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou
 Should'st propagate, already infinite, 420
 And through all numbers absolute, though One;
 But Man by number is to manifest
 His single imperfection, and beget
 Like of his like, his image multiplied,
 In unity defective; which requires
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.
 Thou, in thy secrecy although alone,
 Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
 Social communication—yet, so pleased,
 Canst raise thy creature to what highth thou wilt 430
 Of union or communion, deified;

I, by conversing, cannot these erect
 From prone, nor in their ways complacence find.’
 Thus I emboldened spake, and freedom used
 Permissive, and acceptance found; which gained
 This answer from the gracious Voice Divine:—

“Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleased,
 And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,
 Which thou hast rightly named, but of thyself—
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 440
 My image, not imparted to the brute;
 Whose fellowship, therefore, unmeet for thee,
 Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike.
 And be so minded still. I, ere thou spak'st,
 Knew it not good for Man to be alone,
 And no such company as then thou saw'st
 Intended thee—for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet.
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,

Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.' 450

“He ended, or I heard no more; for now
My earthly, by his heavenly overpowered,
Which it had long stood under, strained to the highth
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense,
Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called
By Nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.
Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell 460

Of fancy, my internal sight; by which,
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the Shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
Who, stooping, opened my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed.

The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew, 470
Man-like, but different sex, so lovely fair
That what seemed fair in all the world seemed now
Mean, or in her summed up, in her contained
And in her looks, which from that time infused
Sweetness into my heart unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspired
The spirit of love and amorous delight.

She disappeared, and left me dark; I waked
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure: 480

When, out of hope, behold her not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorned
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow,
To make her amiable. On she came;
Led by her Heavenly Maker, though unseen
And guided by his voice, nor uninformed
Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites.
Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.

I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud: — 490
“This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfilled
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair — but fairest this
Of all thy gifts! — nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, my Self
Before me. Woman is her name, of Man

Extracted; for this cause he shall forgo
 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere,
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.
 "She heard me thus; and, though divinely brought, 500
 Yet innocence and virgin modesty,
 Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
 That would be wooed, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retired,
 The more desirable — or, to say all,
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought —
 Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turned.
 I followed her; she what was honour knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approved 510
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
 I led her blushing like the Morn; all Heaven,
 And happy constellations, on that hour
 Shed their selectest influence; the Earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
 Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
 Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
 Sung spousal, and bid haste the Evening-star
 On his hill-top to light the bridal lamp. 520
 "Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
 My story to the sum of earthly bliss
 Which I enjoy, and must confess to find
 In all things else delight indeed, but such
 As, used or not, works in the mind no change,
 Nor vehement desire — these delicacies
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
 Walks, and the melody of birds: but here,
 Far otherwise, transported I behold,
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt, 530
 Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
 Superior and unmoved, here only weak
 Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
 Or Nature failed in me, and left some part
 Not proof enough such object to sustain,
 Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
 More than enough — at least on her bestowed
 Too much of ornament, in outward show
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.
 For well I understand in the prime end 540
 Of Nature her the inferior, in the mind
 And inward faculties, which most excel;
 In outward also her resembling less

His image who made both, and less expressing
 The character of that dominion given
 O'er other creatures. Yet when I approach
 Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
 And in herself complete, so well to know
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best. 550
 All higher Knowledge in her presence falls
 Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses, discountenanced, and like Folly shows;
 Authority and Reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made
 Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic placed."

To whom the Angel, with contracted brow:— 560
 "Accuse not Nature! she hath done her part;
 Do thou but thine! and be not diffident
 Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou
 Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
 By attributing overmuch to things
 Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
 For, what admir'st thou, what transports thee so?
 An outside—fair, no doubt, and worthy well
 Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;
 Not thy subjection. Weigh with her thyself; 570
 Then value. Oft-times nothing profits more
 Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
 Well managed. Of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shows—
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honour thou may'st love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But, if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
 Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
 Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common and divulged, if aught
 Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue
 The soul of Man, or passion in him move.
 What higher in her society thou 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 590

In Reason, and is judicious, is the scale
 By which to Heavenly 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 abashed, Adam replied:—

"Neither her outside formed so fair, nor aught
 In procreation, common to all kinds

(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
 And with mysterious reverence, I deem),

So much delights me as those graceful acts,

Those thousand decencies, that daily flow

From all her words and actions, mixed with love

And sweet compliance, which declare unfeigned

Union of mind, or in us both one soul—

Harmony to behold in wedded pair

More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.

Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose

What inward thence I feel, not therefore foiled,

Who meet with various objects, from the sense

Variouly 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 Heaven, is both the way and guide;

Bear with me, then, if lawful what I ask.

Love not the Heavenly Spirits, and how their love

Express they—by looks only, or do they mix

Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?"

To whom the Angel, with a smile that glowed

Celestial rosy-red, Love's proper hue,

Answered:—"Let it suffice thee that thou know'st

Us happy, and without Love no happiness.

Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'st

(And pure thou wert created) we enjoy

In eminence, and obstacle find none

Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars.

Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,

Total they mix, union of pure with pure

Desiring, nor restrained conveyance need

As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.

But I can now no more: the parting Sun

Beyond the Earth's green Cape and verdant Isles

Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.

Be strong, live happy, and love! but first of all

Him whom to love is to obey, and keep

His great command; take heed lest passion sway

Thy judgment to do aught which else free-will

Would not admit; thine and of all thy sons

600

610

620

630

The weal or woe in thee is placed; beware!
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the Blest. Stand fast; to stand or fall 640
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.
Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel."

So saying, he arose; whom Adam thus
Followed with benediction:—"Since to part,
Go, Heavenly Guest, Ethereal Messenger,
Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore!
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honoured ever
With grateful memory. Thou to Mankind 650
Be good and friendly still, and oft return!"

So parted they, the Angel up to Heaven
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.

THE END OF THE EIGHTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, having compassed the Earth, with meditated guile returns as a mist by night into Paradise; enters into the Serpent sleeping. Adam and Eve in the morning go forth to their labours, which Eve proposes to divide in several places, each labouring apart: Adam consents not, alleging the danger lest that enemy of whom they were forewarned should attempt her found alone. Eve, loth to be thought not circumspect or firm enough, urges her going apart, the rather desirous to make trial of her strength: Adam at last yields. The Serpent finds her alone: his subtle approach, first gazing, then speaking, with much flattery extolling Eve above all other creatures. Eve, wondering to hear the Serpent speak, asks how he attained to human speech and such understanding not till now; the Serpent answers that by tasting of a certain tree in the Garden he attained both to speech and reason, till then void of both. Eve requires him to bring her to that tree, and finds it to be the Tree of Knowledge forbidden: the Serpent, now grown bolder, with many wiles and arguments induces her at length to eat. She, pleased with the taste, deliberates a while whether to impart thereof to Adam or not; at last brings him of the fruit; relates what persuaded her to eat thereof. Adam, at first amazed, but perceiving her lost, resolves, through vehemence of love, to perish with her, and, extenuating the trespass, eats also of the fruit. The effects thereof in them both; they seek to cover their nakedness; then fall to variance and accusation of one another.

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

10

Perplexed the Greek, and Cytherea's son :
If answerable style I can obtain 20
Of my celestial Patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplored,
And dictates to me slumbering, or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse,
Since first this subject for heroic song
Pleased me, long choosing and beginning late,
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deemed, chief mastery to dissect
With long and tedious havoc fabled knights 30
In battles feigned (the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unsung), or to describe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, emblazoned shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust and tournament; then marshalled feast
Served up in hall with sewers and seneshals :
The skill of artifice or office mean ;
Not that which justly gives heroic name 40
To person or to poem! Me, of these
Nor skilled nor studious, higher argument
Remains, sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depressed; and much they may if all be mine,
Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.
The Sun was sunk, and after him the Star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the Earth, short arbiter 50
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veiled the horizon round,
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improved
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless returned.
By night he fled, and at midnight returned
From compassing the Earth — cautious of day
Since Uriel, Regent of the Sun, descried 60
His entrance, and forewarned the Cherubim
That kept their watch. Thence, full of anguish, driven,
The space of seven continued nights he rode
With darkness — thrice the equinoctial line
He circled, four times crossed the car of Night

From pole to pole, traversing each colure —
 On the eighth returned, and on the coast averse
 From entrance or cherubic watch by stealth
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place
 (Now not, though Sin, not Time, first wrought the change) 70
 Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
 Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
 Rose up a fountain by the Tree of Life.
 In with the river sunk, and with it rose,
 Satan, involved in rising mist; then sought
 Where to lie hid. Sea he had searched and land
 From Eden over Pontus, and the Pool
 Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;
 Downward as far antarctic; and, in length,
 West from Orontes to the ocean barred 80
 At Darien, thence to the land where flows
 Ganges and Indus. Thus the orb he roamed
 With narrow search, and with inspection deep
 Considered every creature, which of all
 Most opportune might serve his wiles, and found
 The Serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
 Him, after long debate, irresolute
 Of thoughts revolved, his final sentence chose
 Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 90
 From sharpest sight; for in the wily snake
 Whatever sleights none would suspicious mark,
 As from his wit and native subtlety
 Proceeding, which, in other beasts observed,
 Doubt might beget of diabolic power
 Active within beyond the sense of brute.
 Thus he resolved, but first from inward grief
 His bursting passion into plaints thus poured:—
 “O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferred
 More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built 100
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
 For what God, after better, worse would build?
 Terrestrial Heaven, danced round by other Heavens,
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
 In the concentrating all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven
 Is centre, yet extends to all, so thou
 Centring receiv’st from all those orbs; in thee,
 Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears, 110
 Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
 Of creatures animate with gradual life

Of growth, sense, reason, all summed up in Man.
With what delight could I have walked thee round,
If I could joy in aught — sweet interchange
Of hill and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crowned,
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege 120
Of contraries; all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no, nor in Heaven,
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound.
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and him destroyed, 130
Or won to what may work his utter loss.
For, whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe:
In woe then, that destruction wide may range!
To me shall be the glory sole among
The Infernal Powers, in one day to have marred
What he, Almighty styled, six nights and days
Continued making, and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps 140
Not longer than since I in one night freed
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
The Angelic Name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers. He, to be avenged,
And to repair his numbers thus impaired —
Whether such virtue, spent of old, now failed
More Angels to create (if they at least
Are his created), or to spite us more —
Determined to advance into our room
A creature formed of earth, and him endow, 150
Exalted from so base original,
With heavenly spoils, our spoils. What he decreed
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this World, and Earth his seat,
Him Lord pronounced, and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service Angel-wings
And flaming ministers, to watch and tend
Their earthy charge. Of these the vigilance
I dread, and to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour, glide obscure, and pry

In every bush and brake, where hap may find 160
 The Serpent sleeping, in whose mazy folds
 To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
 O foul descent! that I, who erst contended
 With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrained
 Into a beast, and, mixed with bestial slime,
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
 That to the highth of deity aspired!
 But what will not ambition and revenge
 Descend to? Who aspires must down as low
 As high he soared, obnoxious, first or last, 170
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
 Bitter ere long back on itself recoils.
 Let it; I reck not, so it light well aimed,
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next
 Provokes my envy, this new favourite
 Of Heaven, this Man of Clay, son of despite,
 Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker raised
 From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.”
 So saying, through each thicket, dank or dry,
 Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on 180
 His midnight search, where soonest he might find
 The Serpent. Him fast sleeping soon he found,
 In labyrinth of many a round self-rolled,
 His head the midst, well stored with subtle wiles:
 Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
 Nor nocent yet, but on the grassy herb,
 Fearless, unfeared, he slept. In at his mouth
 The Devil entered, and his brutal sense,
 In heart or head, possessing soon inspired
 With act intelligential; but his sleep 190
 Disturbed not, waiting close the approach of morn.
 Now, whenas sacred light began to dawn
 In Eden on the humid flowers, that breathed
 Their morning incense, when all things that breathe
 From the Earth's great altar send up silent praise
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
 With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
 And joined their vocal worship to the quire
 Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
 The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs; 200
 Then commune how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work—for much their work outgrew
 The hands' dispatch of two gardening so wide:
 And Eve first to her husband thus began:—
 “Adam, well may we labour still to dress
 This Garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,

Our pleasant task enjoined; but, till more hands
 Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
 Luxurious by restraint: what we by day
 Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind, 210
 One night or two with wanton growth derides,
 Tending to wild. Thou, therefore, now advise,
 Or hear what to my mind first thoughts present.
 Let us divide our labours — thou where choice
 Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb; while I
 In yonder spring of roses intermixed
 With myrtle find what to redress till noon.
 For, while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or objects new
 Casual discourse draw on, which intermits
 Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
 Early, and the hour of supper comes unearned!"
 To whom mild answer Adam thus returned: —
 "Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear!
 Well hast thou motioned, well thy thoughts employed
 How we might best fulfil the work which here 230
 God hath assigned us, nor of me shalt pass
 Unpraised; for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord imposed
 Labour as to debar us when we need
 Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
 Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
 Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow
 To brute denied, and are of love the food — 240
 Love, not the lowest end of human life.
 For not to irksome toil, but to delight,
 He made us, and delight to reason joined.
 These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
 As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
 Assist us. But, if much converse perhaps
 Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield;
 For solitude sometimes is best society,
 And short retirement urges sweet return. 250
 But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
 Befall thee, severed from me; for thou know'st
 What hath been warned us — what malicious foe.

Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
 By sly assault, and somewhere nigh at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder,
 Hopeless to circumvent us joined, where each
 To other speedy aid might lend at need. 260
 Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our fealty from God, or to disturb
 Conjugal love—than which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoyed by us excites his envy more—
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
 That gave thee being, still shades thee and protects.
 The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.”

To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets, 270
 With sweet austere composure thus replied:—

“Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all Earth’s lord!

That such an enemy we have, who seeks
 Our ruin, both by thee informed I learn,
 And from the parting angel overheard,
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,
 Just then returned at shut of evening flowers.
 But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
 To God or thee, because we have a foe 280
 May tempt it, I expected not to hear.

His violence thou fear’st not, being such
 As we, not capable of death or pain,
 Can either not receive, or can repel.
 His fraud is, then, thy fear; which plain infers
 Thy equal fear that my firm faith and love
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduced:
 Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast.
 Adam! misthought of her to thee so dear?”

To whom, with healing words, Adam replied:— 290

“Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!—
 For such thou art, from sin and blame entire—
 Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
 Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
 The attempt itself, intended by our foe.
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
 The tempted with dishonour foul, supposed
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
 Against temptation. Thou thyself with scorn
 And anger wouldst resent the offered wrong, 300

Though ineffectual found; misdeem not, then,
 If such affront I labour to avert
 From thee alone, which on us both at once
 The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
 Or, daring, first on me the assault shall light.
 Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn—
 Subtle he needs must be who could seduce
 Angels—nor think superfluous others' aid.
 I from the influence of thy looks receive
 Access in every virtue—in thy sight
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
 Shame to be overcome or overreached,
 Would utmost vigour raise, and raised unite.
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
 When I am present, and thy trial choose
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?"

310

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 renewed:—

320

“If this be our condition, thus to dwell
 In narrow circuit straitened by a foe,
 Subtle or violent, we not endued
 Single with like defence wherever met,
 How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
 But harm precedes not sin: only our foe
 Tempting affronts us with his foul esteem
 Of our integrity: his foul esteem
 Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunned or feared
 By us, who rather double honour gain
 From his surmise proved false, find peace within,
 Favour from Heaven, our witness, from the event?
 And what is faith, love, virtue, unassayed
 Alone, without exterior help sustained?
 Let us not then suspect our happy state
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise
 As not secure to single or combined.
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so;
 And Eden were no Eden, thus exposed.”

330

340

To whom thus Adam fervently replied:—
 “O Woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordained them; his creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left
 Of all that he created—much less Man,
 Or ought that might his happy state secure,

Secure from outward force. Within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power;
 Against his will he can receive no harm. 350
 But God left free the Will; for what obeys
 Reason is free; and Reason he made right,
 But bid her well be ware, and still erect,
 Lest, by some fair appearing good surprised,
 She dictate false, and misinform the Will
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins
 That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve,
 Since Reason not impossibility may meet 360
 Some specious object by the foe suborned,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warned.
 Seek not temptation, then, which to avoid
 Were better, and most likely if from me
 Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
 First thy obedience; the other who can know,
 Not seeing the attempted, who attest?
 But, if thou think trial unsought may find 370
 Us both securer than thus warned 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 toward thee hath done his part: do thine."
 So spake the Patriarch of Mankind; but Eve
 Persisted; yet submissive, though last, replied:—
 "With thy permission, then, and thus forewarned,
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words 380
 Touched only, that our trial, when least sought,
 May find us both perhaps far less prepared,
 The willinger I go, nor much expect
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse."
 Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
 Soft she withdrew, and, like a wood-nymph light,
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
 Betook her to the groves, but Delia's self
 In gait surpassed and goddess-like deport,
 Though not as she with bow and quiver armed, 390
 But with such gardening tools as Art, yet rude,
 Guiltless of fire had formed, or Angels brought.
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorned,
 Likest she seemed— Pomona when she fled

Vertumnus — or to Ceres in her prime,
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursued
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return
 Repeated; she to him as oft engaged 400
 To be returned by noon amid the bower,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
 O much deceived, much failing, hapless Eve,
 Of thy presumed return! event perverse!
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise
 Found'st either sweet repast or sound repose;
 Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
 Waited, with hellish rancour imminent,
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back 410
 Despoiled of innocence, of faith, of bliss.
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come,
 And on his quest where likeliest he might find
 The only two of mankind, but in them
 The whole included race, his purposed prey.
 In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance or plantation for delight;
 By fountain or by shady rivulet 420
 He sought them both, but wished his hap might find
 Eve separate; he wished, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanced, when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veiled in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
 Half-spied, so thick the roses bushing round
 About her glowed, oft stooping to support
 Each flower of tender stalk, whose head, though gay
 Carnation, purple, azure, or specked with gold,
 Hung drooping unsustained. Them she upstays 430
 Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
 Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
 From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
 Nearer he drew, and many a walk traversed
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen
 Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
 Imbordered on each bank, the hand of Eve:
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feigned
 Or of revived Adonis, or renowned 440
 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 admired, the person more.
 As one who, long in populous city pent,
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages and farms
 Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight —
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound —
 If chance with nymph-like step fair virgin pass,
 What pleasing seemed for her now pleases more,
 She most, and in her look sums all delight:
 Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold
 This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
 Thus early, thus alone. Her heavenly form
 Angelic, but more soft and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air 460
 Of gesture or least action, overawed
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereaved
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought.
 That space the Evil One abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remained
 Stupidly good, of enmity disarmed,
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge.
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure not for him ordained. Then soon 470
 Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
 Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites:—
 “Thoughts, whither have ye led me? with what sweet
 Compulsion thus transported to forget
 What hither brought us? hate, not love, nor hope
 Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
 Of pleasure, but all pleasure to destroy,
 Save what is in destroying; other joy
 To me is lost. Then let me not let pass
 Occasion which now smiles. Behold alone 480
 The Woman, opportune to all attempts —
 Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
 Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
 And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
 Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould;
 Foe not formidable, exempt from wound —
 I not; so much hath Hell debased, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.

She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods,
 Not terrible, though terror be in love, 490
 And beauty, not approached by stronger hate,
 Hate stronger under show of love well feigned —
 The way which to her ruin now I tend.”

So spake the Enemy of Mankind, enclosed
 In serpent, inmate bad, and toward Eve
 Addressed his way — not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since, but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that towered
 Fold above fold, a surging maze; his head
 Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500

With burnished neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
 Floated redundant. Pleasing was his shape
 And lovely; never since of serpent kind
 Lovelier — not those that in Illyria changed
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transformed
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen,
 He with Olympias, this with her who bore
 Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique 510
 At first, as one who sought access but feared
 To interrupt, sidelong he works his way.

As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail,
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train
 Curled many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
 To lure her eye. She, busied, heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as used
 To such disport before her through the field 520
 From every beast, more duteous at her call
 Than at Circean call the herd disguised.

He, bolder now, uncalled before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring. Oft he bowed
 His turret crest and sleek enamelled neck,
 Fawning, and licked the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turned at length
 The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad
 Of her attention gained, with serpent-tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air; 530

His fraudulent temptation thus began: —
 “Wonder not, sovran mistress (if perhaps
 Thou canst who art sole wonder), much less arm
 Thy looks, the heaven of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeased that I approach thee thus, and gaze

Insatiate, I thus single, nor have feared
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retired.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore, 540
 With ravishment beheld — there best beheld
 Where universally admired. But here,
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
 Who sees thee (and what is one?) who shouldst be seen
 A Goddess among Gods, adored and served
 By Angels numberless, thy daily train?"

So glozed the Tempter, and his proem tuned.
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
 Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
 Not unamazed, she thus in answer spake:—

"What may this mean? Language of Man pronounced
 By tongue of brute, and human sense expressed!
 The first at least of these I thought denied
 To beasts, whom God on their creation-day
 Created mute to all articulate sound;
 The latter I demur, for in their looks
 Much reason, and in their actions, oft appears.
 Thee, Serpent, subtlest beast of all the field 560
 I knew, but not with human voice endued;
 Redouble, then, this miracle, and say,
 How cam'st thou speakable of mute, and how
 To me so friendly grown above the rest
 Of brutal kind that daily are in sight:
 Say, for such wonder claims attention due."

To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied:—
 "Empress of this fair World, resplendent Eve!
 Easy to me it is to tell thee all
 What thou command'st, and right thou shouldst be obeyed. 570
 I was at first as other beasts that graze
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
 As was my food, nor aught but food discerned
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
 Till on a day, roving the field, I chanced
 A goodly tree far distant to behold,
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mixed,
 Ruddy and gold. I nearer drew to gaze;
 When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
 Grateful to appetite, more pleased my sense 580
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats

Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
 Unsucked of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolved
 Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
 Powerful persuaders, quickened at the scent
 Of that alluring fruit, urged me so keen.
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
 For, high from ground, the branches would require 590
 Thy utmost reach, or Adam's: round the tree
 All other beasts that saw, with like desire
 Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
 Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
 Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
 I spared not; for such pleasure till that hour
 At feed or fountain never had I found.
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
 Strange alteration in me, to degree
 Of Reason in my inward powers, and Speech 600
 Wanted not long, though to this shape retained.
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
 I turned my thoughts, and with capacious mind
 Considered all things visible in Heaven,
 Or Earth, or Middle, all things fair and good.
 But all that fair and good in thy divine
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,
 United I beheld.—no fair to thine
 Equivalent or second; which compelled
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610
 And gaze, and worship thee of right declared
 Sovran of creatures, universal Dame!"

So talked the spirited sly Snake; and Eve,
 Yet more amazed, unwary thus replied:—
 "Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first proved.
 But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?
 For many are the trees of God that grow
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown 620
 To us; in such abundance lies our choice
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouched,
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men
 Grow up to their provision, and more hands
 Help to disburden Nature of her bearth."
 To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad:—
 "Empress, the way is ready, and not long—
 Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
 Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past

Of blowing myrrh and balm. If thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon." 630

"Lead, then," said Eve. He, leading, swiftly rolled
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest. As when a wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame

(Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends),
Hovering and blazing with delusive light, 640
Misleads the amazed night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool,
There swallowed up and lost, from succour far:
So glistered the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the Tree
Of Prohibition, root of all our woe;

Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake:—

"Serpent, we might have spared our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee—
Wondrous, indeed, if cause of such effects! 650

But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice: the rest, we live
Law to ourselves; our Reason is our Law."

To whom the Tempter guilefully replied:—
"Indeed! Hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
Yet lords declared of all in Earth or Air?"

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless:—"Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat; 660
But of the fruit of this fair tree, amidst
The Garden, God hath said, 'Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die.'"

She scarce had said, though brief, when now, more bold
The Tempter, but, with show of zeal and love
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on, and, as to passion moved,
Fluctuates disturbed, yet comely, and in act
Raised, as of some great matter to begin.

As when of old some orator renowned
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourished, since mute, to some great cause addressed,
Stood in himself collected, while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue
Sometimes in highth began, as no delay 670

Of preface brooking through his zeal of right :
 So standing, moving, or to highth upgrown,
 The Tempter, all impassioned, thus began :—
 “ O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving Plant,
 Mother of science ! now I feel thy power 680
 Within me clear, not only to discern
 Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
 Of highest agents, deemed however wise.
 Queen of this Universe ! do not believe
 Those rigid threats of death. Ye shall not die.
 How should ye ? By the fruit ? it gives you life
 To knowledge. By the Threatener ? look on me,
 Me who have touched and tasted, yet both live,
 And life more perfect have attained than Fate 690
 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 denounced, whatever thing Death be,
 Deterred not from achieving what might lead
 To happier life, knowledge of Good and Evil ?
 Of good, how just ! of evil — if what is evil
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunned ?
 God, therefore, cannot hurt ye, and be just ; 700
 Not just, not God ; not feared then, nor obeyed :
 Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
 Why, then, was this forbid ? Why but to awe,
 Why but to keep ye low and ignorant,
 His worshippers ? He knows that in the day
 Ye eat thereof your eyes, that seem so clear,
 Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
 Opened and cleared, and ye shall be as Gods,
 Knowing both good and evil, as they know. 710
 That ye should 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 wished,
 Though threatened, which no worse than this can bring !
 And what are Gods, that Man may not become
 As they, participating godlike food ?
 The Gods are first, and that advantage use
 On our belief, that all from them proceeds.
 I question it ; for this fair Earth I see, 720
 Warmed by the Sun, producing every kind ;
 Them nothing. If they all things, who enclosed

Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
 That whoso eats thereof forthwith attains
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
 The offence, that Man should thus attain to know?
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
 Impart against his will, if all be his?
 Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
 In Heavenly breasts? These, these and many more 730
 Causes import your need of this fair fruit.

Goddess humane, reach, then, and freely taste!"

He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
 Into her heart too easy entrance won.

Fixed on the fruit she gazed, which to behold
 Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
 Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
 With reason, to her seeming, and with truth.
 Meanwhile the hour of noon drew on, and waked 740
 An eager appetite, raised by the smell
 So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
 Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first,
 Pausing a while, thus to herself she mused:—

“Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
 Though kept from Man, and worthy to be admired,
 Whose taste, too long forborne, at first assay
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise.
 Thy praise he also who forbids thy use 750
 Conceals not from us, naming thee the Tree
 Of Knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
 Forbids us then to taste. But his forbidding
 Commends thee more, while it infers the good
 By thee communicated, and our want;
 For good unknown sure is not had, or, had
 And yet unknown, is as not had at all.

In plain, then, what forbids he but to know?
 Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise!
 Such prohibitions bind not. But, if Death 760
 Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
 Our inward freedom! In the day we eat
 Of this fair fruit, our doom is we shall die!
 How dies the Serpent? He hath eaten, and lives,
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
 Irrational till then. For us alone
 Was death invented? or to us denied
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserved?
 For beasts it seems; yet that one beast which first

Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy
 The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
 Friendly to Man, far from deceit or guile.
 What fear I, then? rather, what know to fear
 Under this ignorance of good and evil,
 Of God or Death, of law or penalty?
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise. What hinders, then,
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?"

So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
 Forth-reaching to the fruit, she plucked, she eat.
 Earth felt the wound, and Nature from her seat,
 Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe
 That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
 The guilty Serpent, and well might, for Eve,
 Intent now only on her taste, naught else
 Regarded; such delight till then, as seemed,
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true,
 Or fancied so through expectation high
 Of knowledge; nor was Godhead from her thought.

Greedily she ingorged without restraint,
 And knew not eating death. Sate at length,
 And hightened as with wine, jocund and boon,
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began:—
 "O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees
 In Paradise! of operation blest
 To sapience, hitherto obscured, infamed,
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created! but henceforth my early care,
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches, offered free to all;
 Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
 In knowledge, as the Gods who all things know.
 Though others envy what they cannot give—
 For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
 Thus grown! Experience, next to thee I owe,
 Best guide: not following thee, I had remained
 In ignorance; thou open'st Wisdom's way,
 And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
 And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high—
 High, and remote to see from thence distinct
 Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
 May have diverted from continual watch
 Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
 About him. But to Adam in what sort

Shall I appear? Shall I to him make known
 As yet my change, and give him to partake
 Full happiness with me, or rather not,
 But keep the odds of knowledge in my power 820
 Without copartner? so to add what wants
 In female sex, the more to draw his love,
 And render me more equal, and perhaps—
 A thing not undesirable—sometime
 Superior; for, inferior, who is free?
 This may be well; but what if God have seen,
 And death ensue? Then I shall be no more;
 And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
 Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct!
 A death to think! Confirmed, then, I resolve 830
 Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe.
 So dear I love him that with him all deaths
 I could endure, without him live no life.”

So saying, from the tree her step she turned,
 But first low reverence done, as to the Power
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infused
 Into the plant sciential sap, derived
 From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove
 Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn 840
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown,
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.
 Great joy he promised to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delayed;
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
 Misgave him. He the faltering measure felt,
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when first they parted. By the Tree
 Of Knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand 850
 A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smiled,
 New gathered, and ambrosial smell diffused.
 To him she hasted; in her face excuse
 Came prologue, and apology to prompt,
 Which, with bland words at will, she thus addressed:—

“Hast thou not wondered, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have missed, and thought it long, deprived
 Thy presence—agony of love till now
 Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more
 Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 860
 The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange
 Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear.
 This tree is not, as we are told, a tree

Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown
 Opening the way, but of divine effect
 To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste ;
 And hath been tasted such. The Serpent wise,
 Or not restrained as we, or not obeying,
 Hath eaten of the fruit, and is become
 Not dead, as we are threatened, but thenceforth 870
 Endued with human voice and human sense,
 Reasoning to admiration, and with me
 Persuasively hath so prevailed that I
 Have also tasted, and have also found
 The effects to correspond — opener mine eyes,
 Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
 And growing up to Godhead ; which for thee
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
 For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss ;
 Tedious, unshared with thee, and odious soon. 880
 Thou, therefore, also taste, that equal lot
 May join us, equal joy, as equal love ;
 Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
 Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
 Deity for thee, when fate will not permit."

Thus Eve with countenance blithe her story told ;
 But in her cheek distemper flushing glowed.
 On the other side, Adam, soon as he heard
 The fatal trespass done by Eve, amazed,
 Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890
 Ran through his veins, and all his joints relaxed.
 From his slack hand the garland wreathed for Eve
 Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed.
 Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
 First to himself he inward silence broke : —

"O fairest of Creation, last and best
 Of all God's works, creature in whom excelled
 Whatever can to sight or thought be formed,
 Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
 How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost, 900
 Defaced, deflowered, and now to death devote!
 Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
 The strict forbiddance, how to violate
 The sacred fruit forbidden? · Some cursed fraud
 Of enemy hath beguiled thee, yet unknown,
 And me with thee hath ruined; for with thee
 Certain my resolution is to die.
 How can I live without thee? how forgo
 Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly joined,
 To live again in these wild woods forlorn? 910

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 disturbed,
 Submitting to what seemed remediless,
 Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turned:—

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"Bold deed thou hast presumed, adventurous Eve,
 And peril great provoked, who thus hast dared
 Had it been only coveting to eye

That sacred food, sacred to abstinence;
 Much more to taste it, under ban to touch.
 But past who can recall, or done undo?
 Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate! Yet so
 Perhaps thou shalt not die; perhaps the fact

Is not so heinous now—foretasted fruit,
 Profaned first by the Serpent, by him first
 Made common and unhallowed ere our taste,
 Nor yet on him found deadly. He yet lives—
 Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,
 Higher degree of life: inducement strong

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To us, as likely, tasting, to attain
 Proportional ascent; which cannot be
 But to be Gods, or Angels, demi-gods.
 Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
 Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy

Us, his prime creatures, dignified so high,
 Set over all his works; which, in our fall,
 For us created, needs with us must fail,
 Dependent made. So God shall uncreate,

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Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose—
 Not well conceived of God; who, though his power
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loth
 Us to abolish, lest the Adversary

Triumph and say: '~~Fickle~~—their state whom God
 Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
 He ruined, now Mankind; whom will he next?'—

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Matter of scorn not to be given the Foe.
 However, I with thee, have fixed my lot,
 Certain to undergo like doom. If death
 Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
 So forcible within my heart I feel
 The bond of Nature draw me to my own—
 My own in thee; for what thou art is mine.

Our state cannot be severed; we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself."

So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied:—

"O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate; but, short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolved,
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,

Shall separate us, linked in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;
Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known.

Were it I thought death menaced would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee—rather die

Deserted than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace, chiefly assured
Remarkably so late of thy so true,

So faithful, love unequalled. But I feel
Far otherwise the event—not death, but life
Augmented, opened eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine that what of sweet before
Hath touched my sense flat seems to this and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds."

So saying, she embraced him, and for joy
Tenderly wept, much won that he his love
Had so ennobled as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits), from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand. He scrupled not to eat,
Against his better knowledge, not deceived,
But fondly overcome with female charm.

Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs, and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky loured, and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal Sin
Original; while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill, nor Eve to iterate

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Her former trespass feared, the more to soothe
 Him with her loved society; that now,
 As with new wine intoxicated both,
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings 1010
 Wherewith to scorn the Earth. But that false fruit
 Far other operation first displayed,
 Carnal desire inflaming. He on 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 savour we apply,
 And palate call judicious. I the praise 1020
 Yield thee; so well this day thou hast purveyed.
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstained
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
 True relish, tasting. If such pleasure be
 In things to us forbidden, it might be wished
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
 But come; so well refreshed, now let us play,
 As meet is, after such delicious fare;
 For never did thy beauty, since the day
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorned 1030
 With all perfections, so inflame my sense
 With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
 Than ever—bounty of this virtuous tree!”

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
 Of amorous intent, well understood
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he seized, and to a shady bank,
 Thick overhead with verdant roof embowered,
 He led her, nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
 Pansies, and violets, and asphodel, 1040
 And hyacinth—Earth's freshest, softest lap.
 There they their fill of love and love's disport
 Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
 The solace of their sin, till dewy sleep
 Oppressed them, wearied with their amorous play.

Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
 That with exhilarating vapour bland
 About their spirits had played, and inmost powers
 Made err, was now exhaled, and grosser sleep,
 Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams 1050
 Encumbered, now had left them, up they rose
 As from unrest, and, each the other viewing,
 Soon found their eyes how opened, and their minds

How darkened. Innocence, that as a veil
 Had shadowed them from knowing ill, was gone;
 Just confidence, and native righteousness,
 And honour, from about them, naked left
 To guilty Shame: he covered, but his robe
 Uncovered more. So rose the Danite strong,
 Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap
 Of Philistean Dalilah, and waked
 Shorn of his strength; they destitute and bare
 Of all their virtue. Silent, and in face
 Confounded, long they sat, as stricken mute;
 Till Adam, though not less than Eve abashed,
 At length gave utterance to these words constrained:—

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“O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
 To that false Worm, of whomsoever taught
 To counterfeit Man’s voice—true in our fall,
 False in our promised rising; since our eyes
 Opened we find indeed, and find we know
 Both good and evil, good lost and evil got:
 Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know,
 Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
 Of innocence, of faith, of purity,
 Our wonted ornaments now soiled and stained,
 And in our faces evident the signs
 Of foul concupiscence; whence evil store,
 Even shame, the last of evils; of the first
 Be sure then. How shall I behold the face
 Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? Those Heavenly Shapes
 Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
 Insufferably bright. Oh, might I here
 In solitude live savage, in some glade
 Obscured, where highest woods, impenetrable
 To star or sunlight, spread their umbrage broad,
 And brown as evening! Cover me, ye pines!
 Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more!
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may, for the present, serve to hide
 The parts of each from other that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen—
 Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves, together sewed,
 And girded on our loins, may cover round
 Those middle parts, that this new comer, Shame,
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.”

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So counselled he, and both together went
 Into the thickest wood. There soon they chose
 The fig-tree — not that kind for fruit renowned,

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But such as, at this day, to Indians known,
 In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
 Branching so broad and long that in the ground
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow
 About the mother tree, a pillared shade
 High overarched, and echoing walks between:
 There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
 At loop-holes cut through thickest shade. Those leaves 1110
 They gathered, broad as Amazonian targe,
 And with what skill they had together sewed,
 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 the American, so girt
 With feathered cincture, naked else and wild,
 Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
 Thus fenced, and, as they thought, their shame in part
 Covered, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
 They sat them down to weep. Nor only tears
 Rained at their eyes, but high winds worse within
 Began to rise, high passions—anger, hate,
 Mistrust, suspicion, discord—and shook sore
 Their inward state of mind, calm region once
 And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
 For Understanding ruled not, and the Will
 Heard not her lore, both in subjection now
 To sensual Appetite, who, from beneath
 Usurping over sovran Reason, claimed 1130
 Superior sway. From thus distempered breast
 Adam, estranged in look and altered style,
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renewed:—

“Would thou hadst hearkened to my words, and stayed
 With me, as I besought thee. when that strange
 Desire of wandering, this unhappy morn,
 I know not whence possessed thee! We had then
 Remained still happy— not, as now, despoiled
 Of all our good, shamed, naked, miserable!
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve 1140
 The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
 Such proof, conclude they then begin to fail.”

To whom, soon moved with touch of blame, thus Eve:—
 “What words have passed thy lips, Adam severe?
 Imput'st thou that to my default, or will
 Of wandering, as thou call'st it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happened thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
 Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discerned.

Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake ; 1150
 No ground of enmity between us known
 Why he should mean me ill or seek to harm.
 Was I to have never parted from thy side?
 As good have grown there still, a lifeless rib.
 Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
 Command me absolutely not to go,
 Going into such danger, as thou saidst?
 Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay,
 Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 Hadst thou been firm and fixed in thy dissent, 1160
 Neither had I transgressed, nor thou with me."

To whom, then first incensed, Adam replied:—

"Is this the love, is this the recompense
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve, expressed
 Immutable when thou wert lost, not I—
 Who might have lived, and joyed immortal bliss,
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
 And am I now upbraided as the cause
 Of thy transgressing? not enough severe,
 It seems, in thy restraint! What could I more? 1170
 I warned thee, I admonished thee, foretold

The danger, and the lurking enemy
 That lay in wait; beyond this had been force,
 And force upon free will hath here no place.
 But confidence then bore thee on, secure
 Either to meet no danger, or to find
 Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
 I also erred in overmuch admiring
 What seemed in thee so perfect that I thought
 No evil durst attempt thee. But I rue 1180
 That error now, which is become my crime,
 And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
 Him who, to worth in 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 appeared no end.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man's transgression known, the guardian Angels forsake Paradise, and return up to Heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors; who descends, and gives sentence accordingly; then, in pity, clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of Hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new World, and the sin by Man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in Hell, but to follow Satan, their sire, up to the place of Man: to make the way easier from Hell to this World to and fro, they pave a broad highway or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then, preparing for Earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to Hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium; in full assembly relates, with boasting, his success against Man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed, with himself also, suddenly into Serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then, deluded with a show of the Forbidden Tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretells the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but, for the present, commands his Angels to make several alterations in the Heavens and Elements. Adam, more and more perceiving his fallen condition, heavily bewails, rejects the condolment of Eve; she persists, and at length appeases him: then, to evade the curse likely to fall on their offspring, proposes to Adam violent ways; which he approves not, but, conceiving better hope, puts her in mind of the late promise made them, that her seed should be revenged on the Serpent, and exhorts her, with him, to seek peace of the offended Deity by repentance and supplication.

MEANWHILE the heinous and despiteful act
Of Satan done in Paradise, and how
He, in the Serpent, had perverted Eve,
Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in Heaven; for what can scape the eye
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
Hindered not Satan to attempt the mind
Of Man, with strength entire and free will armed
Complete to have discovered and repulsed
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
For still they knew, and ought to have still remembered,

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The high injunction not to taste that fruit,
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying
Incurred (what could they less?) the penalty,
And, manifold in sin, deserved to fall.
Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste
The Angelic guards ascended, mute and sad
For Man; for of his state by this they knew,
Much wondering how the subtle Fiend had stolen 20
Entrance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news
From Earth arrived at Heaven-gate, displeased
All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
That time celestial visages, yet, mixed
With pity, violated not their bliss.
About the new-arrived, in multitudes,
The Ethereal people ran, to hear and know
How all befell. They toward the throne supreme,
Accountable, made haste, to make appear,
With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance, 30
And easily approved; when the Most High,
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud
Amidst, in thunder uttered thus his voice:—
“Assembled Angels, and ye Powers returned
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismayed
Nor troubled at these tidings from the Earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent,
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this Tempter crossed the gulf from Hell.
I told ye then he should prevail, and speed 40
On his bad errand—Man should be seduced,
And flattered out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker; no decree of mine,
Concurring to necessitate his fall.
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
His free will, to her own inclining left
In even scale. But fallen he is; and now
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
On his transgression, Death denounced that day?
Which he presumes already vain and void, 50
Because not yet inflicted, as he feared,
By some immediate stroke, but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance ere day end.
Justice shall not return, as bounty, scorned.
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,
Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferred
All judgment, whether in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell.
Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee,

Man's friend, his Mediator, his designed 60
 Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
 And destined Man himself to judge Man fallen."

So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
 Blazed forth unclouded deity. He full
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Expressed, and thus divinely answered mild:—

"Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
 Mine both in Heaven and Earth to do thy will 70
 Supreme, that thou in me, thy Son Beloved,
 May'st ever rest well pleased. I go to judge
 On Earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
 Whoever judged, the worst on me must light,
 When time shall be; for so I undertook
 Before thee, and, not repenting, this obtain
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
 On me derived. Yet I shall temper so
 Justice with mercy as may illustrate most
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.

Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none 80
 Are to behold the judgment but the judged,
 Those two; the third best absent is condemned,
 Convict thy flight, and rebel to all law;
 Conviction to the Serpent none belongs."

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose
 Of high collateral glory. Him Thrones and Powers,
 Princedoms, and Dominations ministrant,
 Accompanied to Heaven-gate, from whence
 Eden and all the coast in prospect lay.
 Down he descended straight; the speed of Gods 90
 Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes winged.

Now was the Sun in western cadence low
 From noon, and gentle airs due at their hour
 To fan the Earth now waked, and usher in
 The evening cool, when he, from wrath more cool,
 Came, the mild judge and intercessor both,
 To sentence Man. The voice of God they heard
 Now walking in the Garden, by soft winds
 Brought to their ears, while day declined; they heard,
 And from his presence hid themselves among 100
 The thickest trees, both man and wife, till God,
 Approaching, thus to Adam called aloud:—

"Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
 My coming, seen far off? I miss thee here,
 Not pleased, thus entertained with solitude,
 Where obvious duty erewhile appeared unsought.

Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth!"

He came, and with him Eve, more loth, though first
To offend, discountenanced both, and discomposed. 110
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, faltering long, thus answered brief:—
"I heard thee in the Garden, and, of thy voice
Afraid, being naked, hid myself." To whom
The gracious Judge, without revile, replied:—
"My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not feared,
But still rejoiced; how is it now become 120
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked who
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?"
To whom thus Adam, sore beset, replied:—
"O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand
Before my Judge—either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life,
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame 130
By my complaint. But strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint,
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolved; though, should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.
This Woman, whom thou 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, 140
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seemed to justify the deed—
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat."
To whom the Sovran Presence thus replied:—
"Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee above her, made of thee
And for thee, whose perfection far excelled 150
Hers in all real dignity? Adorned
She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts

Were such as under government well seemed —
Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part
And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.”

So having said, he thus to Eve in few: —

“ Say, Woman, what is this which thou hast done? ”

To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelmed,
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge 160
Bold or loquacious, thus abashed replied: —
“ The Serpent me beguiled, and I did eat.”

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgment he proceeded on the accused
Serpent, though brute, unable to transfer
The guilt on him who made him instrument
Of mischief, and polluted from the end
Of his creation — justly then accursed,
As vitiated in nature. More to know

Concerned not Man (since he no further knew), 170
Nor altered his offence; yet God at last
To Satan, first in sin, his doom applied,
Though in mysterious terms, judged as then best;
And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall: —

“ Because thou hast done this, thou art accursed
Above all cattle, each beast of the field;
Upon thy belly grovelling thou shalt go,
And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.

Between thee and the Woman I will put 180
Enmity, and between thine and her seed;
Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.”

So spake this oracle — then verified

When Jesus, son of Mary, second Eve,
Saw Satan fall like lightning down from Heaven,
Prince of the Air; then, rising from his grave,
Spoiled Principalities and Powers, triumphed
In open show, and, with ascension bright,
Captivity led captive through the Air,
The realm itself of Satan, long usurped.

Whom he shall tread at last under our feet, 190
Even he who now foretold his fatal bruise,
And to the Woman thus his sentence turned: —

“ Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
In sorrow forth, and to thy husband's will
Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.”

On Adam last thus judgment he pronounced: —

“ Because thou hast hearkened to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree concerning which
I charged thee, saying, *Thou shalt not eat thereof,* 200

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 the herb of the field;
 In the sweat of thy face thou shalt 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 judged he Man, both Judge and Saviour sent,
 And the instant stroke of death, denounced that day, 210
 Removed far off; then, pitying how they stood
 Before him naked to the air, that now
 Must suffer change, disdained not to begin
 Thenceforth the form of servant to assume.

As when he washed his servants' feet, so now,
 As father of his family, he clad
 Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
 Or, as the snake, with youthful coat repaid;
 And thought not much to clothe his enemies.

Nor he their outward only with the skins 220
 Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
 Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness
 Arraying, covered from his Father's sight.
 To him with swift ascent he up returned,
 Into his blissful bosom reassumed
 In glory as of old; to him appeased,
 All, though all-knowing, what had passed with Man
 Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile, ere thus was sinned and judged on Earth,
 Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death, 230
 In counterview within the gates, that now
 Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
 Far into Chaos, since the Fiend passed through,
 Sin opening; who thus now to Death began:—

"O Son, why sit we here, each other viewing
 Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives
 In other worlds, and happier seat provides
 For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be
 But that success attends him; if mishap,
 Ere this he had returned, with fury driven 240
 By his avengers, since no place like this
 Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
 Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
 Wings growing, and dominion given me large
 Beyond this Deep—whatever draws me on,
 Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
 Powerful at greatest distance to unite

With secret amity things of like kind
 By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
 Inseparable, must with me along; 250
 For Death from Sin no power can separate.
 But, lest the difficulty of passing back
 Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
 Impassable, impervious, let us try
 (Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine
 Not unagreeable!) to found a path
 Over this main from Hell to that new World
 Where Satan now prevails — a monument
 Of merit high to all the infernal host,
 Easing their passage hence, for intercourse 260
 Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
 Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
 By this new-felt attraction and instinct."

Whom thus the meagre Shadow answered soon: —
 "Go whither fate and inclination strong
 Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
 The way, thou leading: such a scent I draw
 Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
 The savour of death from all things there that live.
 Nor shall I to the work thou enterprised 270
 Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid."

So saying, with delight he snuffed the smell
 Of mortal change on Earth. As when a flock
 Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
 Against the day of battle, to a field
 Where armies lie encamped come flying, lured
 With scent of living carcasses designed
 For death the following day in bloody fight;
 So scented the grim Feature, and upturned
 His nostril wide into the murky air, 280
 Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
 Then both, from out Hell-gates, into the waste
 Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
 Flew diverse, and, with power (their power was great)
 Hovering upon the waters, what they met
 Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
 Tossed up and down, together crowded drove,
 From each side shoaling, toward the mouth of Hell;
 As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
 Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290
 Mountains of ice, that stop the imagined way
 Beyond Petsora eastward to the rich
 Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
 Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,

As with a trident smoke, and fixed as firm
 As Delos, floating once; the rest his look
 Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move,
 And with asphaltic slime; broad as the gate,
 Deep to the roots of Hell the gathered beach
 They fastened, and the mole immense wrought on 300
 Over the foaming Deep high-arched, a bridge
 Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
 Immovable of this now fenceless World,
 Forfeit to Death — from hence a passage broad,
 Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.
 So, if great things to small may be compared,
 Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
 From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
 Came to the sea, and, over Hellespont
 Bridging his way, Europe with Asia joined, 310
 And scourged with many a stroke the indignant waves.
 Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
 Pontifical — a ridge of pendent rock
 Over the vexed Abyss, following the track
 Of Satan, to the 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 320
 The confines met of empyrean Heaven
 And of this World, and on the left hand Hell,
 With long reach interposed; three several ways
 In sight to each of these three places led.
 And now their way to Earth they had descried,
 To Paradise first tending, when, behold
 Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,
 Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
 His zenith, while the Sun in Aries rose!
 Disguised he came; but those his children dear 330
 Their parent soon discerned, though in disguise.
 He, after Eve seduced, unminded slunk
 Into the wood fast by, and, changing shape
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
 Upon her husband — saw their shame that sought
 Vain covertures; but, when he saw descend
 The Son of God to judge them, terrified
 He fled, not hoping to escape, but shun
 The present — fearing, guilty, what his wrath
 Might suddenly inflict; that past, returned 340

By night, and, listening where the hapless pair
 Sat in their sad discourse and various plaint,
 Thence gathered his own doom; which understood
 Not instant, but of future time, with joy
 And tidings fraught, to Hell he now returned,
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
 Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhopèd
 Met who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
 Of that stupendious bridge his joy increased.
 Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
 Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:—

350

“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 divinèd
 (My heart, which by a secret harmony
 Still moves with thine, joinèd in connexion sweet)
 That thou on Earth hadst prospered, 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.

360

Hell could no longer hold us in her bounds,
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.
 Thou hast achievèd our liberty, confinèd
 Within Hell-gates till now; thou us empowerèd
 To fortify thus far, and overlay

370

With this portentous bridge the dark Abyss.
 Thine now is all this World; thy virtue hath won
 What thy hands builded not; thy wisdom gainèd,
 With odds, what war hath lost, and fully avenged
 Our foil in Heaven. Here thou shalt monarch reign,
 There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
 As battle hath adjudgèd, from this new World
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated,
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds,
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular World,
 Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.”

380

Whom thus the Prince of Darkness answerèd glad:—
 “Fair daughter, and thou, son and grandchild both,
 High proof ye now have given to be the race
 Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
 Antagonist of Heaven's Almighty King),
 Amply have merited of me, of all

The Infernal Empire, that so near Heaven's door
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 390
 Mine with this glorious work, and made one realm
 Hell and this World — one realm, one continent
 Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore, while I
 Descend through Darkness, on your road with ease,
 To my associate Powers, them to acquaint
 With these successes, and with them rejoice,
 You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
 All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
 There dwell, and reign in bliss; thence on the Earth
 Dominion exercise and in the air, 400
 Chiefly on Man, sole lord of all declared;
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
 My substitutes I send ye, and create
 Plenipotent on Earth, of matchless might
 Issuing from me. On your joint vigour now
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
 Through Sin to Death exposed by my exploit.
 If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell
 No detriment need fear; go, and be strong."

So saying, he dismissed them; they with speed 410
 Their course through thickest constellations held,
 Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look wan,
 And planets, planet-strook, real eclipse
 Then suffered. The other way Satan went down
 The causey to Hell-gate; on either side
 Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaimed,
 And with rebounding surge the bars assailed,
 That scorned his indignation. Through the gate,
 Wide open and unguarded, Satan passed,

And all about found desolate; for those 420
 Appointed to sit there had left their charge,
 Flown to the upper World; the rest were all
 Far to the inland retired, about the walls
 Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
 Of Lucifer, so by allusion called
 Of that bright star to Satan paragoned.
 There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand
 In council sat, solicitous what chance
 Might intercept their Emperor sent; so he
 Departing gave command, and they observed. 430
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
 By Astracan, over the snowy plains,
 Retires, or Bactrian Sophi, from the horns
 Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
 The realm of Aladule, in his retreat

To Tauris or Casbeen; so these, the late
 Heaven-banished host, left desert utmost Hell
 Many a dark league, reduced in careful watch
 Round their metropolis, and now expecting
 Each hour their great Adventurer from the search 440
 Of foreign worlds. He through the midst unmarked,
 In show plebeian Angel militant
 Of lowest order, passed, and, from the door
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
 Ascended his high throne, which, under state
 Of richest texture spread, at the upper end
 Was placed in regal lustre. Down a while
 He sat, and round about him saw, unseen.
 At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
 And shape star-bright appeared, or brighter, clad 450
 With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter. All amazed
 At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wished beheld,
 Their mighty Chief returned: loud was the acclaim.
 Forth rushed in haste the great consulting Peers,
 Raised from their dark Divan, and with like joy
 Congratulant approached him, who with hand
 Silence, and with these words attention, won:—
 “Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers!— 460
 For in possession such, not only of right,
 I call ye, and declare ye now, returned,
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit
 Abominable, accursed, the house of woe,
 And dungeon of our tyrant! Now possess,
 As lords, a spacious World, to our native Heaven
 Little inferior, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achieved. Long were to tell
 What I have done, what suffered, with what pain 470
 Voyaged the unreal, vast, unbounded Deep
 Of horrible confusion—over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is paved,
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 Toiled out my uncouth passage, forced to ride
 The untractable Abyss, plunged in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild,
 That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely opposed
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found 480
 The new-created World, which fame in Heaven
 Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful,

Of absolute perfection; therein Man
 Placed in a paradise, by our exile
 Made happy. Him by fraud I have seduced
 From his Creator, and, the more to increase
 Your wonder, with an apple! He, thereat
 Offended — worth your laughter! — hath given up
 Both his beloved Man and all his World
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
 Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
 To range in, and to dwell, and over Man
 To rule, as over all he should have ruled.
 True is, me also he hath judged; or rather
 Me not, but the brute Serpent, in whose shape
 Man I deceived. That which to me belongs
 Is enmity, which he will put between
 Me and Mankind: I am to bruise his heel;
 His seed — when is not set — shall bruise my head!
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have the account
 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 wondered, but not long
 Had leisure, wondering at himself now more.
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare,
 His arms clung to his ribs, his legs entwining
 Each other, till, supplanted, down he fell,
 A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
 Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power
 Now ruled him, punished in the shape he sinned,
 According to his doom. He would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss returned with forked tongue
 To forked tongue; for now were all transformed
 Alike, to serpents all, as accessories
 To his bold riot. Dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick-swarming now
 With complicated monsters, head and tail —
 Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbæna dire,
 Cerastes horned, Hydrus, and Ellops drear,
 And Dipsas (not so thick swarmed once the soil
 Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
 Ophiusa); but still greatest he the midst,
 Now Dragon grown, larger than whom the Sun

Engendered in the Pythian vale on slime, 530
 Huge Python; and his power no less he seemed
 Above the rest still to retain. They all
 Him followed, issuing forth to the open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
 Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array,
 Sublime with expectation when to see
 In triumph issuing forth their glorious Chief.
 They saw, but other sight instead—a crowd
 Of ugly serpents! Horror on them fell,
 And horrid sympathy; for what they saw 540
 They felt themselves now changing. Down their arms,
 Down fell both spear and shield; down they as fast,
 And the dire hiss renewed, and the dire form
 Caught by contagion, like in punishment
 As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant
 Turned to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
 Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
 A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate
 Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550
 Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
 Used by the Tempter. On that prospect strange
 Their earnest eyes they fixed, imagining
 For one forbidden tree a multitude
 Now risen, to work them further woe or shame;
 Yet, parched with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain,
 But on they rolled in heaps, and, up the trees
 Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
 That curled Megæra. Greedily they plucked 560
 The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
 Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flamed;
 This, more delusive, not the touch, but taste
 Deceived; they, fondly thinking to allay
 Their appetite with gutt, instead of fruit
 Chewed bitter ashes, which the offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected. Oft they assayed,
 Hunger and thirst constraining; drugged as oft,
 With hatefulest disrelish writhed their jaws
 With soot and cinders filled; so oft they fell 570
 Into the same illusion, not as Man
 Whom they triumphed once lapsed. Thus were they plagued,
 And, worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
 Till their lost shape, permitted, they resumed—
 Yearly enjoined, some say, to undergo
 This annual humbling certain numbered days,

To dash their pride, and joy for Man seduced.
 However, some tradition they dispersed
 Among the Heathen of their purchase got,
 And fabled how the Serpent, whom they called 580
 Ophion, with Eurynome (the wide-
 Encroaching Eve perhaps), had first the rule
 Of high Olympus, thence by Saturn driven
 And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Meanwhile in Paradise the Hellish pair
 Too soon arrived—Sin, there in power before
 Once actual, now in body, and to dwell
 Habitual habitant; behind her Death,
 Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
 On his pale horse; to whom Sin thus began:— 590

“Second of Satan sprung, all-conquering Death!
 What think’st thou of our empire now? though earned
 With travail difficult, not better far
 Than still at Hell’s dark threshold to have sat watch,
 Unnamed, undreaded, and thyself half-starved?”

Whom thus the Sin-born Monster answered soon:—

“To me, who with eternal famine pine,
 Alike is Hell, or Paradise, or Heaven—
 There best where most with ravin I may meet:
 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems 600
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corpse.”

To whom the incestuous Mother thus replied:—

“Thou, therefore, on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
 Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl—
 No homely morsels; and whatever thing
 The scythe of Time mows down devour unspared;
 Till I, in Man residing through the race,
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect,
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.”

This said, they both betook them several ways, 610
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature
 Sooner or later; which the Almighty seeing,
 From his transcendent seat the Saints among,
 To those bright Orders uttered thus his voice:—

“See with what heat these dogs of Hell advance
 To waste and havoc yonder World, which I
 So fair and good created, and had still
 Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man
 Let in these wasteful furies, who impute 620
 Folly to me (so doth the Prince of Hell
 And his adherents), that with so much ease
 I suffer them to enter and possess

A piace so heavenly, and, conniving, seem
 To gratify my scornful enemies,
 That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
 Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
 At random yielded up to their misrule;
 And know not that I called and drew them thither,
 My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 630
 Which Man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
 On what was pure; till, crammed and gorged, nigh burst
 With sucked and glutted offal, at one sling
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
 Both Sin and Death, and yawning Grave, at last
 Through Chaos hurled, obstruct the mouth of Hell
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.
 Then Heaven and Earth, renewed, shall be made pure
 To sanctity that shall receive no stain:
 Till then the curse pronounced on both precedes." 640
 He ended, and the Heavenly audience loud
 Sung Halleluiah, as the sound of seas,
 Through multitude that sung:—"Just are thy ways,
 Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
 Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,
 Destined restorer of Mankind, by whom
 New Heaven and Earth shall to the ages rise,
 Or down from Heaven descend." Such was their song,
 While the Creator, calling forth by name
 His mighty Angels, gave them several charge, 650
 As sorted best with present things. The Sun
 Had first his precept so to move, so shine,
 As might affect the Earth with cold and heat
 Scarce tolerable, and from the north to call
 Decrepit winter, from the south to bring
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blanc Moon
 Her office they prescribed; to the other five
 Their planetary motions and aspects,
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join 660
 In synod unbenign; and taught the fixed
 Their influence malignant when to shower—
 Which of them, rising with the Sun or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous.* To the winds they set
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound
 Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
 With terror through the dark aerial hall.
 Some say he bid his Angels turn askance
 The poles of Earth twice ten degrees and more
 From the Sun's axle; they with labour pushed

Oblique the centric Globe: some say the Sun
 Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road
 Like distant breadth — to Taurus with the seven
 Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
 Up to the Tropic Crab; thence down amain
 By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorn; to bring in change
 Of seasons to each clime. Else had the spring
 Perpetual smiled on Earth with vernant flowers,
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 680
 Beyond the polar circles; to them day
 Had unbenighted shone, while the low Sun,
 To recompense his distance, in their sight
 Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
 Or east or west — which had forbid the snow
 From cold Estotiland, and south as far
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit,
 The Sun, as from Thyestean banquet, turned
 His course intended; else how had the world
 Inhabited, though sinless, more than now 690
 Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
 These changes in the heavens, though slow, produced
 Like change on sea and land — sideral blast,
 Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
 Corrupt and pestilent. Now from the north
 Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, armed with ice,
 And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
 Boreas and Cæcias and Argestes loud
 And Thrascias rend the woods, and seas upturn; 700
 With adverse blasts upturns them from the south
 Notus and Afer, black with thundrous clouds
 From Serraliona; thwart of these, as fierce
 Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
 Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
 Daughter of Sin, among the irrational
 Death introduced through fierce antipathy.
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl, 710
 And fish with fish. To graze the herb all leaving
 Devoured each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of Man, but fled him, or with countenance grim
 Glared on him passing. These were from without
 The growing miseries; which Adam saw
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandoned, but worse felt within,

And, in a troubled sea of passion tost,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:—

“O miserable of happy! Is this the end
Of this new glorious World, and me so late
The glory of that glory? who now, become
Accursed of blessed, hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
Of happiness! Yet well, if here would end
The misery! I deserved it, and would bear
My own deservings. But this will not serve:
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard
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 bind 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 mould me Man? Did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious Garden! As my will
Concurred not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust,
Desirous to resign and render back
All I received, unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
Thy justice seems. Yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refused
Those terms, whatever, when they were proposed.
Thou didst accept them: wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? And, though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son
Prove disobedient, and, reprov’d, retort,
‘Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not!’
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,

But natural necessity, begot.

God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace;
Thy punishment, then, justly is at his will.

Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
That dust I am, and shall to dust return.

770

O welcome hour whenever! Why delays

His hand to execute what his decree

Fixed on this day? Why do I overlive?

Why am I mocked with death, and lengthened out

To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet

Mortality, my sentence, and be earth

Insensible! how glad would lay me down

As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,

And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more

Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse

780

To me and to my offspring would torment me

With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt

Pursues me still—lest all I cannot die;

Lest that pure breath of life, the Spirit of Man

Which God inspired, cannot together perish

With this corporeal clod. Then, in the grave,

Or in some other dismal place, who knows

But I shall die a living death? O thought

Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath

Of life that sinned: what dies but what had life

790

And sin? The body properly hath neither.

All of me, then, shall die: let this appease

The doubt, since human reach no further knows.

For, though the Lord of all be infinite,

Is his wrath also? Be it, Man is not so,

But mortal doomed. How can he exercise

Wrath without end on Man, whom death must end?

Can he make deathless death? That were to make

Strange contradiction; which to God himself

Impossible is held, as argument

800

Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,

For anger's sake, finite to infinite

In punished Man, to satisfy his rigour

Satisfied never? That were to 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 the extent of their own sphere. But say

That death be not one stroke, as I supposed,

Bereaving sense, but endless misery

810

From this day onward, which I feel begun

Both in me and without me, and so last
 To perpetuity — Ay me! that fear
 Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution
 On my defenceless head! Both Death and I
 Am found eternal, and incorporate both:
 Nor I on my part single; in me all
 Posterity stands cursed. Fair patrimony
 That I must leave ye, sons! Oh, were I able
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820
 So disinherited, how would ye bless
 Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all Mankind,
 For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemned?
 If guiltless! But from me what can proceed
 But all corrupt — both mind and will depraved
 Not to do only, but to will the same
 With me! How can they, then, acquitted stand
 In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,
 Forced I absolve. All my evasions vain
 And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still 830
 But to my own conviction: first and last
 On me, me only, as the source and spring
 Of all corruption, all the blame lights due.
 So might the wrath! Fond wish! couldst thou support
 That burden, heavier than the Earth to bear —
 Than all the world much heavier, though divided
 With that bad Woman? Thus, what thou desir'st,
 And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
 Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
 Beyond all past example and future — 840
 To Satan only like, both crime and doom.
 O Conscience! into what abyss of fears
 And horrors hast thou driven me; out of which
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged!"
 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud
 Through the still night — not now, as ere Man fell,
 Wholesome and cool and mild, but with black air
 Accompanied, with damps and dreadful gloom;
 Which to his evil conscience represented
 All things with double terror. On the ground 850
 Outstretched he lay, on the cold ground, and oft
 Cursed his creation: Death as oft accused
 Of tardy execution, since denounced
 The day of his offence. "Why comes not Death,"
 Said he, "with one thrice-acceptable stroke
 To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,
 Justice divine not hasten to be just?
 But Death comes not at call; Justice divine

Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
 O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers ! 860
 With other echo late I taught your shades
 To answer, and resound far other song.”
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed ;
 But her, with stern regard, he thus repelled :—
 “ Out of my sight, thou serpent ! That name best
 Befits thee, with him leagued, thyself as false
 And hateful : nothing wants, but that thy shape
 Like his, and colour serpentine, may show 870
 Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
 Henceforth, lest that too heavenly form, pretended
 To hellish falsehood, snare them. But for thee
 I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
 And wandering vanity, when least was safe,
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdained
 Not to be trusted—longing to be seen,
 Though by the Devil himself ; him overweening
 To overreach ; but, with the Serpent meeting,
 Fooled and beguiled ; by him thou, I by thee, 880
 To trust thee from my side, imagined wise,
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults,
 And understood not all was but a 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 ! Oh, why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven
 With Spirits masculine, create at last 890
 This novelty on Earth, this fair defect
 Of Nature, and not fill the World at once
 With men as Angels, without feminine ;
 Or find some other way to generate
 Mankind ? This mischief had not then befallen,
 And more that shall befall—innumerable
 Disturbances on Earth through female snares,
 And straight conjunction with this sex. For either
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake ; 900
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gained
 By a far worse, or, if she love, withheld
 By parents ; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet, already linked and wedlock-bound

To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calamity shall cause

To human life, and household peace confound."

He added not, and from her turned; but Eve,
Not so repulsed, with tears that ceased not flowing,
And tresses all disordered, at his feet
Fell humble, and, embracing them, besought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:—

910

"Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness Heaven
What love sincere and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
Unhappily deceived! Thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel in this uttermost distress,

920

My only strength and stay. Forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace; both joining,
As joined in injuries, one enmity

Against a foe by doom express assigned us,
That cruel Serpent. On me exercise not
Thy hatred for this misery befallen—

On me already lost, me than thyself
More miserable. Both have sinned; but thou
Against God only; I against God and thee,
And to the place of judgment will return,

930

There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
The sentence, from thy head removed, may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe,
Me, me only, just object of His ire."

She ended, weeping; and her lowly plight,
Immovable till peace obtained from fault
Acknowledged and deplored, in Adam wrought
Commiseration. Soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress—

940

Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel whom she had displeased, his aid.
As one disarmed, his anger all he lost,
And thus with peaceful words upraised her soon:—

"Unwary, and too desirous, as before
So now, of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself! Alas!

Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain
His full wrath whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers

950

Could alter high decrees, I to that place
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
 That on my head all might be visited,
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
 'To me committed, and by me exposed.
 But rise; let us no more contend, nor blame
 Each other, blamed enough elsewhere, but strive
 In offices of love how we may lighten
 Each other's burden in our share of woe;
 Since this day's death denounced, if aught I see,
 Will prove 'no sudden, but a slow-paced evil,
 A long day's dying, to augment our pain,
 And to our seed (O hapless seed!) derived."

960

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied:—

"Adam, by sad experiment I know
 How little weight my words with thee can find,
 Found so erroneous, thence by just event
 Found so unfortunate. Nevertheless,
 Restored by thee, vile as I am, to place
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart,
 Living or dying from thee I will not hide
 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,
 Or end, though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.

970

If care of our descent perplex us most,
 Which must be born to certain woe, devoured
 By Death at last (and miserable it is
 To be to others cause of misery,
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
 Into this cursed world a woeful race,
 That, after wretched life, must be at last
 Food for so foul a monster), in thy power
 It lies, yet ere conception, to prevent
 The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
 Childless thou art; childless remain. So Death
 Shall be deceived his glut, and with us two
 Be forced to satisfy his ravenous maw.

980

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 our selves and seed at once to free

990

From what we fear for both, let us make short; 1000
 Let us seek Death, or, he not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves.
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears
 That show no end but death, and have the power,
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
 Destruction with destruction to destroy?"

She ended here, or vehement despair
 Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertained as dyed her cheek with pale.
 But Adam, with such counsel nothing swayed, 1010
 To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Labouring had raised, and thus to Eve replied:—
 "Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee something more sublime
 And excellent than what thy mind contemns:
 But self-destruction therefore sought refutes
 That excellence thought in thee, and implies
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
 For loss of life and pleasure overloved.
 Or, if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
 Of misery, so thinking to evade
 The penalty pronounced, doubt not but God
 Hath wiselier armed his vengeful ire than so
 To be forestalled. Much more I fear lest death
 So snatched will not exempt us from the pain
 We are by doom to pay; rather such acts
 Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
 To make death in us live. Then let us seek
 Some safer resolution — which methinks
 I have in view, calling to mind with heed 1030
 Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
 The Serpent's head. Piteous amends! unless
 Be meant whom I conjecture, our grand foe,
 Satan, who in the Serpent hath contrived
 Against us this deceit. To crush his head
 Would be revenge indeed — which will be lost
 By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
 Resolved as thou proposest; so our foe
 Shall scape his punishment ordained, and we
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040
 No more be mentioned, then, of violence
 Against ourselves, and wilful barrenness
 That cuts us from all hope, and savours only
 Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
 Reluctance against God and his just yoke
 Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild

And gracious temper he both heard and judged,
 Without wrath or reviling. We expected
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought
 Was meant by death that day; when, lo! to thee 1050
 Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
 And bringing forth, soon recompensed with joy,
 Fruit of thy womb. On me the curse aslope
 Glanced on the ground. With labour I must earn
 My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse;
 My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold
 Or heat should injure us, his timely care
 Hath, unbesought, provided, and his hands
 Clothed us unworthy, pitying while he judged.
 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060
 Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
 And teach us further by what means to shun
 The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow!
 Which now the sky, with various face, begins
 To show us in this mountain, while the winds
 Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
 Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek
 Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
 Our limbs benumbed—ere this diurnal star
 Leave cold the night, how we his gathered beams 1070
 Reflected may with matter sere foment,
 Or by collision of two bodies grind
 The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds,
 Justling, or pushed with winds, rude in their shock,
 Tine the slant lightning, whose thwart flame, driven down,
 Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine,
 And sends a comfortable heat from far,
 Which might supply the Sun. Such fire to use,
 And what may else be remedy or cure
 To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,* 1080
 He will instruct us praying, and of grace
 Beseeching him; so as we need not fear
 To pass commodiously this life, sustained
 By him with many comforts, till we end
 In dust, our final rest and native home.
 What better can we do than, to the place
 Repairing where he judged us, prostrate fall
 Before him reverent, and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg, with tears
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air 1090
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeigned and humiliation meek?
 Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn

From his displeasure, in whose look serene,
When angry most he seemed and most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and mercy shone?"

So spake our Father penitent; nor Ève
Felt less remorse. They, forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judged them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent, and both confessed
Humbly their faults, and pardon begged, with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeigned and humiliation meek.

1100

THE END OF THE TENTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XI.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

THUS they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had removed
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead, that sighs now breathed
Unutterable, which the Spirit of prayer
Inspired, and winged for Heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory. Yet their port
Not of mean suitors; nor important less
Seemed their petition than when the ancient pair
In fables old, less ancient yet than these. 10
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drowned, before the shrine
Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor missed the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they passed
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then, clad
With incense, where the golden altar fumed,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne. Them the glad Son 20
Presenting thus to intercede began:—

“See, Father, what first-fruits on Earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in Man—these sighs
And prayers, which in this golden censer, mixed

With incense, I, thy priest, before thee bring;
 Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed
 Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
 Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
 Of Paradise could have produced, ere fallen
 From innocence. Now, therefore, bend thine ear
 To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;
 Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
 Interpret for him, me his advocate
 And propitiation; all his works on me,
 Good or not good, ingraft; my merit those
 Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
 Accept me, and in me from these receive
 The smell of peace toward Mankind; let him live,
 Before thee reconciled, at least his days
 Numbered, though sad, till death, his doom (which I
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse),
 To better life shall yield him, where with me
 All my redeemed may dwell in joy and bliss,
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one."

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene:—

"All thy request for Man, accepted Son,
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree.
 But longer in that Paradise to dwell
 The law I gave to Nature him forbids;
 Those pure immortal elements, that know
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him, tainted now, and purge him off,
 As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,
 And mortal food, as may dispose him best
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first
 Distempered all things, and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
 Created him endowed—with Happiness
 And Immortality; that fondly lost,
 This other served but to eternize woe,
 Till I provided Death: so Death becomes
 His final remedy, and, after life
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refined
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Waked in the renovation of the just,
 Resigns him up with Heaven and Earth renewed.
 But let us call to synod all the Blest
 Through Heaven's wide bounds; from them I will not hide
 My judgments—how with Mankind I proceed,
 As how with peccant Angels late they saw,
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirmed."

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright Minister that watched. He blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom. The angelic blast
Filled all the regions: from their blissful bowers
Of amarantine shade, fountain or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the Sons of Light
Hasted, resorting to the summons high,
And took their seats, till from his throne supreme
The Almighty thus pronounced his sovran will:—

80

“O Sons, like one of us Man is become
To know both good and evil, since his taste
Of that defended fruit; but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost and evil got,
Happier had it sufficed him to have known
Good by itself and evil not at all.

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.

90

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

100

Vacant possession, some new trouble raise;
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair,
From hallowed ground the unholy, and denounce
To them, and to their progeny, from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urged

(For I behold them softened, and with tears
Bewailing their excess), all terror hide.

110

If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My covenant in the Woman's seed renewed.
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace;
And on the east side of the Garden place,

Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
 Cherubic watch, and of a sword the flame
 Wide-waving, all approach far off to fright,
 And guard all passage to the Tree of Life;
 Lest Paradise a receptacle prove

To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey,
 With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude."

He ceased, and the Archangelic Power prepared
 For swift descent; with him the cohort bright
 Of watchful Cherubim. Four faces each
 Had, like a double Janus; all their shape
 Spangled with eyes more numerous than those
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
 Charmed with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,

To resalute the World with sacred light,
 Leucothea waked, and with fresh dews embalmed
 The Earth, when Adam and first matron Eve
 Had ended now their orisons, and found
 Strength added from above, new hope to spring
 Out of despair, joy, but with fear yet linked;
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renewed:—

"Eve, easily may faith admit that all
 The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends;
 But that from us aught should ascend to Heaven
 So prevalent as to concern the mind
 Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,
 Hard to belief may seem. Yet this will prayer,
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
 Even to the seat of God. For, since I sought
 By prayer the offended Deity to appease,
 Kneeled and before him humbled all my heart,
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
 That I was heard with favour; peace returned
 Home to my breast, and to my memory
 His promise that thy seed shall bruise our Foe;
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of death

Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee!
 Eve rightly called, Mother of all Mankind,
 Mother of all things living, since by thee
 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 ordained
 A help, became thy snare; to me reproach

Rather belongs, distrust and all dispraise.
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
 That I, who first brought death on all, am graced
 The source of life; next favourable thou,
 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st, 170
 Far other name deserving. But the field
 To labour calls us, now with sweat imposed,
 Though after sleepless nights; for see! the Morn,
 All unconcerned with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling. Let us forth,
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoined
 Laborious, till day droop. While here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
 Here let us live, though in fallen state, content." 180

So spake, so wished, much-humbled Eve; but Fate
 Subscribed not. Nature first gave signs, impressed
 On bird, beast, air—air suddenly eclipsed,
 After short blush of morn. Nigh in her sight
 The bird of Jove, stooped from his aery tour,
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
 First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
 Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight. 190
 Adam observed, and, with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmoved to Eve thus spake:—

“O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,¹
 Which Heaven 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 released
 Some days: how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows, or more than this, that we are dust,
 And thither must return, and be no more? 200
 Why else this double object in our sight,
 Of flight pursued in the air and o'er the ground
 One way the 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 Heavenly fraught?”

He erred not; for, by this, the Heavenly bands
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt— 210
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt
 And carnal fear that day dimmed Adam's eye.

Not that more glorious, when the Angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw
 The field pavilioned with his guardians bright;
 Nor that which on the flaming mount appeared
 In Dothan, covered with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king, who, to surprise
 One man, assassin-like, had levied war,
 War unproclaimed. The princely Hierarchy
 In their bright stand there left his Powers to seize
 Possession of the Garden; he alone,
 To find where Adam sheltered, took his way,
 Not unperceived of Adam; who to Eve,
 While the great visitant approached, thus spake:—

220

“Eve, now expect great tidings, which, perhaps,
 Of us will soon determine, or impose
 New laws to be observed; for I descry,
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
 One of the Heavenly host, and, by his gait,
 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 to offend,
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.”

230

He ended; and the Archangel soon drew nigh,
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man
 Clad to meet man. Over his lucid arms
 A military vest of purple flowed,
 Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
 In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof.
 His starry helm unbuckled showed him prime
 In manhood where youth ended; by his side,
 As in a glistening zodiac, hung the sword,
 Satan's dire dread, and in his hand the spear.
 Adam bowed low; he, kingly, from his state
 Inclined not, but his coming thus declared:—

240

250

“Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs.
 Sufficient that thy prayers are heard, and Death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated of his seizure many days,
 Given thee of grace, wherein thou may'st repent,
 And one bad act with many deeds well done
 May'st cover. Well may then thy Lord, appeased,
 Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell

Permits not. To remove thee I am come, 260
 And send thee from the Garden forth, to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil."
 He added not; for Adam, at the news
 Heart-strook, with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament
 Discovered soon the place of her retire:—

“O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death:
 Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
 Thee, native soil? these happy walks and shades, 270
 Fit haunt of Gods, where I had hope to spend,
 Quiet, though sad, the respite of that day
 That must be mortal to us both? O flowers,
 That never will in other climate grow,
 My early visitation, and my last
 At even, which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names,
 Who now shall rear ye to the Sun, or rank
 Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?
 Thee, lastly, nuptial bower, by me adorned 280
 With what to sight or smell was sweet, from thee
 How shall I part, and whither wander down
 Into a lower world, to this obscure
 And wild? How shall we breathe in other air
 Less pure, accustomed to immortal fruits?”

Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild:—
 “Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
 What justly thou hast lost; nor set thy heart,
 Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine.
 Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes 290
 Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;
 Where he abides, think there thy native soil.”

Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
 Recovering, and his scattered spirits returned,
 To Michael thus his humble words addressed:—
 “Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or named
 Of them the highest—for such of shape may seem
 Prince above princes—gently hast thou told
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
 And in performing end us. What besides 300
 Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,
 Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring—
 Departure from this happy place, our sweet
 Recess, and only consolation left
 Familiar to our eyes; all places else
 Inhospitable appear, and desolate.

Nor knowing us, nor known. And, if by prayer
 Incessant I could hope to change the will
 Of him who all things can, I would not cease
 To weary him with my assiduous cries; 310
 But prayer against his absolute decree
 No more avails than breath against the wind,
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
 This most afflicts me—that, departing hence,
 As from his face I shall be hid, deprived
 His blessed countenance. Here I could frequent,
 With worship, place by place where he vouchsafed
 Presence Divine, and to my sons relate,
 ‘On this mount He appeared: under this tree 320
 Stood visible; among these pines his voice
 I heard; here with him at this fountain talked.’
 So many grateful altars I would rear
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
 Of lustre from the brook, in memory
 Or monument to ages, and thereon
 Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers.
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek
 His bright appearances, or footstep trace?
 For, though I fled him angry, yet, recalled 330
 To life prolonged and promised race, I now
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
 Of glory, and far off his steps adore.”
 To whom thus Michael, with regard benign:—
 “Adam, thou know’st Heaven his, and all the Earth,
 Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
 Fomented by his virtual power and warmed.
 All the Earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
 No despicable gift; surmise not, then, 340
 His presence to these narrow bounds confined
 Of Paradise or Eden. This had been
 Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
 All generations, and had hither come,
 From all the ends of the Earth, to celebrate
 And reverence thee their great progenitor.
 But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
 To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
 Yet doubt not but in valley and in plain
 God is, as here, and will be found alike 350
 Present, and of his presence many a sign
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round
 With goodness and paternal love, his face

Express, and of his steps the track divine.
 Which that thou may'st believe, and be confirmed
 Ere thou from hence depart, know I am sent
 To show thee what shall come in future days
 To thee and to thy offspring. Good with bad
 Expect to hear, supernal grace contending
 With sinfulness of men—thereby to learn 360
 True patience, and to temper joy with fear
 And pious sorrow, equally inured
 By moderation either state to bear,
 Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
 Safest thy life, and best prepared endure
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
 This hill; let Eve (for I have drenched her eyes)
 Here sleep below while thou to foresight wak'st,
 As once thou slept'st while she to life was formed.”

To whom thus Adam gratefully replied:— 370
 “Ascend; I follow thee, safe guide, the path
 Thou lead'st me, and to the hand of Heaven submit,
 However chastening—to the evil turn
 My obvious breast, arming to overcome
 By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,
 If so I may attain.” So both ascend
 In the visions of God. It was a hill,
 Of Paradise the highest, from whose top
 The hemisphere of Earth in clearest ken
 Stretched out to the amplest reach of prospect lay. 380
 Not higher that hill, nor wider looking round,
 Whereon for different cause the Tempter set
 Our second Adam, in the wilderness,
 To show him all Earth's kingdoms and their glory.
 His eye might there command wherever stood
 City of old or modern fame, the seat
 Of mightiest empire, from the destined walls
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
 To Paquin, of Sinæan kings, and thence 390
 To Agra and Lahor of Great Mogul,
 Down to the golden Chersonese, or where
 The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
 In Hispahan, or where the Russian Ksar
 In Mosco, or the Sultan in Bizance,
 Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken
 The empire of Negus to his utmost port
 Ercoco, and the less maritime kings,
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
 And Sofala (thought Ophir), to the realm 400

Of Congo, and Angola farthest south,
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount,
 The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
 Marocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
 Of Atabalipa, and yet unspoiled
 Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons 410
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film removed
 Which that false fruit that promised clearer sight
 Had bred; then purged with euphrasy and rue
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see,
 And from the well of life thrée drops instilled.
 So deep the power of these ingredients pierced,
 Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam, now enforced to close his eyes,
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranced. 420
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand
 Soon raised, and his attention thus recalled:—
 "Adam, now ope thine eyes, and first behold
 The effects which thy original crime hath wrought
 In some to spring from thee, who never touched
 The excepted tree, nor with the Snake conspired,
 Nor sinned thy sin, yet from that sin derive
 Corruption to bring forth more violent deeds."
 His eyes he opened, and beheld a field,
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430
 New-reaped, the other part sheep-walks and folds;
 I' the midst an altar as the landmark stood,
 Rustic, of grassy sord. Thither anon
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
 First-fruits, the green ear and the yellow sheaf,
 Unculled, as came to hand. A shepherd next,
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,
 Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strewed,
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites performed. 440
 His offering soon propitious fire from heaven
 Consumed, with nimble glance and grateful steam;
 The other's not, for his was not sincere:
 Whereat he inly raged, and, as they talked,
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone
 That beat out life; he fell, and, deadly pale,
 Groaned out his soul, with gushing blood effused.

Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
Dismayed, and thus in haste to the Angel cried:—

“O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen
To that meek man, who well had sacrificed: 450
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?”

To whom Michael thus, he also moved, replied:—

“These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
Out of thy loins. The unjust the just hath slain,
For envy that his brother’s offering found
From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact
Will be avenged, and the other’s faith approved
Lose no reward, though here thou see him die,
Rolling in dust and gore.” To which our Sire:— 460

“Alas, both for the deed and for the cause!

But have I now seen Death? Is this the way

I must return to native dust? O sight

Of terror, foul and ugly to behold!

Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!”

To whom thus 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 the entrance than within. 470

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 the inabstinence of Eve

Shall bring on men.” Immediately a place

Before his eyes appeared, sad, noisome, dark;

A lazar-house it seemed, wherein were laid

Numbers of all diseased—all maladies 480

Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms

Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,

Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,

Intestine stone and ulcer, colic pangs,

Demoniac phrenzy, moping 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

Tended the sick, busiest from couch to couch; 490

And over them triumphant Death his dart

Shook, but delayed to strike, though oft invoked

With vows, as their chief good and final hope.

Sight so deform what heart of rock could long

Dry-eyed behold? Adam could not, but wept,
 Though not of woman born: compassion quelled
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrained excess,
 And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renewed:—

“O miserable Mankind, to what fall
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserved! 500
 Better end here unborn. Why is life given
 To be thus wrested from us? rather why
 Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
 What we receive, would either not accept
 Life offered, or soon beg to lay it down,
 Glad to be so dismissed in peace. Can thus
 The image of God in Man, created once
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
 To such unsightly sufferings be debased 510
 Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,
 Retaining still divine similitude
 In part, from such deformities be free,
 And for his Maker’s image’ sake exempt?”

“Their Maker’s image,” answered Michael, “then
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
 To serve ungoverned Appetite, and took
 His image whom they served—a brutish vice,
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.

Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520
 Disfiguring not God’s likeness, but their own;
 Or, if his likeness, by themselves defaced
 While they pervert pure Nature’s healthful rules
 To loathsome sickness—worthily, since they
 God’s image did not reverence in themselves.”

“I yield it just,” said Adam, “and submit.

But is there yet no other way, besides
 These painful passages, how we may come
 To death, and mix with our connatural dust?”

“There is,” said Michael, “if thou well observe 530
 The rule of *Not 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 may’st thou live, till, like ripe fruit, thou drop
 Into thy mother’s lap, or be with ease
 Gathered, not harshly plucked, for death mature.
 This is old age; but then thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty, which will change
 To withered, weak, and grey; thy senses then, 540
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forgo

To what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry,
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
 The balm of life." To whom our Ancestor:—

"Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
 Life much — bent rather how I may be quit,
 Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge,
 Which I must keep till my appointed day
 Of rendering up, and patiently attend
 My dissolution." Michaël replied:—

55^a

"Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st
 Live well; how long or short permit to Heaven.
 And now prepare thee for another sight."

He looked, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
 Were tents of various hue: by some were herds
 Of cattle grazing: others whence the sound
 Of instruments that made melodious chime
 Was heard, of harp and organ, and who moved
 Their stops and chords was seen: his volant touch
 Instinct through all proportions low and high
 Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.

560

In other part stood one who, at the forge
 Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass
 Had melted (whether found where casual fire
 Had wasted woods, on mountain or in vale,
 Down to the veins of earth, thence gliding hot
 To some cave's mouth, or whether washed by stream
 From underground); the liquid ore he drained
 Into fit moulds prepared; from which he formed
 First his own tools, then what might else be wrought
 Fusil or graven in metal. After these,

570

But on the hither side, a different sort
 From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat,
 Down to the plain descended: by their guise
 Just men they seemed, and all their study bent
 To worship God aright, and know his works
 Not hid; nor those things last which might preserve
 Freedom and peace to men. They on the plain
 Long had not walked when from the tents behold
 A bevy of fair women, richly gay

580

In gems and wanton dress! to the harp they sung
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on.
 The men, though grave, eyed them, and let their eyes
 Rove without rein, till, in the amorous net
 Fast caught, they liked, and each his liking chose.
 And now of love they treat, till the evening-star,

Love's harbinger, appeared; then, all in heat,
 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
 Hymen, then first to marriage rites invoked: 590
 With feast and music all the tents resound.

Such happy interview, and fair event
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
 And charming symphonies, attached the heart
 Of Adam, soon inclined to admit delight,
 The bent of Nature; which he thus expressed:—

“True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest,
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past: 600
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
 Here Nature seems fulfilled in all her ends.”

To whom thus Michael:—“Judge not what is best
 By pleasure, though to Nature seeming meet,
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end,
 Holy and pure, conformity divine.

Those tents thou 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; 610

Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
 Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledged none.

Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
 For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seemed
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
 Yet empty of all good wherein consists
 Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
 Bred only and completed to the taste
 Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance.

To dress, and trol the tongue, and roll the eye;— 620

To these that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious titled them the Sons of God,
 Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame,
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
 Of these fair atheists, and now swim in joy
 (Erelong to swim at large) and laugh; for which
 The world erelong a world of tears must weep.”

To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:—
 “O pity and shame, that they who to live well
 Entered so fair should turn aside to tread
 Paths indirect, or in the midway faint! 630

But still I see the tenor of Man's woe
 Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.”

“From Man's effeminate slackness it begins,”
 Said the Angel, “who should better hold his place

By wisdom, and superior gifts received.

But now prepare thee for another scene."

He looked, and saw wide territory spread

Before him — towns, and rural works between,

Cities of men with lofty gates and towers,

640

Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,

Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise.

Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,

Single or in array of battle ranged

Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood.

One way a band select from forage drives

A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,

From a fat meadow-ground, or fleecy flock,

Ewes and their bleating lambs, over the plain,

Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,

650

But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray:

With cruel tournament the squadrons join;

Where cattle pastured late, now scattered lies

With carcasses and arms the ensanguined field

Deserted. Others to a city strong

Lay siege, encamped, by battery, scale, and mine,

Assaulting; others from the wall defend

With dart and javelin, stones and sulphurous fire;

On each hand slaughter and gigantic deeds.

In other part the sceptred haralds call

660

To council in the city-gates: anon

Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mixed,

Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon

In factious opposition, till at last

Of middle age one rising, eminent

In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,

Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,

And judgment from above: him old and young

Exploded, and had seized with violent hands,

Had not a cloud descending snatched him thence,

670

Unseen amid the throng. So violence

Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,

Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.

Adam was all in tears, and to his guide

Lamenting turned full sad: — "Oh, what are these?

Death's ministers, not men! who thus deal death

Inhumanly to men, and multiply

Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew

His brother; for of whom such massacre

Make they but of their brethren, men of men?

680

But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven

Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?"

To whom thus Michael:—“These are the product
Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st,
Where good with bad were matched; who of themselves
Abhor to join, and, by imprudence mixed,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these Giants, men of high renown;
For in those days might only shall be admired,
And valour and heroic virtue called.

690

To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Manslaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory, and, for glory done,
Of triumph to be styled great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods—
Destroyers rightlier called, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achieved, renown on earth,
And what most merits fame in silence hid.

But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheld'st
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his Saints—him the Most High,
Rapt in a balmy cloud, with winged steeds,
Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death, to show thee what reward
Awaits the good, the rest what punishment;
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.”

700

710

He looked, and saw the face of things quite changed.
The brazen throat of war had ceased to roar;
All now was turned to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance,
Marrying or prostituting, as befell,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allured them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declared,
And testified against their ways. He oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs' or festivals, and to them preached
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison, under judgments imminent;
But all in vain. Which when he saw, he ceased
Contending, and removed his tents far off;
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk,

720

Measured by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth, 730
Smeared round with pitch, and in the side a door
Contrived, and of provisions laid in large
For man and beast: when lo! a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
Came sevens and pairs, and entered in, as taught
Their order; last, the sire and his three sons,
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the South-wind rose, and, with black wings
Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under heaven; the hills to their supply 740
Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,
Sent up amain; and now the thickened sky
Like a dark ceiling stood: down rushed the rain
Impetuous, and continued till the earth
No more was seen. The floating vessel swum
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelmed, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water rolled; sea covered sea,
Sea without shore: and in their palaces, 750
Where luxury late reigned, sea-monsters whelped
And stabled: of mankind, so numerous late,
All left in one small bottom swum embarked.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,
Depopulation! Thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood thee also drowned,
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently reared
By the Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless, as when a father mourns 760
His children, all in view destroyed at once,
And scarce to the Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint:—
“O visions ill foreseen! Better had I
Lived ignorant of future—so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear. Those now that were dispensed
The burden of many ages on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me, ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek 770
Henceforth to be foretold what shall befall
Him or his children—evil, he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent,
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel
Grievous to bear. But that care now is past;

Man is not whom to warn; those few escaped
 Famine and anguish will at last consume,
 Wandering that watery desert. I had hope,
 When violence was ceased and war on Earth, 780
 All would have then gone well, peace would have crowned
 With length of happy days the race of Man;
 But I was far deceived, for now I see
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
 How comes it thus? Unfold, Celestial Guide,
 And whether here the race of Man will end."

To whom thus Michael:—"Those whom last 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; 790
 Who, having spilt much blood, and done much waste,
 Subduing nations, and achieved thereby
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
 Surfeit, and lust, till wantonness and pride
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
 The conquered, also, and enslaved by war,
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose,
 And fear of God—from whom their piety feigned
 In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800
 Against invaders; therefore, cooled in zeal,
 Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for the Earth shall bear
 More than enough, that temperance may be tried.
 So all shall turn degenerate, all depraved.
 Justice and temperance, truth and faith, forgot;
 One man except, the only son of light
 In a dark age, against example good,
 Against allurement, custom, and a world 810
 Offended. Fearless of reproach and scorn,
 Or violence, he of their wicked ways
 Shall them admonish, and before them set
 The paths of righteousness, how much more safe
 And full of peace, denouncing wrath to come
 On their impenitence, and shall return
 Of them derided, but of God observed
 The one just man alive: by his command
 Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
 To save himself and household from amidst 820
 A world devote to universal wrack.
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodged

And sheltered round, but all the cataracts
 Of Heaven set open on the Earth shall pour
 Rain day and night; all fountains of the deep,
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds, till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills. Then shall this Mount
 Of Paradise by might of waves be moved 830
 Out of his place, pushed by the horned flood,
 With all his verdure spoiled, and trees adrift,
 Down the great river to the opening Gulf,
 And there take root, an island salt and bare,
 The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang—
 To teach thee that God attributes to place
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought
 By men who there frequent or therein dwell.
 And now what further shall ensue behold.”
 He looked, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
 Driven by a keen North-wind, that, blowing dry,
 Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decayed;
 And the clear sun on his wide watery glass
 Gazed hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
 As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
 With soft foot towards the deep, who now had stopt
 His sluices, as the heaven his windows shut.
 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground, 850
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fixed.
 And now the tops of hills as rocks appear;
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive
 Toward the retreating sea their furious tide.
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
 And, after him, the surer messenger,
 A dove, sent forth once and again to spy
 Green tree or ground whereon his foot may light;
 The second time returning, in his bill
 An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign. 860
 Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
 The ancient sire descends, with all his train;
 Then, with uplifted hands and eyes devout,
 Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds
 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
 Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
 Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
 Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
 Greatly rejoiced; and thus his joy broke forth:—
 “O thou, who future things canst represent 870

As present, Heavenly Instructor, I revive
 At this last sight, assured that Man shall live,
 With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
 Far less I now lament for one whole world
 Of wicked sons destroyed than I rejoice
 For one man found so perfect and so just
 That God vouchsafes to raise another world
 From him, and all his anger to forget.

But say what mean those coloured streaks in Heaven:
 Distended as the brow of God appeased?

880

Or serve they as a flowery verge to bind
 The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,
 Lest it again dissolve and shower the Earth?"

To whom the Archangel:—"Dextrously thou aim'st.
 So willingly doth God remit his ire:

Though late repenting him of Man depraved,
 Grieved at his heart, when, looking down, he saw
 The whole Earth filled with violence, and all flesh
 Corrupting each their way; yet, those removed,
 Such grace shall one just man find in his sight

890

That he relents, not to blot out mankind,
 And makes a covenant never to destroy
 The Earth again by flood, nor let the sea
 Surpass his bounds, nor rain to drown the world
 With man therein or beast; but, when he brings
 Over the Earth a cloud, will therein set
 His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look

And call to mind his covenant. Day and night,
 Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
 Shall hold their course, till fire purge all things new,
 Both Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell."

900

THE END OF THE ELEVENTH BOOK.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK XII.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

AS one who, in his journey, bates at noon,
Though bent on speed, so here the Archangel paused
Betwixt the world destroyed and world restored,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes:—

“Thus thou hast seen one world begin and end,
And Man as from a second stock proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense.
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,
Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
With large wine-offerings poured, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy unblamed, and dwell
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
Under paternal rule, till one shall rise.

10

20

Of proud, ambitious heart, who, not content
 With fair equality, fraternal state,
 Will arrogate dominion undeserved
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
 Concord and law of Nature from the Earth —
 Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game) 30
 With war and hostile snare such as refuse
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous.
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styled
 Before the Lord, as in despite of Heaven,
 Or from Heaven claiming second sovranity,
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.
 He, with a crew, whom like ambition joins
 With him or under him to tyrannize,
 Marching from Eden toward the west, shall find 40
 The plain, wherein a black bituminous gurge
 Boils out from under ground, the mouth of Hell.
 Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build
 A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven;
 And get themselves a name, lest, far dispersed
 In foreign lands, their memory be lost —
 Regardless whether good or evil fame.
 But God, who oft descends to visit men
 Unseen, and through their habitations walks,
 To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 50
 Comes down to see their city, ere the tower
 Obstruct Heaven-towers, and in derision sets
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase
 Quite out their native language, and, instead,
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown.
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud
 Among the builders; each to other calls,
 Not understood — till, hoarse and all in rage,
 As mocked they storm. Great laughter was in Heaven,
 And looking down to see the hubbub strange 60
 And hear the din. Thus was the building left
 Ridiculous, and the work *Confusion* named.”
 Whereto thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd: —
 “O execrable son, so to aspire
 Above his brethren, to himself assuming
 Authority usurped, from God not given!
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold
 By his donation: but man over men
 He made not lord — such title to himself 70
 Reserving, human left from human free.

But this usurper his encroachment proud
 Stays not on Man; to God his tower intends
 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 thy original lapse, true liberty
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
 Twinned, and from her hath no dividual being.

Reason in Man obscured, or not obeyed,
 Immediately inordinate desires
 And upstart passions catch the government
 From Reason, and to servitude reduce
 Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits

Within himself unworthy powers to reign
 Over free reason, God, in judgment just,
 Subjects him from without to violent lords,
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall

His outward freedom. Tyranny must be,
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
 But justice and some fatal curse annexed,
 Deprives them of their outward liberty,

Their inward lost: witness the irreverent son
 Of him who built the ark, who, for the shame
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
Servant of servants, on his vicious race.

Thus will this latter, as the former world,
 Still tend from bad to worse, till God at last,
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw

His presence from among them, and avert
 His holy eyes, resolving from thenceforth
 To leave them to their own polluted ways,
 And one peculiar nation to select

From all the rest, of whom to be invoked.
 A nation from one faithful man to spring.

Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship—Oh, that men
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch lived who scaped the Flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall

To worship their own work in wood and stone
 For gods!—yet him God the Most High vouchsafes 120
 To call by vision from his father's house,
 His kindred, and false gods, into a land
 Which he will show him, and from him will raise
 A mighty nation, and upon him shower
 His benediction so that in his seed
 All nations shall be blest. He straight obeys;
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes.
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
 Ur of Chaldæa, passing now the ford 130
 To Haran—after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude—
 Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who called him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
 Pitched about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain
 Of Moreh. There, by promise, he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,
 From Hamath northward to the Desert south
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnamed), 140
 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 150
 Plainlier shall be revealed. This patriarch blest,
 Whom *faithful Abraham* due time shall call,
 A son, and of his son a grandchild, leaves,
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown.
 The grandchild, with twelve sons increased, departs
 From Canaan to a land hereafter called
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
 See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
 Into the sea. To sojourn in that land
 He comes, invited by a younger son 160
 In time of dearth—a son whose worthy deeds
 Raise him to be the second in that realm
 Of Pharaoh. There he dies, and leaves his race
 Growing into a nation, and now grown
 Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks

To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
Inhospitably, and kills their infant males:
Till, by two brethren (those two brethren call
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim 170
His people from enthralment, they return,
With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.
But first the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compelled by signs and judgments dire:
To blood unshed the rivers must be turned;
Frogs, lice, and flies must all his palace fill
With loathed intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murrain die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss, 180
And all his people; thunder mixed with hail,
Hail mixed with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,
And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
Last, with one midnight-stroke, all the first-born
Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds 190
The river-dragon tamed at length submits
To let his sojourners depart, and oft
Humbles his stubborn heart, but still as ice
More hardened after thaw; till, in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismissed, the sea
Swallows him with his host, but them lets pass,
As on dry land, between two crystal walls,
Awed by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided till his rescued gain their shore:
Such wondrous power God to his Saint will lend, 200
Though present in his Angel, who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire—
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire—
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues.
All night he will pursue, but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning-watch;
Then through the fiery pillar and the cloud
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot-wheels: when, by command, 210
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;

On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war. The race elect
Safe towards Canaan, from the shore, advance
Through the wild Desert—not the readiest way,
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarmed,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life 220
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrained in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness: there they shall found
Their government, and their great Senate choose
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordained.
God, from the Mount of Sinai, whose grey top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself,
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpet's sound,
Ordain them laws—part, such as appertain 230
To civil justice; part, religious rites
Of sacrifice, informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destined Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful: they beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; he grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without Mediator, whose high office now 240
Moses in figure bears, to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
And all the Prophets, in their age, the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus laws and rites
Established, such delight hath God in men
Obedient to his will that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle—
The Holy One with mortal men to dwell.
By his prescript a sanctuary is framed
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein 250
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings
Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn
Seven lamps, as in a zodiac representing
The heavenly fires. Over the tent a cloud
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night.
Save when they journey; and at length they come,
Conducted by his Angel, to the land

Promised to Abraham and his seed. The rest 260
 Were long to tell how many battles fought;
 How many kings destroyed, and kingdoms won;
 Or how the sun shall in mid-heaven stand still
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
 Man's voice commanding, 'Sun, in Gibeon stand,
 And thou, Moon, in the vale of Aialon,
 Till *Israel* overcome!'—so call the third
 From Abraham, son of Isaac, and from him
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win."

Here Adam interposed:—"O sent from Heaven, 270
 Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things
 Thou hast revealed, those chiefly which concern
 Just Abraham and his seed. Now first I find
 Mine eyes true opening, and my heart much eased.
 Erewhile perplexed with thoughts what would become
 Of me and all mankind; but now I see
 His day, in whom all nations shall be blest—
 Favour unmerited by me, who sought
 Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
 This yet I apprehend not—why to those 280
 Among whom God will deign to dwell on Earth
 So many and so various laws are given.
 So many laws argue so many sins
 Among them; how can God with such reside?"

To whom thus Michael:—"Doubt not but that sin
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
 And therefore was law given them, to evince
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up
 Sin against Law to fight, that, when they see
 Law can discover sin, but not remove, 290
 Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
 The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
 Some blood more precious must be paid for Man,
 Just for unjust, that in such righteousness,
 To them by faith imputed, they may find
 Justification towards God, and peace
 Of conscience, which the law by ceremonies
 Cannot appease, nor man the moral part
 Perform, and not performing cannot live.
 So Law appears imperfect, and but given 300
 With purpose to resign them, in full time,
 Up to a better covenant, disciplined
 From shadowy types to truth, from flesh to spirit,
 From imposition of strict laws to free
 Acceptance of large grace, from servile fear
 To filial, works of law to works of faith.

And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
 Highly beloved, being but the minister
 Of Law, his people into Canaan lead;
 But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310
 His name and office bearing who shall quell
 The adversary Serpent, and bring back
 Through the world's wilderness long-wandered Man
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
 Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan placed,
 Long time shall dwell and prosper, but when sins
 National interrupt their public peace,
 Provoking God to raise them enemies—
 From whom as oft he saves them penitent,
 By Judges first, then under Kings; of whom 320
 The second, both for piety renowned
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
 Irrevocable, that his regal throne
 For ever shall endure. The like shall sing
 All Prophecy—that of the royal stock
 Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
 A son, the Woman's Seed to thee foretold,
 Foretold to Abraham as in whom shall trust
 All nations, and to kings foretold of kings
 The last, for of his reign shall be no end. 330
 But first a long succession must ensue;
 And his next son, for wealth and wisdom famed,
 The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
 Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
 Such follow him as shall be registered
 Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll:
 Whose foul idolatries and other faults,
 Heaped to the popular sum, will so incense
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
 Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 340
 With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
 To that proud city whose high walls thou saw'st
 Left in confusion. Babylon thence called.
 There in captivity he lets them dwell
 The space of seventy years; then brings them back,
 Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
 To David, stablished as the days of Heaven.
 Returned from Babylon by leave of kings,
 Their lords, whom God disposed, the house of God
 They first re-edify, and for a while 350
 In mean estate live moderate, till, grown
 In wealth and multitude, factious they grow.
 But first among the priests dissension springs

Men who attend the altar, and should most
 Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings
 Upon the temple itself; at last they seize
 The sceptre, and regard not David's sons;
 Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
 Anointed King Messiah might be born
 Barred of his right. Yet at his birth a star, 360
 Unseen before in heaven, proclaims him come,
 And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:
 His place of birth a solemn Angel tells
 To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
 They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
 Of squadroned Angels hear his carol sung.
 A Virgin is his mother, but his sire
 The Power of the Most High. He shall ascend
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
 With Earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heavens."
 He ceased, discerning Adam with such joy
 Surcharged as had, like grief, been dewed in tears,
 Without the vent of words; which these he breathed:—
 "O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have searched in vain—
 Why our great Expectation should be called
 The Seed of Woman. Virgin Mother, hail!
 High in the love of Heaven, yet from my loins 380
 Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
 Of God Most High; so God with Man unites.
 Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise
 Expect with mortal pain. Say where and when
 Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the Victor's heel."
 To whom thus Michael:—"Dream not of their fight
 As of a duel, or the local wounds
 Of head or heel. Not therefore joins the Son
 Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
 Thy enemy; nor so is overcome 390
 Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound;
 Which he who comes thy 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, imposed
 On penalty of death, and suffering death,
 The penalty to thy transgression due,
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 400

So only can high justice rest appaid.
 The Law of God exact he shall fulfil
 Both by obedience and by love, though love
 Alone fulfil the Law; thy punishment
 He shall endure, by coming in the flesh
 To a reproachful life and cursed death,
 Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
 In his redemption, and that his obedience
 Imputed becomes theirs by faith — his merits
 To save them, not their own, though legal, works. 410
 For this he shall live hated, be blasphemed,
 Seized on by force, judged, and to death condemned
 A shameful and accursed, nailed to the cross
 By his own nation, slain for bringing life;
 But to the cross he nails thy enemies —
 The Law that is against thee, and the sins
 Of all mankind, with him there crucified,
 Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
 In this his satisfaction. So he dies,
 But soon revives; Death over him no power 420
 Shall long usurp. Ere the third dawning light
 Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
 Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
 Thy ransom paid, which Man from Death redeems —
 His death for Man, as many as offered life
 Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
 By faith not void of works. This godlike act
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,
 In sin for ever lost from life; this act
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength, 430
 Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms,
 And fix far deeper in his head their stings
 Than temporal death shall bruise the Victor's heel,
 Or theirs whom he redeems — a death like sleep,
 A gentle wafting to immortal life.
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay
 Longer on Earth than certain times to appear
 To his disciples — men who in his life
 Still followed him; to them shall leave in charge
 To teach all nations what of him they learned 440
 And his salvation, them who shall believe
 Baptizing in the profuent stream — the sign
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
 Pure, and in mind prepared, if so befall,
 For death like that which the Redeemer died.
 All nations they shall teach; for from that day
 Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins

Salvation shall be preached, but to the sons
 Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;
 So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450
 Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend
 With victory, triumphing through the air
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
 The Serpent, Prince of Air, and drag in chains
 Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;
 Then enter into glory, and resume
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
 Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,
 When this World's dissolution shall be ripe,
 With glory and power, to judge both quick and dead — 460
 To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
 Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth
 Shall be all Paradise, far happier place
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days."

So spake the Archangel Michaël; then paused,
 As at the World's great period; and our Sire,
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:—

"O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense,
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 470
 And evil turn to good—more wonderful
 Than that which by creation first brought forth
 Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
 Whether I should repent me now of sin
 By me done and occasioned, or rejoice
 Much more that much more good thereof shall spring —
 To God more glory, more good-will to men
 From God—and over wrath grace shall abound.
 But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven
 Must reascend, what will betide the few, 480
 His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,
 The enemies of truth. Who then shall guide
 His people, who defend? Will they not deal
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?"

"Be sure they will," said the Angel; "but from Heaven
 He to his own a Comforter will send,
 The promise of the Father, who shall dwell,
 His Spirit, within them, and the law of faith
 Working through love upon their hearts shall write,
 To guide them in all truth, and also arm 490
 With spiritual armour, able to resist
 Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts—
 What man can do against them not afraid,
 Though to the death; against such cruelties

With inward consolations recompensed,
 And oft supported so as shall amaze
 Their proudest persecutors. For the Spirit,
 Poured first on his Apostles, whom he sends
 To evangelize the nations, then on all
 Baptized, shall them with wondrous gifts endue 500
 To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
 As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
 Great numbers of each nation to receive
 With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: at length,
 Their ministry performed, and race well run,
 Their doctrine and their story written left,
 They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
 Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
 Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven
 To their own vile advantages shall turn 510
 Of lucre and ambition, and the truth
 With superstitions and traditions taint,
 Left only in those written records pure,
 Though not but by the Spirit understood.
 Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
 Places, and titles, and with these to join
 Secular power, though feigning still to act
 By spiritual; to themselves appropriating
 The Spirit of God, promised alike and given
 To all believers; and, from that pretence, 520
 Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
 On every conscience—laws which none shall find
 Left them enrolled, or what the Spirit within
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
 But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind
 His consort, Liberty? what but unbuild
 His living temples, built by faith to stand—
 Their own faith, not another's? for, on Earth,
 Who against faith and conscience can be heard
 Infallible? Yet many will presume: 530
 Whence heavy persecution shall arise
 On all who in the worship persevere
 Of Spirit and Truth; the rest, far greater part,
 Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
 Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire
 Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of Faith
 Rarely be found. So shall the World go on,
 To good malignant, to bad men benign,
 Under her own weight groaning, till the day
 Appear of respiration to the just 540
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return

Of Him so lately promised to thy aid,
 The Woman's Seed—obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord;
 Last in the clouds from Heaven to be revealed
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted World; then raise
 From the conflagrant mass, purged and refined,
 New Heavens, new Earth, Ages of endless date
 Founded in righteousness and peace and love,
 To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.” 550

He ended; and thus Adam last replied:—
 “How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
 Measured this transient World, the race of Time,
 Till Time stand fixed! Beyond is all abyss—
 Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
 Greatly instructed I shall hence depart,
 Greatly in peace of thought, and have my fill
 Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
 Beyond which was my folly to aspire. 560
 Henceforth I learn that to obey is best,
 And love with fear the only God, to walk
 As in his presence, ever to observe
 His providence, and on him sole depend,
 Merciful over all his works, with good
 Still overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things—by things deemed weak
 Subverting worldly-strong, and worldly-wise
 By simply meek; that suffering for Truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory, 570
 And to the faithful death the gate of life—
 Taught this by his example whom I now
 Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.”

To whom thus also the Angel last replied:—
 “This having learned, thou hast attained the sum
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
 Thou knew'st by name, and all the ethereal powers,
 All secrets of the Deep, all Nature's works,
 Or works of God in heaven, air, earth, or sea,
 And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst, 580
 And all the rule, one empire. Only add
 Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith;
 Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
 By name to come called Charity, the soul
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth
 To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
 A Paradise within thee, happier far.
 Let us descend now, therefore, from this top

Of speculation; for the hour precise
 Exacts our parting hence; and, see! the guards, 590
 By me encamped on yonder hill, expect
 Their motion, at whose front a flaming sword,
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.
 We may no longer stay. Go, waken Eve;
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calmed,
 Portending good, and all her spirits composed
 To meek submission: thou, at season fit,
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard—
 Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,
 The great deliverance by her seed to come 600
 (For by the Woman's Seed) on all mankind—
 That ye may live, which will be many days,
 Both in one faith unanimous; though sad
 With cause for evils past, yet much more cheered
 With meditation on the happy end."

He ended, and they both descend the hill.
 Descended, Adam to the bower where Eve
 Lay sleeping ran before, but found her waked;
 And thus with words not sad she him received:—
 "Whence thou return'st and whither went'st I know; 610
 For God is also in sleep, and dreams advise,
 Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
 Presaging, since, with sorrow and heart's distress
 Wearied, I fell asleep. But now lead on;
 In me is no delay; with thee to go
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
 Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,
 Who for my wilful crime art banished hence.
 This further consolation yet secure 620
 I carry hence: though all by me is lost,
 Such favour I unworthy am vouchsafed,
 By me the Promised Seed shall all restore."

So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard
 Well pleased, but answered not; for now too nigh
 The Archangel stood, and from the other hill
 To their fixed station, all in bright array,
 The Cherubim descended, on the ground
 Gliding meteorous, as evening mist
 Risen from a river o'er the marish glides, 630
 And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel
 Homeward returning. High in front advanced,
 The brandished sword of God before them blazed,
 Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
 And vapour as the Libyan air adust,

Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat
In either hand the hastening Angel caught
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain—then disappeared. 640
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Waved over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms.
Some natural tears they dropped, but wiped them soon
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide.
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.

THE END.



INTRODUCTION

TO

PARADISE REGAINED.

Paradise Regained seems to have been complete in manuscript before the publication of *Paradise Lost*. This we infer from an interesting passage in the Autobiography of the Quaker, Thomas Ellwood, in which he gives an account of the origin of *Paradise Regained*, and claims the credit of having suggested the subject to Milton. We have already seen (Introduction to *Paradise Lost*, p. 15) how young Ellwood, visiting Milton, in 1665, at the cottage in Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire, where he was then residing to avoid the Great Plague in London, had a manuscript given him by the poet, with a request to read it at his leisure, and return it with his judgment thereon. On taking this manuscript home with him, Ellwood tells us, he found it to be *Paradise Lost*. He then proceeds as follows:—“After I had, with the best attention, read it through, I made him another visit, and returned him his book, with due acknowledgment of the favour he had done me in communicating it to me. He asked how I liked it, and what I thought of it; which I modestly, but freely, told him: and, after some further discourse about it, I pleasantly said to him, ‘Thou hast said much here of *Paradise Lost*; but what hast thou to say of *Paradise Found*?’ He made me no answer, but sate some time in a muse, then brake off that discourse and fell upon another subject. After the sickness was over, and the city well cleansed and become safely habitable again, he returned thither. And when, afterwards, I went to wait on him there (which I seldom failed of doing, whenever my occasions drew me to London), he showed me his second poem, called *Paradise Regained*, and in a pleasant tone said to me, ‘This is owing to you; for you put it into my head by the question you put to me at Chalfont, which before I had not thought of.’”* The inference from this passage may certainly be that the poem was at least begun in the cottage at Chalfont St. Giles (say in the winter of 1665-6), and that, if not finished there, it was finished in Milton’s house in Artillery Walk, shortly after his return to town in 1666. When *Paradise Lost*, therefore, was published in the autumn of 1667, its sequel, though kept back, was ready.

* The History of the Life of Thomas Ellwood, Second Edition (1714), pp. 246, 247.

According to this calculation, the poem remained in manuscript for about four years. It was not published till 1671, when *Paradise Lost* had been in circulation for four years, and when the first edition of that poem must have been nearly, if not quite, exhausted — for that edition was restricted to 1,500 copies at the utmost, and Milton's receipt for the second five pounds, due, by agreement, on the sale of 1,300 of these copies, bears date April 26, 1669. But, for some reason or other, Simmons, the publisher of *Paradise Lost*, was delaying a second edition of that poem — which did not appear till 1674. It may have been owing to dissatisfaction with this delay on Milton's part that Milton did not put *Paradise Regained* into Simmons's hands, but had it printed (as appears) on his own account. Conjoining with it *Samson Agonistes*, which he also had for some time by him, or had just composed, he issued the two poems in a small octavo volume of 220 pages, with this general title-page — "*Paradise Regain'd. A Poem. In IV. Books. To which is added Samson Agonistes. The Author John Milton. London, Printed by J. M. for John Starkey at the Mitre in Fleetstreet, near Temple Bar. MDCLXXI.*" There is no separate title-page to *Paradise Regained*; which commences on the next leaf after this general title, and extends to p. 112 of the volume. Then there is a separate title-leaf to *Samson Agonistes*; which poem, occupying the rest of the volume, is separately pagged. On the last leaf of the whole volume are two sets of *Errata*, entitled "Errata in the former Poem" and "Errata in the latter Poem."

Not Samuel Simmons of the Golden Lion in Aldersgate Street, the publisher of *Paradise Lost*, it will be seen, but John Starkey, of the Mitre in Fleet Street, was the publisher of the new volume. He was, however, the publisher only, or agent for the printer "J. M." Such, at all events, is the inference of so good an authority in such matters as the late Mr. Leigh Sotheby, who, after quoting the title of the volume, as above, adds: "It is interesting here to notice that the initials of Milton occur in the imprint as the printer of the volume. Such was frequently the case when a work was printed solely at the expense of the author."* In connexion with which observation we may here note the entry of the volume in the books of the Stationers' Company:

Septemb. 10, 1670: Mr. John Starkey entered for his copie, under the hands of Mr. Tho. Tomkyns and Mr. Warden Roper, a copie or Booke Intituled Paradise regain'd, A Poem in 4 Bookes. The Author John Milton. To which is added Samson Agonistes, a drammadic [sic] Poem, by the same Author.

The volume itself furnishes an additional item of information. On the page opposite the general title-page at the beginning is this brief imprint, "Licensed, July 2, 1670" — from which it appears that the necessary licence had been obtained by Milton from the censor Tomkyns. Apparently Tomkyns gave this licence more easily than he had given that for *Paradise Lost*.

The volume containing the first editions of *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* is handsome enough in appearance — the paper thicker than that of the first edition of *Paradise Lost*, and the type more distinct and more widely spaced. But the printing, especially the pointing, is not nearly so accurate. Within the first few pages one finds commas where there should be full stops or colons, and *vice versa*, and becomes aware that the person or persons who assisted Milton in seeing the volume through the press cannot have been so

* Ramblings in the Elucidation of the Autograph of Milton, 1861, p. 83.

careful as those who performed the like duty for the former poem — where, though the pointing is not our modern pointing, it rarely conflicts with the sense.

Whatever was the number of copies printed, it sufficed the demand during the rest of Milton's life, and for six years beyond. When he died in 1674, there was a second edition of the *Paradise Lost*, to be followed by a third in 1678; but it was not till 1680 that there was a second edition of the *Paradise Regained* and *Samson*. It was brought out by the same publisher, Starkey, and is of inferior appearance and getting-up to the first — the size still small octavo, but the type closer, so as to reduce the number of pages to 132. The title-pages remain the same; but the two poems are now pagged continuously, and not separately. There seems to have been no particular care in revising for the press, for errors noted in the list of errata in the former edition remain uncorrected in the text of this.

Third editions, both of the *Paradise Regained* and of the *Samson*, appeared in folio in 1688, sold, either together or separately, by a new publisher — Randal Taylor; and these are commonly found bound up with the fourth or folio edition of *Paradise Lost*, published by another bookseller in the same year. From this time forward, in fact, the connexion between *Paradise Regained* and *Samson*, originally accidental, is not kept up, save for mere convenience in publication. The tendency was to editions of all Milton's poetical works collectively — in which editions it was natural to put *Paradise Lost* first, then *Paradise Regained*, then *Samson Agonistes*, and after these the *Minor Poems*. The greater demand for *Paradise Lost*, however, making it convenient to divide the Poetical Works in publication, two methods of doing so presented themselves. On the one hand, there was an obvious propriety, if the Poems were to be divided at all, in detaching *Paradise Regained* from *Samson* and the rest, and attaching it to *Paradise Lost*; and, accordingly, there are instances of such conjoint editions of *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, apart from the other poems, in 1692, 1775, and 1776. But a more convenient plan, mechanically, inasmuch as it divided the Poems collectively into two portions of nearly equal bulk, was to let *Paradise Lost* stand by itself in one or more volumes, and throw *Paradise Regained*, *Samson*, and the *Minor Poems* together into a separate issue in one or more volumes — the two sets combinable or not into a collective edition. This plan, first adopted by Tonson, in 1695, has prevailed since.

There is not the least reason for doubting Ellwood's statement as to the way in which the subject of *Paradise Regained* was suggested to Milton. There is no such evidence as in the case of *Paradise Lost* of long meditation of the subject previous to the actual composition of the poem. Among Milton's jottings, in 1640-1, of subjects for dramas, or other poems (see Introduction to *Paradise Lost*, p. 11), there are indeed several from the New Testament History. There is a somewhat detailed scheme of a drama, to be called *Baptistes*, on the subject of the death of John the Baptist at the hands of Herod. There are also seven notes of subjects from the Life of Christ — the first entitled *Christus Patiens*, accompanied by a few words which show that, under that title, Milton had an idea of a drama on the scene of the Agony in the Garden; the others entered simply as follows: "*Christ Born*," "*Herod Massacring, or Rachel Weeping* (Matt. ii.)," "*Christ Bound*," "*Christ Crucified*," "*Christ Risen*," and "*Lazarus* (John xi.)." But not one of those eight subjects, thought of in

Milton's early manhood, it will be seen, corresponds with the precise subject of *Paradise Regained*, executed when he was verging on sixty. The subject of that poem is expressly and exclusively the Temptation of Christ by the Devil in the Wilderness, after his baptism by John, as related in Matt. iv. 1-11, Mark i. 12, 13, and Luke iv. 1-13. Commentators on the Poem, indeed, have remarked it as somewhat strange that Milton should have given so general a title as "Paradise Regained" to a poem representing only this particular passage of the Gospel History. For the subject of the Poem is thus announced in the opening lines—

"I, who erewhile the happy Garden sung
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recovered Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foiled
In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed,
And Eden raised in the waste Wilderness."

On which passage, and on the Poem generally, a commentator (Thyer), representing a general feeling, makes this remark: "It may seem a little odd that Milton should impute the recovery of Paradise to this short scene of our Saviour's life upon earth, and not rather extend it to His Agony, Crucifixion, &c. But the reason, no doubt, was that Paradise *regained* by our Saviour's resisting the temptation of Satan might be a better contrast to Paradise *lost* by our first parents too easily yielding to the same seducing Spirit." This remark is perfectly just; but it receives elucidation and point from Ellwood's story of the way in which the poem came into existence.

Only by firmly remembering that it was as a sequel to *Paradise Lost* that *Paradise Regained* grew into shape in Milton's mind, will the second poem be rightly understood. The commentators, indeed, as they have sought the "origin of Paradise Lost," or hints for its origin, in all sorts of previous poems, Italian, Latin, and Dutch, on the same subject (see our Introduction to the Poem), have, though less laboriously, searched for previous poems from which Milton may have taken hints for his *Paradise Regained*. Todd, in his preliminary observations entitled "Origin of Paradise Regained," refers to the following pieces as possibly in Milton's recollection while he was writing the Poem, — Bale's *Brefe Comedy or Enterlude concernynge the Temptacyon of our Lorde and Saver Jesus Christ by Sathan in the Desart* (1538); Giles Fletcher's *Christ's Victorie and Triumph* (1611), a poem in four parts, the second of which, entitled "Christ's Triumph on Earth," describes the Temptation; also *La Humanità del Figliuolo di Dio*, a poem in ten books, by Theofilo Folengo of Mantua (1533); *La Vita et Passione di Christo*, a poem by Antonio Cornozano (1518); and one or two other Italian poems cited at random for their titles and not from knowledge. The only one of these references worth much is that to Giles Fletcher's religious poem. Giles Fletcher (died 1623), and his brother Phineas Fletcher, who outlived him more than twenty-five years, were among the truest poets in the interval between Spenser and Milton, and the highest in that ideal or Spenserian faculty which Milton possessed and admired. He must have known the works of both brothers well, and not least the really fine poem of Giles Fletcher to which Todd refers. But recollection of it can have had no effect on the *scheme* of his own *Paradise Regained*. That was determined simply by the poet's own meditations on those passages of the Evangelists

which narrate the Temptation in the Wilderness, — especially the eleven verses in Matt. iv. and the thirteen in Luke iv. — with a view to construct therefrom an imagination of the whole scene, which, while it should be true to the scriptural text, should fit as a sequel to *Paradise Lost*. The result was the poem as we now have it — a poem in which the brief scriptural narrative of the Temptation is expanded into four books, and yet the additions and filling-in are consistent with the texts which have suggested them.

So distinctly is *Paradise Regained* a sequel to *Paradise Lost* that acquaintance with *Paradise Lost* is all but presupposed in the reader ere he begins the shorter poem. Such acquaintance, indeed, is not absolutely necessary; but it conduces to a more exact understanding of the total meaning of the poem, and of not a few individual passages in it. Indeed, even that diagram of Universal Space or physical Infinitude which was before the poet's mind, as we have seen, throughout *Paradise Lost* (see our Introduction to that Poem), is still present to his mind, though more dimly, in *Paradise Regained*.

The result of Satan's triumph in *Paradise Lost*, it is to be remembered, was that he and his crew of Fallen Angels had succeeded in adding the "orbicular World" of Man, *i.e.* the whole Starry Universe with the Earth at its centre, to that infernal Empire of Hell to which they had been driven down on their expulsion from Heaven or the Emyrean. At the close of the real action of the great epic this is what we find Satan and Sin congratulating themselves upon (Book X. 350—409) — that Man's World has now been wrested from the Empire of Heaven above, and annexed to that of Hell beneath. An inter-communication has been established between Hell and Man's World, and it is hinted that thenceforward the Fallen Angels will not dwell so much in their main dark dominion of Hell as in the more lightsome World overhead, to which access is now easy. Distributing themselves through this World, they will rule its spheres and its elements; but more especially will they congregate in the Air round the central Earth, so as to intermingle with human affairs continually and exercise their diabolic functions on the successive generations of men. They — originally Angels in the Emyreal Heaven, then doomed spirits in Hell — will now be the "Powers of the Air," round about the Earth, and the Gods of Man's World. So they anticipate, and, over and over again throughout the poem, we are reminded that their anticipation has been fulfilled. What is the theory throughout *Paradise Lost* but that the gods of all the heathen mythologies, worshipped by all the nations, are the Fallen Angels who, in their new condition as Demons of Man's World and Powers of the Air, have so blinded and drugged the perceptions and imaginations of men as to be accepted as divinities?

Well, in *Paradise Regained* all this is assumed. It is assumed that for some thousands of years these "Powers of the Air," *alias* Devils, *alias* gods of the Polytheistic Mythologies, have been in possession of Man's World, distributed some here, some there, according to their characters and faculties of mischief, but occasionally meeting in council somewhere in the element of Air or Mist. Satan is still their chief — the greatest in power and in ability, the leader in their councils, their governor, and the director of their common enterprises. He is no longer quite the same sublime spirit as in the *Paradise Lost*, in whom were to be discerned the majestic lineaments of the Archangel just ruined. The thousands of years he has spent since then in his self-selected function as the devil of our Earth, — no longer flying from star to star and through the grander

regions of Universal Space, but winging about constantly close to our Earth, and meddling incessantly with all that is worst in merely terrestrial affairs,— have told upon his nature, and even upon his mien and bearing. He is a meaner, shrewder spirit, both morally and physically less impressive. But he has not yet degenerated into the mere scoffing Mephistopheles of Goethe's great poem. He retains something of his former magnanimity, or at least of his power of understanding and appealing to the higher motives of thought and action. Whatever of really great invention or wisdom remains among the diabolic host in their diffusion through Man's World and its elements is still chiefly lodged in *him*. He it is, accordingly, who, in his vigilance as to what goes on on Earth, is the first to become aware of the advent of one who may possibly be that prophesied "greater Man" who is to retrieve the consequences of Adam's fall, end the diabolic influence in Man's World, and reconect that World with Heaven. He it is who, as soon as he has made this discovery, summons the diabolic crew to consultation; and the farther trial of Christ's virtue likewise devolves on him.

The greater portion of the first book of the Poem is preliminary to the real action. It describes the baptism of Christ, when about thirty years of age, and as yet obscure and unknown, by John at Bethabara on the Jordan, the recognition of him by John, the proclamation from Heaven of his Messiahship, the presence of Satan among those who hear this proclamation, and his alarm thereupon. A few days are then supposed to elapse, during which Christ remains in his lodging in Bethabara, the object now of much public regard, and with his first disciples gathering round him; after which he is led by the Spirit into the wilderness, there to revolve his past life, and meditate on the ministry he is about to begin. It is after he has been already forty days in the Desert, and has begun to feel hunger, that the special action of the Poem opens (I. 303). It extends over three days. On the first day (the fortieth, it is to be supposed, of Christ's stay in the Wilderness,) we have Satan's presentation of himself to Christ in the guise of an old peasant, their first discourse, and the commencement of the Temptation in the manner in which it is related both in Matthew and in Luke—to wit, by the suggestion to Christ that he should prove his divinity by turning the stones around him into bread. This part of the relation occupies the remainder of Book I., which ends with a description of the coming on of night in the Desert. In Book II. the relation is resumed—about half the Book being occupied with an episodic account of the perplexity of Mary and the disciples by reason of Christ's mysterious absence, and an account also of a second council of the Evil Spirits to advise with Satan on his farther proceedings; but the remainder of the Book bringing us back to the Desert, where Satan, early in the second day, renews the temptation. This second day's temptation is the most protracted and laborious, and the account of it extends from Book II. through the whole of Book III. and over two-thirds of Book IV. It is here that Milton has allowed his imagination the largest liberty in expanding the brief hints of the scriptural texts. Both in Matthew and in Luke the acts of the Temptation are represented as three. There is the Temptation of the Bread, or the appeal to Christ's hunger, which is put first by both Evangelists: there is the Temptation of the Vision of the Kingdoms of the Earth from a mountain-top, or the appeal to Christ's ambition—which Luke puts second in order, but Matthew last; and there is the Temptation on the pinnacle of the Temple, or, as it may be called,

the appeal to vanity — which Matthew puts second, but Luke last. Milton, assigning a separate day to each act of the Temptation, follows Luke's order rather than Matthew's in the last two acts, and devotes the second day to the appeal to Christ's ambition. But he adds a variety of circumstances. He begins the day, for example, with a repetition of the hunger-temptation of the previous day, and then passes on to subtle appeals to the higher appetites of wealth and power, so as to prepare the way for the vision of the Kingdoms of the Earth from the mountain-top. Milton's management of this vision (which begins at line 251 of Book III. and extends to line 393 of Book IV.) has hardly met with sufficient admiration. He contrives to make it not only a splendid, but also a most accurate, general view of the political condition of the earth at the time referred to, when the Parthians in the East and the Romans in the West were the great rival powers that had swamped all others; and by thus supposing Satan to have based his temptation on the actual state of the world, and a calculation of what might be done by the genius of a bold adventurer striking in, at that particular juncture, between the Romans and the Parthians, he imparts to it a character of high Machiavellian ability. But the Temptation passes into still a new vein at the close, where, the direct appeal to political ambition having failed, Satan, with Athens in view instead of Rome, tries to work on the passion for purely intellectual distinction. This too failing, the second day's temptation is at an end, and there is the return from the mountain-top to the wilderness, where Christ is left alone during a night of storm and ghastliness. There remains then only the final act of the Temptation, reserved for the third day — the temptation on the pinnacle of the Temple. Although Milton has also put his own interpretation on this portion of the Temptation, working up to the actual transportation of Christ to the pinnacle, and the challenge of his power there, by previous questionings of Satan whether, after all, he is the "Son of God" in any very extraordinary sense, yet a comparatively brief space suffices both for the discourse leading up to the incident and for the incident itself. The third day's temptation, indeed, encroaching only a little on that day, and not protracted over the whole of it, occupies only about the last third of Book IV. One sees, at the close of the poem, why Milton preferred Luke's arrangement of the three acts of the Temptation to Matthew's. The reservation of the incident on the pinnacle of the Temple to the last enables the poet to close with that fine visual effect of Christ standing alone on the pinnacle, after Satan's inglorious fall, till the fiery globe of ministering Angels surround him, and bear him in safety to Earth on their wings as on a floating couch. Down they bear him to a flowery valley, and to the celestial food spread out for him there; he refreshes himself therewith while the Angels above sing a hymn of his victory and its consequences; then, rising, he finds his way unobserved to his mother's house.

Speaking of *Paradise Regained*, Milton's nephew, Phillips, says (*Life of Milton*, 1694): "It is generally censured to be much inferior to the other (*i.e.* "to *Paradise Lost*), though he (Milton) could not hear with patience any such "thing when related to him." Tradition, as usual, has exaggerated this statement, until now the current assertion is that Milton preferred *Paradise Regained* to *Paradise Lost*. We may safely say that he knew better than to do any such thing. But, probably, in that "general censure" of the inferiority of the smaller poem, which had begun, according to Phillips, even during the three years that were spared Milton to note its reception, he discovered critical

misconceptions which have transmitted themselves to our time. "Is *Paradise Regained* complete or not?" is a question on which a good deal has been written by Peck, Warburton, Newton, and others. The sole reason for thinking that it is incomplete, and that possibly the four books of the Poem as it now stands were originally intended only as part of a much larger poem, is founded on the smallness of that portion of Christ's life which is embraced in the poem, and on the stopping short of that consummation which would have completed the antithesis to *Paradise Lost*—i.e. the expulsion of Satan and his crew out of the human World altogether back to Hell. This objection has already been discussed, and found invalid. By no protraction of the poem over the rest of Christ's life, we may also remark, could Milton have brought the story to the consummation thought desirable. The *virtual* deliverance of the World from the power of Satan and his crew may be represented as achieved in Christ's life on earth, and Milton represents it as achieved in Christ's first encounter with Satan at the outset of his ministry; but the *actual* or *physical* expulsion of the Evil Spirits out of their usurped world into their own nether realm was left a matter of prophecy or promise, and was certainly not regarded by Milton as having been accomplished even at the time when he wrote. Such completion of the poem, therefore, as could be given to it by working it on to this historical consummation, was impossible. But, in short, by publishing the poem as it stands, Milton certified its completeness according to his own idea of the theme. — "Well, then," some of the critics continue, raising a second question, "can the poem properly be called an epic?" They have in view the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Aeneid*, as the types of epics; and, allowing that *Paradise Lost* may rank as also an epic, they think *Paradise Regained* too short and too simple for such a name. But Milton had anticipated the objection as early as 1641, when, in his *Reason of Church-Government*, speaking of his literary schemes, he had discriminated two kinds of epics, of which he might have the option, if he should ultimately determine on the epic form of composition as the best for his genius. "That epick form," he had said, "whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso are a *diffuse*, and the Book of Job a *brief* model." May we not say that, whereas in *Paradise Lost* he had adopted the larger or more diffuse of the two models of epic here described, so in *Paradise Regained* he had in view rather the smaller or briefer model? This would put the matter on its right footing. *Paradise Regained* is a different poem from *Paradise Lost*—not so great, because not admitting of being so great; but it is as good in its different kind. The difference of kinds between the two poems is even signalized in certain differences in the language and versification. *Paradise Regained* seems written more hurriedly than *Paradise Lost*, and, though with passages of great beauty, with less avoidance of plain historical phrases, and less care to give to all the effect of continued song.

PARADISE REGAINED:

A POEM IN FOUR BOOKS.

THE AUTHOR

JOHN MILTON.

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE FIRST BOOK.

I WHO erewhile the happy Garden sung
I, By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recovered Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foiled
In all his wiles, defeated and repulsed,
And Eden raised in the waste Wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who led'st this glorious Eremite
Into the desert, his victorious field
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence
By proof the undoubted Son of God, inspire, 10
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,
And bear through highth or depth of Nature's bounds,
With prosperous wing full summed, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age:
Worthy to have not remained so long unsung.

Now had the great Proclaimer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried 20
Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand
To all baptized. To his great baptism flocked
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deemed
To the flood Jordan—came as then obscure,
Unmarked, unknown. But him the Baptist soon
Descried, divinely warned, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resigned
To him his heavenly office. Nor was long
His witness unconfirmed: on him baptized
Heaven opened, and in likeness of a dove 30

The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
 From Heaven pronounced him his beloved Son.
 That heard the Adversary, who, roving still
 About the world, at that assembly famed
 Would not be last, and, with the voice divine
 Nigh thunder-struck, the exalted man to whom
 Such high attest was given a while surveyed
 With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,
 Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
 To council summons all his mighty peers,
 Within thick clouds and dark tenfold involved,
 A gloomy consistory; and then amidst,
 With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:—

40

“O ancient Powers of Air and this wide World

(For much more willingly I mention Air,
 This our old conquest, than remember Hell,
 Our hated habitation), well ye know
 How many ages, as the years of men,

This Universe we have possessed, and ruled
 In manner at our will the affairs of Earth,

50

Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
 Lost Paradise, deceived by me, though since
 With dread attending when that fatal wound
 Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
 Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven
 Delay, for longest time to Him is short;

And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
 This dreaded time have compassed, wherein we
 Must bide the stroke of that long-threatened wound

60

(At least, if so we can, and by the head
 Broken be not intended all our power

To be infringed, our freedom and our being
 In this fair empire won of Earth and Air) —

For this ill news I bring: The Woman's Seed,
 Destined to this, is late of woman born.

His birth to our just fear gave no small cause;
 But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying
 All virtue, grace and wisdom to achieve
 Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.

Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim
 His coming, is sent harbinger, who all

70

Invites, and in the consecrated stream
 Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them so
 Purified to receive him pure, or rather
 To do him honour as their King. All come,
 And he himself among them was baptized—
 Not thence to be more pure, but to receive

The testimony of Heaven, that who he is
 Thenceforth the nations may not doubt. I saw
 The Prophet do him reverence; on him, rising 80
 Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds
 Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head
 A perfect dove descend (whate'er it meant);
 And out of Heaven the sovran voice I heard,
 'This is my Son beloved,—in him am pleased.'
 His mother, then, is mortal, but his Sire
 He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven;
 And what will He not do to advance his Son?
 His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
 When his fierce thunder drove us to the Deep; 90
 Who this is we must learn, for Man he seems
 In all his lineaments, though in his face
 The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
 Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
 Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
 But must with something sudden be opposed
 (Not force, but well-couched fraud, well-woven snares),
 Ere in the head of nations he appear,
 Their king, their leader, and supreme on Earth.
 I, when no other durst, sole undertook 100
 The dismal expedition to find out
 And ruin Adam, and the exploit performed
 Successfully: a calmer voyage now
 Will waft me; and the way found prosperous once
 Induces best to hope of like success."

He ended, and his words impression left
 Of much amazement to the infernal crew,
 Distracted and surprised with deep dismay
 At these sad tidings. But no time was then
 For long indulgence to their fears or grief: 110
 Unanimous they all commit the care
 And management of this main enterprise
 To him, their great Dictator, whose attempt
 At first against mankind so well had thrived
 In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
 From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
 Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,
 Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
 So to the coast of Jordan he directs
 His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles, 120
 Where he might likeliest find this new-declared,
 This man of men, attested Son of God,
 Temptation and all guile on him to try—
 So to subvert whom he suspected raised

To end his reign on Earth so long enjoyed:
But, contrary, unweeting he fulfilled

The purposed counsel, pre-ordained and fixed,
Of the Most High, who, in full frequency bright
Of Angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:—

“Gabriel, this day, by proof, thou shalt behold
Thou and all Angels conversant on Earth
With Man or men’s affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message late,
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a son,
Great in renown, and called the Son of God.
Then told’st her, doubting how these things could be

130

To her a virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the Highest
O’ershadow her. This Man, born and now upgrown,

140

To show him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt, and now assay

His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostasy. He might have learnt

Less overweening, since he failed in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate’er his cruel malice could invent.

He now shall know I can produce a man,
Of female seed, far abler to resist

150

All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell—
Winning by conquest what the first man lost

By fallacy surprised. But first I mean
To exercise him in the Wilderness;

There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes.

By humiliation and strong sufferance
His weakness shall o’ercome Satanic strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;

160

That all the Angels and ethereal Powers—
They now, and men hereafter—may discern
From what consummate virtue I have chose

This perfect man, by merit called my Son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men.”

So spake the Eternal Father, and all Heaven
Admiring stood a space; then into hymns
Burst forth, and in celestial measures moved,

170

Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument:—

“Victory and triumph to the Son of God,
Now entering his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate’er may tempt, whate’er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.

Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of Hell,
And, devilish machinations, come to naught!” 180

So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tuned.
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodged in Bethabara, where John baptized,
Musing and much revolving in his breast
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his godlike office now mature,
One day forth walked alone, the Spirit leading
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse 190
With solitude, till, far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
He entered now the bordering Desert wild,
And, with dark shades and rocks environed round,
His holy meditations thus pursued:—

“O what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awakened in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compared! 200

When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do,
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things. Therefore, above my years,
The Law of God I read, and found it sweet;
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection that, ere yet my age
Had measured twice six years, at our great Feast 210
I went into the Temple, there to hear
The teachers of our Law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own,
And was admired by all. Yet this not all
To which my spirit aspired. Victorious deeds
Flamed in my heart, heroic acts—one while

To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke ;
 Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
 Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
 Till truth were freed, and equity restored : 220
 Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
 By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
 And make persuasion do the work of fear ;
 At least to try, and teach the erring soul,
 Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware
 Misled ; the stubborn only to subdue.
 These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
 By words at times cast forth, inly rejoiced,
 And said to me apart, 'High are thy thoughts,
 O Son! but nourish them, and let them soar 230
 To what highth sacred virtue and true worth
 Can raise them, though above example high ;
 By matchless deeds express thy matchless Sire.
 For know, thou art no son of mortal man ;
 Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
 Thy Father is the Eternal King who rules
 All Heaven and Earth, Angels and sons of men.
 A messenger from God foretold thy birth
 Conceived in me a virgin ; he foretold
 Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne, 240
 And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
 At thy nativity a glorious quire
 Of Angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung
 To shepherds, watching at their folds by night
 And told them the Messiah now was born,
 Where they might see him ; and to thee they came,
 Directed to the manger where thou lay'st ;
 For in the inn was left no better room.
 A star, not seen before, in heaven appearing,
 Guided the wise men thither from the East, 250
 To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold ;
 By whose bright course led on they found the place,
 Affirming it thy star, new-graven in heaven,
 By which they knew thee King of Israel born.
 Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warned
 By vision, found thee in the Temple, and spake,
 Before the altar and the vested priest,
 Like things of thee to all that present stood.'
 This having heard, straight I again revolved
 The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ 260
 Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
 Known partly, and soon found of whom they spake

I am — this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard assay, even to the death,
Ere I the promised kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins'
Full weight must be transferred upon my head.
Yet, neither thus disheartened or dismayed,
The time prefixed I waited; when behold
The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard, 270
Not knew by sight) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare!

I, as all others, to his baptism came,
Which I believed was from above; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaimed
Me him (for it was shown him so from Heaven) —
Me him whose harbinger he was; and first
Refused on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won.

But, as I rose out of the laving stream, 280
Heaven opened her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove;
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounced me his,
Me his beloved Son, in whom alone

He was well pleased: by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes
The authority which I derived from Heaven.

And now by some strong motion I am led 290
Into this wilderness; to what intent
I learn not yet. Perhaps I need not know;
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals."

So spake our Morning Star, then in his rise,
And, looking round, on every side beheld
A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades.
The way he came, not having marked return,
Was difficult, by human steps untrod;
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come 300
Lodged in his breast as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.

Full forty days he passed — whether on hill
Sometimes, anon in shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak
Or cedar to defend him from the dew,
Or harboured in one cave, is not revealed;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,

Till those days ended; hungered then at last
 Among wild beasts. They at his sight grew mild, 310
 Nor sleeping him nor waking harmed; his walk
 The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm;
 The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof.

But now an aged man in rural weeds,
 Following, as seemed, the quest of some stray ewe,
 Or withered sticks to gather, which might serve
 Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
 To warm him wet returned from field at eve,
 He saw approach; who first with curious eye
 Perused him, then with words thus uttered spake:— 320

“Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this place,
 So far from path or road of men, who pass
 In troop or caravan? for single none
 Durst ever, who returned, and dropt not here
 His carcass, pined with hunger and with droughth.
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,
 For that to me thou seem'st the man whom late
 Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford
 Of Jordan honoured so, and called thee Son
 Of God. I saw and heard, for we sometimes 330
 Who dwell this wild, constrained by want, come forth
 To town or village nigh (nighest is far),
 Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear,
 What happens new; fame also finds us out.”

To whom the Son of God:—“Who brought me hither
 Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek.”

“By miracle he may,” replied the swain;
 “What other way I see not; for we here
 Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inured
 More than the camel, and to drink go far— 340
 Men to much misery and hardship born.
 But, if thou be the Son of God, command
 That out of these hard stones be made thee bread;
 So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve
 With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste.”

He ended, and the Son of God replied:—
 “Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written
 (For I discern thee other than thou seem'st),
 Man lives not by bread only, but each word
 Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed 350
 Our fathers here with manna? In the Mount
 Moses was forty days, nor eat nor drank;
 And forty days Eliah without food
 Wandered this barren waste; the same I now.

Why dost thou, then, suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who *thou* art?"

Whom thus answered the Arch-Fiend, now undisguised:—

"Tis true, I am that Spirit unfortunate
Who, leagued with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven 360
With them from bliss to the bottomless Deep—
Yet to that hideous place not so confined

By rigour unconniving but that oft,
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of Earth,
Or range in the Air; nor from the Heaven of Heavens
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.

I came, among the Sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job,
To prove him, and illustrate his high worth; 370
And, when to all his Angels he proposed

To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud,
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues

Of all his flattering prophets glibbed with lies
To his destruction, as I had in charge:

For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be beloved of God, I have not lost 380
To love, at least contemplate and admire,

What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense.

What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declared the Son of God, to hear attent

Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds?

Men generally think me much a foe

To all mankind. Why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence. By them

I lost not what I lost; rather by them 390
I gained what I have gained, and with them dwell

Copartner in these regions of the World,
If not disposer—lend them oft my aid,

Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,

Whereby they may direct their future life.

Envy, they say, excites me, thus to gain

Companions of my misery and woe!

At first it may be; but, long since with woe

Nearer acquainted, now I feel by proof 400

That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
 Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load;
 Small consolation, then, were Man adjoined.
 This wounds me most (what can it less?) that Man,
 Man fallen, shall be restored, I never more."

To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:—

"Deservedly thou griev'st, composed of lies
 From the beginning, and in lies wilt end,
 Who boast'st release from Hell, and leave to come
 Into the Heaven of Heavens. Thou com'st, indeed, 410
 As a poor miserable captive thrall

Comes to the place where he before had sat
 Among the prime in splendour, now deposed,
 Ejected, emptied, gazed, unpitied, shunned,
 A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn,
 To all the host of Heaven. The happy place
 Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy—
 Rather inflames thy torment, representing
 Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable;
 So never more in Hell than when in Heaven. 420
 But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King!
 Wilt thou impute to obedience what thy fear
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?

What but thy malice moved thee to misdeem
 Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him
 With all inflictions? but his patience won.
 The other service was thy chosen task,
 To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
 For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.
 Yet thou pretend'st to truth! all oracles 430

By thee are given, and what confessed more true
 Among the nations? That hath been thy craft,
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
 But what have been thy answers? what but dark,
 Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,
 Which they who asked have seldom understood,
 And, not well understood, as good not known?

Who ever, by consulting at thy shrine,
 Returned the wiser, or the more instruct
 To fly or follow what concerned him most, 440
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
 For God hath justly given the nations up
 To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
 Idolatrous. But, when his purpose is
 Among them to declare his providence,
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,

But from him, or his Angels president
 In every province, who, themselves disdain
 To approach thy temples, give thee in command
 What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say 450
 To thy adorers? Thou, with trembling fear,
 Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st;
 Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
 But this thy glory shall be soon retrenched;
 No more shalt thou by oracling abuse
 The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceased,
 And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
 Shalt be inquired at Delphos or elsewhere —
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.

God hath now sent his living Oracle 460
 Into the world to teach his final will,
 And sends his Spirit of Truth henceforth to dwell
 In pious hearts, an inward oracle
 To all truth requisite for men to know."

So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
 Dissembled, and this answer smooth returned: —

"Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
 And urged me hard with doings which not will,
 But misery, hath wrested from me. Where 470
 Easily canst thou find one miserable,

And not enforced oft-times to part from truth,
 If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
 Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
 But thou art placed above me; thou art Lord;
 From thee I can, and must, submit, endure
 Check or reproof, and glad to scape so quit.
 Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
 Smooth on the tongue discoursed, pleasing to the ear,
 And tunable as sylvan pipe or song; 480

What wonder, then, if I delight to hear
 Her dictates from thy mouth? most men admire
 Virtue who follow not her lore. Permit me
 To hear thee when I come (since no man comes),
 And talk at least, though I despair to attain.
 Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
 Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
 To tread his sacred courts, and minister
 About his altar, handling holy things,
 Praying or vowing, and vouchsafed his voice 490
 To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
 Inspired: disdain not such access to me."

To whom our Saviour, with unaltered brow:—
“Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
I bid not, or forbid. Do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more.”

He added not; and Satan, bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappeared,
Into thin air diffused: for now began
Night with her sullen wing to double-shade
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couched;
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

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THE END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE SECOND BOOK.

MEANWHILE the new-baptized who yet remained
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly called
Jesus Messiah, Son of God, declared
And on that high authority had believed,
And with him talked, and with him lodged — I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others, though in Holy Writ not named —
Now missing him, their joy so lately found,
So lately found and so abruptly gone,
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And, as the days increased, increased their doubt.
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the Mount and missing long,
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come.
Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Eliah, so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara — in Jericho
The city of palms, Ænon, and Salem old,
Machærus, and each town or city walled
On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Peræa — but returned in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
Plain fishermen (no greater men them call),
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and plaints outbreathed: —
“Alas, from what high hope to what relapse

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Unlooked for are we fallen! Our eyes beheld
 Messiah certainly now come, so long
 Expected of our fathers; we have heard
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth.
 'Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand;
 The kingdom shall to Israel be restored:'
 Thus we rejoiced, but soon our joy is turned
 Into perplexity and new amaze.
 For whither is he gone? what accident
 Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire
 After appearance, and again prolong
 Our expectation? God of Israel,
 Send thy Messiah forth; the time is come.
 Behold the kings of the earth, how they oppress
 Thy Chosen, to what highth their power unjust
 They have exalted, and behind them cast
 All fear of Thee; arise, and vindicate
 Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke!
 But let us wait; thus far He hath performed—
 Sent his Anointed, and to us revealed him,
 By his great Prophet pointed at and shown
 In public, and with him we have conversed.
 Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
 Lay on his providence; He will not fail,
 Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall—
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence:
 Soon we shall see our hope, our joy, return."

Thus they out of their complaints new hope resume
 To find whom at the first they found unsought.
 But to his mother Mary, when she saw
 Others returned from baptism, not her Son,
 Nor left at Jordan tidings of him none,
 Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure,
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and raised
 Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad:—

"Oh, what avails me now that honour high,
 To have conceived of God, or that salute,
 'Hail, highly favoured, among women blest!'
 While I to sorrows am no less advanced,
 And fears as eminent above the lot
 Of other women, by the birth I bore:
 In such a season born, when scarce a shed
 Could be obtained to shelter him or me
 From the bleak air? A stable was our warmth,
 A manger his; yet soon enforced to fly
 Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king
 Were dead, who sought his life, and, missing, filled

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With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem.
 From Egypt home returned, in Nazareth
 Hath been our dwelling many years; his life 80
 Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
 Little suspicious to any king. But now,
 Full grown to man, acknowledged, as I hear,
 By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
 Son owned from Heaven by his Father's voice,
 I looked for some great change. To honour? no;
 But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
 That to the fall and rising he should be
 Of many in Israel, and to a sign
 Spoken against—that through my very soul 90
 A sword shall pierce. This is my favoured lot,
 My exaltation to afflictions high!
 Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest!
 I will not argue that, nor will repine.
 But where delays he now? Some great intent
 Conceals him. When twelve years he scarce had seen,
 I lost him, but so found as well I saw
 He could not lose himself, but went about
 His Father's business. What he meant I mused—
 Since understand; much more his absence now 100
 Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
 But I to wait with patience am inured;
 My heart hath been a storehouse long of things
 And sayings laid up, portending strange events.”
 Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind
 Recalling what remarkably had passed
 Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
 Meekly composed awaited the fulfilling:
 The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,
 Sole, but with holiest meditations fed, 110
 Into himself descended, and at once
 All his great work to come before him set—
 How to begin, how to accomplish best
 His end of being on Earth, and mission high.
 For Satan, with sly preface to return,
 Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
 Up to the middle region of thick air,
 Where all his Potentates in council sat.
 There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
 Solicitous and blank, he thus began:— 120
 “Princes, Heaven's ancient Sons, Ethereal Thrones—
 Demonian Spirits now, from the element
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier called
 Powers of Fire, Air, Water, and Earth beneath

(So may we hold our place and these mild seats
 Without new trouble!)—such an enemy
 Is risen to invade us, who no less
 Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell.
 I, as I undertook, and with the vote
 Consenting in full frequence was empowered, 130
 Have found him, viewed him, tasted him; but find
 Far other labour to be undergone
 Than when I dealt with Adam, first of men,
 Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,
 However to this Man inferior far—
 If he be Man by mother's side, at least
 With more than human gifts from Heaven adorned,
 Perfections absolute, graces divine,
 And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds. 140
 Therefore I am returned, lest confidence
 Of my success with Eve in Paradise
 Deceive ye to persuasion over-sure
 Of like succeeding here. I summon all
 Rather to be in readiness with hand
 Or counsel to assist, lest I, who erst
 Thought none my equal, now be overmatched.”

So spake the old Serpent, doubting, and from all
 With clamour was assured their utmost aid
 At his command; when from amidst them rose
 Belial, the dissolutes Spirit that fell, 150
 The sensualest, and, after Asmodai,
 The fleshliest Incubus, and thus advised:—
 “Set women in his eye and in his walk,
 Among daughters of men the fairest found.
 Many are in each region passing fair
 As the noon sky, more like to goddesses
 Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,
 Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
 Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
 And sweet allayed, yet terrible to approach, 160
 Skilled to retire, and in retiring draw
 Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
 Such object hath the power to soften and tame
 Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
 Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
 Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
 At will the manliest, resolute breast,
 As the magnetic hardest iron draws.
 Women, when nothing else, beguiled the heart
 Of wisest Solomon, and made him build, 170
 And made him bow, to the gods of his wives.”

To whom quick answer Satan thus returned:—

“Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh’st
 All others by thyself. Because of old
 Thou thyself doat’st on womankind, admiring
 Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,
 None are, thou think’st, but taken with such toys.
 Before the Flood, thou, with thy lusty crew,
 False titled Sons of God, roaming the Earth,
 Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men, 180
 And coupled with them, and begot a race.
 Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
 In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk’st,
 In wood or grove, by mossy fountain-side,
 In valley or green meadow, to waylay
 Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
 Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
 Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
 Too long—then lay’st thy scapes on names adored,
 Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan, 190
 Satyr, or Faun, or Silvan? But these haunts
 Delight not all. Among the sons of men
 How many have with a smile made small account
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorned
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent!
 Remember that Pellean conqueror,
 A youth, how all the beauties of the East
 He slightly viewed, and slightly overpassed;
 How he surnamed of Africa dismissed,
 In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid. 200
 For Solomon, he lived at ease, and, full
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aimed not beyond
 Higher design than to enjoy his state;
 Thence to the bait of women lay exposed.
 But he whom we attempt is wiser far
 Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
 Made and set wholly on the accomplishment
 Of greatest things. What woman will you find,
 Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
 On whom his leisure will vouchsafed an eye 210
 Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
 As sitting queen adored on Beauty’s throne,
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt
 To enamour, as the zone of Venus once
 Wrought that effect on Jove (so fables tell),
 How would one look from his majestic brow,
 Seated as on the top of Virtue’s hill,
 Discountenance her despised, and put to rout

All her array, her female pride deject,
 Or turn to reverent awe! For Beauty stands 220
 In the admiration only of weak minds
 Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
 Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
 At every sudden slighting quite abashed.

Therefore with manlier objects we must try
 His constancy—with such as have more show
 Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise
 (Rocks whereon greatest men have ofttest wrecked);
 Or that which only seems to satisfy 230
 Lawful desires of nature, not beyond.

And now I know he hungers, where no food
 Is to be found, in the wild Wilderness:
 The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
 No advantage, and his strength as oft assay."

He ceased, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;

Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
 Of Spirits likest to himself in guile,
 To be at hand and at his beck appear,
 If cause were to unfold some active scene
 Of various persons, each to know his part; 240

Then to the desert takes with these his flight,
 Where still, from shade to shade, the Son of God,
 After forty days' fasting, had remained,
 Now hungering first, and to himself thus said:—

"Where will this end? Four times ten days I have passed
 Wandering this woody maze, and human food

Nor tasted, nor had appetite. That fast
 To virtue I impute not, or count part
 Of what I suffer here. If nature need not,
 Or God support nature without repast, 250
 Though needing, what praise is it to endure?

But now I feel I hunger; which declares
 Nature hath need of what she asks. Yet God
 Can satisfy that need some other way,

Though hunger still remain. So it remain
 Without this body's wasting, I content me,
 And from the sting of famine fear no harm;
 Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
 Me hungering more to do my Father's will."

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son 260
 Communed in silent walk, then laid him down
 Under the hospitable covert nigh

Of trees thick interwoven. There he slept,
 And dreamed, as appetite is wont to dream,
 Of meats and drinks. nature's refreshment sweet.

Him thought he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing even and morn—
Though ravenous, taught to abstain from what they brought;
He saw the Prophet also, how he fled 270
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper—then how, awaked,
He found his supper on the coals prepared,
And by the Angel was bid rise and eat,
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof sufficed him forty days:
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry 280
The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song.
As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting waked.
Up to a hill anon his steps he reared,
From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;
But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote, none he saw—
Only in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
With chant of tuneful birds resounding loud. 290
Thither he bent his way, determined there
To rest at noon, and entered soon the shade
High-roofed, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
That opened in the midst a woody scene;
Nature's own work it seemed (Nature taught Art),
And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt
Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs. He viewed it round;
When suddenly a man before him stood,
Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
As one in city or court or palace bred, 300
And with fair speech these words to him addressed:—
“With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild solitude so long should bide,
Of all things destitute, and, well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of some note,
As story tells, have trod this wilderness:
The fugitive bond-woman, with her son,
Outcast Nebaioth, yet found here relief
By a providing Angel; all the race 310
Of Israel here had famished, had not God
Rained from heaven manna; and that Prophet bold,

Native of Thebez, wandering here, was fed
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat.
 Of thee these forty days none hath regard,
 Forty and more deserted here indeed."

To whom thus Jesus:—"What conclud'st thou hence?
 They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none."

"How hast thou hunger then?" Satan replied.

"Tell me, if food were now before thee set, 320

Wouldst thou not eat?" "Thereafter as I like
 The giver," answered Jesus. "Why should that
 Cause thy refusal?" said the subtle Fiend.

"Hast thou not right to all created things?
 Owe not all creatures, by just right, to thee
 Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,

But tender all their power? Nor mention I
 Meats by the law unclean, or offered first

To idols—those young Daniel could refuse;

Nor proffered by an enemy—though who 330

Would scruple that, with want oppressed? Behold,

Nature ashamed, or, better to express,

Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purveyed

From all the elements her choicest store,

To treat thee as beseems, and as her Lord

With honour. Only deign to sit and eat."

He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,

Our Saviour, lifting up his eyes, beheld,

In ample space under the broadest shade,

A table richly spread in regal mode, 340

With dishes piled and meats of noblest sort

And savour—beasts of chase, or fowl of game,

In pastry built, or from the spit, or boiled,

Grisamber-steamed; all fish, from sea or shore,

Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin,

And exquisitest name, for which was drained

Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

Alas! how simple, to these cates compared,

Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!

And at a stately sideboard, by the wine, 350

That fragrant smell diffused, in order stood

Tall stripling youths rich-clad, of fairer hue

Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more,

Under the trees now tripped, now solemn stood,

Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades

With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,

And ladies of the Hesperides, that seemed

Fairer than feigned of old, or fabled since

Of faery damsels met in forest wide

By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore. 360

And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chiming strings or charming pipes; and winds
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fanned
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.
Such was the splendour; and the Tempter now
His invitation earnestly renewed:—

“What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
Defends the touching of these viands pure; 370
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
All these are Spirits of air, and woods, and springs,
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord.
What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat.”

To whom thus Jesus temperately replied:—
“Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
And who withholdeth my power that right to use? 380
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command?
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of Angels ministrant,
Arrayed in glory, on my cup to attend:
Why shouldst thou, then, obtrude this diligence
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn, 390
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.”

To whom thus answered Satan, malecontent:—
“That I have also power to give thou seest;
If of that power I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestowed on whom I pleased,
And rather opportunely in this place
Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
Why shouldst thou not accept it? But I see
What I can do or offer is suspect.
Of these things others quickly will dispose, 400
Whose pains have earned the far-fet spoil.” With that
Both table and provision vanished quite,
With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard;
Only the importune Tempter still remained,
And with these words his temptation pursued:—

“By hunger, that each other creature tames,

Thou art not to be harmed, therefore not moved;
 Thy temperance, invincible besides,
 For no allurements yields to appetite;
 And all thy heart is set on high designs, 410
 High actions. But wherewith to be achieved?
 Great acts require great means of enterprise;
 Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
 A carpenter thy father known, thyself
 Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
 Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit.
 Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire
 To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?
 What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
 Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude, 420
 Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
 Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms.
 What raised Antipater the Edomite,
 And his son Herod placed on Judah's throne.
 Thy throne, but gold, that got him puissant friends?
 Therefore, if at great things thou wouldst arrive,
 Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap—
 Not difficult, if thou hearken to me.
 Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;
 They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain, 430
 While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want."

To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:—
 "Yet wealth without these three is impotent
 To gain dominion, or to keep it gained—
 Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
 In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolved;
 But men endued with these have oft attained,
 In lowest poverty, to highest deeds—
 Gideon, and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad
 Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat 440
 So many ages, and shall yet regain
 That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
 Among the Heathen (for throughout the world
 To me is not unknown what hath been done
 Worthy of memorial) canst thou not remember
 Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
 For I esteem those names of men so poor,
 Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
 Riches, though offered from the hand of kings.
 And what in me seems wanting but that I 450
 May also in this poverty as soon
 Accomplish what they did, perhaps and more?
 Extol not riches, then, the toil of fools,

The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt
To slacken virtue and abate her edge
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and realms! Yet not for that a crown,
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights, 460
To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
For therein stands the office of a king,
His honour, virtue, merit, and chief praise,
That for the public all this weight he bears.
Yet he who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king—
Which every wise and virtuous man attains;
And who attains not ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes, 470
Subject himself to anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.
But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and, knowing, worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly. This attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force—which to a generous mind
So reigning can be no sincere delight. 48c
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous, than to assume.
Riches are needless, then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought—
To gain a sceptre, oft best better missed."

THE END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE THIRD BOOK.

SO spake the Son of God; and Satan stood
A while as mute, confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted and convinced
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renewed, him thus accosts:—

“I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
Thy actions to thy words accord; thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due; thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape. 10
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast, or tongue of Seers old
Infallible; or, wert thou sought to deeds
That might require the array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms. 20
These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide?
Affecting private life, or more obscure
In savage wilderness, wherefore deprive
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The fame and glory—glory, the reward
That sole excites to high attempts the flame
Of most erected spirits, most tempered pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and powers, all but the highest? 30

Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe. The son
 Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
 Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
 At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down
 The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quelled
 The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
 Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
 Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
 Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
 The more he grew in years, the more inflamed
 With glory, wept that he had lived so long
 Inglorious. But thou yet art not too late."

40

To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:—
 "Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
 For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
 For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
 For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
 The people's praise, if always praise unmixed?
 And what the people but a herd confused,
 A miscellaneous rabble, who extol
 Things vulgar, and, well weighed, scarce worth the praise?
 They praise and they admire they know not what,
 And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
 And what delight to be by such extolled,
 To live upon their tongues, and be their talk?
 Of whom to be dispraised were no small praise—
 His lot who dares be singularly good.
 The intelligent among them and the wise
 Are few, and glory scarce of few is raised.
 This is true glory and renown—when God,
 Looking on the Earth, with approbation marks
 The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
 To all his Angels, who with true applause
 Recount his praises. Thus he did to Job,
 When, to extend his fame through Heaven and Earth,
 As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember,
 He asked thee, 'Hast thou seen my servant Job?'
 Famous he was in Heaven; on Earth less known,
 Where glory is false glory, attributed
 To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame.
 They err who count it glorious to subdue
 By conquest far and wide, to overrun
 Large countries, and in field great battles win,
 Great cities by assault. What do these worthies
 But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
 Peaceable nations, neighbouring or remote,
 Made captive, yet deserving freedom more

50

60

70

Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
 Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove, 80
 And all the flourishing works of peace destroy;
 Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods,
 Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
 Worshipped with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
 One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
 Till conqueror Death discover them scarce men,
 Rolling in brutish vices, and deformed,
 Violent or shameful death their due reward.
 But, if there be in glory aught of good,
 It may by means far different be attained, 90
 Without ambition, war, or violence —
 By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
 By patience, temperance. I mention still
 Him whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,
 Made famous in a land and times obscure;
 Who names not now with honour patient Job?
 Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable?)
 By what he taught and suffered for so doing,
 For truth's sake suffering death unjust, lives now
 Equal in fame to proudest conquerors. 100
 Yet, if for fame and glory aught be done,
 Aught suffered — if young African for fame
 His wasted country freed from Punic rage —
 The deed becomes unpraised, the man at least,
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
 Shall I seek glory, then, as vain men seek,
 Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but His
 Who sent me, and thereby witness whence I am."
 To whom the Tempter, murmuring, thus replied: —
 "Think not so slight of glory, therein least 110
 Resembling thy great Father. He seeks glory,
 And for his glory all things made, all things
 Orders and governs; nor content in Heaven,
 By all his Angels glorified, requires
 Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
 Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption.
 Above all sacrifice, or hallowed gift,
 Glory he requires, and glory he receives,
 Promiscuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,
 Or Barbarous, nor exception hath declared;
 From us, his foes pronounced, glory he exacts." 120
 To whom our Saviour fervently replied: —
 "And reason; since his Word all things produced,
 Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
 But to show forth his goodness, and impart

His good communicable to every soul
 Freely; of whom what could he less expect
 Than glory and benediction — that is, thanks —
 The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
 From them who could return him nothing else,
 And, not returning that, would likeliest render
 Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy? 130

Hard recompense, unsuitable return
 For so much good, so much beneficence!
 But why should man seek glory, who of his own
 Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs
 But condemnation, ignominy, and shame —
 Who, for so many benefits received,
 Turned recreant to God, ingrate and false, |
 And so of all true good himself despoiled;
 Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take 140
 That which to God alone of right belongs?
 Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
 That who advance his glory, not their own,
 Them he himself to glory will advance.”

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

“Of glory, as thou wilt,” said he, “so deem; 150
 Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.
 But to a Kingdom thou art born — ordained
 To sit upon thy father David’s throne,
 By mother’s side thy father, though thy right
 Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
 Easily from possession won with arms.

Judæa now and all the Promised Land,
 Reduced a province under Roman yoke,
 Obeys Tiberius, nor is always ruled
 With temperate sway: oft have they violated 160
 The Temple, oft the Law, with foul affronts,
 Abominations rather, as did once

Antiochus. And think’st thou to regain
 Thy right in sitting still, or thus retiring?
 So did not Machabeus. He indeed
 Retired unto the Desert, but with arms;
 And o’er a mighty king so oft prevailed
 That by strong hand his family obtained,
 Though priests, the crown, and David’s throne usurped,
 With Modin and her suburbs once content. 170
 If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal

And duty — zeal and duty are not slow,
 But on Occasion's forelock watchful wait:
 They themselves rather are occasion best —
 Zeal of thy Father's house, duty to free
 Thy country from her heathen servitude.
 So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify,
 The Prophets old, who sung thy endless reign —
 The happier reign the sooner it begins.
 Reign then; what canst thou better do the while?"

18c

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

190

200

To whom the Tempter, inly racked, replied: —
 "Let that come when it comes. All hope is lost
 Of my reception into grace; what worse?
 For where no hope is left is left no fear.
 If there be worse, the expectation more
 Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
 I would be at the worst; worst is my port,
 My harbour, and my ultimate repose,
 The end I would attain, my final good.
 My error was my error, and my crime
 My crime; whatever, for itself condemned,
 And will alike be punished, whether thou
 Reign or reign not — though to that gentle brow
 Willingly I could fly, and hope thy reign,
 From that placid aspect and meek regard,
 Rather than aggravate my evil state,

210

Would stand between me and thy Father's ire
 (Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell) 220
 A shelter and a kind of shading cool
 Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
 If I, then, to the worst that can be haste,
 Why move thy feet so slow to what is best?
 Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,
 That thou, who worthiest art, shouldst be their king!
 Perhaps thou linger'st in deep thoughts detained
 Of the enterprize so hazardous and high!
 No wonder; for, though in thee be united
 What of perfection can in Man be found, 230
 Or human nature can receive, consider
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
 At home, scarce viewed the Galilean towns,
 And once a year Jerusalem few days'
 Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe?
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
 Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts—
 Best school of best experience, quickest in sight
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.
 The wisest, unexperienced, will be ever 240
 Timorous, and loth, with novice modesty
 (As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom)
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadventurous.
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
 The monarchies of the Earth, their pomp and state—
 Sufficient introduction to inform
 Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
 And regal mysteries; that thou may'st know
 How best their opposition to withstand." 250
 With that (such power was given him then), he took
 The Son of God up to a mountain high.
 It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
 A spacious plain outstretched in circuit wide
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flowed,
 The one winding, the other straight, and left between
 Fair champaign, with less rivers interveined,
 Then meeting joined their tribute to the sea.
 Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine;
 With herds the pasture thronged, with flocks the hills; 260
 Huge cities and high-towered, that well might seem
 The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large
 The prospect was that here and there was room
 For barren desert, fountainless and dry.
 To this high mountain-top the Tempter brought

Our Saviour, and new train of words began:—

“Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Forest, and field, and flood, temples and towers,
Cut shorter many a league. Here thou behold'st

Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds,

270

Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on

As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,

And oft beyond; to south the Persian bay,

And, inaccessible, the Arabian drouth:

Here, Nineveh, of length within her wall

Several days' journey, built by Ninus old,

Of that first golden monarchy the seat,

And seat of Salmanassar, whose success

Israel in long captivity still mourns;

There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,

280

As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice

Judah and all thy father David's house

Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,

Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,

His city, there thou seest, and Bactra there;

Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,

And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;

There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,

The drink of none but kings; of later fame,

290

Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands,

The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there

Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,

Turning with easy eye, thou may'st behold.

All these the Parthian (now some ages past

By great Arsaces led, who founded first

That empire) under his dominion holds,

From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.

And just in time thou com'st to have a view

Of his great power; for now the Parthian king

In Ctesiphon hath gathered all his host

300

Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild

Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid

He marches now in haste. See, though from far,

His thousands, in what martial equipage

They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms,

Of equal dread in flight or in pursuit—

All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;

See how in warlike muster they appear,

In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.”

He looked, and saw what numbers numberless

310

The city gates outpoured, light-armed troops

In coats of mail and military pride.

In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
 Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
 Of many provinces from bound to bound—
 From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
 And Margiana, to the Hyrcanian cliffs
 Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
 From Atropatia, and the neighbouring plains
 Of Adiabene, Media, and the south
 Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.

320

He saw them in their forms of battle ranged,
 How quick they wheeled, and flying behind them shot
 Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
 Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;
 The field all iron cast a gleaming brown.

Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor, on each horn,
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
 Chariots, or elephants indorsed with towers

Of arches; nor of labouring pioneers

330

A multitude, with spades and axes armed,
 To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleÿs fill,
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay

With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke:

Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,

And waggons fraught with utensils of war.

Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,

When Agrican, with all his northern powers,

Besieged Albracca, as romances tell,

The city of Gallaphrone, from thence to win

340

The fairest of her sex, Angelica,

His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,

Both Paynim and the peers of Charlemain.

Such and so numerous was their chivalry;

At sight whereof the Fiend yet more presumed,

And to our Saviour thus his words renewed:—

“That thou may'st know I seek not to engage

Thy virtue, and not every way secure

On no slight grounds thy safety, hear and mark

To what end I have brought thee hither, and show

350

All this fair sight. Thy kingdom, though foretold

By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou

Endeavour, as thy father David did,

Thou never shalt obtain: prediction still

In all things, and all men, supposes means;

Without means used, what it predicts revokes.

But say thou wert possessed of David's throne

By free consent of all, none opposite,

Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope

Long to enjoy it quiet and secure 360
 Between two such enclosing enemies,
 Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these
 Thou must make sure thy own: the Parthian first,
 By my advice, as nearer, and of late
 Found able by invasion to annoy
 Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,
 Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,
 Maugre the Roman. It shall be my task
 To render thee the Parthian at dispose,
 Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league. 370
 By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
 That which alone can truly reinstall thee
 In David's royal seat, his true successor —
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those Ten Tribes
 Whose offspring in his territory yet serve
 In Habor, and among the Medes dispersed:
 Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
 Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
 Their fathers in the land of Egypt served,
 This offer sets before thee to deliver. 380
 These if from servitude thou shalt restore
 To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
 Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
 From Egypt to Euphrates and beyond,
 Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar not need fear."
 To whom our Saviour answered thus, unmoved: —
 "Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war,
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
 Before mine eyes thou hast set, and in my ear 390
 Vented much policy, and projects deep
 Of enemies, of aids, battles, and leagues,
 Plausible to the world, to me worth naught.
 Means I must use, thou say'st; prediction else
 Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne!
 My time, I told thee (and that time for thee
 Were better farthest off), is not yet come.
 When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
 On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
 Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome 400
 Luggage of war there shown me — argument
 Of human weakness rather than of strength.
 My brethren, as thou call'st them, those Ten Tribes,
 I must deliver, if I mean to reign
 David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway
 To just extent over all Israel's sons!

But whence to *thee* this zeal? Where was it then
 For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
 When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
 Of numbering Israel — which cost the lives 410
 Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
 By three days' pestilence? Such was thy zeal
 To Israel then, the same that now to me.
 As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
 Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
 From God to worship calves, the deities
 Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
 And all the idolatries of heathen round,
 Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes;
 Nor in the land of their captivity 420
 Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
 The God of their forefathers, but so died
 Impenitent, and left a race behind
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
 From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain,
 And God with idols in their worship joined.
 Should I of these the liberty regard,
 Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
 Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreformed,
 Headlong would follow, and to their gods perhaps 430
 Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve
 Their enemies who serve idols with God.
 Yet He at length, time to himself best known,
 Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call
 May bring them back, repentant and sincere,
 And at their passing cleave the Assyrian flood,
 While to their native land with joy they haste,
 As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
 When to the Promised Land their fathers passed.
 To his due time and providence I leave them." 440
 So spake Israel's true King, and to the Fiend
 Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
 So fares it when with truth falsehood contends.

THE END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE FOURTH BOOK.

PERPLEXED and troubled at his bad success
The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discovered in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleeked his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
So little here, nay lost. But Eve was Eve;
This far his over-match, who, self-deceived
And rash, beforehand had no better weighed
The strength he was to cope with, or his own.
But—as a man who had been matchless held
In cunning, over-reached where least he thought,
'To salve his credit, and for very spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage-time,
About the wine-press where sweet must is poured,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dashed, the assault renew,
(Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end—
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
Washed by the southern sea, and on the north
To equal length backed with a ridge of hills
That screened the fruits of the earth and seats of men

10

20

30

From cold Septentrion blasts; thence in the midst
 Divided by a river, off whose banks
 On each side an imperial city stood,
 With towers and temples proudly elevate
 On seven small hills, with palaces adorned,
 Porches and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
 Statues and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
 Gardens and groves, presented to his eyes
 Above the highth of mountains interposed —
 By what strange parallax, or optic skill 40
 Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass
 Of telescope, were curious to inquire.
 And now the Tempter thus his silence broke:—
 “The city which thou seest no other deem
 Than great and glorious Rome, Queen of the Earth
 So far renowned, and with the spoils enriched
 Of nations. There the Capitol thou seest,
 Above the rest lifting his stately head
 On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
 Impregnable; and there Mount Palatine, 50
 The imperial palace, compass huge, and high
 The structure, skill of noblest architects,
 With gilded battlements, conspicuous far,
 Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires.
 Many a fair edifice besides, more like
 Houses of gods — so well I have disposed
 My aery microscope — thou may'st behold,
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs
 Carved work, the hand of famed artificers
 In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold. 60
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
 What conflux issuing forth, or entering in:
 Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
 Hasting, or on return, in robes of state;
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power;
 Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings;
 Or embassies from regions far remote,
 In various habits, on the Appian road,
 Or on the Æmilian — some from farthest south,
 Syene, and where the shadow both way falls, 70
 Meroë, Nilotic isle, and, more to west,
 The realm of Bocchus to the Blackmoor sea;
 From the Asian kings (and Parthian among these),
 From India and the Golden Chersoness,
 And utmost Indian isle Taprobane,
 Dusk faces with white silken turbants wreathed;
 From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;

Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians north
 Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.
 All nations now to Rome obedience pay — 80
 To Rome's great Emperor, whose wide domain,
 In ample territory, wealth and power,
 Civility of manners, arts and arms,
 And long renown, thou justly may'st prefer
 Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
 Shared among petty kings too far removed;
 These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
 The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. 90
 This Emperor hath no son, and now is old,
 Old and lascivious, and from Rome retired
 To Capreæ, an island small but strong
 On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;
 Committing to a wicked favourite
 All public cares, and yet of him suspicious;
 Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,
 Endued with regal virtues as thou art,
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
 Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne, 100
 Now made a sty, and, in his place ascending,
 A victor-people free from servile yoke!
 And with my help thou may'st; to me the power
 Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
 Aim, therefore, at no less than all the world;
 Aim at the highest; without the highest attained,
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
 On David's throne, be prophesied what will."

To whom the Son of God, unmoved, replied: —
 "Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show 110
 Of luxury, though called magnificence,
 More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
 Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to tell
 Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
 On citron tables or Atlantic stone
 (For I have also heard, perhaps have read),
 Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
 Chios and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
 Crystal, and myrrhine cups, embossed with gems
 And studs of pearl — to me should'st tell, who thirst 120
 And hunger still. Then embassies thou show'st
 From nations far and nigh! What honour that,
 But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
 So many hollow compliments and lies,

Outlandish flatteries? Then proceed'st to talk
 Of the Emperor, how easily subdued,
 How gloriously. I shall, thou say'st, expel
 A brutish monster: what if I withal
 Expel a Devil who first made him such?
 Let his tormentor, Conscience, find him out; 130
 For him I was not sent, nor yet to free
 That people, victor once, now vile and base,
 Deservedly made vassal—who, once just,
 Frugal, and mild, and temperate, conquered well,
 But govern ill the nations under yoke,
 Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
 By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
 Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
 Then cruel, by their sports to blood inured
 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts exposed; 140
 Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
 And from the daily scene effeminate.
 What wise and valiant man would seek to free
 These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved,
 Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
 Know, therefore, when my season comes to sit
 On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
 Spreading and overshadowing all the earth,
 Or as a stone that shall to pieces dash
 All monarchies besides throughout the world; 150
 And of my kingdom there shall be no end.
 Means there shall be to this; but what the means
 Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell."

To whom the Tempter, impudent, replied:—
 "I see all offers made by me how slight
 Thou valu'st, because offered, and reject'st.
 Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
 Or nothing more than still to contradict.
 On the other side know also thou that I
 On what I offer set as high esteem, 160
 Nor what I part with mean to give for naught.
 All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
 The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give
 (For, given to me, I give to whom I please),
 No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else—
 On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
 And worship me as thy superior lord
 (Easily done), and hold them all of me;
 For what can less so great a gift deserve?"

Whom thus our Saviour answered with disdain:— 170
 "I never liked thy talk, thy offers less;

Now both abhor, since thou hast dared to utter
 The abominable terms, impious condition.
 But I endure the time, till which expired
 Thou hast permission on me. It is written,
 The first of all commandments, 'Thou shalt worship
 The Lord thy God, and only Him shalt serve;'
 And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
 To worship thee, accursed? now more accursed
 For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve, 180
 And more blasphemous; which expect to rue.
 The kingdoms of the world to thee were given!
 Permitted rather, and by thee usurped;
 Other donation none thou canst produce.
 If given, by whom but by the King of kings,
 God over all supreme? If given to thee,
 By thee how fairly is the Giver now
 Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost
 Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame
 As offer them to me, the Son of God — 190
 To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
 That I fall down and worship thee as God?
 Get thee behind me! Plain thou now appear'st
 That Evil One, Satan for ever damned."

To whom the Fiend, with fear abashed, replied: —
 "Be not so sore offended, Son of God —
 Though Sons of God both Angels are and Men —
 If I, to try whether in higher sort
 Than these thou bar'st that title, have proposed
 What both from Men and Angels I receive, 200
 Tetrarchs of Fire, Air, Flood, and on the Earth
 Nations besides from all the quartered winds —
 God of this World invoked, and World beneath
 Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
 To me most fatal, me it most concerns.
 The trial hath indamaged thee no way,
 Rather more honour left and more esteem;
 Me naught advantaged, missing what I aimed.
 Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
 The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more 210
 Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not.
 And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclined
 Than to a worldly crown, addicted more
 To contemplation and profound dispute;
 As by that early action may be judged,
 When, slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st
 Alone into the Temple, there wast found
 Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant

On points and questions fitting Moses' chair,
 Teaching, not taught. The childhood shows the man, 220
 As morning shows the day. Be famous, then,
 By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,
 So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
 In knowledge; all things in it comprehend.
 All knowledge is not couched in Moses' law,
 The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;
 The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach
 To admiration, led by Nature's light;
 And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
 Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st. 230
 Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,
 Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?
 How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
 Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
 Error by his own arms is best evinced.
 Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
 Westward, much nearer by south-west; behold
 Where on the Ægean shore a city stands,
 Built nobly, pure the air and light the soil—
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts 240
 And eloquence, native to famous wits
 Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
 City or suburban, studious walks and shades.
 See there the olive-grove of Academe,
 Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
 Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
 There, flowery hill, Hymettus, with the sound
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
 His whispering stream. Within the walls then view 250
 The schools of ancient sages—his who bred
 Great Alexander to subdue the world,
 Lyceum there; and painted Stoa next.
 There thou shalt hear and learn the secret power
 Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit
 By voice or hand, and various-measured verse,
 Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
 Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer called,
 Whose poem Phœbus challenged for his own. 260
 Thence what the lofty grave Tragedians taught
 In chorus or iambic, teachers best
 Of moral prudence, with delight received
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life.

High actions and high passions best describing.
 Thence to the famous Orators repair,
 Those ancient whose resistless eloquence
 Wielded at will that fierce democracy,
 Shook the Arsenal, and fulmined over Greece 270
 To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne.
 To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
 From heaven descended to the low-roofed house
 Of Socrates—see there his tenement—
 Whom, well inspired, the oracle pronounced
 Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
 Mellifluous streams, that watered all the schools
 Of Academics old and new, with those
 Surnamed Peripatetics, and the sect
 Epicurean, and the Stoic severe. 280
 These here revolve, or, as thou likest, at home,
 Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;
 These rules will render thee a king complete
 Within thyself, much more with empire joined.”
 To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:—
 “Think not but that I know these things; or, think
 I know them not, not therefore am I short
 Of knowing what I ought. He who receives
 Light from above, from the Fountain of Light,
 No other doctrine needs, though granted true; 290
 But these are false, or little else but dreams,
 Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
 The first and wisest of them all professed
 To know this only, that he nothing knew;
 The next to fabling fell and smooth conceits;
 A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
 Others in virtue placed felicity,
 But virtue joined with riches and long life;
 In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;
 The Stoic last in philosophic pride, 300
 By him called virtue, and his virtuous man,
 Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing,
 Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
 As fearing God nor man, contemning all
 Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life—
 Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can;
 For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
 Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
 Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more, 310
 And how the World began, and how Man fell,
 Degraded by himself, on grace depending?

Much of the Soul they talk, but all awry;
And in themselves seek virtue; and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none;
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who, therefore, seeks in these
True wisdom finds her not, or, by delusion
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets, 320
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
(And what he brings what needs he elsewhere seek?)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep-versed in books and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge,
As children gathering pebbles on the shore. 330
Or, if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where so soon
As in our native language can I find
That solace? All our Law and Story strewed
With hymns, our Psalms with artful terms inscribed,
Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
That pleased so well our victor's ear, declare
That rather Greece from us these arts derived —
Ill imitated while they loudest sing
The vices of their deities, and their own, 340
In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
Remove their swelling epithets, thick-laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin-sown with aught of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Zion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is praised aright and godlike men,
The Holiest of Holies and his Saints
(Such are from God inspired, not such from thee); 350
Unless where moral virtue is expressed
By light of Nature, not in all quite lost.
Their orators thou then extoll'st as those
The top of eloquence — statist indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may seem;
But herein to our Prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government,
In their majestic, unaffected style,

Than all the oratory of Greece and Rome. 360
 In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
 What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,
 What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;
 These only, with our Law, best form a king."

So spake the Son of God; but Satan, now
 Quite at a loss (for all his darts were spent),
 Thus to our Saviour, with stern brow, replied:—

"Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
 Kingdom nor empire, pleases thee, nor aught 370
 By me proposed in life contemplative
 Or active, tended on by glory or fame,

What dost thou in this world? The Wilderness
 For thee is fittest place: I found thee there,
 And thither will return thee. Yet remember
 What I foretell thee; soon thou shalt have cause
 To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
 Nicely or cautiously, my offered aid,

Which would have set thee in short time with ease
 On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season, 380
 When prophecies of thee are best fulfilled.

Now, contrary—if I read aught in heaven,
 Or heaven write aught of fate—by what the stars
 Voluminous, or single characters

In their conjunction met, give me to spell,
 Sorrows and labours, opposition, hate,
 Attends thee; scorns, reproaches, injuries,
 Violence and stripes, and, lastly, cruel death.

A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
 Real or allegoric, I discern not; 390
 Nor when: eternal sure—as without end,
 Without beginning; for no date prefixed
 Directs me in the starry rubric set."

So saying, he took (for still he knew his power
 Not yet expired), and to the Wilderness
 Brought back, the Son of God, and left him there,
 Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
 As daylight sunk, and brought in lowering Night,
 Her shadowy offspring, unsubstantial both,
 Privation mere of light and absent day. 400

Our Saviour, meek, and with untroubled mind
 After his aery jaunt, though hurried sore,
 Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
 Wherever, under some concourse of shades,
 Whose branching arms thick intertwined might shield
 From dews and damps of night his sheltered head;

But, sheltered, slept in vain; for at his head
The Tempter watched, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturbed his sleep. And either tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of heaven; the clouds
From many a horrid rift abortive poured
Fierce rain with lightning mixed, water with fire
In ruin reconciled; nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rushed abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vexed wilderness, whose tallest pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,
Bowed their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st
Unshaken! Nor yet staid the terror there:
Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round
Environed thee; some howled, some yelled, some shrieked,
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Sat'st unappalled in calm and sinless peace.
Thus passed the night so foul, till Morning fair
Came forth with pilgrim steps, in amice gray,
Who with her radiant finger stilled the roar
Of thunder, chased the clouds, and laid the winds,
And grisly spectres, which the Fiend had raised
To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the sun with more effectual beams
Had cheered the face of earth, and dried the wet
From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,
Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
After a night of storm so ruinous,
Cleared up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
To gratulate the sweet return of morn.
Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,
Was absent, after all his mischief done,
The Prince of Darkness; glad would also seem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;
Yet with no new device (they all were spent),
Rather by this his last affront resolved,
Desperate of better course, to vent his rage
And mad despite to be so oft repelled.
Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
Backed on the north and west by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
And in a careless mood thus to him said:—
“Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
After a dismal night. I heard the wrack,
As earth and sky would mingle; but myself

Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them,
 As dangerous to the pillared frame of Heaven,
 Or to the Earth's dark basis underneath,
 Are to the main as inconsiderable
 And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
 To man's less universe, and soon are gone.
 Yet, as being oftentimes noxious where they light
 On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
 Like turbulencies in the affairs of men,
 Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
 They oft fore-signify and threaten ill.

460

This tempest at this desert most was bent;
 Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
 The perfect season offered with my aid
 To win thy destined seat, but wilt prolong
 All to the push of fate, pursue thy way
 Of gaining David's throne no man knows when
 (For both the when and how is nowhere told),
 Thou shalt be what thou art ordained, no doubt;
 For Angels have proclaimed it, but concealing
 The time and means? Each act is rightliest done
 Not when it must, but when it may be best.

470

If thou observe not this, be sure to find
 What I foretold thee—many a hard assay
 Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
 Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold;
 Whereof this ominous night that closed thee round,
 So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
 May warn thee, as a sure foregoing sign."

480

So talked he, while the Son of God went on,
 And staid not, but in brief him answered thus:—
 "Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
 Those terrors which thou speak'st of did me none.
 I never feared they could, though noising loud
 And threatening nigh: what they can do as signs
 Betokening or ill-boding I contemn
 As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
 Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
 Obtrud'st thy offered aid, that I, accepting,
 At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
 Ambitious Spirit! and would'st be thought my God;
 And storm'st, refused, thinking to terrify
 Me to thy will! Desist (thou art discerned,
 And toil'st in vain), nor me in vain molest."

490

To whom the Fiend, now swoln with rage, replied:—
 "Then hear, O Son of David, virgin-born!

500

For Son of God to me is yet in doubt.
 Of the Messiah I have heard foretold
 By all the Prophets; of thy birth, at length
 Announced by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
 And of the angelic song in Bethlehem field,
 On thy birth-night, that sung thee Saviour born.
 From that time seldom have I ceased to eye
 Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
 Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
 Till, at the ford of Jordan, whither all
 Flocked to the Baptist, I among the rest
 (Though not to be baptized), by voice from Heaven
 Heard thee pronounced the Son of God beloved.
 Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
 And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
 In what degree or meaning thou art called
The Son of God, which bears no single sense.
 The Son of God I also am, or was;
 And, if I was, I am; relation stands:
 All men are Sons of God; yet thee I thought
 In some respect far higher so declared.
 Therefore I watched thy footsteps from that hour,
 And followed thee still on to this waste wild,
 Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
 Thou art to be my fatal enemy.
 Good reason, then, if I beforehand seek
 To understand my adversary, who
 And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;
 By parle or composition, truce or league,
 To win him, or win from him what I can.
 And opportunity I here have had
 To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
 Proof against all temptation, as a rock
 Of adamant and as a centre, firm
 To the utmost of mere man both wise and good,
 Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
 Have been before contemned, and may again.
 Therefore, to know what more thou art than man,
 Worth naming Son of God by voice from Heaven,
 Another method I must now begin."

So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing
 Of hippogrif, bore through the air sublime,
 Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,
 Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
 The Holy City, lifted high her towers,
 And higher yet the glorious Temple reared
 Her pile, far off appearing like a mount

Of alabaster, topt with golden spires :

There, on the highest pinnacle, he set

The Son of God, and added thus in scorn : —

“ There stand, if thou wilt stand ; to stand upright

Will ask thee skill. I to thy Father's house

Have brought thee, and highest placed : highest is best.

Now show thy progeny ; if not to stand,

Cast thyself down. Safely, if Son of God ;

For it is written, ‘ He will give command

Concerning thee to his Angels ; in their hands

They shall uplift thee, lest at any time

Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.’ ”

To whom thus Jesus : “ Also it is written,

‘ Tempt not the Lord thy God.’ ” He said, and stood ;

But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.

As when Earth's son, Antæus (to compare

Small things with greatest), in Irassa strove

With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foiled, still rose,

Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,

Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple joined,

Throttled at length in the air expired and fell,

So, after many a foil, the Tempter proud,

Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride

Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall ;

And, as that Theban monster that proposed

Her riddle, and him who solved it not devoured,

That once found out and solved, for grief and spite

Cast herself headlong from the Ismenian steep,

So, strook with dread and anguish, fell the Fiend,

And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought

Joyless triumphals of his hoped success,

Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,

Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.

So Satan fell ; and straight a fiery globe

Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,

Who on their plummy vans received Him soft

From his uneasy station, and upbore,

As on a floating couch, through the blithe air ;

Then, in a flowery valley, set him down

On a green bank, and set before him spread

A table of celestial food, divine

Ambrosial fruits fetched from the Tree of Life,

And from the Fount of Life ambrosial drink,

That soon refreshed him wearied, and repaired

What hunger, if aught hunger, had impaired,

Or thirst ; and, as he fed, Angelic quires

Sung heavenly anthems of his victory

550

560

570

580

590

Over temptation and the Tempter proud:—

“ True Image of the Father, whether throned
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or, remote from Heaven, enshrined
In fleshly tabernacle and human form,

Wandering the wilderness— whatever place,
Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
The Son of God, with Godlike force endued
Against the attempter of thy Father's throne
And thief of Paradise! Him long of old
Thou didst delude, and down from Heaven cast
With all his army; now thou hast avenged
Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regained lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.

600

He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke.

610

For, though that seat of earthly bliss be failed,
A fairer Paradise is founded now

For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
A Saviour, art come down to reinstall;

Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
Of tempter and temptation without fear.

But thou, Infernal Serpent! shalt not long
Rule in the clouds. Like an autumnal star,

Or lightning, thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down
Under his feet. For proof, ere this thou feel'st

620

Thy wound (yet not thy last and deadliest wound)
By this repulse received, and hold'st in Hell

No triumph; in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe

To dread the Son of God. He, all unarmed,
Shall chase thee, with the terror of his voice,

From thy demoniac holds, possession foul—
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,

And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,
Lest he command them down into the Deep,

630

Bound, and to torment sent before their time.
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both Worlds,

Queller of Satan! On thy glorious work
Now enter, and begin to save Mankind.”

Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and, from heavenly feast refreshed,
Brought on his way with joy. He, unobserved,
Home to his mother's house private returned.

THE END.



INTRODUCTION

TO

SAMSON AGONISTES.

MILTON is remembered mainly as an epic poet. But his final choice of the epic form for his greatest poem and its companion was the result of deliberation. Apparently it was even a departure from his original inclination, when in his early manhood he had debated with himself in what form of poetry his genius would have fullest scope. Two of his early English poems had not only been dramatic, but had actually been performed. The *Arcades* was "part of an entertainment presented to the Countess-Dowager of Derby at Harefield by some noble persons of her family," probably in the year 1633; and *Comus*, the finest and most extensive of all Milton's minor poems, was nothing else than an elaborate "masque," performed, in the year 1634, at Ludlow Castle, in Shropshire, before the Earl of Bridgewater, Lord President of Wales, by way of an entertainment to the gentry of the neighbourhood. (See Introductions to these two Poems.) Whether Milton was present at the performance of either the *Arcades* or the *Comus* is not known; but the fact of his writing two such dramatic pieces for actual performance by the members of a family with which he had relations of acquaintance shows that at that time — *i.e.* when he was twenty-six years of age — he had no objection to this kind of entertainment, then so fashionable at Court and among noble families of literary tastes. That he had seen masques performed — masques of Ben Jonson, Carew, or Shirley — may be taken for granted; and we have his own assurance that, when at Cambridge, he attended dramatic representations there, got up in the colleges, and that, when in London, during his vacations from Cambridge, he used to go to the theatres (*Eleg.* i. 29-46). To the same effect we have his lines in *L'Allegro*, where he includes the theatre among the natural pleasures of the mind in its cheerful mood —

"Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learnèd sock be on,
Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild" —

words which, so far as Milton's appreciation of Shakespeare is concerned, would seem poor, if we did not recollect the splendid lines which he had pre-

viously written (1630), and which were prefixed to the second folio edition of Shakespeare's plays in 1632 —

“What needs my Shakespeare for his honoured bones
The labour of an age in piled stones,
Or that his hallowed reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear Son of Memory, great heir of Fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness,” &c.

Still the unlawfulness of dramatic entertainments had always been a tenet of those stricter English Puritans with whom Milton even then felt a political sympathy; and Prynne's famous *Histriomastix*, in which he denounced stage-plays and all connected with them through a thousand quarto pages (1632), had helped to confirm Puritanism in this tenet. As Prynne's treatise had been out more than a year before the *Arcades* and *Comus* were written, it is clear that he had not converted Milton to his opinion. While the more rigid and less educated of the Puritans undoubtedly went with Prynne in condemning the stage altogether, Milton, I should say, before the time of his journey to Italy (1638-39), was one of those who retained a pride in the drama as the form of literature in which, for two generations, English genius had been most productive. Lamenting, with others, the corrupt condition into which the national drama had fallen in baser hands, and the immoral accompaniments of the degraded stage, he had seen no reason to recant his enthusiastic tribute to the memory of Shakespeare, or to be ashamed of his own contribution to the dramatic literature of England in his two model masques.

Gradually, however, with Milton's growing seriousness amid the events and duties that awaited him after his return from his Italian journey, and especially after the meeting of the Long Parliament (Nov. 3, 1640), there came a change in his notions of the drama. From this period there is evidence that his sympathy with the Prynne view of things, at least as far as regarded the English stage, was more considerable than it had been — that, while he regarded all literature as recently infected with baseness and corruption, and requiring to be taught again its true relation to the spiritual needs and uses of a great nation, he felt an especial dislike to the popular literature of stage-plays, as then written and acted. From this period, if I mistake not, he was practically against theatre-going, as unworthy of a serious man, considering the contrast between what was to be seen within the theatres and what was in course of transaction without them; nor, if his two masques and his eulogy on Shakespeare had remained to be written now, do I think he would have judged it opportune to write them. Certainly he would not now have written the masques for actual performance, public or private. And yet he had not abandoned his admiration of the drama as a form of literature. On the contrary, he was still convinced that no form of literature was nobler, more capable of conveying the highest and most salutary conceptions of the mind of a great poet. When, immediately after his return from Italy, he was preparing himself for that great English poem upon which he proposed to bestow his full strength, and debating with himself what should be its subject and what its form, what do we find? We find him, for a while (*The Reason of Church Government*, Introd. to Book II.), balancing the claims of the epic, the dramatic, and the lyric, and concluding that in any one of these a great Christian poet might have congenial scope, and the benefit of grand precedents and

models. He discusses the claims of the Epic first, and thinks highly of them, but proceeds immediately to inquire "whether those dramatic constitutions in which Sophocles and Euripides reign shall be found more doctrinal and exemplary to a nation," adding, "The Scripture also affords us a divine Pastoral Drama in the Song of Solomon, consisting of two persons and a double chorus, as Origen rightly judges; and the Apocalypse of St. John is the majestic image of a high and stately Tragedy, shutting up and intermingling her solemn scenes and acts with a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies; and this my opinion the grave authority of Paræus, commenting that book, is sufficient to confirm." Here we have certainly a proof that no amount of sympathy which Milton may have felt with the Puritan dislike of stage-plays had affected his admiration of the dramatic form of poetry as practised by the ancient Greek tragedians and others. Accordingly, it was to the dramatic form, rather than to either the epic or the lyric, that Milton then inclined in his meditations of some great English poem to be written by himself. As we have already seen (Introduction to *Paradise Lost*, pp. 11, 12), he threw aside his first notion of an epic on King Arthur, and began to collect possible subjects for dramas from Scriptural History, and from the early history of Britain. He collected and jotted down the titles of no fewer than sixty possible tragedies on subjects from the Old and New Testaments, and thirty-eight possible tragedies on subjects of English and Scottish History — among which latter, curiously enough, was one on the subject of *Macbeth*. From this extraordinary collection of possible subjects *Paradise Lost* already stood out as that which most fascinated him; but even that subject was to be treated dramatically.

All this was before the year 1642. On the 2d of September in that year — the King having a few days before raised his standard at Nottingham, and given the signal for the Civil War — there was passed the famous ordinance of Parliament suppressing stage-plays "while the public troubles last," and shutting up the London theatres. From that date onwards to the Restoration, or for nearly eighteen years, the Drama, in the sense of the Acted Drama, was in abeyance in England. This fact may have co-operated with other reasons in determining Milton — when he did at length find leisure for returning to his scheme of a great English poem — to abandon the dramatic form he had formerly favoured. True, the mere discontinuance of stage-plays in England, as an amusement inconsistent with Puritan ideas, and intolerable in the state of the times, cannot, even though Milton approved of such discontinuance (as he doubtless did), have altered his former convictions in favour of the dramatic form of poetry, according to its noblest ancient models — especially as he could have had no thought, when meditating his Scriptural Tragedies, of adapting them for actual performance. Such a tragedy as *he* had meant to write would not have been the least in conflict with the real operative element in the contemporary Puritan antipathy to the Drama. Still the Dramatic form itself had fallen into discredit; and there were weaker brethren with whom it would have been useless to reason on the distinction between the written Drama and the acted Drama, between the noblest tragedy on the ancient Greek model and the worst of those English stage-plays, of the reign of Charles, from which the nation had been compelled to desist. Milton does not seem to have been indifferent to this feeling. The tone of his reference to Shakespeare in his *Εἰκονοκλαστής*, published in 1649, suggests that, if he had not then really

abated his allegiance to Shakespeare, he at least agreed so far with the ordinary Puritanism around him as not to think Shakespeare-worship the particular doctrine then required by the English mind.

For some such reason, among others, Milton, when he set himself at length (in 1658) to redeem his long-given pledge of a great English poem, and chose for his subject *Paradise Lost*, deliberately gave up his first intention of treating that subject in the dramatic form. When that poem was given to the world (1667) it was as an epic. Its companion, *Paradise Regained*, published in 1671, was also an epic.

But, though it was thus as an epic poet that Milton chose mainly and finally to appear before the world, he was so far faithful to his old affection for the Drama as to leave to the world one experiment of his mature art in that form. *Samson Agonistes* was an attestation that the poet who in his earlier years had written the beautiful pastoral drama of *Comus* had never ceased to like that form of poesy, but to the last believed it suitable, with modifications, for his severer and sterner purposes. At what time *Samson* was written is not definitely ascertained; but it was certainly after the Restoration, and probably after 1667. It was published in 1671, in the same volume with *Paradise Regained* (see title of the volume, &c. in *Introd. to Paradise Regained*, p. 284). For a time the connexion thus established between *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes* was kept up in subsequent editions; but since 1688 I know of no publication of these two poems together by themselves. There have been one or two editions of the *Samson* by itself; but it has generally appeared either in collective editions of all the poems, or in editions of the minor poems apart from *Paradise Lost*.

How came Milton to select such a subject as that of *Samson Agonistes* for one of his latest poems, if not the very latest?

To this question it is partly an answer to say that the exploits of the Hebrew Samson had long before struck him as capable of treatment in an English tragedy. Among his jottings, in 1640-41, of subjects for possible Scripture Tragedies, we find these two, occurring as the 19th and 20th in the total list—“*Samson Pursophorus or Hybristes, or Samson Marrying, or Ramath-Lechi,*” Judges xv.; and “*Dagonalia,*” Judges xvi. That is to say, Milton, in 1640-41, thought there might be two sacred dramas founded on the accounts of Samson's life in the Book of Judges—the one on Samson's first marriage with a Philistian woman, and his feuds with the Philistines growing out of that incident, when he was *Pursophorus* (*i.e.* The Firebrand-bringer) or *Hybristes* (*i.e.* Violent); the other on the closing scene of his life, when he took his final vengeance on the Philistines in their feast to Dagon. These subjects, however, do not seem then to have had such attractions for Milton as some of the others in the list; for they are merely jotted down as above, whereas to some of the others, such as “*Dinah,*” “*Abram from Morea,*” and “*Sodom,*” are appended sketches of the plot or hints for the treatment. Why, then, did Milton, in his later life, neglect so many other subjects of which he had kept his early notes, and cling so tenaciously to the story of Sampson?

The reason is not far to seek; nor need we seek it in the fact that he had seen Italian, Latin, and even English, poems on the story of Samson, which may have reminded him of the theme. Todd and other commentators have

dug up the titles of some such old poems, without being able to prove that they suggested anything to Milton. The truth is that the capabilities of the theme, perceived by him through mere poetic tact as early as 1640-41, had been brought home to him, with singular force and intimacy, by the experience of his own subsequent life. The story of Samson must have seemed to Milton a metaphor or allegory of much of his own life in its later stages. He also, in his veteran days, after the Restoration, was a champion at bay, a prophet-warrior left alone among men of a different faith and different manners — Philistines, who exulted in the ruin of his cause, and wreaked their wrath upon him for his past services to that cause by insults, calumnies, and jeers at his misfortunes and the cause itself. He also was blind, as Samson had been — groping about among the malignant conditions that had befallen him, helplessly dependent on the guiding of others, and bereft of the external consolations and means of resistance to his scorers that might have come to him through sight. He also had to live mainly in the imagery of the past. In that past, too, there were similarities in his case to that of Samson. Like Samson, substantially, he had been a Nazarite — no drinker of wine or strong drink, but one who had always been an ascetic in his dedicated service to great designs. And the chief blunder in his life, that which had gone nearest to wreck it, and had left the most marring consequences and the most painful reflections, was the very blunder of which, twice-repeated, Samson had to accuse himself. Like Samson, he had married a Philistine woman — one not of his own tribe, and having no thoughts or interests in common with his own; and, like Samson, he had suffered indignities from this wife and her relations, till he had learnt to rue the match. The consequences of Milton's unhappy first marriage (1643) in his temper and opinions form a marked train in his biography, extending far beyond their apparent end in the publication of his *Divorce Pamphlets*, followed by his hasty reconciliation with his wife after her two years' desertion of him (1645). Although, from that time, he lived with his first wife, without further audible complaint, till her death about 1652, and although his two subsequent marriages were happier, the recollection of his first marriage (and it was only the wife of this first marriage that he had ever *seen*) seems always to have been a sore in Milton's mind, and to have affected his thoughts of the marriage-institution itself, and of the ways and character of women. In this respect also he could find coincidences between his own life and that of Samson, which recommended the story of Samson with far more poignancy to him in his later life than when he first looked at it in the inexperience of his early manhood. In short, there must have rushed upon Milton, contemplating in his later life the story of the blind Samson among the Philistines, so many similarities with his own case, that there is little wonder that he then selected this subject for poetic treatment. While writing *Samson Agonistes* (*i.e.* Samson the Agonist, Athlete, or Wrestler) he must have been secretly conscious throughout that he was representing much of his own feelings and experience; and the reader of the poem that knows anything of Milton's life has this pressed upon him at every turn. Probably the best introduction to the poem would be to read the Biblical history of Samson (Judges xiii.—xvi.) with the facts of Milton's life in one's mind.

The poem was put forth, however, with no intimation to this effect. That, indeed, might have been an obstacle to its passing the censorship. Readers were left to gather the fact for themselves, according to the degree of their

information, and their quickness in interpreting. In the prose preface which Milton thought fit to prefix to the poem — entitled “*Of that sort of Dramatic Poem which is called Tragedy*” — he concerns himself not at all with the matter of the poem, or his own meaning in it, but only with its literary form. He explains why, towards the grave close of his life, he has not thought it inconsistent to write what might be called a Tragedy, and what particular kind of Tragedy he has taken care to write. The preface ought to be carefully read, in connexion with the remarks already made on Milton's early taste for the dramatic form of poesy, and the variations to which that taste had been subjected by circumstances. It will be noted that a large portion of the preface is apologetic. Although, after the Restoration, the drama had revived in England, and men were once more familiar with stage-plays, Milton evidently felt that many of his countrymen still retained their Puritanic horror of the Drama, and of all related to it — nay, that this horror might well be increased by the spectacle of the sort of plays supplied to the re-opened theatres by Dryden, Wycherley, and the other caterers for the amusement of Charles II. and his Court. An explanation might be demanded why, when the Drama was thus becoming a greater abomination than ever, a man like Milton should give his countenance in any way to the dramatic form of poetry. Accordingly, Milton does explain, and in such a way as to distinguish as widely as possible between the Tragedy he has written and the stage-dramas then popular. “Tragedy, as it was anciently composed,” he says, “hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems.” In order to fortify this statement he repeats Aristotle's definition of Tragedy, and reminds his readers that “philosophers and other gravest writers” frequently cite from the old tragic poets — nay, that St. Paul himself had quoted a verse of Euripides, and that, according to the judgment of a Protestant commentator on the Apocalypse, that book might be viewed as a tragedy of peculiar structure, with choruses between the acts. Some of the most eminent and active men in history, he adds, including one of the Fathers of the Christian Church, had written or attempted Tragedies. All this, he says, is “mentioned to vindicate Tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day, with other common interludes; happening through the poet's error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity, or introducing trivial and vulgar persons; which by all judicious hath been counted absurd, and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people.” It is impossible not to see, in the carefulness of this apology, that Milton felt that he was treading on perilous ground, and might give offence to the weaker brethren by his use of the dramatic form at all, especially for a sacred subject. It is hardly possible either to avoid seeing, in the reference to the “error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity,” an allusion to Shakespeare, as well as to Dryden and the post-Restoration dramatists.

Samson Agonistes, therefore, was offered to the world as a tragedy avowedly of a different order from that which had been established in England. It was a tragedy of the severe classic order, according to that noble Greek model which had been kept up by none of the modern nations, unless it might be the Italians. In reading it, not Shakespeare, nor Ben Jonson, nor Massinger, must be thought of, but Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Claiming this in general terms, the poet calls especial attention to his fidelity to ancient

Greek precedents in two particulars — his use of the chorus, and his observation of the rule of unity in time. The tragedy, he says, never having been intended for the stage, but only to be read, the division into acts and scenes is omitted. He does *not* say, however (and this is worth noting), that, had it been possible to produce the tragedy on the stage in a becoming manner, he would have objected to its being done. It is said that Bishop Atterbury, about 1722, had a scheme for bringing it on the stage at Westminster, the division into acts and names to be arranged by Pope. It was a fitter compliment when Handel, in 1742, made Samson the subject of an Oratorio, and married his great music to Milton's as great words.

SAMSON AGONISTES.

A DRAMATIC POEM.

THE AUTHOR

JOHN MILTON.

Aristot. Poet. cap 6. Τραγωδία μίμησις πράξεως σπουδαίας, &c. — Tragœdia est imitatio actionis seriæ, &c., per misericordiam et metum perficiens talium affectuum lustrationem.



OF THAT SORT OF DRAMATIC POEM CALLED TRAGEDY.

TRAGEDY, as it was anciently composed, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems; therefore said by Aristotle to be of power, by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such-like passions—that is, to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirred up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion; for so, in physic, things of melancholic hue and quality are used against melancholy, sour against sour, salt to remove salt humours. Hence philosophers and other gravest writers, as Cicero, Plutarch, and others, frequently cite out of tragic poets, both to adorn and illustrate their discourse. The Apostle Paul himself thought it not unworthy to insert a verse of Euripides into the text of Holy Scripture, 1 Cor. xv. 33; and Paræus, commenting on the *Revelation*, divides the whole book, as a tragedy, into acts, distinguished each by a Chorus of heavenly harpings and song between. Heretofore men in highest dignity have laboured not a little to be thought able to compose a tragedy. Of that honour Dionysius the elder was no less ambitious than before of his attaining to the tyranny. Augustus Cæsar also had begun his *Ajax*, but, unable to please his own judgment with what he had begun, left it unfinished. Seneca, the philosopher, is by some thought the author of those tragedies (at least the best of them) that go under that name. Gregory Nazianzen, a Father of the Church, thought it not unbecoming the sanctity of his person to write a tragedy, which he entitled *Christ Suffering*. This is mentioned to vindicate Tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day, with other common interludes; happening through the poet's error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity, or introducing trivial and vulgar persons: which by all judicious hath been counted absurd, and brought in without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people. And, though ancient Tragedy use no Prologue, yet using sometimes, in case of self-defence or explanation, that which Martial calls an Epistle, in behalf of this tragedy, coming forth after the ancient manner, much different from what among us passes for best, thus much beforehand may be *epistled*—that Chorus is here introduced after the Greek manner, not ancient only, but modern, and still in use among the Italians. In the modelling therefore of this poem, with good reason, the Ancients and Italians are rather followed, as of much more authority and fame. The measure of verse used in the Chorus is of all sorts, called by the Greeks *Monostrophic*, or rather *Apolelymenon*, without regard had to Strophe,

Antistrophe, or Epode, — which were a kind of stanzas framed only for the music, then used with the Chorus that sung; not essential to the poem, and therefore not material; or, being divided into stanzas or pauses, they may be called *Allæostropha*. Division into act and scene, referring chiefly to the stage (to which this work never was intended), is here omitted.

It suffices if the whole drama be found not produced beyond the fifth act. Of the style and uniformity, and that commonly called the plot, whether intricate or explicit — which is nothing indeed but such economy, or disposition of the fable, as may stand best with verisimilitude and decorum — they only will best judge who are not unacquainted with Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the three tragic poets unequalled yet by any, and the best rule to all who endeavour to write Tragedy. The circumscription of time, wherein the whole drama begins and ends, is, according to ancient rule and best example, within the space of twenty-four hours.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

THE PERSONS.

SAMSON.

MANOA, the father of Samson.

DALILA, his wife.

HARAPHA of Gath.

Public Officer.

Messenger.

Chorus of Danites.

The Scene, before the Prison in Gaza.



SAMSON AGONISTES.

SAMS. A little onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade.
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoined me,
Where I, a prisoner chained, scarce freely draw
The air, imprisoned also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught. But here I feel amends —
The breath of heaven fresh blowing, pure and sweet,
With day-spring born; here leave me to respire.
This day a solemn feast the people hold
To Dagon, their sea-idol, and forbid
Laborious works. Unwillingly this rest
Their superstition yields me; hence, with leave
Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
This unfrequented place to find some ease —
Ease to the body some, none to the mind
From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
Of hornets armed, no sooner found alone
But rush upon me thronging, and present
Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
Oh, wherefore was my birth from Heaven foretold
Twice by an Angel, who at last, in sight
Of both my parents, all in flames ascended
From off the altar where an offering burned,
As in a fiery column charioting
His godlike presence, and from some great act
Or benefit revealed to Abraham's race?
Why was my breeding ordered and prescribed
As of a person separate to God,
Designed for great exploits, if I must die
Betrayed, captived, and both my eyes put out,

10

20

30

Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze,
 To grind in brazen fetters under task
 With this heaven-gifted strength? O glorious strength,
 Put to the labour of a beast, debased
 Lower than bond-slave! Promise was that I
 Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver!
 Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him
 Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,
 Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke.
 Yet stay; let me not rashly call in doubt
 Divine prediction. What if all foretold
 Had been fulfilled but through mine own default?
 Whom have I to complain of but myself,
 Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
 In what part lodged, how easily bereft me,
 Under the seal of silence could not keep,
 But weakly to a woman must reveal it,
 O'ercome with importunity and tears?
 O impotence of mind in body strong!
 But what is strength without a double share
 Of wisdom? Vast, unwieldy, burdensome,
 Proudly secure, yet liable to fall
 By weakest subtleties; not made to rule,
 But to subserve where wisdom bears command.
 God, when he gave me strength, to show withal
 How slight the gift was, hung it in my hair.
 But peace! I must not quarrel with the will
 Of highest dispensation, which herein
 Haply had ends above my reach to know.
 Suffices that to me strength is my bane,
 And proves the source of all my miseries —
 So many, and so huge, that each apart
 Would ask a life to wail. But, chief of all,
 O loss of sight, of thee I most complain!
 Blind among enemies! O worse than chains,
 Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
 Light, the prime work of God, to me is extinct,
 And all her various objects of delight
 Annulled, which might in part my grief have eased.
 Inferior to the vilest now become
 Of man or worm, the vilest here excel me:
 They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, exposed
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
 Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
 In power of others, never in my own —
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more than half.
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,

me 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80

Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse

Without all hope of day!

O first-created beam, and thou great Word,

“Let there be light, and light was over all,”

Why am I thus bereaved thy prime decree?

The Sun to me is dark

And silent as the Moon,

When she deserts the night,

Hid in her vacant interlunar cave.

Since light so necessary is to life,

And almost life itself, if it be true

That light is in the soul,

She all in every part, why was the sight

To such a tender ball as the eye confined,

So obvious and so easy to be quenched,

And not, as feeling, through all parts diffused,

That she might look at will through every pore?

Then had I not been thus exiled from light,

As in the land of darkness, yet in light,

To live a life half dead, a living death,

And buried; but, O yet more miserable!

Myself my sepulchre, a moving grave;

Buried, yet not exempt,

By privilege of death and burial,

From worst of other evils, pains, and wrongs;

But made hereby obnoxious more

To all the miseries of life,

Life in captivity

Among inhuman foes.

But who are these? for with joint pace I hear

The tread of many feet steering this way;

Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare

At my affliction, and perhaps to insult—

Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Chor. This, this is he; softly a while;

Let us not break in upon him.

O change beyond report, thought, or belief!

See how he lies at random, carelessly diffused,

With languished head unpropt,

As one past hope, abandoned,

And by himself given over,

In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds

O'er-worn and soiled.

Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,

That heroic, that renowned,

Irresistible Samson? whom, unarmed,

No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;

90

100

110

120

Who tore the lion as the lion tears the kid;
 Ran on embattled armies clad in iron,
 And, weaponless himself, 130
 Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
 Of brazen shield and spear, the hammered cuirass,
 2 Chalybean-tempered steel, and frock of mail
 2 Adamantean proof:
 1 But safest he who stood aloof,
 When insupportably his foot advanced,
 In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
 Spurned them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite,
 Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turned
 Their plated backs under his heel, 140
 Or grovelling soiled their crested helmets in the dust.
 Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
 The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
 A thousand foreskins fell, the flower of Palestine,
 2 In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day:
 Then by main force pulled up, and on his shoulders bore,
 The gates of Azza, post and massy bar,
 Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old —
 No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so —
 Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up Heaven. 150
 Which shall I first bewail —
 Thy bondage or lost sight,
 Prison within prison
 Inseparably dark?
 Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!)
 The dungeon of thyself; thy soul
 (Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain)
 Imprisoned now indeed,
 In real darkness of the body dwells,
 Shut up from outward light 160
 To incorporate with gloomy night;
 For inward light, alas!
 Puts forth no visual beam.
 O mirror of our fickle state,
 Since man on earth, unparalleled,
 The rarer thy example stands,
 By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
 Strongest of mortal men,
 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fallen.
 For him I reckon not in high estate 170
 Whom long descent of birth,
 Or the sphere of fortune, raises;
 But thee, whose strength, while virtue was her mate,
 Might have subdued the Earth,

Universally crowned with highest praises.

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

Chor. He speaks: let us draw nigh. Matchless in might,
The glory late of Israel, now the grief!

We come, thy friends and neighbours not unknown, 180

From Eshtaol and Zora's fruitful vale,

To visit or bewail thee; or, if better,

Counsel or consolation we may bring,

Salve to thy sores: apt words have power to swage

The tumours of a troubled mind,

And are as balm to festered wounds.

Sams. Your coming, friends, revives me; for I learn

Now of my own experience, not by talk,

How counterfeit a coin they are who 'friends'

Bear in their superscription (of the most 190

I would be understood). In prosperous days

They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,

Not to be found, though sought. Ye see, O friends,

How many evils have enclosed me round;

Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me,

Blindness; for, had I sight, confused with shame,

How could I once look up, or heave the head,

Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwrecked

My vessel trusted to me from above,

Gloriously rigged, and for a word, a tear, 200

Fool! have divulged the secret gift of God

To a deceitful woman? Tell me, friends,

Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool

In every street? Do they not say, 'How well

Are come upon him his deserts'? Yet why?

Immeasurable strength they might behold

In me; of wisdom nothing more than mean.

This with the other should at least have paired;

These two, proportion'd ill, drove me transverse. 210

Chor. Tax not divine disposal. Wisest men

Have erred, and by bad women been deceived;

And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.

Deject not, then, so overmuch thyself,

Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides.

Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder

Why thou should'st wed Philistian women rather

Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,

At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

Sams. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleased

Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed 220

The daughter of an infidel. They knew not

That what I motioned was of God ; I knew
 From intimate impulse, and therefore urged
 The marriage on, that, by occasion hence,
 I might begin Israel's deliverance —
 The work to which I was divinely called.
 She proving false, the next I took to wife
 (O that I never had ! fond wish too late !)
 Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
 That specious monster, my accomplished snare.
 I thought it lawful from my former act,
 And the same end, still watching to oppress
 Israel's oppressors. Of what now I suffer
 She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
 Who, vanquished with a peal of words, (O weakness !)
 Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke
 The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
 Thou never wast remiss, I bear thee witness ;
 Yet Israel still serves with all his sons.

Sams. That fault I take not on me, but transfer
 On Israel's governors and heads of tribes,
 Who, seeing those great acts which God had done
 Singly by me against their conquerors,
 Acknowledged not, or not at all considered,
 Deliverance offered. I, on the other side,
 Used no ambition to commend my deeds ;
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer.
 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
 To count them things worth notice, till at length
 Their lords, the Philistines, with gathered powers,
 Entered Judea, seeking me, who then
 Safe to the rock of Etham was retired —
 Not flying, but forecasting in what place
 To set upon them, what advantaged best.
 Meanwhile the men of Judah, to prevent
 The harass of their land, beset me round ;
 I willingly on some conditions came
 Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
 To the Uncircumcised a welcome prey,
 Bound with two cords. But cords to me were threads
 Touched with the flame : on their whole host I flew
 Unarmed, and with a trivial weapon felled
 Their choicest youth ; they only lived who fled.
 Had Judah that day joined, or one whole tribe,
 They had by this possessed the towers of Gath,
 And lorded over them whom now they serve.
 But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,

230

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260

And by their vices brought to servitude,
 Than to love bondage more than liberty — 270
 Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty —
 And to despise, or envy, or suspect,
 Whom God hath of his special favour raised
 As their deliverer? If he aught begin,
 How frequent to desert him, and at last
 To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds!

Chor. Thy words to my remembrance bring
 How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
 Their great deliverer contemned, 2
 The matchless Gideon, in pursuit 280
 Of Madian, and her vanquished kings;
 And how ingrateful Ephraim
 Had dealt with Jephtha, who by argument,
 Not worse than by his shield and spear,
 Defended Israel from the Ammonite,
 Had not his prowess quelled their pride,
 In that sore battle when so many died
 Without reprieve, adjudged to death
 For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.

Sams. Of such examples add me to the roll. 290
 Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
 But God's proposed deliverance not so.

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

Yet more there be who doubt his ways not just, 300
 As to his own edicts found contradicting;
 Then give the reins to wandering thought,
 Regardless of his glory's diminution,
 Till, by their own perplexities involved,
 They ravel more, still less resolved,
 But never find self-satisfying solution.

As if they would confine the Interminable,
 And tie him to his own prescript,
 Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
 And hath full right to exempt 310
 Whomso it pleases him by choice
 From national obstruction, without taint
 Of sin, or legal debt;
 For with his own laws he can best dispense.

He would not else, who never wanted means,

Nor in respect of the enemy just cause,
 To set his people free,
 Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
 Against his vow of strictest purity,
 To seek in marriage that fallacious bride,
 Unclean, unchaste.

Down, Reason, then; at least, vain reasonings down;
 Though Reason here aver
 That moral verdict quits her of unclean:
 Unchaste was subsequent; her stain, not his.

But see! here comes thy reverend sire,
 With careful step, locks white as down,
 Old Manoa: advise
 Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.

Sams. Ay me! another inward grief, awaked
 With mention of that name, renews the assault.

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

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

Man. O miserable change! Is this the man,
 That invincible Samson, far renowned,
 The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
 Equivalent to Angels' walked their streets,
 None offering fight; who, single combatant,
 Duelled their armies ranked in proud array,
 Himself an army—now unequal match
 To save himself against a coward armed
 At one spear's length? O ever-failing trust
 In mortal strength! and, oh, what not in man
 Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good
 Prayed for, but often proves our woe, our bane?
 I prayed for children, and thought barrenness
 In wedlock a reproach; I gained a son,
 And such a son as all men hailed me happy:
 Who would be now a father in my stead?
 Oh, wherefore did God grant me my request,
 And as a blessing with such pomp adorned?
 Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
 Our earnest prayers, then, given with solemn hand
 As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind?
 For this did the Angel twice descend? for this
 Ordained thy nurture holy, as of a plant

320

330

340

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360

Select and sacred? glorious for a while,
 The miracle of men; then in an hour
 Ensnared, assaulted, overcome, led bound,
 Thy foes' derision, captive, poor and blind,
 Into a dungeon thrust, to work with slaves!
 Alas! methinks whom God hath chosen once
 To worthiest deeds, if he through frailty err,
 He should not so o'erwhelm, and as a thrall
 Subject him to so foul indignities,
 Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

370

Sams. Appoint not heavenly disposition, father.

Nothing of all these evils hath befallen me
 But justly; I myself have brought them on;
 Sole author I, sole cause. If aught seem vile,
 As vile hath been my folly, who have profaned
 The mystery of God, given me under pledge
 Of vow, and have betrayed it to a woman,
 A Canaanite, my faithless enemy.

380

This well I knew, nor was at all surprised,
 But warned by oft experience. Did not she
 Of Timna first betray me, and reveal
 The secret wrested from me in her highth
 Of nuptial love professed, carrying it straight
 To them who had corrupted her, my spies
 And rivals? In this other was there found
 More faith, who, also in her prime of love,
 Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,
 Though offered only, by the scent conceived,
 Her spurious first-born, Treason against me?
 Thrice she assayed, with flattering prayers and sighs,
 And amorous reproaches, to win from me
 My capital secret, in what part my strength
 Lay stored, in what part summed, that she might know;
 Thrice I deluded her, and turned to sport

390

Her importunity, each time perceiving
 How openly and with what impudence
 She purposed to betray me, and (which was worse
 Than undissembled hate) with what contempt
 She sought to make me traitor to myself.

400

Yet, the fourth time, when, mustering all her wiles,
 With blandished parleys, feminine assaults,
 Tongue-batteries, she surceased not day nor night
 To storm me, over-watched and wearied out,
 At times when men seek most repose and rest,
 I yielded, and unlocked her all my heart,
 Who, with a grain of manhood well resolved,
 Might easily have shook off all her snares;

But foul effeminacy held me yoked
 Her bond-slave. O indignity, O blot
 To honour and religion! servile mind
 Rewarded well with servile punishment!
 The base degree to which I now am fallen,
 These rags, this grinding, is not yet so base
 As was my former servitude, ignoble,
 Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
 True slavery; and that blindness worse than this,
 That saw not how degenerately I served.

Man. I cannot praise thy marriage-choices, son—
 Rather approve them not; but thou didst plead
 Divine impulsion prompting how thou might'st
 Find some occasion to infest our foes.

I state not that; this I am sure—our foes
 Found soon occasion thereby to make thee
 Their captive, and their triumph; thou the sooner
 Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms,
 To violate the sacred trust of silence
 Deposited within thee—which to have kept
 Tacit was in thy power. True; and thou bear'st

Enough, and more, the burden of that fault;
 Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,
 That rigid score. A worse thing yet remains:

This day the Philistines a popular feast
 Here celebrate in Gaza, and proclaim
 Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,
 To Dagon, as their god who hath delivered
 Thee, Samson, bound and blind, into their hands—
 Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.

So Dagon shall be magnified, and God,
 Besides whom is no god, compared with idols,
 Disglorified, blasphemed, and had in scorn
 By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
 Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
 Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest,
 Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
 Could have befallen thee and thy father's house.

Sams. Father, I do acknowledge and confess
 That I this honour, I this pomp, have brought
 To Dagon, and advanced his praises high
 Among the Heathen round—to God have brought
 Dishonour, obloquy, and oped the mouths
 Of idolists and atheists; have brought scandal
 To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
 In feeble hearts, propense enough before
 To waver, or fall off and join with idols:

Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
 The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
 Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
 This only hope relieves me, that the strife 460
 With me hath end. All the contest is now
 'Twixt God and Dagon. Dagon hath presumed,
 Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
 His deity comparing and preferring
 Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure,
 Will not connive, or linger, thus provoked,
 But will arise, and his great name assert.
 Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
 Such a discomfit as shall quite despoil him
 Of all these boasted trophies won on me, 470
 And with confusion blank his worshipers.

Man. With cause this hope relieves thee; and these words
 I as a prophecy receive; for God
 (Nothing more certain) will not long defer
 To vindicate the glory of his name
 Against all competition, nor will long
 Endure it doubtful whether God be Lord
 Or Dagon. But for thee what shall be done?
 Thou must not in the meanwhile, here forgot,
 Lie in this miserable loathsome plight 480
 Neglected. I already have made way
 To some Philistian lords, with whom to treat
 About thy ransom. Well they may by this
 Have satisfied their utmost of revenge,
 By pains and slaveries, worse than death, inflicted
 On thee, who now no more canst do them harm.

Sams. Spare that proposal, father; spare the trouble
 Of that solicitation. Let me here,
 As I deserve, pay on my punishment,
 And expiate, if possible, my crime, 490
 Shameful garrulity. To have revealed
 Secrets of *men*, the secrets of a friend,
 How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
 Contempt and scorn of all—to be excluded
 All friendship, and avoided as a blab,
 The mark of fool set on his front!
 But I *God's* counsel have not kept, his holy secret
 Presumptuously have published, impiously,
 Weakly at least and shamefully—a sin
 That Gentiles in their parables condemn 500
 To their Abyss and horrid pains confined.

Man. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite;
 But act not in thy own affliction, son.

Repent the sin; but, if the punishment
 Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;
 Or the execution leave to high disposal,
 And let another hand, not thine, exact
 Thy penal forfeit from thyself. Perhaps
 God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;
 Who ever more approves and more accepts
 (Best pleased with humble and filial submission)
 Him who, imploring mercy, sues for life,
 Than who, self-rigorous, chooses death as due;
 Which argues over-just, and self-displeased
 For self-offence more than for God offended.
 Reject not, then, what offered means who knows
 But God hath set before us to return thee
 Home to thy country and his sacred house,
 Where thou may'st bring thy offerings, to avert
 His further ire, with prayers and vows renewed.

510

Sams. His pardon I implore; but, as for life,
 To what end should I seek it? When in strength
 All mortals I excelled, and great in hopes,
 With youthful courage, and magnanimous thoughts
 Of birth from Heaven foretold and high exploits,
 Full of divine instinct, after some proof
 Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond
 The sons of Anak, famous now and blazed,
 Fearless of danger, like a petty god
 I walked about, admired of all, and dreaded
 On hostile ground, none daring my affront—
 Then, swollen with pride, into the snare I fell
 Of fair fallacious looks, venerable trains,
 Softened with pleasure and voluptuous life,
 At length to lay my head and hallowed pledge
 Of all my strength in the lascivious lap
 Of a deceitful concubine, who shorn me,
 Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,
 Then turned me out ridiculous, despoiled,
 Shaven, and disarmed among my enemies.

520

530

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

540

Sams. Wherever fountain or fresh current flowed
 Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure
 With touch ethereal of Heaven's fiery rod,
 I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying

550

Thirst, and refreshed; nor envied them the grape
Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

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

Sams. But what availed this temperance, not complete
Against another object more enticing?

What boots it at one gate to make defence, 560

And at another to let in the foe,
Effeminately vanquished? by which means,
Now blind, disheartened, shamed, dishonoured, quelled,
To what can I be useful? wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heaven imposed?

But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A burdenous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object; these redundant locks,
Robustious to no purpose, clustering down,
Vain monument of strength; till length of years 570
And sedentary numbness craze my limbs
To a contemptible old age obscure.

Here rather let me drudge, and earn my bread,
Till vermin, or the draff of servile food,
Consume me, and oft-invocated death
Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift
Which was expressly given thee to annoy them?

Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle, 580
Inglorious, unemployed, with age outworn.

But God, who caused a fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst to allay
After the brunt of battle, can as easy

Cause light again within thy eyes to spring,
Wherewith to serve him better than thou hast.
And I persuade me so. Why else this strength
Miraculous yet remaining in those locks?

His might continues in thee not for naught,
Nor shall his wondrous gifts be frustrate thus.

Sams. All otherwise to me my thoughts portend— 590
That these dark orbs no more shall treat with light,

Nor the other light of life continue long,
But yield to double darkness nigh at hand;

So much I feel my genial spirits droop,
My hopes all flat: Nature within me seems
In all her functions weary of herself;

My race of glory run, and race of shame,

And I shall shortly be with them that rest.

Man. Believe not these suggestions, which proceed
From anguish of the mind, and humours black
That mingle with thy fancy. I, however,
Must not omit a father's timely care
To prosecute the means of thy deliverance
By ransom or how else: meanwhile be calm,
And healing words from these thy friends admit.

60c

Sams. Oh, that torment should not be confined
To the body's wounds and sores,
With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breast, and reins,
But must secret passage find
To the inmost mind,
There exercise all his fierce accidents,
And on her purest spirits prey,
As on entrails, joints, and limbs,
With answerable pains, but more intense,
Though void of corporal sense!

61c

My griefs not only pain me
As a lingering disease,
But, finding no redress, ferment and rage;
Nor less than wounds immedicable
Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
To black mortification.

62c

Thoughts, my tormentors, armed with ~~deadly~~ stings, *cu feet*
Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise
Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.
Sleep hath forsook and given me o'er
To death's benumbing opium as my only cure;
Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
And sense of Heaven's desertion.

63c

I was his nursling once and choice delight,
His destined from the womb,
Promised by heavenly message twice descending.
Under his special eye

Abstemious I grew up and thrived amain;
He led me on to mightiest deeds,
Above the nerve of mortal arm,
Against the Uncircumcised, our enemies:
But now hath cast me off as never known,
And to those cruel enemies,

64c

Whom I by his appointment had provoked,
Left me all helpless, with the irreparable loss

Of sight, reserved alive to be repeated
 The subject of their cruelty or scorn.
 Nor am I in the list of them that hope;
 Hopeless are all my evils, all remediless.
 This ~~one prayer yet remains~~, might I be heard,
 No long petition — speedy death,
 The close of all my miseries and the balm.

650

Chor. Many are the sayings of the wise,
 In ancient and in modern books enrolled,
 Extolling patience as the truest fortitude,
 And to the bearing well of all calamities,
 All chances incident to man's frail life,
 Consolatories writ
 With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,
 Lenient of grief and anxious thought.
 But with the afflicted in his pangs their sound
 Little prevails, or rather seems a tune
 Harsh, and of dissonant mood from his complaint,
 Unless he feel within
 Some source of consolation from above,
 Secret refreshings that repair his strength
 And fainting spirits uphold.

660

God of our fathers! what is Man,
 That thou towards him with hand so various —
 Or might I say contrarious? —
 Temper'st thy providence through his short course:
 Not evenly, as thou rul'st
 The angelic orders, and inferior creatures mute,
 Irrational and brute?

670

Nor do I name of men the common rout,
 That, wandering loose about,
 Grow up and perish as the summer fly,
 Heads without name, no more remembered;
 But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
 With gifts and graces eminently adorned,
 To some great work, thy glory,
 And people's safety, which in part they effect.
 Yet toward these, thus dignified, thou oft,
 Amidst their highth of noon,
 Changest thy countenance and thy hand, with no regard
 Of highest favours past
 From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

680

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
 To life obscured, which were a fair dismissal,
 But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high —
 Unseemly falls in human eye,
 Too grievous for the trespass or omission;

690

Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
 Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
 To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captived,
 Or to the unjust tribunals, under change of times,
 And condemnation of the ungrateful multitude.
 If these they scape, perhaps in poverty
 With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
 Painful diseases and deformed,
 In crude old age ;
 Though not disordinate, yet causeless suffering
 The punishment of dissolute days. In fine,
 Just or unjust alike seem miserable,
 For oft alike both come to evil end.

700

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

But who is this? what thing of sea or land —

710

Female of sex it seems —

That, so bedecked, ornate, and gay,

Comes this way sailing,

Like a stately ship

Of Tarsus, bound for the isles

Of Javan or Gadire,

With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,

Sails filled, and streamers waving,

Courted by all the winds that hold them play ;

An amber scent of odorous perfume

Her harbinger, a damsel train behind?

720

Some rich Philistian matron she may seem ;

And now, at nearer view, no other certain

Than Dalila thy wife.

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

Chor. Yet on she moves; now stands and eyes thee fixed,
 About to have spoke; but now, with head declined,

Like a fair flower surcharged with dew, she weeps,

And words addressed seem into tears dissolved,

Wetting the borders of her silken veil.

730

But now again she makes address to speak.

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution

I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson ;

Which to have merited, without excuse,

I cannot but acknowledge. Yet, if tears

May expiate (though the fact more evil drew

In the perverse event than I foresaw),

My penance hath not slackened, though my pardon

No way assured. But conjugal affection,
 Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt, 740
 Hath led me on, desirous to behold
 Once more thy face, and know of thy estate,
 If aught in my ability may serve
 To lighten what thou suffer'st, and appease
 Thy mind with what amends is in my power—
 Though late, yet in some part to recompense
 My rash but more unfortunate misdeed.

Sams. Out, out, hyæna! These are thy wonted arts,
 And arts of every woman false like thee—
 To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray; 750
 Then, as repentant, to submit, beseech,
 And reconciliation move with feigned remorse,
 Confess, and promise wonders in her change—
 Not truly penitent, but chief to try
 Her husband, how far urged his patience bears,
 His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
 Then, with more cautious and instructed skill,
 Again transgresses, and again submits;
 That wisest and best men, full oft beguiled,
 With goodness principled not to reject 760
 The penitent, but ever to forgive,
 Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
 Entangled with a poisonous bosom-snake,
 If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
 As I by thee, to ages an example.

Dal. Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
 To lessen or extenuate my offence,
 But that, on the other side, if it be weighed
 By itself, with aggravations not surcharged,
 Or else with just allowance counterpoised, 770
 I may, if possible, thy pardon find
 The easier towards me, or thy hatred less.
 First granting, as I do, it was a weakness
 In me, but incident to all our sex,
 Curiosity, inquisitive, importune
 Of secrets, then with like infirmity
 To publish them—both common female faults—
 Was it not weakness also to make known
 For importunity, that is for naught,
 Wherein consisted all thy strength and safety? 780
 To what I did thou show'dst me first the way.
 But I to enemies revealed, and should not!
 Nor should'st thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:
 Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
 Let weakness, then, with weakness come to parle.

So near related, or the same of kind ;
 Thine forgive mine, that men may censure thine
 The gentler, if severely thou exact not
 More strength from me than in thyself was found.
 And what if love, which thou interpret'st hate, 790
 The jealousy of love, powerful of sway
 In human hearts, nor less in mine towards thee,
 Caused what I did? I saw thee mutable
 Of fancy; feared lest one day thou would'st leave me
 As her at Timna; sought by all means, therefore,
 How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
 No better way I saw than by importuning
 To learn thy secrets, get into my power
 Thy key of strength and safety. Thou wilt say,
 'Why, then, revealed?' I was assured by those 800
 Who tempted me that nothing was designed
 Against thee but safe custody and hold.
 That made for me; I knew that liberty
 Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
 While I at home sat full of cares and fears,
 Wailing thy absence in my widowed bed;
 Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,
 Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines',
 Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
 Fearless at home of partners in my love. 810
 These reasons in Love's law have passed for good,
 Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps;
 And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
 Yet always pity or pardon hath obtained.
 Be not unlike all others, not austere
 As thou art strong, inflexible as steel.
 If thou in strength all mortals dost exceed,
 In uncompassionate anger do not so.
Sams. How cunningly the sorceress displays
 Her own transgressions, to upbraid me mine! 820
 That malice, not repentance, brought thee hither
 By this appears. I gave, thou say'st, the example,
 I led the way—bitter reproach, but true;
 I to myself was false ere thou to me.
 Such pardon, therefore, as I give my folly
 Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou seest
 Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,
 Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
 Confess it feigned. Weakness is thy excuse,
 And I believe it—weakness to resist 830
 Philistian gold. If weakness may excuse,
 What murdurer, what traitor, parricide,

Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
~~All wickedness is weakness~~; that plea, therefore,
 With God or man will gain thee no remission.
 But love constrained thee! Call it furious rage
 To satisfy thy lust. Love seeks to have love;
 My love how could'st thou hope, who took'st the way
 To raise in me inexpiable hate,
 Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betrayed? 840
 In vain thou striv'st to cover shame with shame,
 Or by evasions thy crime uncover'st more.

Dal. Since thou determin'st weakness for no plea
 In man or woman, though to thy own condemning,
 Hear what assaults I had, what snares besides,
 What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
 Which might have awed the best-resolved of men,
 The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
 It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
 That wrought with me. Thou know'st the magistrates 850

And princes of my country came in person,
 Solicited, commanded, threatened, urged,
 Adjured by all the bonds of civil duty
 And of religion—pressed how just it was,
 How honourable, how glorious, to entrap
 A common enemy, who had destroyed
 Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
 Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
 Preaching how meritorious with the gods
 It would be to ensnare an irreligious 860
 Dishonourer of Dagon. What had I
 To oppose against such powerful arguments?
 Only my love of thee held long debate,
 And combated in silence all these reasons
 With hard contest. At length, that grounded maxim,
 So rife and celebrated in the mouths
 Of wisest men, that to the public good
 Private respects must yield, with grave authority
 Took full possession of me, and prevailed;
 Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining. 870

Sams. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end—
 In feigned religion, smooth hypocrisy!
 But, had thy love, still odiously pretended,
 Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
 Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds.
 I, before all the daughters of my tribe
 And of my nation, chose thee from among
 My enemies, loved thee, as too well thou knew'st;
 Too well; unbosomed all my secrets to thee,

Not out of levity, but overpowered 880
 By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
 Yet now am judged an enemy. Why, then,
 Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband —
 Then, as since then, thy country's foe professed?
 Being once a wife, for me thou wast to leave
 Parents and country; nor was I their subject,
 Nor under their protection, but my own;
 Thou mine, not theirs. If aught against my life
 Thy country sought of thee, it sought unjustly,
 Against the law of nature, law of nations; 890
 No more thy country, but an impious crew
 Of men conspiring to uphold their state
 By worse than hostile deeds, violating the ends
 For which our country is a name so dear;
 Not therefore to be obeyed. But zeal moved thee;
 To please thy gods thou didst it! Gods unable
 To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
 But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
 Of their own deity, Gods cannot be —
 Less therefore to be pleased, obeyed, or feared. 900
 These false pretexts and varnished colours failing,
 Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear!
Dal. In argument with men a woman ever
 Goes by the worse, whatever be her cause.
Sams. For want of words, no doubt, or lack of breath!
 Witness when I was worried with thy peals.
Dal. I was a fool, too rash, and quite mistaken
 In what I thought would have succeeded best.
 Let me obtain forgiveness of thee, Samson;
 Afford me place to show what recompense 910
 Towards thee I intend for what I have misdone,
 Misguided. Only what remains past cure
 Bear not too sensibly, nor still insist
 To afflict thyself in vain. Though sight be lost,
 Life yet hath many solaces, enjoyed
 Where other senses want not their delights —
 At home, in leisure and domestic ease,
 Exempt from many a care and chance to which
 Eyesight exposes, daily, men abroad.
 I to the lords will intercede, not doubting
 Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee 920
 From forth this loathsome prison-house, to abide
 With me, where my redoubled love and care,
 With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
 May ever tend about thee to old age,

With all things grateful cheered, and so supplied
That what by me thou hast lost thou least shalt miss.

Sams. No, no; of my condition take no care;

It fits not; thou and I long since are twain;

Nor think me so unwary or accursed

To bring my feet again into the snare

Where once I have been caught. I know thy trains,

Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils.

Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,

No more on me have power; their force is nulled;

So much of adder's wisdom I have learned,

To fence my ear against thy sorceries.

If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men

Loved, honoured, feared me, thou alone could hate me,

Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forgo me,

How would'st thou use me now, blind, and thereby

Deceivable, in most things as a child

Helpless, thence easily contemned and scorned,

And last neglected! How would'st thou insult,

When I must live uxorious to thy will

In perfect thralldom! how again betray me,

Bearing my words and doings to the lords

To gloss upon, and, censuring, frown or smile!

This jail I count the house of liberty

To thine, whose doors my feet shall never enter.

Dal. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.

Sams. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake

My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.

At distance I forgive thee; go with that;

Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works

It hath brought forth to make thee memorable

Among illustrious women, faithful wives;

Cherish thy hastened widowhood with the gold

Of matrimonial treason: so farewell.

Dal. I see thou art implacable, more deaf

To prayers than winds and seas. Yet winds to seas

Are reconciled at length, and sea to shore:

Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,

Eternal tempest never to be calmed.

Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing

For peace, reap nothing but repulse and hate,

Bid go with evil omen, and the brand

Of infamy upon my name denounced?

To mix with thy concernments I desist

Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own.

Fame, if not double-faced, is double-mouthed,

And with contrary blast proclaims most deeds;

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On both his wings, one black, the other white,
 Bears greatest names in his wild airy flight.
 My name, perhaps, among the Circumcised
 In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
 To all posterity may stand defamed,
 With malediction mentioned, and the blot
 Of falsehood most unconjugal traduced.

But in my country, where I most desire,
 In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
 I shall be named among the famoussest
 Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
 Living and dead recorded, who, to save
 Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose
 Above the faith of wedlock bands; my tomb
 With odours visited and annual flowers;
 Not less renowned than in Mount Ephraim

Jael, who, with inhospitable guile,
 Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nailed.

Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
 The public marks of honour and reward
 Conferred upon me for the piety
 Which to my country I was judged to have shown.

At this whoever envies or repines,
 I leave him to his lot, and like my own.

Chor. She's gone—a manifest serpent by her sting
 Discovered in the end, till now concealed.

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

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

Sams. Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end;
 Not wedlock-treachery endangering life.

Chor. It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit,
 Strength, comeliness of shape, or amplest merit,
 That woman's love can win, or long inherit;
 But what it is, hard is to say,
 Harder to hit,

Which way soever men refer it,
 (Much like thy riddle, Samson) in one day
 Or seven though one should musing sit.

If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride
 Had not so soon preferred

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1010

- Thy paranymph, worthless to thee compared, 1020
 Successor in thy bed,
 Nor both so loosely disallied
 Their nuptials, nor this last so treacherously
 Had shorn the fatal harvest of thy head.
 Is it for that such outward ornament
 Was lavished on their sex, that inward gifts
 Were left for haste unfinished, judgment scant,
 Capacity not raised to apprehend
 Or value what is best,
 In choice, but ofttest to affect the wrong? 1030
 Or was too much of self-love mixed,
 Of constancy no root infix'd,
 That either they love nothing, or not long?
 Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best,
 Seeming at first all heavenly under virgin veil,
 Soft, modest, meek, demure,
 Once joined, the contrary she proves—a thorn
 Intestine, far within defensive arms
 A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
 Adverse and turbulent; or by her charms 1040
 Draws him awry, enslaved
 With dotage, and his sense depraved
 To folly and shameful deeds, which ruin ends.
 What pilot so expert but needs must wreck,
 Embarked with such a steers-mate at the helm?
 Favoured of Heaven who finds
 One virtuous, rarely found,
 That in domestic good combines!
 Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
 But virtue which breaks through all opposition, 1050
 And all temptation can remove,
 Most shines and most is acceptable above.
 Therefore God's universal law
 Gave to the man despotic power
 Over his female in due awe,
 Nor from that right to part an hour,
 Smile she or lour:
 So shall he least confusion draw
 On his whole life, not swayed
 By female usurpation, nor dismayed. *ruick* 1060
 But had we best retire? I see a storm.
Sams. Fair days have oft contracted wind and rain.
Chor. But this another kind of tempest brings.
Sams. Be less abstruse; my riddling days are past.
Chor. Look now for no enchanting voice, nor fear
 The bait of honeyed words; a rougher tongue

Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride,
 The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
 Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.
 Comes he in peace? What wind hath blown him hither 1070
 I less conjecture than when first I saw
 The sumptuous Dalila floating this way:
 His habit carries peace, his brow defiance.

Sams. Or peace or not, alike to me he comes.

Chor. His fraught we soon shall know: he now arrives.

Har. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
 As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
 Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;
 Men call me Harapha, of stock renowned 1080
 As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old
 That Kiriathaim held. Thou know'st me now,
 If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
 Of thy prodigious might and feats performed,
 Incredible to me, in this displeas'd,
 That I was never present on the place
 Of those encounters, where we might have tried
 Each other's force in camp or listed field;
 And now am come to see of whom such noise
 Hath walked about, and each limb to survey,
 If thy appearance answer loud report. 1090

Sams. The way to know were not to see, but taste.

Har. Dost thou already single me? I thought
 Gyves and the mill had tamed thee. O that fortune
 Had brought me to the field where thou art famed
 To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw!
 I should have forced thee soon wish other arms,
 Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown;
 So had the glory of prowess been recovered
 To Palestine, won by a Philistine 1100
 From the unforeskinned race, of whom thou bear'st
 The highest name for valiant acts. That honour,
 Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
 I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

Sams. Boast not of what thou would'st have done, but do
 What then thou would'st; thou seest it in thy hand.

Har. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
 And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

Sams. Such usage as your honourable lords
 Afford me, assassinated and betrayed;
 Who durst not with their whole united powers 1110
 In fight withstand me single and unarmed,
 Nor in the house with chamber-ambushes
 Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,

Till they had hired a woman with their gold,
 Breaking her marriage-faith, to circumvent me.
 Therefore, without feign'd shifts, let be assigned
 Some narrow place enclosed, where sight may give thee,
 Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;
 Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
 And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon, 1120
 Vant-brace and greaves and gauntlet; add thy spear,
 A weaver's beam, and seven-times-folded shield:
 I only with an oaken staff will meet thee,
 And raise such outcries on thy clattered iron,
 Which long shall not withhold me from thy head,
 That in a little time, while breath remains thee,
 Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath, to boast
 Again in safety what thou would'st have done
 To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms 1130
 Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,
 Their ornament and safety, had not spells
 And black enchantments, some magician's art,
 Armed thee or charmed thee strong, which thou from Heaven
 Feign'dst at thy birth was given thee in thy hair,
 Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
 Were bristles ranged like those that ridge the back
 Of chafed wild boars or ruffled porcupines.

Sams. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;
 My trust is in the Living God, who gave me, 1140
 At my nativity, this strength, diffused
 No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,
 Than thine, while I preserved these locks unshorn,
 The pledge of my unviolated vow.
 For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god,
 Go to his temple, invoke his aid
 With solemnest devotion, spread before him
 How highly it concerns his glory now
 To frustrate and dissolve these magic spells,
 Which I to be the power of Israel's God 1150
 Avow, and challenge Dagon to the test,
 Offering to combat thee, his champion bold,
 With the utmost of his godhead seconded:
 Then thou shalt see, or rather to thy sorrow
 Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine.

Har. Presume not on thy God. Whate'er he be,
 Thee he regards not, owns not, hath cut off
 Quite from his people, and delivered up
 Into thy enemies' hand; permitted them
 To put out both thine eyes, and fettered send thee 1160

Into the common prison, there to grind
 Among the slaves and asses, thy comrades,
 As good for nothing else, no better service
 With those thy Loisterous locks; no worthy match
 For valour to assail, nor by the sword
 Of noble warrior, so to stain his honour,
 But by the barber's razor best subdued.

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

1170

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

1180

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

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

1190

Sams. Among the daughters of the Philistines
 I chose a wife, which argued me no foe,
 And in your city held my nuptial feast;
 But your ill-meaning politician lords,
 Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
 Appointed to await me thirty spies,
 Who, threatening cruel death, constrained the bride
 To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,
 That solved the riddle which I had proposed.

1200

When I perceived all set on enmity,
 As on my enemies, wherever chanced,
 I used hostility, and took their spoil,
 To pay my underminers in their coin.
 My nation was subjected to your lords!
 It was the force of conquest; force with force
 Is well ejected when the conquered can.

But I, a private person, whom my country
As a league-breaker gave up bound, presumed
Single rebellion, and did hostile acts! 1210

I was no private, but a person raised,
With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven,
To free my country. If their servile minds
Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,
But to their masters gave me up for nought,
The unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.

I was to do my part from Heaven assigned,
And had performed it if my known offence
Had not disabled me, not all your force.
These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant, 1220
Though by his blindness maimed for high attempts
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

Har. With thee, a man condemned, a slave enrolled,
Due by the law to capital punishment?

To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Sams. Cam'st thou for this; vain boaster, to survey me,
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer; part not hence so slight informed;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee. 1230

Har. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unused
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

Sams. No man withholds thee; nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van;
My heels are fettered, but my fist is free.

Har. This insolence other kind of answer fits.

Sams. Go, baffled coward, lest I run upon thee,
Though in these chains, bulk without spirit vast,
And with one buffet lay thy structure low,
Or swing thee in the air, then dash thee down, 1240
To the hazard of thy brains and shattered sides.

Har. By Astaroth, ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries, in irons loaden on thee.

Chor. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fallen,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides,
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

Sams. I dread him not, nor all his giant brood,
Though fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantic size, Goliah chief.

Chor. He will directly to the lords, I fear, 1250
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

Sams. He must allege some cause, and offered fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise

Whether he durst accept the offer or not ;
 And that he durst not plain enough appeared.
 Much more affliction than already felt
 They cannot well impose, nor I sustain,
 If they intend advantage of my labours,
 The work of many hands, which earns my keeping, 1260
 With no small profit daily to my owners.
 But come what will ; my deadliest foe will prove
 My speediest friend, by death to rid me hence ;
 The worst that he can give to me the best.
 Yet so it may fall out, because their end
 Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
 Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.

Chor. O, how comely it is, and how reviving
 To the spirits of just men long oppressed,
 When God into the hands of their deliverer 1270
 Puts invincible might,
 To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressor,
 The brute and boisterous force of violent men,
 Hardy and industrious to support
 Tyrannic power, but raging to pursue
 The righteous, and all such as honour truth !
 He all their ammunition
 And feats of war defeats,
 With plain heroic magnitude of mind
 And celestial vigour armed ; 1280
 Their armouries and magazines contemns,
 Renders them useless, while
 With winged expedition
 Swift as the lightning glance he executes
 His errand on the wicked, who, surprised,
 Lose their defence, distracted and amazed.

But patience is more oft the exercise
 Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
 Making them each his own deliverer,
 And victor over all 1290
 That tyranny or fortune can inflict.
 Either of these is in thy lot,
 Samson, with might endued
 Above the sons of men ; but sight bereaved
 May chance to number thee with those
 Whom patience finally must crown.

This Idol's day hath been to thee no day of rest,
 Labouring thy mind
 More than the working day thy hands.
 And yet, perhaps, more trouble is behind ; 1300
 For I descry this way

Some other tending; in his hand
 A sceptre or quaint staff he bears,
 Comes on amain, speed in his look.
 By his habit I discern him now
 A public officer, and now at hand.
 His message will be short and voluble.

Off. Ebrews, the prisoner Samson here I seek.

Chor. His manacles remark him; there he sits.

Off. Samson, to thee our lords thus bid me say:

1310

This day to Dagon is a solemn feast,
 With sacrifices, triumph, pomp, and games;
 Thy strength they know surpassing human rate,
 And now some public proof thereof require
 To honour this great feast, and great assembly.
 Rise, therefore, with all speed, and come along,
 Where I will see thee heartened and fresh clad,
 To appear as fits before the illustrious lords.

Sams. Thou know'st I am an Ebrew; therefore tell them
 Our law forbids at their religious rites
 My presence; for that cause I cannot come.

1320

Off. This answer, be assured, will not content them.

Sams. Have they not sword-players, and every sort
 Of gymnastic artists, wrestlers, riders, runners,
 Jugglers and dancers, antics, mummers, mimics,
 But they must pick me out, with shackles tired,
 And over-laboured at their public mill,
 To make them sport with blind activity?
 Do they not seek occasion of new quarrels,
 On my refusal, to distress me more,
 Or make a game of my calamities?
 Return the way thou cam'st; I will not come.

1330

Off. Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.

Sams. Myself! my conscience, and internal peace.
 Can they think me so broken, so debased
 With corporal servitude, that my mind ever
 Will condescend to such absurd commands?
 Although their drudge, to be their fool or jester,
 And, in my midst of sorrow and heart-grief,
 To show them feats, and play before their god—
 The worst of all indignities, yet on me
 Joined with extreme contempt! I will not come.

1340

Off. My message was imposed on me with speed,
 Brooks no delay: is this thy resolution?

Sams. So take it with what speed thy message needs.

Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce.

Sams. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

Chor. Consider, Samson; matters now are strained

Up to the highth, whether to hold or break.
 He's gone, and who knows how he may report 1350
 Thy words by adding fuel to the flame?
 Expect another message, more imperious,
 More lordly thundering than thou well wilt bear.

Sams. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
 Of strength, again returning with my hair
 After my great transgression — so requite
 Favour renewed, and add a greater sin
 By prostituting holy things to idols,
 A Nazarite, in place abominable,
 Vaunting my strength in honour to their Dagon? 1360
 Besides how vile, contemptible, ridiculous,
 What act more execrably unclean, profane?

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

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

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outward acts defile not.

Sams. Where outward force constrains, the sentence holds: 1370
 But who constrains me to the temple of Dagon,
 Not dragging? The Philistian lords command:
 Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
 I do it freely, venturing to displease
 God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
 Set God behind; which, in his jealousy,
 Shall never, unrepented, find forgiveness.
 Yet that he may dispense with me, or thee,
 Present in temples at idolatrous rites
 For some important cause, thou need'st not doubt.

Chor. How thou wilt here come off surmounts my reach. 1380

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

Chor. In time thou hast resolved: the man returns. 1390

Off. Samson, this second message from our lords
 To thee I am bid say: Art thou our slave,
 Our captive, at the public mill our drudge,
 And dar'st thou, at our sending and command,
 Dispute thy coming? Come without delay;

Or we shall find such engines to assail
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force.
Though thou wert firmlier fastened than a rock.

Sams. I could be well content to try their art,
Which to no few of them would prove pernicious; 1400
Yet, knowing their advantages too many,
Because they shall not trail me through their streets
Like a wild beast, I am content to go.
Masters' commands come with a power resistless
To such as owe them absolute subjection;
And for a life who will not change his purpose?
(So mutable are all the ways of men!)
Yet this be sure, in nothing to comply
Scandalous or forbidden in our Law.

Off. I praise thy resolution. Doff these links: 1410
By this compliance thou wilt win the lords
To favour, and perhaps to set thee free.

Sams. Brethren, farewell. Your company along
I will not wish, lest it perhaps offend them
To see me girt with friends; and how the sight
Of me, as of a common enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them
I know not. Lords are lordliest in their wine;
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fired 1420
With zeal, if aught religion seem concerned;
No less the people, on their holy-days,
Impetuous, insolent, unquenchable.
Happen what may, of me expect to hear
Nothing dishonourable, impure, unworthy
Our God, our Law, my nation, or myself;
The last of me or no I cannot warrant.

Chor. Go, and the Holy One
Of Israel be thy guide
To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
Great among the Heathen round; 1430
Send thee the Angel of thy birth, to stand
Fast by thy side, who from thy father's field
Rode up in flames after his message told
Of thy conception, and be now a shield
Of fire; that Spirit that first rushed on thee
In the camp of Dan,
Be efficacious in thee now at need!
For never was from Heaven imparted
Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,
As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen. 1440
But wherefore comes old Manoa in such haste
With youthful steps? Much livelier than erewhile

He seems: supposing here to find his son,
Or of him bringing to us some glad news?

Man. Peace with you, brethren! My inducement hither
Was not at present here to find my son,
By order of the lords new parted hence
To come and play before them at their feast.
I heard all as I came; the city rings,
And numbers thither flock: I had no will,
Lest I should see him forced to things unseemly. 1450
But that which moved my coming now was chiefly
To give ye part with me what hope I have
With good success to work his liberty.

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

Man. I have attempted, one by one, the lords,
Either at home, or through the high street passing,
With supplication prone and father's tears,
To accept of ransom for my son, their prisoner. 1460
Some much averse I found, and wondrous harsh,
Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;
That part most revered Dagon and his priests:
Others more moderate seeming, but their aim
Private reward, for which both God and State
They easily would set to sale: a third
More generous far and civil, who confessed
They had enough revenged, having reduced
Their foe to misery beneath their fears;
The rest was magnanimity to remit, 1470
If some convenient ransom were proposed.
What noise or shout was that? It tore the sky.

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

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance
May compass it, shall willingly be paid
And numbered down. Much rather I shall choose
To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest
And he in that calamitous prison left. 1480
No, I am fixed not to part hence without him.
For his redemption all my patrimony,
If need be, I am ready to forgo
And quit. Not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

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

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

1490

1500

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

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

1510

Chor. Noise call you it, or universal groan,
 As if the whole inhabitation perished?
 Blood, death, and deathful deeds, are in that noise,
 Ruin, destruction at the utmost point.

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

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

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

1520

Chor. Best keep together here, lest, running thither,
 We unawares run into danger's mouth.

This evil on the Philistines is fallen:
 From whom could else a general cry be heard?
 The sufferers, then, will scarce molest us here;
 From other hands we need not much to fear.

What if, his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
 Nothing is hard) by miracle restored,
 He now be dealing dole among his foes,
 And over heaps of slaughtered walk his way?

1530

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
 For his people of old; what hinders now?

Man. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;
 Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief.
 A little stay will bring some notice hither.

Chor. Of good or bad so great, of bad the sooner;
 For evil news rides post, while good news baits.
 And to our wish I see one hither speeding—
 An Ebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe. 1540

Messenger. O, whither shall I run, or which way fly
 The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
 Which erst my eyes beheld, and yet behold?
 For dire imagination still pursues me.
 But providence or instinct of nature seems,
 Or reason, though disturbed and scarce consulted,
 To have guided me aright, I know not how,
 To thee first, reverend Manoa, and to these
 My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
 As at some distance from the place of horror, 1550
 So in the sad event too much concerned.

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

Mess. It would burst forth; but I recover breath,
 And sense distract, to know well what I utter.

Man. Tell us the sum; the circumstance defer.

Mess. Gaza yet stands; but all her sons are fallen,
 All in a moment overwhelmed and fallen.

Man. Sad! but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest 1560
 The desolation of a hostile city.

Mess. Feed on that first; there may in grief be surfeit.

Man. Relate by whom.

Mess. By Samson.

Man. That still lessens
 The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.

Mess. Ah! Manoa, I refrain too suddenly
 To utter what will come at last too soon,
 Lest evil tidings, with too rude irruption
 Hitting thy aged ear, should pierce too deep.

Man. Suspense in news is torture; speak them out.

Mess. Then take the worst in brief: Samson is dead. 1570

Man. The worst indeed! O, all my hope's defeated
 To free him hence! but Death, who sets all free,
 Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
 What windy joy this day had I conceived,
 Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves
 Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
 Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
 Yet, ere I give the reins to grief, say first
 How died he; death to life is crown or shame.
 All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he? 1580
 What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

Mess. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

Man. Wearied with slaughter, then, or how? explain.

Mess. By his own hands.

Man. Self-violence! What cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself
Among his foes?

Mess. Inevitable cause—
At once both to destroy and be destroyed.
The edifice, where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pulled.

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

Mess. Occasions drew me early to this city;
And, as the gates I entered with sun-rise,
The morning trumpets festival proclaimed
Through each high street. Little I had dispatched,
When all abroad was rumoured that this day
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games.
I sorrowed at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.

The building was a spacious theatre,
Half round on two main pillars vaulted high,
With seats where all the lords, and each degree
Of sort, might sit in order to behold;
The other side was open, where the throng
On banks and scaffolds under sky might stand:
I among these aloof obscurely stood.

The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had filled their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turned. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought,
In their state livery clad: before him pipes
And timbrels; on each side went armed guards;
Both horse and foot before him and behind,
Archers and slingers, cataphracts, and spears.

At sight of him the people with a shout
Rifted the air, clamouring their god with praise,
Who had made their dreadful enemy their thrall.
He patient, but undaunted, where they led him,
Came to the place; and what was set before him,
Which without help of eye might be assayed,
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still performed

1590

1600

1610

1620

All with incredible, stupendious force,
 None daring to appear antagonist.
 At length, for intermission sake, they led him
 Between the pillars; he his guide requested 1630
 (For so from such as nearer stood we heard),
 As over-tired, to let him lean a while
 With both his arms on those two massy pillars,
 That to the arched roof gave main support.
 He unsuspecting led him; which when Samson
 Felt in his arms, with head a while inclined,
 And eyes fast fixed, he stood, as one who prayed,
 Or some great matter in his mind revolved:
 At last, with head erect, thus cried aloud:—
 “Hitherto, Lords, what your commands imposed 1640
 I have performed, as reason was, obeying,
 Not without wonder or delight beheld;
 Now, of my own accord, such other trial
 I mean to show you of my strength yet greater
 As with amaze shall strike all who behold.”
 This uttered, straining all his nerves, he bowed;
 As with the force of winds and waters pent
 When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
 With horrible convulsion to and fro
 He tugged, he shook, till down they came, and drew 1650
 The whole roof after them with burst of thunder
 Upon the heads of all who sat beneath,
 Lords, ladies, captains, counsellors, or priests,
 Their choice nobility and flower, not only
 Of this, but each Philistian city round,
 Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
 Samson, with these immixed, inevitably
 Pulled down the same destruction on himself;
 The vulgar only scaped, who stood without.

Chor. O dearly bought revenge, yet glorious! 1660
 Living or dying thou hast fulfilled
 The work for which thou wast foretold
 To Israel, and now liest victorious
 Among thy slain self-killed;
 Not willingly, but tangled in the fold
 Of dire Necessity, whose law in death conjoined
 Thee with thy slaughtered foes, in number more
 Than all thy life had slain before.

Semichor. While their hearts were jocund and sublime,
 Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine
 And fat regorged of bulls and goats,
 Chanting their idol, and preferring
 Before our living Dread, who dwells 1670

In Silo, his bright sanctuary,
 Among them he a spirit of phrenzy sent,
 Who hurt their minds,
 And urged them on with mad desire
 To call in haste for their destroyer.
 They, only set on sport and play,
 Unweetingly importuned

1680

Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
 So fond are mortal men,
 Fallen into wrath divine,
 As their own ruin on themselves to invite,
 Insensate left, or to sense reprobate,
 And with blindness internal struck.

Semichor. But he, though blind of sight,
 Despised, and thought extinguished quite,
 With inward eyes illuminated,

1690

His fiery virtue roused
 From under ashes into sudden flame,
 And as an evening dragon came,
 Assailant on the perched roosts
 And nests in order ranged
 Of tame villatic fowl, but as an eagle
 His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads.
 So Virtue, given for lost,

Depressed and overthrown, as seemed,
 Like that self-begotten bird

1700

In the Arabian woods embost,
 That no second knows nor third,
 And lay erewhile a holocaust,
 From out her ashy womb now teemed,
 Revives, reflowerishes, then vigorous most
 When most unactive deemed;
 And, though her body die, her fame survives,
 A secular bird, ages of lives.

Man. Come, come; no time for lamentation now,
 Nor much more cause. Samson hath quit himself
 Like Samson, and heroically hath finished

1710

A life heroic, on his enemies
 Fully revenged — hath left them years of mourning,
 And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor
 Through all Philistian bounds; to Israel
 Honour hath left and freedom, let but them
 Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
 To himself and father's house eternal fame;
 And, which is best and happiest yet, all this
 With God not parted from him, as was feared,
 But favouring and assisting to the end.

1720

Nothing is here for tears, nothing to wail
 Or knock the breast; no weakness, no contempt,
 Dispraise, or blame; nothing but well and fair,
 And what may quiet us in a death so noble.
 Let us go find the body where it lies
 Soaked in his enemies' blood, and from the stream
 With lavers pure, and cleansing herbs, wash off
 The clotted gore. I, with what speed the while
 (Gaza is not in plight to say us nay),
 Will send for all my kindred, all my friends,
 To fetch him hence, and solemnly attend,
 With silent obsequy and funeral train,
 Home to his father's house. There will I build him
 A monument, and plant it round with shade
 Of laurel ever green and branching palm,
 With all his trophies hung, and acts enrolled
 In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
 Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
 And from his memory inflame their breasts
 To matchless valour and adventures high;
 The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
 Visit his tomb with flowers, only bewailing
 His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
 From whence captivity and loss of eyes.

1730

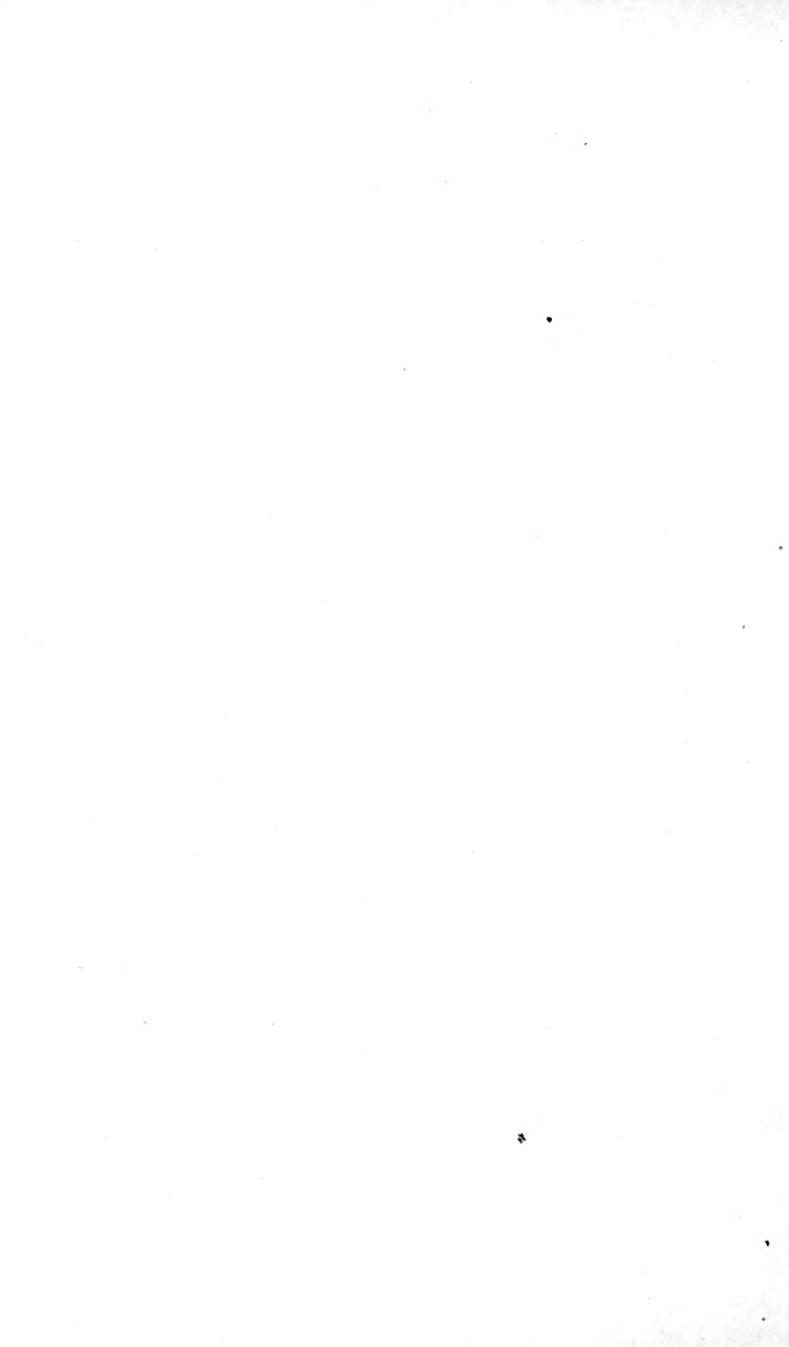
1740

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

1750

THE END.

INTRODUCTION
TO THE MINOR POEMS.



GENERAL INTRODUCTION.

UNDER the date Oct. 6, 1645, this entry occurs in the books of the London Stationers' Company: "*Mr. Moseley entered for his copie, under the hand of Sir Nath. Brent and both the Wardens, a booke called Poems in English and Latyn by Mr. John Milton, 6d.*" The meaning of the entry is that on that day Humphrey Moseley, then the most active publisher in London of poetry, old plays, and works of pure fancy, registered the forthcoming volume as his copyright, showing Brent's licence for its publication, and the signatures of the Wardens of the Company besides, and paying sixpence for the formality. The following is the complete title of the volume when it did appear: —

"Poems of Mr. John Milton, both English and Latin, compos'd at several times. Printed by his true Copies. The Songs were set in Musick by Mr. Henry Lawes, gentleman of the King's Chappel, and one of His Majesties private Musick.

‘———— Baccare frontem
Cingite, ne vati noceat mala lingua futuro.’

VIRGIL, Eclog. 7.

Printed and publish'd according to Order. London, Printed by Ruth Raworth, for Humphrey Moseley, and are to be sold at the signe of the Princes Arms in Pauls Churchyard. 1645."

From a copy of this first edition of Milton's Poems among the King's Pamphlets in the British Museum, bearing a note of the precise day of its publication written on the title-page, I learn that the day was Jan. 2, 1645-6. Milton had then been some months in his new dwelling-house in Barbican; where, besides his pupils, there were now domiciled with him his reconciled wife, his aged father, and several of his wife's relations.

The volume published by Moseley is a small and rather neat octavo of more than 200 pages. The English Poems come first and fill 120 pages; after which, with a separate title-page, and filling 88 pages, separately numbered, come the Latin Poems. The poems contained in the volume, whether in the English or the Latin portion, include, with two exceptions, all those which are now known to have been written by Milton, at different periods, from his boyhood at St. Paul's School to the year 1645, in which the volume was published. The exceptions are the little elegy "On the Death of a fair Infant dying of a Cough" (1626), and the curious little fragment, "At a Vacation Exercise at College" (1628). Prefixed to the volume as a whole, and doubtless with Milton's sanction, was a very eulogistic Preface by Moseley, entitled "The Stationer to the Reader" (see it at the beginning of the Minor Poems). Then, before *Comus*, which begins on p. 67 of the volume, there is a separate title-page, as if to call attention to its greater length and importance — besides which,

Lawes's eulogistic dedication of this poem to Lord Brackley, in his separate edition of 1637, is reproduced (see it prefixed to *Comus* in this ed.), and the poem is farther introduced by a copy furnished by Milton of Sir Henry Wotton's remarkable letter to him in 1638 (also prefixed to *Comus* in this ed.). Finally, prefixed to the Latin Poems in the volume, after the separate title-page which distinguishes them from the English portion, are copies of the commendatory verses, &c., with which Milton had been favoured when abroad by the distinguished foreigners who had seen some of these poems, or otherwise become acquainted with him. Only in one peculiarity of the volume was there a miscarriage. It had been proposed, apparently by Moseley, that there should be a portrait of Milton prefixed to the volume; and the engraver to whom Moseley had entrusted the thing was one W. Marshall, who had executed other portraits of men of the day, and was of some respectability in his profession. But, whether Marshall worked carelessly from an oil-painting then in Milton's possession, or only concocted something out of his own head, the print which he produced bore no earthly resemblance to Milton, or indeed to any possible human being. Though entitled "*Joannis Miltoni Angli Effigies anno atatis viges. primo,*" ("Portrait of John Milton, Englishman, in the 21st year of his age,") it exhibited a stolid, grim-looking, long-haired gentleman, of about fifty, with a background of trees and a meadow, and shepherds dancing and piping, seen through a window. What Milton thought when this engraving of himself was shown him we can only guess. But, instead of having it cancelled, he let it go forth with the volume — only taking his revenge by a practical joke at the engraver's expense. He offered him some lines of Greek verse to be engraved ornamentally under the portrait; and these lines the poor artist did innocently engrave, little thinking what they meant. An English translation of them may run thus —

That an unskilful hand had carved this print
You'd say at once, seeing the living face;
But, finding here no jot of me, my friends,
Laugh at the wretched artist's mis-attempt.

Such was the First Edition of Milton's Miscellaneous Poems, published in 1645, when the author was thirty-seven years of age. The volume seems to have had no great circulation; but it sufficed to keep alive, for the next two-and-twenty years, or till the publication of *Paradise Lost* in 1667, the recollection that the man who, through this long period, was becoming more and more known for his Revolutionary principles and his connexion with the Commonwealth government, had begun life as a poet.

Paradise Lost having been followed, in 1671, by *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, the popularity of these three great poems of Milton's later years seems to have re-awakened so much demand for his earlier Poems as to make a new edition of them desirable. Accordingly, in 1673, or twenty-eight years after Moseley had published the first edition, a second edition of the Minor Poems did appear, under Milton's own superintendence. This Second Edition, which, like the first, was a small octavo, bore the following title: —

"Poems, &c., upon Several Occasions. By Mr. John Milton: both English and Latin, &c. Composed at several times. With a small Tractate of Education. To Mr. Hartlib. London, Printed for Tho. Dring, at the White Lion, next Chancery Lane End, in Fleet Street. 1673." [So in copies which I have seen; but in a copy now before me, the latter part of the imprint runs thus: — "London: Printed for Thos. Dring, at the Blew Anchor next Mitre Court over against Fetter Lane in Fleet Street. 1673."]

In this second edition, as compared with the first, the following particulars are to be noted: (1) There were certain *additions*. The chief of these were, of course, those English and Latin pieces which had been written by Milton since the first edition was published. For obvious reasons, indeed, Milton did not think it advisable, at that date, to publish his sonnets to Fairfax, Vane, and Cromwell, nor that second one to Cyriack Skinner in which he speaks with exultation of his own services in the Republican cause. With these exceptions, however, all the pieces written since 1645 were now published by Milton himself in this second edition. But there were also included in this edition those two English pieces, which, though written long before the publication of the first edition, had not appeared in it, viz.: the elegy "On the Death of a fair Infant dying of a Cough," written in 1626, and the fragment, "At a Vacation Exercise at College," written in 1628. Copies of these two pieces had apparently been recovered by Milton, and their insertion in the new edition was certainly a gain to that edition. (2) To some copies of this second edition of the Poems there was prefixed a new portrait of Milton, superseding the caricature by Marshall prefixed to the first edition. But the jocular Greek lines on Marshall's portrait which had appeared in the first edition were still preserved. They were printed among the *Sylvæ* in the new edition, with the title "In Effigiei ejus Sculptorem." (3) From the new edition were *omitted* Moseley's Preface to the first edition, and also the two pieces of English prose which had been specially inserted in the first as introductions to the *Comus*—viz. Lawes's Dedication of the *Comus* to Lord Brackley in 1637, and Sir Henry Wotton's letter of 1638. Milton probably thought that these laudatory introductions were no longer required. He still kept, however, the complimentary verses, &c., of his foreign friends, prefixed to the Latin poems.

To most of the editions of the Minor Poems that have appeared since Milton's own second edition of 1673 there have, of course, been added such scraps of verse, not inserted in that edition, as Milton would himself have included in any final edition. Thus the scraps of verse, whether in English or Latin, interspersed through his prose-writings, are now properly collected and inserted among the Poems. Those four English Sonnets, also, which Milton had, from prudential reasons, omitted in the edition of 1673, are now in their places. After the Revolution of 1688 there was no reason for withholding these interesting sonnets from the public; and, accordingly, when Milton's nephew, Edward Phillips, published, in 1694, an English edition of the "Letters of State" which had been written by his uncle as Latin Secretary during the Commonwealth, and prefixed to these Letters his Memoir of his uncle, he very properly printed the four missing sonnets as an appendix to the Memoir. From that time they have always been included in editions of the Poems.

Even had Milton not given his Minor Poems to the world in print during his lifetime, those interesting productions of his genius would not have been wholly lost. From the time when he had first begun to write poems or other things, he had carefully kept the MSS.; and it so chanced that a larger quantity of Milton's original MSS. has been preserved than of the original MSS. of most other English poets of that age. Not a few of Milton's papers, either loose, or forming a kind of large draft-book, had come into the possession of Sir Henry Newton Puckering, Bart., a scholar and book-collector of the seventeenth century; and as, on his death in 1700, he left his collection of books to the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge, these papers lay about

in that Library till 1736, when they were carefully put together and bound in morocco. Accordingly, this thin morocco-bound volume of Milton MSS. is to this day one of the most precious curiosities in the Library of Trinity College. It is shown to visitors in a glass table-case, arranged so as to gratify them with the sight of a page or two of Milton's autograph. By permission of the Master and Fellows, but only in the presence of one of the Fellows, it may be removed from the case for more leisurely examination. The volume consists of fifty-four pages, all of folio size, except an interpolated leaf or two of small quarto. Eight of the pages are blank; all the other forty-six are written on, most of them very closely. The following is a list of the contents in the order in which they stand:—*Arcades* (draft in Milton's own hand); *Song, At a solemn Music* (Milton's own hand); *Sonnet on his having arrived at the age of twenty-three* (in Milton's own hand, as part of Prose Letter to a Friend, of which there are two drafts); *On Time* (Milton's own hand); *Upon the Circumcision* (Milton's own hand); *Sonnet VIII.* (in the hand of an amanuensis); *Sonnets IX. and X.* (Milton's own hand); *Comus* and *Lycidas*, entire drafts, much corrected (in Milton's own hand); *Seven pages of Jottings of Subjects for Tragedies* (Milton's own hand: see *Intro.* to *P. L.*, to *P. R.*, and to *Sams. Ag.*); *Sonnets XI.—XIV.* (in Milton's own hand, but with copies in another hand); *Sonnet XV.: To Fairfax* (in Milton's own hand); *Sonnet XVI.: To Cromwell* (in the hand of some amanuensis); *Sonnet XVII.: To Vane* (also in another hand); *Lines on the Forcers of Conscience* (also in another hand); *Sonnets XXI.—XXIII.* (also in the hands of amanuenses). It thus appears that in this precious volume at Cambridge there are preserved (mostly in Milton's own hand, but occasionally in the hands of amanuenses, who either transcribed from his original drafts before he was blind, or, after he was blind, wrote to his dictation) actual MS. copies of much the larger part of all Milton's MINOR ENGLISH POETRY.

INTRODUCTIONS

TO THE ENGLISH POEMS.

PARAPHRASES ON PSALMS CXIV. AND CXXXVI.

THESE were done, as the author himself takes care to tell us, "at fifteen years old" — *i.e.* in 1624. They are, in fact, the only specimens now extant of Milton's muse before he went to Cambridge. They are the relics, doubtless, of a little collection of boyish performances, now lost, with which he amused himself, and perhaps pleased his father and his teachers, when he lived in his father's house in Bread Street, Cheapside, and attended the neighbouring school of St. Paul's. They prove him to have been even then a careful reader of contemporary English poetry, and, in particular, of Spenser, and of Sylvester's quaint and old-fashioned, but richly poetical, translation of the *Divine Weekes and Workes* of the French religious poet Du Bartas. This book, which had been published in 1605 by Humphrey Lownes, a well-known printer of Bread Street Hill, close to Milton's father's house, was as popular in England as the original was on the Continent. It went through several editions while Sylvester lived, and almost every pious English household of literary tastes possessed a copy.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT DYING OF A COUGH.

Over this poem Milton has himself placed the words "*Anno ætatis 17,*" implying that it was written in his 17th year. Now, as Milton entered his seventeenth year on the 9th of December, 1624, and ended it on the 9th of December, 1625, this would place the poem between these dates. But, when Milton placed Arabic figures after the phrase *anno ætatis* in these headings of his poems, it was his habit to give himself the benefit of a year by understanding the figures as noting cardinal and not ordinal numbers. "*Anno ætatis 17*" meant, with him, not strictly "in his seventeenth year," but "at seventeen years of age." The present poem, accordingly, was actually written in the winter of 1625-6, or during Milton's second academic year at Cambridge. It is the first of his preserved English pieces of the Cambridge period, but seems to have been written, not *at* Cambridge, but in the course of a brief

visit made to London between the Michaelmas Term and the Lent Term of the academic year — *i.e.* between December 16, 1625, and January 13, 1625-6. The subject of it was the death of an infant niece of the poet, the first child of his only surviving sister Anne Milton, who was several years older than himself, and had been recently married to a Mr. Edward Phillips, a native of Shrewsbury, but resident in London, where he held a situation in the Crown Office in Chancery. When in town from Cambridge, Milton had seen the "fair infant," whether in his father's house in Bread Street, or in his sister's own house, which was "in the Strand, near Charing Cross." But the life of the little creature was to be short. The autumn of 1625 was a particularly unhealthy one in London — the Plague then raging there with such violence that as many as 35,000 persons were said to have died of it during that season within the Bills of Mortality. There is an allusion to this prevalence of the Plague in the last stanza but one of the poem. Not to the Plague, however, but to the general inclemency of the succeeding winter, did the delicate little blossom fall a victim. She died "of a cough" — *i.e.* of some affection of the lungs.

AT A VACATION EXERCISE IN THE COLLEGE.

The heading prefixed to this piece by Milton is, more completely, as follows: — "*Anno ætatis 19: At a Vacation Exercise in the College, part Latin, part English: the Latin Speeches ended, the English thus began.*" The piece, in fact, was written in 1628, or during Milton's fourth academic year at Cambridge, and, as the title implies, was but a fragment of a much longer and more composite exercise or discourse, part of which was in Latin, written for some ceremonial at Christ's College in the vacation of that year — *i.e.* after the close of the Easter Term on the 4th of July.

Fortunately, the College Exercise to which this piece belonged still exists. It is the Sixth of those seven juvenile Latin Essays of Milton called *Prolusiones Oratoriæ* (now included in his collected prose-works) which were first published in 1674, the last year of his life, in conjunction with his *Epistolæ Familiæres*, or Latin Familiar Epistles. All the seven *Prolusiones* are interesting as throwing light on Milton's career at the University, and his success in those public debates and discussions on scholastic and philosophical topics which formed in those days so important a part of College and University training. The Sixth, however, is nearly the longest, and is perhaps the most interesting altogether. It is entitled "*In Feriis Æstivis Collegii, sed concurrente, ut solet, totâ fere Academiæ juventute, Oratio: Exercitationes nonnunquam ludicras Philosophiæ studiis non obesse;*" which may be translated thus, "*In the Summer Vacation of the College, but in the presence, as usual, of a concourse of nearly the whole youth of the University, an Oration to this effect: That occasional sportive exercises are not inconsistent with philosophical studies.*" The Essay, then, was an actual speech delivered by Milton in the hall of Christ's College, Cambridge, on an occasion of periodical revel, when not only his fellow-collegians, but a crowd of students from other colleges, were present. Milton had nearly completed his undergraduate course, and had his degree of B.A. in prospect; and he was probably chosen to lead the revels on account of his pre-eminent reputation among the undergraduates of Christ's. "The revels," we say; for, in reading the speech itself, we become

aware that the circumstances were those of some annual academic saturnalia, when the college hall was a scene of festivity, practical joking, and fun of all kinds, and when the president — styled, in academic phrase, “the Father” for the nonce — was expected to enliven the proceedings with a speech full of jests and personalities, and to submit in turn to interruptions, laughter, and outcries from his noisy “sons.” Milton, though confessing in the course of his speech that fun was hardly his element, and that his “faculty in festivities and quips” was very slight, seems to have acquitted himself in his character of “Father,” or elected master of the revels, with unusual distinction. At all events he took trouble enough. His entire discourse must have taken at least an hour and a half in the delivery. As originally delivered, it consisted of three parts — first, a serio-comic discourse, in Latin prose, on the theme “*that sportive exercises on occasion are not inconsistent with the studies of Philosophy* ;” secondly, a more expressly comic harangue, also in Latin prose, in which he assumes the character of Father of the meeting, addresses his sons jocularly, and leads off the orgy; and, thirdly, a conclusion in English, partly verse and partly prose, consisting of dramatic speeches.

In the middle part, or Latin comic harangue, we have, amid many coarse jocosities, and personal allusions to individual fellow-students not now intelligible, the following passage explanatory of what is to follow: “I turn me, therefore, as Father, to my sons, of whom I behold a goodly number; and I see too that the mischievous little rogues acknowledge me to be their father by secretly bobbing their heads. Do you ask what are to be their names? I will not, by taking the names of dishes, give my sons to be eaten by you, for that would be too much akin to the ferocity of Tantalus and Lycaon; nor will I designate them by the names of parts of the body, lest you should think that I had begotten so many bits of men instead of whole men; nor is it my pleasure to call them after the kinds of wine, lest what I should say should be not according to Bacchus. I wish them to be named according to the number of the Predicaments, that so I may express their distinguished birth and their liberal manner of life.” The meaning of which passage seems to be that it was the custom at such meetings for the “Father” to confer nicknames for the nonce on such of his fellow-students as were more particularly associated with him as his “sons,” and, as such, had perhaps to take a prominent part, under him, in the proceedings; and that Milton, instead of following old practice, and calling his sons by such rigmorole names as *Beef, Mutton, Pork*, &c. (names of dishes), or *Head, Neck, Breast*, &c. (names of parts of the body), or *Sack, Rhenish, Sherris*, &c. (names of wines), proposed to call them after the famous Ten Predicaments or Categories of Aristotle. These Predicaments or Categories were all regarded as subdivisions of the one supreme category of ENS or BEING. First ENS was subdivided into the two general categories of *Ens per se* or *Substance*, and *Ens per accidens* or *Accident*. By farther divisions and subdivisions, however, *Accident* was made to split itself into nine subordinate categories — Quantity, Quality, Relation, Action, Passion, Place where, Time when, Posture, and Habit. Prefix to these nine categories, developed out of *Accident*, the one unbroken category of *Substance*, and you have the Ten Aristotelian Categories or Predicaments, once so famous in the schools. What Milton said, therefore, was virtually this: — I, as Father, choose to represent myself as ENS or Being in general, undivided Being; and you, my sons, Messrs. So

and So and So and So (to wit, certain students of Christ's acting along with Milton in the farce), are to regard yourselves as respectively Substance, Quantity, Quality, Relation, Action, Passion, Place, Time, Posture, and Habit. Thus I have assigned you your parts in what is to follow of our proceedings.

We have here then the key to the dramatic speeches in English with which Milton's address was wound up. After apologizing for having detained the audience so long with his Latin harangue, he announces that he is about to break the University statutes (which ordained that all academic discourses, &c., should be in the learned tongues) by "running across" from Latin to English. At this point, therefore, he suddenly exclaims —

"Hail! native language, that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
And mad'st," &c.

He continues this episodic address to his native speech through a goodly number of lines, but then remembers that it is a divergence from the business in hand, and that his sons are waiting to hear him speak in the character of ENS. Accordingly, he does speak in this character, calling up the eldest of his ten sons, *Substance*, and addressing him in fit terms. Whether *Substance* made any reply we are not informed; but the next two Predicaments, *Quantity* and *Quality*, did speak in their turn — not in verse, however, but in prose. It seems most natural to conclude that these speeches were made by the students of Christ's who represented the Predicaments in question — Milton himself only speaking in his paramount character as ENS. In this character, at all events, he finally calls "by name" on the student who represented the fourth category — *i.e. Relation*; and with this speech of ENS to *Relation*, the fragment, as we now have it, abruptly ends. "The rest was prose," we are informed — *i.e.* whatever was said by *Relation*, and to or by the six remaining Predicaments, was said in prose and has not been preserved. Mr. W. G. Clark, of Cambridge, ascertained that among Milton's fellow-students at Christ's were two brothers named Rivers. This explains the words "Rivers, arise," and the sequel.

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

This magnificent ode, called by Hallam "perhaps the finest in the English language," was composed, as we learn from Milton's own heading of it in the edition of 1645, in the year 1629. Milton was then twenty-one years of age, in his sixth academic year at Cambridge, and a B.A. of a year's standing. There is an interesting allusion to the ode by Milton himself, when he was in the act of composing it, in the sixth of his Latin elegies. In that elegy, addressed to his friend Charles Diodati, residing in the country, in answer to a friendly epistle which Diodati had sent to him on the 13th of December, 1629, there is a distinct description of the *Ode on the Nativity*, as then finished or nearly so, and ready to be shown to Diodati, together with the express information that it was begun on Christmas-day 1629.

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

Having, in the Ode on the Nativity, celebrated the birth of Christ, Milton seems to have intended his little piece "Upon the Circumcision" as a sequel. This appears from the opening lines, in which distinct allusion is made to the

Nativity. We may therefore, with great probability, suppose the piece to have been written on or about the Feast of the Circumcision following the Christmas of the previous ode — *i.e.* January 1, 1629-30.

THE PASSION.

This piece, also, as the opening stanza implies, grew out of the Ode on the Nativity, and is a kind of sequel to it. It was probably written for Easter 1630. It is but the fragment of an intended larger poem, for which, after he had proceeded so far, he thought his powers unequal.

ON TIME.

In the draft of this little piece, in Milton's own hand, among the Cambridge MSS., the title is given more at length thus: *On Time—To be set on a Clock-case.* The piece is assigned, conjecturally, to the year 1630.

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

This piece is also assigned, conjecturally, to the year 1630. The title "At a Solemn Music" may be translated "At a Concert of Sacred Music." Milton, we know, had been a musician from his childhood, and had had unusual opportunities of hearing the best music in England. See *Intro.* to the Latin Poem *Ad Patrem* among the *Sylvæ*.

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

This little piece is also assigned, but only conjecturally, to the year 1630. If this is correct, the exact date is May 1, 1630.

ON SHAKESPEARE.

This famous little piece is sometimes spoken of as Milton's "Sonnet on Shakespeare"; but it is not even laxly a Sonnet, as it consists of sixteen lines. In its anonymous printed form among the commendatory verses prefixed to the Shakespeare Folio of 1632, it is entitled "An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatick Poet, W. Shakespeare." That it was written two years before its publication in so distinguished a place appears from the date "1630" appended to its shorter title in the original editions of Milton's Poems. It seems to me not improbable that Milton originally wrote the lines in a copy of the First Folio Shakespeare in his possession, and furnished them thence to the publisher of the Second Folio.

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER.

The two pieces on this subject are chiefly curious as specimens of Milton's muse in that facetious style in which, according to his own statement, he was hardly at home. They celebrate an incident which must have been of considerable interest to all Cambridge men of Milton's time—the death of old Thomas Hobson, the Cambridge University carrier.

Born in 1544, or twenty years before Shakespeare, Hobson had for more than sixty years been one of the most noted characters in Cambridge. Every week during this long period he had gone and come between Cambridge and

the Bull Inn, Bishopsgate Street, London, driving his own wain and horses, and carrying letters and parcels, and sometimes stray passengers. All the Heads and Fellows of Colleges, all the students, and all the townspeople, knew him. By his business as a carrier, and also by letting out horses, he had become one of the wealthiest citizens in Cambridge—owner of houses in the town and of other property. He had also such a reputation for shrewdness and humour that, rightly or wrongly, all sorts of good sayings were fathered upon him. Till his eighty-sixth year he had persisted in driving his carrier's waggon himself. But, in April or May 1630, a stop had been put to his journeys. The Plague, after an interval of five years, was again in England; it was rife in Cambridge this time, so that the colleges had been prematurely closed and all University exercises brought to an end; and one of the precautions taken was to interdict the continued passage of Hobson, with his letters and parcels, between Cambridge and London. Though many of his neighbours among the townspeople died of the Plague, the tough old carrier escaped that distemper. But the compulsory idleness of some months was too much for him. Some time in November or December 1630, just as the Colleges had re-assembled, and, the Plague having abated, he might have resumed his journeys, he sickened and took to his bed. On the 1st of January, 1630-31, he died, aged eighty-six. Before he died he had executed a will, in which he left a large family of sons, daughters, and grandchildren (one of his daughters being the wife of a Warwickshire baronet), well provided for. Nor had he forgotten the town in which he had made his fortunes. Besides other legacies for public purposes to the town of Cambridge, he left money for the perpetual maintenance of the town-conduit; and to this day the visitor to Cambridge sees a handsome conduit, called after Hobson's name, in the centre of the town, and runnels of clear water flowing, by Hobson's munificence, along the sides of the footways in the main streets. In some respects, Hobson is still the *genius loci* of Cambridge.

Little wonder that the death of such a worthy as old Hobson made a stir among the Cambridge dons and undergraduates, and that many copies of verses were written on the occasion. Several such copies of verses have been recovered; but none so remarkable as Milton's. Milton seems to have had a fondness for the old man, whose horses he must have often hired, and by whom he must often have sent and received parcels. The title of Milton's two pieces is exact to the circumstances of the case: "*On the University Carrier, who sickened in the time of his vacancy, being forbid to go to London by reason of the Plague.*" The gist of the poems themselves, too—in which, through all their punning facetiousness, there is a vein of kindness—is that Hobson died of *ennui*. Both pieces must have been written in or about January 1630-31.

AN EPITAPH ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.

The date of the composition of this poem is determined by that of the event to which it refers—the death, in child-birth, of Jane, wife of John Paultet, fifth Marquis of Winchester. This lady, who was but twenty-three years of age when she died, and was much spoken of for her beauty and mental accomplishments, was a daughter of Thomas, Viscount Savage, of Rock-Savage, Cheshire, by his wife, Elizabeth, the eldest daughter and co-heir

of Thomas Darcy, Earl of Rivers. Her husband, the Marquis of Winchester, who had succeeded to the title in 1628, was a Roman Catholic; he subsequently attained great distinction by his loyalty during the civil wars; and he did not die till 1674, forty-three years after he had been made a widower by the death of this, his accomplished (first) wife. That event occurred on the 15th of April, 1631, in circumstances thus communicated in a contemporary news-letter, dated the 21st of the same month:—"The Lady Marquis of Winchester, daughter to the Lord Viscount Savage, had an imposthume upon her cheek lanced; the humour fell down into her throat, and quickly despatched her, being big with child: whose death is lamented, as well in respect of other her virtues as that she was inclining to become a Protestant." An unusual amount of public regret seems to have been caused by the lady's melancholy death. It was the subject of a long elegy by the poet-laureate, Ben Jonson, printed in his "Underwoods"; and there were verses on the occasion by Davenant and other poets. How Milton, then in his twenty-third year, and still at Cambridge, came to be so interested in the event as to make it the subject of a poem, is not known. Warton had been told that there was a Cambridge collection of verses on the occasion, among which Milton's elegiac ode first appeared; and some expressions in the ode might imply that fact; but no such volume has been found.

L'ALLEGRO AND IL PENSEROSO.

These were written as companion-pieces, and are to be read together. There is some doubt as to the time of their composition, there being no drafts of them among the Cambridge MSS. In the edition of 1645 they follow immediately after the pieces on Hobson, and precede the *Arcades*, with the intervention, however, of the ten Sonnets printed in that edition. With great probability they are assigned to the period immediately subsequent to Milton's student-life at Cambridge, *i.e.* to the time of his studious seclusion in his father's country house at Horton in Buckinghamshire, near Windsor. Milton retired thither in 1632, after taking his degree of M.A., and he mainly resided there till the beginning of 1638. If the pieces were written at Horton, they were probably written soon after his going there. That they were written in some peaceful country neighbourhood, amid the sights and sounds of quiet English landscape and English rural life, is rendered likely by their nature. But it is a mistaken notion of the poems, and a somewhat crude notion, to suppose that they must contain a transcript of the scenery of any one place, even the place where they were written. That place (and we incline to think it was Horton) may have shed its influence into the poems; but the purpose of the poet was not to describe actual scenery, but to represent two *moods*, and to do so by making each mood move, as it were, amid circumstances and adjuncts akin to it and nutritive of it. Hence the scenery is visionary scenery, made up of eclectic recollections from various spots blended into one ideal landscape. It is, indeed, the exquisite fitness with which circumstances are chosen or invented, in true poetic affinity with the two moods, that makes the poems so beautiful, and secures them, while the English language lasts, against the possibility of being forgotten.

The poems, we have said, are companion-pieces, and must be read together. Each describes an ideal day—a day of twelve hours. But *L'Allegro* is the

ideal day of the mind of an educated youth, like Milton himself, in a mood of light cheerfulness. And observe at what point that day begins. It begins at dawn. The first sound heard is the song of the lark; the first sights seen round the rustic cottage, or in the walk from it, are those of new-waked nature, and of labour fresh afield. Then the light broadens on to mid-day, and we have the reapers at their dinner, or the haymakers busy in the sun. And so, through the afternoon merry-makings, we are led to the evening sports and junkets and nut-brown ale round the cottage bench; after which, when the country folks, old and young, have retired to rest, the imaginary youth of the poem, still in his mood of cheerfulness, may protract his more educated day by fit reading indoors, varied by sweet Lydian music. Contrast with all this the day of *Il Penseroso*. It is the same youth, but in a mood more serious, thoughtful, and melancholy. The season of the year, too, may be later. At all events, the ideal day now begins with the evening. It is the song of the nightingale that is first heard; lured by which the youth walks forth in moonlight, seeing all objects in their silver aspect, and listening to the sounds of nightfall. Such evening or nocturnal sights and sounds it is that befit the mood of melancholy. And then, indoors again we follow the thoughtful youth, to see him, in his chamber, where the embers glow on the hearth, sitting meditatively, disturbed by no sound, save (for it may be a town that he is now in) the drowsy voice of the passing bellman. Later still, or after midnight, we may fancy him in some high watch-tower, communing, over his books, with old philosophers, or with poets, of grave and tragic themes. In such solemn and weirdly phantasies let the whole night pass, and let the morning come, not gay, but sombre and cloudy, the winds rocking the trees, and the rain-drops falling heavily from the eaves. At last, when the sun is up, the watcher, who has not slept, may sally forth; but it is to lose himself in some forest of monumental oaks or pines, where sleep may overtake him recumbent by some waterfall. And always, ere he rejoins the mixed society of men, let him pay his due visit of worship to the Gothic cathedral near, and have his mind raised to its highest by the music of the pealing organ.

The studied antithesis of the two pieces has to be kept in mind in reading them. It needs only be added that the commentators have supposed that Milton may have been aided in his conception of the two poems by some passages in Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, by a song in Beaumont and Fletcher's drama of *Nice Valor*, and by recollections of other pieces of a pensive kind, in octosyllabic measure, including Marlowe's pretty poem, the *Passionate Shepherd to his Love*, and Sir Walter Raleigh's answer to the same, called *The Nymph's Reply*. The help from any such quarters, however, must have been very small, the mere suggestion of a cadence here and there.

ARCADES.

"Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess-Dowager of Derby at Harefield by some noble persons of her Family," are the words added by Milton himself to the title of the poem, to explain its nature. In other words, it is part, and only part, of a masque presented before a venerable lady at her country-seat by some members of her family who had chosen this way of showing their affection and respect for her. The rest of the masque has

perished; only this fragment of it, supplied by Milton, remains. The date is a little uncertain. Historically, the *Arcades* is connected so closely with *Comus* that any Introduction to the one must serve also as partly an Introduction to the other; and the manner of the connexion is such that we must assume that the *Arcades* preceded *Comus*. Now, as the date of *Comus* is 1634, the immediately preceding year, 1633, has been taken as the probable year for the *Arcades*; but there are arguments which might push it as far back as 1631, or even 1630. It is chiefly necessary to bear in mind that the *Arcades* did precede *Comus*, and that the lady in whose honour it was composed was one of the same noble family for whom *Comus* was subsequently written.

That lady was Alice, Countess-Dowager of Derby, who, in 1631, was about seventy years of age. The life of this lady had been one that would have made her venerable in the social and literary history of England even had there not been this association of her later years with the youth of Milton. Born, about the year 1560, one of the daughters of Sir John Spencer of Althorpe, Northamptonshire—from whom are descended the Earls Spencer and their branches—she had been married in early life to Ferdinando Stanley, Lord Strange, eldest son of the fourth Earl of Derby. One of her sisters, Elizabeth Spencer, was then, by marriage, Lady Carey, and another, Anne Spencer, was Lady Compton. The three sisters seem to have at that time been especially well known to the poet Spenser, who, indeed, claimed to be related to the Spencers of Althorpe. Spenser's earliest known publication, *Muiopotmos* (1590), was dedicated to Lady Carey; his *Mother Hubbard's Tale* (1591) was dedicated to Lady Compton; and to the youngest of the three sisters—the one with whom we are at present concerned—was dedicated in the same year (1591) his *Tears of the Muses*. In paying this honour to Alice, Lady Strange, Spenser had regard not only to her own accomplishments and his connexion with her family, but also to the reputation of her husband, Lord Strange. No nobleman of the day was of greater note in the world of letters than Lord Strange. He was himself a poet; among the dramatic companies of the time was one retained by him and known as "Lord Strange's Players;" and among his clients and panegyrists were Nash, Greene, and others of Shakespeare's seniors in the English drama. All this is recognised in Spenser's dedication of the *Tears of the Muses* to Lady Strange. "Most brave and noble Lady," he says, "the things that make ye so much honoured of the world "as ye be are such as, without my simple lines' testimony, are throughly "known to all men: namely, your excellent beauty, your virtuous behaviour, "and your noble match with that most honourable Lord, the very pattern of "right nobility. But the causes for which ye have thus deserved of me to be "honoured (if honour it be at all) are both your particular bounties and also "some private bonds of affinity which it hath pleased your Ladyship to "acknowledge. . . . Vouchsafe, noble Lady, to accept this simple remem- "brance, though not worthy of yourself, yet such as perhaps, by good "acceptance thereof, you may hereafter cull out a more meet and memorable "evidence of your own excellent deserts." Some time after this dedication—to wit, in September 1593—the lady so addressed rose still higher in the peerage by the accession of her husband to the earldom of Derby on his father's death. Ferdinando, fifth Earl of Derby, however, enjoyed his new dignity but a few months. He died on the 16th of April, 1594, in his thirty-sixth

year, much regretted. From that day his widow was known as Alice, Countess-Dowager of Derby. The earldom of Derby went to the next male heir; and the Countess-Dowager, with her three young daughters by her deceased husband — Lady Anne Stanley, Lady Frances Stanley, and Lady Elizabeth Stanley — lived on to form new alliances. Spenser, who had honoured her during her husband's life, continued to honour her in her widowhood. In his pastoral of *Colin Clout's come Home again* (completed in 1595), the poet, having enumerated the chief "shepherds" or poets of the British isle, and having proceeded thence to a mention of some of the chief "shepherdesses" or "nymphs," introduces three of these ladies thus:

"Ne less praiseworthie are the sisters three,
The honour of the noble familie
Of which I meanest boast myself to be,
And most that unto them I am so nie,
Phyllis, Charillis, and sweet Amaryllis.
Phyllis the fair is eldest of the three;
The next to her is beautiful Charillis;
But the youngest is the highest in degree."

These three ladies were the three married daughters of Sir John Spenser of Althorpe, honoured some years before by dedications of Spenser's earliest poems to them respectively; and Amaryllis, the youngest of them, and "the highest in degree," was the one to whom he had dedicated his *Tears of the Muses* — then Lady Strange, but now Countess-Dowager of Derby. Indeed, there are special allusions in *Colin Clout's come Home again* to the widowed condition of this lady:

"But Amaryllis whether fortunate
Or else unfortunate may I aread,
That freed is from Cupid's yoke by fate,
Since which she doth new bands' adventure dread?
Shepherd, whatever thou hast heard to be
In this or that praised diversely apart,
In her thou mayst them all assembled see,
And sealed up in the treasure of her heart."

The lady, however, did marry again. In 1600, when Spenser was no longer alive to approve or to regret, she contracted a second marriage with Lord Keeper Egerton — then only Sir Thomas Egerton and Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Queen Elizabeth, but afterwards (1603) Baron Ellesmere and Lord Chancellor to King James, and finally (1616) Viscount Brackley. This eminent lawyer and statesman had already been twice married, and was a man of about sixty years of age, with grown-up children, when he made his splendid match with the Countess-Dowager of Derby. The Countess — who, of course, retained that title in her new condition as the Lord Keeper's wife — was brought once again conspicuously into society by her husband's connexion with public affairs. In 1601 she and her husband jointly purchased the estate of Harefield in Middlesex — a charming property, with a fine mansion upon it, on a spot of well-wooded hill and meadow, on the river Colne, about four miles from Uxbridge. Here, or in London, the Lord Keeper and his wife mainly resided, doing the honours of their position, and receiving in return the recognitions due to persons of their rank. One very memorable incident in their life at Harefield was a visit of four days paid them there by Queen Elizabeth (July 31 — August 3, 1602), when all sorts of pageants were held for her Majesty's recreation. The story

that these included the first known performance of Shakespeare's *Othello* by "Burbidge's players" is now universally rejected; but a long "avenue of elms," leading to the house, was the scene of a kind of masque of welcome at the Queen's reception, and of another of leave-taking on her departure, and was ever afterwards known as "the Queen's Walk." Throughout the reign of James I. there were similar recognitions of the high social rank of the Chancellor and his noble wife, besides not a few of a literary character, in the shape of poems, or dedications of poems, to them. It was not only their own marriage, however — a marriage that proved childless — that now connected the pair. Not long after that marriage had taken place, the ties of family between the two had been drawn closer by the marriage of the Lord Keeper's son — then Sir John Egerton — with Lady Frances Stanley, the Countess's second daughter by her former husband the Earl of Derby. Thus, while the Countess-Dowager was the wife of the father, one of her daughters was the wife of the son. Her other two daughters made marriages of even higher promise at the time. The eldest, Lady Anne Stanley, had married Grey Bridges, fifth Lord Chandos; and the youngest, Lady Elizabeth Stanley, had married, at a very early age (1603), Henry, Lord Hastings, who, in 1605, succeeded his grandfather as Earl of Huntingdon, and possessor of the fine estate of Ashby-de-la-Zouch in Leicestershire.

On the 15th of March, 1616-17, the Lord Chancellor Ellesmere, then just created Viscount Brackley, died, and the Countess-Dowager of Derby commenced her second widowhood. She was then probably over five-and-fifty years of age, and she survived for twenty years more. These twenty years she spent chiefly in retirement at Harefield, where she endowed almshouses for poor widows, and did other acts of charity, but was surrounded all the while, or occasionally visited, by those numerous descendants and other relatives who had grown up, or were growing up, to venerate her, and whose joys and sorrows constituted the chief interest of her declining years. By the year 1630, when she was about seventy years of age, she had at least twenty of her own direct descendants alive, besides collateral relatives in the families of her sisters, *Phyllis* and *Charillis*. (1.) One group of the venerable lady's direct descendants consisted of her eldest daughter, Lady Chandos, and that daughter's surviving children by her first husband Lord Chandos, the eldest of whom was George Bridges, now Lord Chandos, a boy of about twelve years of age. Both mother and children, we chance to know, lived at Harefield, with the grandmother, in 1631; and the estate of Harefield itself, we also learn, was to descend, after the Countess-Dowager's death, to Lady Chandos, otherwise left "destitute," and so to her son, young Lord Chandos. (2.) An additional group of relatives, also sharing the affections of the venerable Lady of Harefield, consisted of the children of her youngest daughter, the Countess of Huntingdon, viz.: Ferdinando, Lord Hastings, twenty-two years of age, and heir-apparent to the earldom of Huntingdon; his younger brother Henry, afterwards Lord Loughborough; a daughter, Alice, married to Sir Gervase Clifton; and another daughter, Elizabeth. These four grandchildren would sometimes be on visits to their grandmother at Harefield from their own homes in London, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, and elsewhere. (3.) There was still a third group of relatives around the venerable lady. At or near the time when she herself had married the Lord Keeper Egerton, as we have seen, her second daughter by her former husband, Lady Frances Stanley, had married the Lord

Keeper's son, Sir John Egerton. When his father was raised to the peerage as Baron Ellesmere (1603), this Sir John Egerton had become "baron-expectant,"—a designation which rose to the higher one of "Lord Egerton" when his father was made Viscount Brackley (1616). On his father's death, a few months afterwards (March 1616-17), he succeeded him as Viscount. But his dignities did not stop at that point. In May 1617, an earldom which had been intended for the father, in recognition of his long services as Lord Chancellor, was bestowed on the son; and he became Earl of Bridgewater. Thus, the Countess-Dowager of Derby saw her second daughter, as well as her youngest, take rank as a Countess. A far larger family of children had been born to this daughter than to either of her sisters. Out of fifteen children, born in all, at least ten were alive in 1630, in order of age as follows: the Lady Frances Egerton, married to Sir John Hobart, of Blickling, Norfolk; the Lady Arabella, married to Lord St. John, of Bletso, son and heir of the Earl of Bolingbroke; the Ladies Elizabeth, Mary, Penelope, Catharine, Magdalen, and Alice, yet unmarried—the last, Lady Alice, being in her tenth or eleventh year; John, Viscount Brackley, the son and heir, in his ninth year; and his brother, Mr. Thomas Egerton, about a year younger. The head-quarters of this numerous family, or of such of them as were unmarried, were—in London, the Earl of Bridgewater's town-house in the Barbican, Aldersgate Street; in the country, the Earl's mansion of Ashridge, Hertfordshire, about sixteen miles from Harefield.

We are now prepared to understand the exact circumstances of the *Arcades*. Sometime in 1630 or 1631, we are to suppose, some of the younger members of the different groups of the relatives of the Dowager-Countess of Derby determined to get up an entertainment in her honour, at her house at Harefield. The occasion may have been the aged lady's birthday, or it may have been some incidental gathering at Harefield for a family purpose. Whatever it was, the young people had resolved to amuse themselves by some kind of festivity in compliment to the venerable lady of whom they were all so proud. What could it be but a masque? Harefield, with its avenue of elms called "the Queen's Walk" in memory of Queen Elizabeth's visit, and with its fine park of grassy slopes and well-wooded knolls, was exactly the place for a masque; besides which, was not the Countess accustomed to this kind of entertainment? Would it not be in good taste to remind her of the masques and similar poetical and musical entertainments that had pleased her in her youth, when she had been the theme of Spenser's muse, and had sat by the side of her first husband, Lord Strange, beholding plays brought out under his patronage? Masques, indeed, were even more in fashion now, in the reign of Charles I., than they had been in the reigns of Elizabeth and James, and a masque in a noble family on any occasion of family-rejoicing was the most natural thing in the world.

There was, then, to be a masque, or at least a bit of a masque, at Harefield; and the actors were already provided. But for a good masque, or even a good bit of a masque, more is required than willing actors. Who was to write the words for the little masque, and who was to set the songs in it to music?

The latter question may be answered first. There can be little doubt, I think, that the person to whom the young people of the family of the Countess-Dowager of Derby trusted for all the musical requisites of the masque, if

not the person who suggested it originally and entirely superintended it, was Henry Lawes, gentleman of the Chapel Royal, and one of his Majesty's private musicians. Farther particulars respecting this interesting man, one of the most celebrated musical composers of his day, will be given in the Introduction to that one of Milton's Sonnets which is addressed to him (Sonnet XIII.). What we have to attend to here is that, though Lawes had professional connexions with not a few aristocratic families, by far the most lasting and intimate of these was with the Bridgewater branch of the Countess-Dowager of Derby's family. As early as 1630-31, the proof tends to show, Lawes, then about thirty years of age, and already of distinction in the English musical world, though with much of his reputation still to make, reckoned among his chief patrons and employers the Earl and Countess of Bridgewater; and among his most hopeful pupils at that time were several of the children of the Earl and Countess. Others of the Countess of Derby's grandchildren may have been pupils of Lawes; but those of the Bridgewater branch were the most musical in their tastes, and it was to them, in their town-house in the Barbican, or in their country-seat at Ashridge, that Lawes's visits were most frequent. Quite possibly, therefore, it was they that originated the notion of a masque in honour of the Countess. But, even if some of her relatives of the other groups were concerned in the plan, or admitted into it, the singing parts would fall to the Bridgewaters, and the arrangement of the music, and the general management, to their instructor, Lawes. Business of this kind was part of the profession of musical composers in those days, and Lawes, as we shall find (Introd. to *Comus*), was an expert in it.

An additional argument in favour of the idea that Lawes was the manager of the entertainment and arranged its music is found in the fact that the poetry for it was furnished by Milton. For Milton's intimacy with Lawes is a known fact. The friendship between the two, of which many interesting proofs remain, may have begun even in Milton's boyhood. Noted as a musician as was Milton's own father, there can have been few musical artists in London that were not occasional visitors in his house in Bread Street; and there were many things in Lawes, when once he and the younger Milton were brought together, to rivet an attachment to him. On the other hand, Milton's poetical powers must have been well known to Lawes. Accordingly, when the notion of the Entertainment at Harefield had been started, and Lawes and his Bridgewater pupils, if our idea is correct, were busy over the project, it was to Milton that Lawes applied for the necessary words or *libretto*. If, as has been argued, the date was 1630 or 1631, Milton may have been up in London on one of his vacation visits. Perhaps, however, his father was already in possession of his country-place at Horton, and in that case Milton may have been there, and so actually within about ten miles, cross-country, from Harefield. Wherever it was that the two met to consult, Lawes about thirty years of age and Milton eight years younger, we can see what happened. Lawes explained to Milton the circumstances of the proposed Entertainment and the kind of thing that was wanted; and Milton, meditating the affair for a few days, produced *Arcades* or *The Arcadians*.

Let the reader now go back in imagination to Harefield, on a spring or summer evening two hundred and forty years ago. Certain revels or pageants in the ground have perhaps preceded, and the time, we say, seems now to be evening. Harefield House is lit up; and in front of it, on a throne of

state arranged so as to glitter in the light, is seated the aged Countess, with the seniors of the assembled party around her as spectators. Suddenly torches are seen flickering among the trees in the park, and out from among those trees, towards where the Countess is sitting, there bursts a band of nymphs and shepherds. They are, in fact, "*some noble persons of her family who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state.*" When they have approached near enough, they pause, as if overcome by the splendour of the vision before them; and then one voice breaks out from the rest in recognition of the Countess. This is the first Song: —

"Look, Nymphs and Shepherds, look!
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that," &c.

This song ended, the nymphs and shepherds renew their approach to the object of their wonder; but, "*as they come forward, the Genius of the Wood [Lawes?] appears, and turning toward them speaks.*" The speech of this Genius of the Wood is in eighty-three lines of blank verse. In it the Genius first addresses the shepherds, or male performers in the masque, and tells them he recognises them, through their disguise, as noble Arcadians; then he addresses the nymphs in a similar strain; then, after introducing himself as the Genius of the Wood, describing his occupations in that capacity, and descanting on his particular affection for music and his desire to do his best in that art in praise of her whom he had often admired in secret as the Queen of the place, and whom his auditory have come to gaze upon, he offers to lead them to her. Accordingly, lute or other instrument in hand, he advances, with this song, sung probably in solo: —

"O'er the smooth enamelled green
Where no print of step hath been,
Follow me," &c.

Following him, accordingly, the masquers do obeisance to the Lady, and range themselves round her; whereupon there is a third and concluding song, sung probably by many voices, madrigal-wise, and ending with a repetition of the final words of the previous song: —

"Such a rural queen
All Arcadia hath not seen."

The entertainment was probably not yet over: but whatever more of it there was, out-of-doors or indoors, was not of Milton's composition.

The Countess-Dowager of Derby survived the Entertainment only a few years. She died at Harefield, January 26, 1636-7. Her estate of Harefield descended to Lady Chandos, then her only remaining daughter, and so came to her grandson Lord Chandos, and *his* heirs; but in 1675 it was purchased back by Sir Richard Newdegate, Bart., of Arbury, Warwickshire, whose family had been the original possessors of the property, but had parted with it in 1585. Accordingly, Harefield is now in possession of the Newdegates. The place is worth visiting, not only as the scene of the *Arcades*, but for other reasons. Harefield House indeed has disappeared. It was burnt down by accident in 1660. But the pedestrian on the road from Uxbridge to Rickmansworth may still identify the site of the House by one or two mounds and hollows, and a large cedar of Lebanon, on the quiet slopes behind Harefield Church; and in the church itself he may see, besides other antiquities of

interest, the tomb of the heroine of the *Arcades*. It is a richly-sculptured and heraldically emblazoned marble monument, exhibiting the effigy of the Countess in a crimson robe and gilt coronet recumbent under a canopy of pale green and gold, and, on the side, effigies of her three daughters in relief and also painted. The Countess is represented as in her youth, beautiful, and with long fair hair. The three daughters have the same long fair hair and like features.

COMUS:

"A Masque, presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634, before the Earl of Bridgewater, Lord President of Wales."

The history of this, the most important of all the minor poems of Milton, is closely connected with that of the *Arcades*, and our introduction to the *Arcades* is partly also an introduction to the *Comus*. What of more specific introduction is necessary remains to be given here.

One branch of the relatives of the venerable Countess-Dowager of Derby, the heroine of the *Arcades*, consisted, as we have seen, of the members of the noble family of Bridgewater:—to wit, John, 1st Earl of Bridgewater, the Countess's stepson, being the son of her second husband, Lord Chancellor Ellesmere; this nobleman's wife, the Countess's second daughter, Lady Frances Stanley, by her first husband, Ferdinando, 5th Earl of Derby; and the numerous children born to this pair,—two of them daughters already married and with houses of their own, but other daughters still unmarried, and residing, together with their two boy-brothers, Viscount Brackley and Mr. Thomas Egerton, sometimes at their father's town-house in the Barbican, and sometimes at his country-seat of Ashridge in Hertfordshire. It is with these members of the Bridgewater family that we have chiefly to do in the *Comus*.

The Earl of Bridgewater, now about fifty-four years of age (he had been born in 1579), had a place among the nobility of the Court of Charles I. for which he was probably indebted to the fame and long services of his father, the Lord Chancellor. Already a Privy Councillor, &c., he had, on the 26th of June, 1631, been nominated by Charles to the high office of the Viceroyalty of Wales, or, as it was more formally called, the Office of "Lord President of the Council in the Principality of Wales and the Marches of the same." This office—including military command and civil jurisdiction, not only over the Welsh principality itself, but also over the four contiguous English counties of Gloucester, Worcester, Hereford, and Shropshire—had been filled, in Elizabeth's reign, by Sir Henry Sidney, the father of Sir Philip Sidney, and after him by Henry, 2nd Earl of Pembroke; and men of scarcely inferior note had held it since. The official seat of the Lord President was the town and castle of Ludlow in Shropshire, about twenty miles south from Shrewsbury, and beautifully situated in one of those tracts of green hilly country which mark the transition from England proper into Wales. The town, which was formerly walled, is mainly on an eminence near the junction of two streams, the Teme and the Corve, whose united waters flow on to meet the Severn in Worcestershire. On the highest ground of the town, and conspicuous to a great distance over the surrounding country, is Ludlow Church, a large building of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Near it, at a point where the ascending slope on which the town is built ends in a precipitous

rock overhanging a steep valley through which the river runs, is Ludlow Castle, now a romantic ruin, but once a garrisoned place of strength, separately walled in from the town, and approached by a gateway from a kind of esplanade at the top of the main street. It was this Castle, with its outer court, inner court, keep, barracks, drawbridge, &c., that was more immediately the residence of the Presidents of Wales. The older portions of the Castle dated from the Conquest, when they had been built by the Conqueror's kinsman, Roger de Montgomery; and there was hardly a part of the edifice but had its interesting legends and associations—legends and associations connected with the old wars of race between the Welsh and the Norman-English, or with those subsequent Wars of the Roses in which the Welsh had taken so active a share. Thus there were shown in the Castle certain rooms called "the Princes' Apartments," where Edward, Prince of Wales, and his young brother, the sons of Edward IV., had lived from 1472 to 1483, when they left Ludlow on that fatal journey which ended in their murder in the Tower.

Although appointed Lord President of Wales in June 1631, the Earl of Bridgewater does not seem to have assumed his functions actively, or to have gone near Ludlow, till some time afterwards. On the 12th of May, 1633, his powers in his office were defined afresh by a Royal Letter of Instructions, which was also to regulate the future proceedings, judicial and administrative, of the Council over which he presided. This Council was ostensibly to consist of upwards of eighty persons named in the Letter, among whom were many bishops and the chief state-officers of England, besides a number of knights and gentlemen of the Welsh border.

In October 1633 the Earl sent his new Letter of Instructions to his Council at Ludlow, to be read and registered before his own arrival. At what time he followed in person we do not accurately know; but, when he did follow, the ceremonial of his inauguration was unusually splendid. He was attended "by a large concourse of the neighbouring nobility and gentry"—*i.e.*, we may suppose, by all of his Council then in those parts, and by other persons of local consequence. He had brought his Countess with him, and probably his whole family, from London or Ashridge—including, as we certainly know, his youngest daughter, the Lady Alice Egerton, a beautiful young girl, fourteen or fifteen years old, and her two younger brothers, Viscount Brackley and Mr. Thomas Egerton. The festivities and hospitalities proper to such an occasion as the Earl's inauguration would naturally protract themselves over a considerable time. They did protract themselves, at all events, to Michaelmas-night, the 29th of September, 1634, when all Ludlow was astir with an unusual thing in those parts—nothing less than a complete masque, or poetical and musical entertainment, performed in the great hall of Ludlow Castle, by members of the Earl's family, before the Earl and an audience of assembled guests.

At this particular time, the English Court and aristocracy may be said to have been masque-mad. Nothing so magnificent, for example, in the shape of a pageant had ever been seen in England as that got up by the lawyers of the Four Inns of Court in February 1633-4, "as an expression of their love and duty to their Majesties," *i.e.* to King Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria. Months were spent in the preparation. Shirley was engaged to write the poetry; Mr. Simon Ivy and Mr. Henry Lawes to compose the music; Inigo

Jones to construct the machinery: while some of the ablest and most eminent lawyers of the time, such as Selden, Attorney-General Noy, Bulstrode Whitelocke, and Mr. Hyde, acted zealously on the Committee of General Management. When the day came—Feb. 3—there was a gorgeous afternoon and evening procession of the masquers, with painted chariots, flaming torches, music, and wondrous grotesque accompaniments, from Holborn down Chancery Lane to Whitehall, the whole population of London having gathered along the route to see and to cheer; and, afterwards, in the Banqueting-house at Whitehall, the main masque itself, Shirley's *Triumph of Peace*, was performed before their Majesties with every possible magnificence. The whole affair cost the Four Inns of Court 21,000*l.*; whereof 1,000*l.* were spent on the music—Lawes and his fellow-composer receiving 100*l.* apiece for their share. The actors in this masque were chiefly handsome lawyers of the Four Inns, whose names are now unknown. But, a fortnight later, in the same Banqueting-house at Whitehall, there was another masque, of scarcely inferior magnificence, given by their Majesties themselves, and in which the actors were the King, fourteen of the chief nobles, and ten young sons of noblemen. This was Carew's *Calum Britannicum*, performed on Shrove-Tuesday night, February 18, 1633-4. The music to this masque was by Henry Lawes; the machinery by Inigo Jones; and among the young noblemen who took juvenile parts in it were the Earl of Bridgewater's two sons, Viscount Brackley and Mr. Thomas Egerton, and their cousin Lord Chandos.

With a recollection of the *Arcades*, and probably of many other such private theatrical delights, traditional in the Bridgewater family; with the two young boys fresh from the glory of their small parts in the recent royal masque of *Calum Britannicum*; above all, with Lawes, the musical tutor of the family, radiant from his musical success in that masque and in its more gorgeous predecessor, the masque of *The Triumph of Peace* by the Four Inns of Court;—what more natural than that it should be resolved to seize the opportunity of the Earl's entry on his Welsh Presidency for a masque on a great scale that should astonish the Welsh and all the West of England? The youngsters and Lawes probably devised the thing; and, the Earl having given his consent, all was arranged. The preparations must have been begun months before the masque actually came off—probably while the family were yet in London. Lawes, of course, was to take care of the music and was to be general manager; and the other actors and singers were to be the young people of the family. But who should write the poetry? Who but Lawes's friend, Mr. Milton, who had already in the *Arcades* given such satisfactory proofs of his fitness for the kind of composition that was wanted? In fact, whether to please himself or to oblige Lawes, or to oblige the Earl of Bridgewater and his family on account of some bond of acquaintance with the family now not recoverable, Milton did undertake to write the masque. The composition of it, we must suppose, occupied him at Horton for several weeks, or even a month or two, during the early part of 1634.

On undertaking to write the masque, Milton would think of some appropriate story, to be shaped into a dramatic pastoral of the required kind, for representation on a stage in the hall of a great Castle by young lords and ladies, and with songs interspersed, to be sung by some of these performers to airs by his friend Lawes. The nature and circumstances of the occasion would be vividly present to his imagination—the Earl entering on his office

as President of the ancient Principality; his retinue, with Welsh and West-of-England gentry among them; the town and castle of Ludlow, and their neighbourhood, as conceived by him from descriptions, or perhaps seen by him (who knows?) in some tour of his own into those parts; the proximity of the place to Welsh scenery, and the connexion of the occasion with ancient British memories and legends. He would, doubtless, co-operate with Lawes, and would give or receive hints. But how the actual story of *Comus* occurred to Milton — the story of the young lady parted from her two brothers at night in the depths of a wild wood, found there by Comus and his crew of evil revellers, and lured and detained by their enchantments, until the Brothers, instructed by a good Attendant Spirit in the shape of their father's faithful shepherd, Thyrsis, rush in and rescue her — how this story occurred to Milton we can but vaguely surmise. He may have derived the conception of such a plot from some of his readings, and may have seen its fitness for his purpose. A somewhat different theory is that he only dramatised a real incident. The popular tradition round about Ludlow still is that the Lady Alice Egerton and her two young brothers, Viscount Brackley and Mr. Thomas Egerton, were actually benighted in Haywood Forest, near Ludlow, as they were on their way to Ludlow from a visit to the house of their relatives, the Egertons, in Herefordshire, and that the Lady Alice was for some time lost by her brothers in the forest. Milton, the tradition adds, had heard of this incident, and constructed his *Comus* upon it. To us, however, it appears more likely that the story of the loss of Lady Alice and her brothers in Haywood Forest grew out of the *Comus* than that the *Comus* grew out of the story. The story was current more than a hundred years ago; but it consists with our knowledge of the way in which such legends arise to suppose that by that time the parting of the lady and her brothers in the masque had been translated, by prosaic gossip on the spot, into a literal incident in the lives of those for whom the masque was written.

In whatever way suggested, the masque was written with most definite attention to the purpose for which it was required. The characters to be represented were as follows: —

THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT; *first appearing as such, but afterwards in the dress of the shepherd* THYRSIS.

COMUS, *with his crew.*

THE LADY.

FIRST BROTHER.

SECOND BROTHER.

SABRINA, *the Nymph of the Severn river, with attendant Water-nymphs.*

Here, if we omit the "crew of Comus" and Sabrina's "attendant water-nymphs" — parts of mere dumb show, which may have been assigned to supernumeraries — there were six speaking and singing parts to be filled up. How were these parts cast? As to four of the parts we have definite information from Lawes. The part of THE LADY, which is the central part in the masque, was given to the Lady Alice Egerton; and the parts of the FIRST BROTHER and the SECOND BROTHER fell to Lady Alice's two boy-brothers, Viscount Brackley and Mr. Thomas Egerton. The important part of THE ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *afterwards* THYRSIS, was taken by Lawes himself. This leaves but two parts unassigned — those of COMUS and SABRINA. The part of COMUS is important, and a good actor was needed for it; that of SABRINA is

less important, and required chiefly a good singer. There was, we may assume, among the connexions of the Bridgewater family, some handsome gentlemen who did not object to act as the disreputable Riot-god, son of Bacchus and Circe, for the opportunity of luring away the sweet Lady Alice even for a little while; and among Lady Alice's sisters there were more than one fit for the part of the River-nymph.

Suppose Milton's MS. of the masque finished (the draft, in his own hand, now among the Cambridge MSS.); suppose that Lawes has copies for his own use and that of his pupils (one of those copies, perhaps that now in the Bridgewater Library, which Todd believed to be in Lawes's hand); suppose the rehearsals over; and suppose the memorable Michaelmas-night, Sept. 29, 1634, arrived. The great Hall of Ludlow Castle is filled with guests. It is a noble apartment, sixty feet long and thirty wide, in which, according to tradition, the elder of the two Princes murdered in the Tower had been proclaimed King, with the title of Edward V., before commencing his fatal journey to London. It is the place of all great state-meetings of the Council of the Presidency. But on this evening it is converted into a theatre and brilliantly lighted. While the Earl and Countess and the rest of the seated audience occupy the main portion of the hall, one end of it is fitted up as a stage, with curtains, &c. Here the performance begins. "*The first scene discovers a wild wood: The Attendant Spirit descends or enters.*" Such is the stage-direction; the meaning of which is that, the stage having been darkened to signify that it is night, and there being paintings or other contrivances in the back-ground to represent a wood, Lawes "descends or enters." In the printed copies, and also in the Cambridge MS., he begins with a speech; but in the Bridgewater MS. this speech is preceded by a song of twenty lines, the opening lines of which are —

" From the heavens now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye
Up in the broad fields of the sky."

There is no doubt that the Bridgewater MS., being the stage copy, here represents what did actually happen. Milton had intended the masque to begin with a speech; but Lawes, thinking it better for stage-purposes to begin with a song, had taken the liberty of transferring to this point a portion of that which now stands, and which Milton intended to stand, as the *final* song or *epilogue* of the Attendant Spirit at the end of the masque. In that final song or epilogue as we now have it, the Attendant Spirit, announcing his *departure*, when the play is over, says —

" To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye
Up in the broad fields of the sky," —

which lines, with a part of their sequel, Lawes, it will be seen, converted cleverly into a prologue, or song of *arrival*, by the change of "*To the ocean*" into "*From the heavens.*" He doubtless thought it more effective to "descend" on the stage, singing this prologue; after which, when *on* the stage, he made the speech announcing the purpose for which he had descended. In that speech, after introducing himself in his character as an

attendant Spirit of Good, sent down to Earth from Jove's realms on a special errand, he thus informs the audience at the outset as to the general drift of the play they are about to witness, and connects it gracefully with the actual circumstances of the Earl of Bridgewater's presence among them, and his entering on so high a British office as the Welsh Presidency —

“ Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood and each ebbing stream,
Took in, by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove,
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles
That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep;
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents. But this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-haired deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with tempered awe to guide
An old and haughty nation proud in arms :
Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state
And new-entrusted sceptre. But their way
Lies through the perplexed paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that, by quick command from sovran Jove,
I was despatched for their defence and guard.”

Prepared by these words, and by the further explanation of the Attendant Spirit that the wood is haunted by the god Comus and his crew of revellers, who waylay travellers and tempt them with an enchanted liquor which changes the countenances of those who partake into the faces of beasts, the audience see the story developed in action before them. They see Comus and his crew appear in the wood with torches, making a riotous and unruly noise — Comus, with a charming-rod in one hand and a glass in the other; and his crew, a set of monsters, with bodies of men and women in glistening apparel, but headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts. They see the crew knit hands and dance, and the dance broken off, by the orders of Comus, at the sound of a light footstep approaching. They see the crew then disappear among the trees, leaving their master alone, who knows that the footstep is that of some benighted virgin, and who, after throwing his “dazzling spells” (*query*, some blaze of blue light?) in the direction in which she is coming, also steps aside to watch. Then they see “the Lady” enter — the sweet Lady Alice, received, of course, with rapturous applause. They hear her explain how she has lost her brothers since sunset, how it is now midnight, how the rude sounds of revelry have attracted her to the spot, and how the darkness and the silence would alarm her were it not for her trust in a higher Power, guarding virtuous minds. As she speaks there comes a gleam through the grove; and, thinking her brothers may be near, she will guide them to her by a song. Accordingly, she sings the song beginning “*Sweet Echo*” — the first song in the masque, according to Milton's arrangement of it, but the second in Lawes's stage-arrangement. It is not her brothers that the song

brings to her, but Comus, who has been listening in admiration. Appearing before her in the guise of a shepherd, he tells her he has seen her brothers, and offers to lead her to them, or to lodge her in his humble cottage till they can be found in the morning. Scarcely has she accepted the offer and left the scene with Comus, when her two brothers—the boys, Viscount Brackley and Mr. Thomas Egerton, also greatly cheered, of course—appear. They discuss with great anxiety the situation of their sister, the elder comforting the younger, till their conversation is interrupted by a far-off holloa. Lest it should be a robber, they draw their swords. But it is their father's faithful shepherd, Thyrsis; or rather they think it is he—for, in reality, it is the good Attendant Spirit, who has been taking note of all that has befallen the Lady, and who, in meeting the brothers, has assumed the disguise of one well known to them. He explains the state of affairs, and greatly alarms the younger brother by his account of Comus and his crew. The elder, though more steady, is for rushing at once to the haunt of the magician and dragging him to death. But the Attendant Spirit, as Thyrsis, explaining that such violence will be vain against the craft of a Sorcerer, proposes rather that they should avail themselves of the power of a certain precious plant, called *Hemony*, of which a portion had once been given him by a certain skilful shepherd-lad of his acquaintance. He had tested the virtue of this plant to ward off enchantments, for he had already approached Comus safely by means of it; and he now proposes that they should all three confront Comus with its aid. The Brothers agree, and they and the supposed Thyrsis go off. Then the scene changes before the eyes of the audience, representing "a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness; soft music; tables spread with dainties;" the Lady in an enchanted chair, with Comus pressing her to drink out of a glass, while his rabble stand around. There is a matchless dialogue between the Lady and Comus—an argument of Purity or Abstinence against Sensuality, in which Purity overcomes and defies its enemy. The Sorcerer, awed, but still persevering, prays the Lady only to taste, when her Brothers rush in with drawn swords, wrest the glass from his hand, and dash it to pieces. Comus and his crew resist slightly, but are driven away and dispersed. Thyrsis then, coming in after the Brothers, finds that unfortunately they have not attended to his instruction to seize the enchanter's wand. The Lady is still marble-bound to her chair, from which the motion of the wand might have freed her. To effect this Thyrsis proposes a new device. It is to invoke Sabrina, the nymph of the adjacent and far-famed Severn river. Who so likely to succour distressed maidenhood as she, that daughter of Lochrine the son of Brutus, who, as ancient British legends told, had flung herself; to preserve her honour, into the stream which had since borne her name? By way of invocation of Sabrina, Thyrsis (*i.e.* Lawes) sings what is now the second song in the masque, but is the third in Lawes's arrangement—the exquisite song beginning "*Sabrina fair.*" Obeying the invocation, Sabrina rises, attended by water-nymphs, and sings the song "*By the rushy-fringed òank*"—the third song in Milton's arrangement, the fourth in Lawes's. She then performs the expected office of releasing the Lady by sprinkling drops of pure water upon her, and touching thrice her lips and finger-tips. Sabrina descends, and the Lady rises from her seat. But, though she is now free from the spell of Comus in his enchanted wood, it remains to convey her and her brothers safely to their father's residence, where their arrival is waited for.

Accordingly, after an ode of thanks to Sabrina for her good service, with blessings on the stream that bears her name, the supposed Thyrsis continues:—

“Come, Lady; while Heaven lends us grace,
 Let us fly this cursed place,
 Lest the Sorcerer us entice
 With some other new device.
 Not a waste or needless sound
 Till we come to holier ground.
 I shall be your faithful guide
 Through the gloomy covert wide;
 And not many furlongs thence
 Is your Father’s residence,
 Where this night are met in state
 Many a friend to gratulate
 His wished presence, and beside
 All the swains that there abide
 With jigs and rural dance resort.
 We shall catch them at their sport;
 And our sudden coming there
 Will double all their mirth and cheer.
 Come, let us haste! the stars grow high,
 But Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.”

Thyrsis, the Lady, and the two Brothers, here leave the stage, and are supposed to be gradually wending their way, through the wood, while it is still night, or very early morning, towards Ludlow Castle. While the spectators are imagining this, the journey of some furlongs is actually achieved; for straightway “*the scene changes, presenting Ludlow Town and the President’s Castle: then come in country-dancers; after them the Attendant Spirit, with the two Brothers and the Lady.*” In this stage-direction it seems to be implied that the spectators now looked on some canvas at the back of the stage, representing Ludlow Town, and the exterior of the very Castle they were sitting in, all bright on a sunshiny morning, and that, as they looked, there came in first a bevy of rustic lads and lasses, or representatives of such, dancing and making merry, till their clodhopping rounds were interrupted by the appearance among them of the guardian Thyrsis and the three graceful young ones. This is confirmed by what Thyrsis says to the dancers in the song which stands fourth in the printed masque, but must have been the fifth in the actual performance:—

“Back, shepherds, back! Enough your play
 Till next sunshine holiday.”

So dismissed, the clodhoppers vanish; and there remain on the stage, facing the Earl and Countess and the audience, only (we may drop the disguise now, as doubtless the audience did in their cheering) the musician Lawes, the Lady Alice, and her brothers Viscount Brackley and Master Thomas Egerton. Advancing towards the Earl and Countess, Lawes presents to them his charge with this continuation of his last song:—

“Noble Lord and Lady bright,
 I have brought ye new delight.
 Here behold so goodly grown
 Three fair branches of your own,” &c.

There seems still to have been a dance at this point, to show off the courtly grace of the young people after the thumping energy of the clodhoppers; for at the end of Lawes’s song there comes this last stage-direction, “*The dances ended, the Spirit epiloguizes.*” That is to say, Lawes, relapsing into his character

of the Attendant Spirit who had descended from Heaven at the beginning of the piece, and had acted so beneficially through it in the guise of the shepherd Thyrsis, winds up the whole by a final speech or song as he slowly recedes or reascends. In our printed copies the Epilogue is a longish speech; but part of that speech, as we have seen, had been transferred, in the actual performance, to the beginning of the masque, as the Spirit's opening song. Therefore in the actual performance the closing lines of the Epilogue as we now have it served as the Spirit's song of reascent or departure, in two stanzas:—

“ Now my task is smoothly done:
I can fly, or I can run,
Quickly to the green Earth's end,
Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.

“ Mortals that would follow me,
Love Virtue! She alone is free:
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or, if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.”

And so, “with these sounds left on the ear, and a final glow of angelic light on the eye, the performance ends, and the audience rises and disperses through the Castle. The Castle is now a crumbling ruin, along the ivy-clad walls and through the dark passages of which the visitor clammers or gropes his way, disturbing the crows and the martlets in their recesses: but one can stand yet in the doorway through which the parting guests of that night descended into the inner court; and one can see where the stage was, on which the sister was lost by her brothers, and Comus revelled with his crew, and the lady was fixed as marble by enchantment, and the swains danced in welcome of the Earl, and the Spirit ascended gloriously to his native heaven. More mystic still it is to leave the ruins, and, descending one of the winding streets of Ludlow that lead from the Castle to the valley of the Teme, to look upwards to Castle and Town seen as one picture, and, marking more expressly the three long pointed windows that gracefully slit the chief face of the wall towards the north, to realize that it was from that ruin and from those windows in the ruin that the verse of *Comus* was first shook into the air of England.”— So I wrote a good few years ago, when the impressions of a visit I had made to Ludlow were fresh and vivid; and, as I copy the words now, they bring back, as it were in a dream, the pleasant memory of one bygone day. I remember my first sight of the hilly town as I walked into it early on a summer's morning, when not a soul was astir, and the clean streets were all silent and shuttered; then my ramble at my own will for an hour or so over the Castle ruins and the green knoll they crown, undisturbed by guide or any figure of fellow-tourist; then my descent again, past and round the great church and its tombs, into the steep town streets, now beginning their bustle for a market-day; and, finally, the lazy circuit I made round the green outskirts of the town, through I know not what glens and up their sloping sides, the ruined Castle always finely distinct close at hand, and in the distance, wherever the eye could range unopposed, a fairy horizon of dim blue mountains.

There is no evidence that Milton himself had taken the journey of 150 miles from London or Horton in order to be present at the performance. It is pos-

sible that he had done so; but it is just as possible that he had not, and even that the authorship of the masque was kept a secret at the time of its performance, known only to Lawes, or to Lawes and the Earl's family. But the Earl of Bridgewater's masque began to be talked of beyond Ludlow; as time passed, and the rumour of it spread, and perhaps the songs in it were carried vocally into London society by Lawes and his pupils of the Bridgewater family, it was still more talked of; and there came to be inquiries respecting its authorship, and requests for copies of it, and especially of the songs. All this we learn from Lawes. His loyalty to his friend Milton in the whole affair was admirable; and he appears to have been more proud, in his own heart, of his concern with the comparatively quiet Bridgewater masque than with his more blazoned and well-paid co-operation in the London masques of the same year. There were many friends of his, it appears, who were not satisfied with copies of the songs and their music only, but wanted complete copies of the masque. To relieve himself from the trouble so occasioned, Lawes resolved at length to print the masque. He did so in 1637 in a small, and now very rare, quarto of 40 pages, with this title-page:—

"A Maske presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634, on Michaelmasse Night, before the Right Honourable John, Earle of Bridgewater, Viscount Brackley, Lord President of Wales, and one of his Majesties' most honourable Privy Counsell.

*'Eheu quid volui misero mihi! floribus Austrum
Perditus—'*

London: Printed for Humphrey Robinson, at the signe of the Three Pidgeons in Paul's Churchyard, 1637."

The volume was dedicated by Lawes to the Earl's son and heir, young Viscount Brackley, who had acted the part of Elder Brother in the masque. The Dedication complete will be found prefixed to *Comus* in the present edition. We learn from it that the proposal of publication was Lawes's own, and that Milton still preferred the shelter of the anonymous. That Lawes had Milton's consent, however, is proved by the motto on the title-page. It is from Virgil's Second Eclogue, and must certainly have been supplied by Milton. "Alas! what have I chosen for my wretched self; thus on my flowers, infatuated that "I am, letting in the rude wind!" So says the shepherd in Virgil's Eclogue; and Milton, in borrowing the words, hints his fear that he may have done ill in letting his *Comus* be published. Though he was now twenty-eight years of age, it was actually, with hardly an exception, his first public venture in print.

He had no reason to regret the venture. "*Comus*," says Hallam, "was sufficient to convince any one of taste and feeling that a great poet had arisen in England, and one partly formed in a different school from his "contemporaries." Such a strong judgment is easily formed now; but there may have been some in England capable of forming it when it was a merit to form it, *i.e.* in 1637 (the year of Ben Jonson's death), when modest copies of Lawes's edition, without the author's name, were first in circulation. We know of one Englishman, at all events, who did form it and express it. This was Milton's near neighbour at Horton, Sir Henry Wotton, Provost of Eton College. Born in 1568, mixed up with political affairs in Elizabeth's reign, and in the height of his active career through that of James—when he had been English Ambassador to various foreign Courts, but had resided, in that capacity, most continuously at Venice—Sir Henry, since Charles came to the throne, had been in veteran retirement in the quiet post of the Eton provostship, respected by all

England for his past diplomatic services, but living chiefly on his memories of those services, his Italian experiences in particular, and in the delights of pictures, books, and scholarly society. Some chance introduction had brought Milton and the aged Knight together for the first time early in 1638, when Milton was preparing for his journey to Italy; and on the 6th of April in that year Milton, by way of parting acknowledgment of Sir Henry's courtesy, sent him a letter with a copy of Lawes's edition of his *Comus*. Sir Henry, it appears, had read the poem in a previous copy, without knowing who was the author; and, writing in reply to Milton on the 13th of April, just in time to overtake him before he left England, he mentioned this fact, and expressed his pleasure at finding that a poem that he had liked so singularly was by his neighbour and new acquaintance. "A dainty piece of entertainment," he calls it, "wherein I should much commend the tragical part [*i.e.* the dialogue] if the "lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Doric delicacy in your songs and "odes; whereunto I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in "our language." Here was praise worth having, and which did, as we know, gratify Milton. He was actually on the move towards Italy when he read Sir Henry Wotton's letter.

When, in 1645, six years after his return from Italy, Milton, then in the very midst of his pamphleteering activity, and of the ill-will which it had brought him, consented to the publication by Moseley of the first collective edition of his Poems, *Comus* was still, in respect of length and merit, his chief poetical achievement. Accordingly, he not only reprinted it in that edition, but gave it the place of honour there. It came last of the English Poems, with a separate title-page, thus:—"A Mask of the same Author, presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634, before the Earl of Bridgewater, then President of Wales: Anno Dom. 1645." The title-page of Lawes's edition of 1637 was, of course, cancelled by this new one; but Lawes's Dedication of that edition to young Viscount Brackley was retained, and there was inserted also, by way of pendant to that Dedication, Sir Henry Wotton's courteous letter of April 13, 1638. The courteous old Sir Henry was then dead; but Milton rightly considered that his word from the grave might be important in the circumstances. And so this Second Edition of the *Comus*, thus distinguished and set off as part of the First collective Edition of the Poems, served all the demand till 1673, when the Second collective Edition of the Poems appeared. *Comus* was, of course, retained in that edition, as still the largest and chief of Milton's minor Poems; but it was made less mechanically conspicuous than in the earlier edition. It did not come last among the English Poems, being followed by the translations of some Psalms; and it had no separate title-page, but only the heading, "A Mask presented at Ludlow Castle, 1634," &c. Lawes's Dedication of the edition of 1637 and Sir Henry Wotton's letter were likewise omitted.

In none of the three first printed editions, it will be observed (Lawes's of 1637, Milton's of 1645, and Milton's of 1673), is the poem entitled COMUS. Nor is there any such title in Milton's original draft among the Cambridge MSS., nor in that Bridgewater transcript which is supposed to have been the stage-copy. "A Mask presented," &c.: such, with slight variations in the phrasing, was the somewhat vague name of the piece while Milton lived. It was really inconvenient, however, that such a poem should be without a briefer

and more specific name. Accordingly, that of COMUS, from one of the chief persons of the drama, has been unanimously and very properly adopted.

Although the word *comus*, or κῶμος, signifying "revel" or "carousal," or sometimes "a band of revellers," is an old Greek common noun, with various cognate terms (such as κωμάζω, "to revel," and κωμῳδία, comedy), the personification or proper name COMUS appears to have been an invention of the later classic mythology. In the *Εἰκόνας*, or "Descriptions of Pictures," by Philostratus, a Greek author of the third century of our era, COMUS is represented as a winged god, seen in one picture "drunk and languid after a repast, his head sunk on his breast, slumbering in a standing attitude, and his legs crossed" (Smith's Dict. of Greek and Roman Biog. and Myth.). But, in fact, poets were left at liberty to fancy Comus, or the god Revel, very much as their own notions of what constitutes mirth or revel directed them; and the use of this liberty might perhaps be traced in the tradition of Comus, and the allusions to him in the poetry of different modern nations, down to Milton's time.

Comus is an occasional personage among the English Elizabethan poets; and he figures especially in Ben Jonson's masque of "*Pleasure Reconciled to Virtue*, presented at Court before King James, 1619." There he appears riding in triumph, as "the god of Good Cheer or the Belly, his head covered "with roses and other flowers, his hair curled;" and his attendants, crowned with ivy, and bearing a large bowl before him, salute him thus: —

"Hail, hail, plump paunch! O the founder of taste
For fresh meats, or powdered, or pickle, or paste;
Devourer of broiled, baked, roasted, or sod;
An emptier of cups, be they even or odd;
All which have now made thee so wide in the waist
As scarce with no pudding thou art to be laced;
But, eating and drinking until thou dost nod,
Thou break'st all thy girdles, and break'st forth a god."

Clearly Milton did not take his idea of the character of Comus from Ben Jonson's masque. A work to which it is more likely that he was in some small degree indebted is a Latin extravaganza, called *Comus, sive Phagesiposia Cimmerica: Somnium*, by the Dutchman Erycius Puteanus. This writer, whose real name was Hendrik van der Putten, was born at Venlo in Holland in 1574, and, after having been for some time in Italy, became Professor of Eloquence and Classical Literature at Louvain, where he died in 1646. He was "the author of an infinity of books," says Bayle (Dict.: Art. Puteanus); among which was the one whose title we have given. It was first published in 1608; but there were subsequent editions, including one brought out at Oxford in 1634, the very year of Milton's masque. The subject of the piece of Erycius Puteanus, which is written mostly in prose, with a mixture of verse, is the description of a dream in which the author visits the palace of Comus, the genius of Love and Cheerfulness, beholds him and his disguised guests at a banquet and subsequent torch-lit orgies, and listens to various dialogues on the voluptuous theory of life. In this dream Comus is a decidedly more graceful being than the lumbering god of good cheer in Ben Jonson's masque. He also, like Ben Jonson's Comus, is represented with curled and rose-crowned hair, but he is "soft-gestured and youthful," and personates a more subtle notion of Revel.

After all, however, Milton's Comus is a creation of his own, for which he

was as little indebted intrinsically to Puteanus as to Ben Jonson. For the purpose of his masque at Ludlow Castle he was bold enough to add a bran-new god, no less, to the classic Pantheon, and to import him into Britain, and particularly into Shropshire. Observe his parentage. Comus, the god of Sensual Pleasure, is not, with Milton, mere Gluttony, as he is in Jonson's masque; nor is he the mere modification of Feast and the Wine-god pictured by Philostratus and adopted by Puteanus. He is a son of the Wine-god certainly, but it is by the sorceress Circe; and, though he has much of his father's nature, he has more of the thrilling mercilessness and magical subtlety of his mother's. It is not for nothing that Milton, in his account of him, almost cites the description of Circe and her enchanted Island in the 10th Book of the *Odyssey*. There will be found throughout the masque more of real borrowing from Homer's picture of the experience of Ulysses and his companions on Circe's Island than from the extravaganza of Puteanus. Thus, to give but one instance, the magical root *Hamony*, by whose powers, explained to the two Brothers by the Attendant Spirit (lines 617-656), they are enabled to defy the spells of Comus and attempt the rescue of their sister, is an avowed adaptation of the divine herb *Achly* given by Hermes to Ulysses (*Odys.* X. 286 *et seq.*) to enable him to withstand those drugs of Circe that had wrought such woe on his companions. Commentators, however, have found traces in the masque of Milton's acquaintance also with George Peele's comedy of *The Old Wives' Tale* (1595) and Fletcher's pastoral of *The Faithful Shepherdess*, originally produced before 1625, and revived as a Court play and acted in the London theatres in 1633-4. In neither of these pieces is COMUS a character; but in the first there is a story of two brothers wandering in search of their lost sister and releasing her from the spell of an Enchanter, and in both there are passages in which one may descry or fancy some slight resemblance to some in *Comus*.

LYCIDAS.

On the 9th of June, 1626, when Milton had been for about sixteen months a student at Christ's College, Cambridge, there were admitted into that college, as appears from its records, two brothers, named King, sons of Sir John King, Knight, then living in Dublin, as Privy Councillor for Ireland and Secretary to the Irish Government. The family was English; but various members of it, in addition to Sir John, held offices in Ireland. Edward King, for example, Sir John's brother, was bishop of the Irish see of Elphin. Both the young men had been born in Ireland — the elder, named Roger, near Dublin; and the younger, named Edward after his uncle, at Boyle in Connaught. At the date of their admission into Christ's College, Roger was sixteen years of age, and Edward fourteen. They had previously been pupils of Mr. Thomas Farnaby, one of the most noted schoolmasters of the time, whose school then was in Goldsmith's Rents, Cripplegate, London. The tutor under whose care they were put at Christ's College was Mr. William Chappell, who was also Milton's first tutor there, and who became afterwards Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, and Dean of Cashel, and finally a bishop in the Irish Church.

Edward King, the younger of the two brothers, seems to have been one of the most popular young men in Christ's College during Milton's residence there. He and Milton must have seen much of each other. They must have

had frequent meetings in hall, at lecture, and in each other's rooms, and frequent walks about Cambridge together. Milton, as we know, was indubitably the chief ornament of the little community, its ablest and noblest youth, supreme in everything; and, before he left college as M.A. in July 1632, aged twenty-three, this had come to be recognised. But, among those who had been his fellow-students in college, and whom he left behind him there, there were several of whom high things were expected. John Cleveland, afterwards known as a metrical Satirist, was one; and the future celebrated "Platonist," Henry More, who had joined the college just as Milton was about to leave it, was another. Probably, however, no one was more liked in the college, both by dons and by students, than Edward King. Indeed, before Milton left the college, King, by what looks now like a promotion over Milton's head, had become himself one of the dons. On June 10, 1630, a Fellowship in Christ's College being then about to fall vacant, a royal mandate was addressed to the Master and Fellows of the college in behalf of Edward King, B.A., willing and requiring them, when the Fellowship should be vacant, to "admit the said Edward King into the same, notwithstanding any statute, ordinance, or constitution to the contrary." Had such college honours then gone by merit, Milton, then a B.A. of two years' standing, would have had a far superior claim. As it was, however, King, though his junior by three years, and only just out of his undergraduateship, received the Fellowship, and thus took nominal precedence of Milton during Milton's last two years at Christ's. The royal mandate in King's favour was clearly owing to his family connexions and influence; but to so popular a young scholar the preferment does not appear to have been grudged. Not only was he a favourite on account of his amiable character; he really was, as the royal mandate represented him, a youth of "hopeful parts." This we learn, however, rather from tradition than from any specimens of his ability that have come down to us. The earliest of such specimens that I have found are in a volume put forth by the Cambridge University press late in 1631 under the title of *Genethliacum illustrissimorum principum, Caroli et Mariæ, a Musis Cantabrigiensibus celebratum*. It consists of complimentary Latin pieces by some scores of Cambridge men, of different colleges, on the recent birth of the Princess Mary, the third child of Charles I., but with retrospective reference to the birth in the previous year (May 29, 1630) of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Charles II. Among the contributors is Edward King, Fellow of Christ's College. He contributes four short Latin pieces — one in hexameters, one in Horatian verse, and two in elegiacs. They are not very poetical or elegant, and indeed are rather prosaic. But in such customary verses of compliment to Royalty one had not much scope; and King had probably written better things, in Latin and in English, known to his fellow-collegians in Christ's, and to Milton among them. When Milton left the college, there seems to have been no one in it for whom he had a higher regard, morally at least, than Edward King.

Five years had elapsed since then, during which Milton, living chiefly at his father's country place, at Horton in Buckinghamshire, some sixty miles from Cambridge, can have seen King but occasionally. He would still hear, however, of King's progress and continued popularity in his Fellowship. In July 1633, we find, King took his full degree of M.A.; and there are subsequent traces of him in the records of the college, while he was qualifying himself for the Church — the profession for which Milton also had been originally

destined, but which he had abandoned. He was Tutor in the college, as well as Fellow; and in 1634-5 he was "prælector," and the admissions into the college for that year are still to be seen in his handwriting in the college-books. At least six more specimens of his Latin versification have been discovered, belonging to this period. There is a copy of Latin Iambics by him in a volume of Cambridge University verses on the King's recovery from small-pox (1633); he furnished another copy of Latin Iambics to a similar collection of academic congratulations on the King's return from his coronation-visit to Scotland (July 1633); there are some commendatory Latin Iambics of King's prefixed to *Senile Odium*, a Latin play by Peter Hausted, M.A. of Queen's College, acted at Cambridge in 1631, but not published till 1633; he has a set of Latin elegiacs in a Cambridge collection of verses on the birth of the Duke of York (Oct. 1633); he has some Horatian stanzas in a similar volume on the birth of the Princess Elizabeth (December 1635); and the latest thing of his I have seen is a copy of Latin Iambics in a collection of pieces, by no fewer than 140 Cambridge scholars, put forth on the birth of the Princess Anne (March 1636-7). Milton's hand does not appear in any of these collections, verses eulogistic of Royalty not being in his way; but he may have seen some of the collections and read King's contributions to them. He cannot, I am pretty sure, have thought much of them, any more than of their predecessors in the volume of 1631. But, as I have said, he liked King personally, and probably knew him to be capable of better things.

Suddenly, however, this youth of golden opinions from all sorts of people, this young hope of Christ's College, was cut off. It was the Long Vacation of 1637, and he had arranged to visit his friends in Ireland. Proceeding by way of the English midland and western counties, and perhaps seeing friends in those parts, he took a passage on board a vessel sailing from Chester Bay for Dublin. The vessel had gone but a little way, was still on the Welsh coast, and not out into the open channel, when, on the 10th of August, in perfectly calm weather, she struck on a rock, not far from land, and foundered. Some seem to have escaped in a boat; but most went down with the ship, and among them Edward King. His body was never recovered.

The news caused a profound sensation among all King's friends. As it was the time of the University vacation, when his college-fellows were scattered, it must have reached them separately, and some of them circuitously. Milton, we are to fancy, heard it at Horton, late in August 1637, or in the course of the following month. It had already been a sad year in the Horton household. The Plague, which had broken out in 1636, and whose ravages in various parts of England, and especially in London, were very alarming in 1637, had caused an unusual number of deaths in the neighbourhood of Horton. In the same unhealthy season, though not by the Plague itself, Milton's mother had died. She was buried, on the 6th of April, in Horton parish church, where the inscription "*Heare lyeth the Body of Sara Milton, the wife of John Milton, who died the 3rd of April, 1637;*" may be read to this day on a plain blue stone on the floor of the chancel. Milton was still walking about Horton with this loss in his mind, and the blue stone, with its inscription, may have just been put down over the grave, when there came the news of the shipwreck in the Irish Seas and of the drowning of Edward King with the rest.

When the Cambridge colleges reassembled in Oct. 1637 after the Long

Vacation, the melancholy death of poor King of Christ's was one of the first subjects of talk. It was proposed by somebody, or it suggested itself to more than one at once, that a volume of Memorial Verses should be prepared in his honour and published from the University press. Among the contributors to this volume were to be, of course, some of King's more immediate associates of Christ's College, from whom he had parted so lately on his fatal journey; but friends of his in other colleges, and relatives and former acquaintances out of Cambridge, might be expected to co-operate. Either Milton was thought of and applied to, or he had heard of the project and volunteered his assistance. In November 1637, as appears from a dating at the head of the original draft of *Lycidas* in Milton's own hand among the Milton MSS. at Cambridge, he wrote that poem, entitling it simply "LYCIDAS." This was to be his contribution to the intended memorial volume.

The volume, probably because other contributors were not so ready as Milton, did not appear till some time in 1638. It consisted of two collections of pieces, printed by the University printers, Thomas Buck and Roger Daniel, and separately paged, so that they might be bound either separately or together. The one was a collection of twenty-three Latin and Greek pieces occupying 35 pages of small quarto, and entitled "*Iusta Edovardo King naufrago ab amicis merentibus, amoris et melas χάρην*" ("Rites to Edward King, drowned by shipwreck, in love and remembrance by his sorrowing friends"); the other consisted of thirteen pieces of English verse, occupying 25 pages of the same size, and with this title, bordered with black, on the front page, "*Obsequies to the memorie of Mr. Edward King, Anno Dom. 1638.*" The last piece in the English collection, and much the longest — for it spreads over six pages (pp. 20–25), while only one of the others extends over more than two — is Milton's *Lycidas*. It is signed merely "J. M.," and has no title, or other formal separation from the pieces that precede it. All the more striking must it have been for a reader who had toiled through the trash of the preceding twelve pieces (I have read them one and all, and will vouch that they *are* trash) to come at length upon this opening of a true poem: —

"Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And with forced fingers rude
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year:
Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear
Compels me to disturb your season due,
For Lycidas is dead."

This poem of Milton's, published half-anonymously in 1638 in the Cambridge volume of Memorial Verses to Edward King, was in circulation just as Milton was going abroad on his Italian journey. It, and his *Comus*, printed for him quite anonymously in the previous year by his friend Henry Lawes the musician, were all but the only poems of Milton in print till 1645, when the first edition of his collected Poems was given to the world by Moseley. In that edition, and in the subsequent edition of 1673, *Lycidas* is printed with its present complete title, thus: "LYCIDAS. *In this Monody the Author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drown'd in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637. And by occasion foretells the ruine of our corrupted Clergie then in their height.*" A portion of this extended title (from

"In this Monody" to the date "1637") appears in the original MS. draft of the poem at Cambridge, inserted, clearly by way of afterthought, in Milton's own hand under the heading LYCIDAS; the words "Novemb. 1637," which had originally accompanied that heading, being then erased as superfluous.

The poem is a Pastoral. It is the most pastoral in form of all Milton's English poems, more so considerably than the *Arcades* and *Comus*. It is not a direct lyric of lamentation by Milton for the death of King; it is a phantasy of one shepherd mourning, in the time of autumn, the death of a fellow-shepherd. The mourning shepherd, however, is Milton himself, and the shepherd mourned for is King; and, through the guise of all the pastoral circumstance and imagery of the poem, there is a studious representation of the real facts of King's brief life and his accidental death, and of Milton's regard for him and academic intimacy with him.

"Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove a-field, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks."

Here is the recollection, pastorally expressed, of their companionship at Cambridge, their walks and talks together there, and their common exercises. In the same manner it has already been hinted to us that among those common exercises was poetry. One reason why *Lycidas* was now lamented in song was that he himself had known how "to sing and build the lofty rhyme." All the more inexplicable was his loss. Where had the Nymphs been when this loved votary of theirs was drowned? Not, certainly, anywhere near the scene of the disaster. Not on the steeps known to the old Bards and Druids (the mountains of North Wales), nor on the shaggy top of Mona (the Isle of Anglesey), nor by the wizard stream of the Deva (the river Dee and Chester Bay). The topographical exactness here, under the poetic language, is worthy of remark, and is one of Milton's habits. But, had the Nymphs been there, what could they have done? Had the Muse herself been able to save her son Orpheus? Dwelling a little on this thought, of the non-immunity of even the finest intellectual promise from the stroke of death, Milton works it into one of the most beautiful and most frequently quoted passages of the poem: "Alas, what boots it," &c. (lines 64-84). That strain, he says, at the end of the passage, had been "of a higher mood," rather beyond the range of the pastoral; but now he will resume his simple oaten pipe and proceed. There pass then across the visionary stage three figures in succession. First comes the Herald of the Sea, Triton, who reports, in mythological terms, which yet veil exact information, that the cause of King's death was not tempestuous weather, for the sea was as calm as glass when the ship went down, but either the unseaworthiness of the ship itself or some inherited curse in her very timbers. Next comes Camus, the local deity of the Cam, footing slowly like his own sluggish stream, and with his bonnet of sedge from its banks, staying not long, but uttering one ejaculation over the loss to Cambridge of one of her darling sons. Lastly, in still more mystic and awful guise, comes St. Peter, the guardian of that Church of Christ for the service of which King had been destined—the apostle to whom the Great Shepherd himself had given it in charge, "Feed

my sheep." Not out of place even his grave figure in this peculiar pastoral. For has he not lost one of his truest under-shepherds, lost him too at a time when he could ill be spared, when false shepherds, hireling shepherds, knowing nothing of the real craft they professed, were more numerous than ever, and the flocks were perishing for lack of care or by the ravages of the stealthy wolf? It is to the singularly bold and stern passage of denunciation here put into St. Peter's mouth (lines 113-131), and especially to the last lines of the passage, prophesying speedy vengeance and reform, that Milton referred, when, in the title prefixed to the poem on its republication in 1645, he intimated that it contained a description of the state of England at the time when it was written, and foretold the ruin of the corrupted English clergy then in their height. In 1638 it had been bold enough to let the passage stand in the poem, as published in the Cambridge memorial volume, without calling attention to it in the title. But, indeed, this passage too had transcended the ordinary limits of the quiet pastoral. The poet is aware of this. Accordingly, when "the dread voice is past" that had so pealed over the landscape and caused it to shudder, he calls on Alphæus and the Sicilian Muse, as the patrons of the pastoral proper, to return, and be with him through the pensive remainder. Beautifully pensive it is, and yet with a tendency to soar. First, in strange and evidently studied contrast with the stern speech of St. Peter which has just preceded, is the exquisitely worded passage which follows (lines 143-151). For musical sweetness, and dainty richness of floral colour, it beats perhaps anything else in all Milton. It is the call upon all valleys of the landscape, and the banks of all the secret streamlets, to yield up their choicest flowers, and those dearest to shepherds, that they may be strewn over the dead body of Lycidas. Ah! it is but a fond fancy, a momentary forgetfulness. For where, meanwhile, is that dead body? Not anywhere on land at all, to be strewn with flowers and receive a funeral, but whelmed amid the sounding seas, either sunk deep down near the spot of the shipwreck, or drifted thence northwards perhaps to the Hebrides, or perhaps southwards to Cornwall and St. Michael's Mount. But let the surviving shepherds cease their mourning. Though that body is never again to be seen on earth, Lycidas is not lost. A higher world has received him already; and there, amid other groves and other streams, laving his oozy locks with the nectar of heaven, and listening to the nuptial song, he has joined the society of the Saints, and can look down on the world and the friends he has left, and act as a power promoted for their good. — Here the Monody or Pastoral ends. The last eight lines of the poem do not belong to the Monody. They are not a part of the song sung by Milton in his imaginary character as the shepherd who is bewailing the death of Lycidas, but are distinctly a stanza of Epilogue, in which Milton speaks directly, criticises what he has just written in his imaginary character, and intimates that he has stepped out of that character, and is about to turn to other occupations: —

"Thus sang the uncouth swain to the oaks and rills,
While the still Morn went out with sandals grey;
He touched the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay;
And now the Sun had stretched out all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay:
At last he rose and twitched his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods and pastures new."

SONNETS AND KINDRED PIECES.

In one well-known Sonnet Wordsworth has given the very essence of the history of the Sonnet down to Milton's time : —

“ Scorn not the Sonnet: Critic, you have frowned,
 Mindless of its just honours! With this key
 Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
 Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
 A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
 With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;
 The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
 Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
 His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp,
 It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
 To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp
 Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
 The thing became a trumpet, whence he blew
 Soul-animating strains, — alas! too few.”

Milton, however, is notable in the succession of chief Sonnet-writers, not only on account of the intrinsic power of the few Sonnets he did write, but also because he helped, by means of them, to establish or re-establish in England that stricter mechanism of the Sonnet which had been in favour with the Italians.

The Sonnet may be defined, generally, as a little poem of fourteen lines, complete in itself, and containing a condensed expression of some one thought or feeling. The Italian poets, however, who had first practised the Sonnet, and from whom the Spaniards, the French, and the English had taken it, had practised it in one particular form, or rather in a certain variety of forms. Not only were the fourteen lines rhyming lines, of the norm of five Iambi each, but the rhymes interlaced each other in a peculiar manner. On the whole, the legitimate Italian Sonnet may be said to have contained either four rhymes or five rhymes altogether, of which two governed the first eight lines, and the remaining two or three the last six, the linking of the rhymes within this general provision admitting of variety, though some arrangements were preferred to others. The least common arrangement in the last six lines was that which ended the Sonnet in a rhyming couplet, so as to round it off with a kind of epigrammatic effect.

On account of the paucity of rhymes in English as compared with Italian, the first English Sonnet-writers had made pretty free with the Italian model. There was some effort indeed to keep more or less close to that model, and especially not to go beyond five rhymes in all in the building of the Sonnet. Instances will be found in Wyatt (1503—1542), and in Surrey (1515—1547). From the first, however, there was a tendency to the convenience of more numerous rhymes than the four or five allowed in Italian, and also, with or without that convenience, to the epigrammatic effect of an ending in a couplet. Hence, at length, a laxness in the English idea of the Sonnet, which permitted any little poem of fourteen lines, rhymed anyhow, to be called by that name. Perhaps, however, two forms emerged from this confusion as normal or customary forms of the English Sonnet. One of these forms, largely exemplified in Spenser (1553—1599), is a form which finds five rhymes in all still sufficient, but does so by throwing the first twelve lines into three interlinked stanzas

of four lines each, and then adding a couplet. The formula, more expressly, is *A* 1, 3, *B* 2, 4, 5, 7, *C* 6, 8, 9, 11, *D* 10, 12, *E* 13, 14; where the rhymes within the three stanzas, it will be observed, are alternate, but, by the device of making the last rhyme of the first stanza begin the second, and the last of the second again begin the third, four rhymes clear all the three stanzas and prepare for the fifth of the final couplet. But a still laxer form than this common Spenserian one was one to which even Surrey had helped himself, and of which there are examples in Spenser too, and others in Samuel Daniel (1562—1619). This form dispensed altogether with the interlinking of the three stanzas by rhymes common to the first and second and the second and third, and was content that the twelve lines should be three loose stanzas of alternate rhymes, connected only by a continuous meaning, and preceding the final couplet. Thus seven rhymes in all were allowed in the Sonnet, the formula being *A* 1, 3, *B* 2, 4, *C* 5, 7, *D* 6, 8, *E* 9, 11, *F* 10, 12, *G* 13, 14. It was of this free form of the Sonnet that Shakespeare availed himself; and all his famous Sonnets, with scarce an exception, are written in it. For example:—

“No longer mourn for me when I am dead
 Than you shall hear the surly sullen bell
 Give warning to the world that I am fled
 From this vile world, with viler worms to dwell;
 Nay, if you read this line, remember not
 The hand that writ it: for I love you so
 That I in your sweet thoughts would be forgot,
 If thinking on me then should make you woe.
 O, if, I say, you look upon this verse
 When I perhaps compounded am with clay,
 Do not so much as my poor name rehearse,
 But let your love even with my life decay,
 Lest the wise world should look into your moan,
 And mock you with me after I am gone.”

To all time this type of Sonnet, though not the strict Italian, will remain, consecrated by Shakespeare's great usage, a true and sufficient English type. Even while Shakespeare was alive, however, there lingered a knowledge of the stricter Italian type, and a disposition to exhibit it also in English. The Sonnets of Donne (1573—1631), specimens though they are rather of metrical intellection than of lyrical effusion, are, most of them, more after the Italian mechanism than Spenser's, and much more than Shakespeare's. They are of five rhymes, of which two, by their interlinking, sustain the first eight lines of the Sonnet, leaving three for the other six lines. On the same principle, and with much more of softness and music in them, are the Sonnets of Drummond of Hawthornden (1585—1649), a poet imbued with Italian influences and fond of the Sonnet. But both in Donne's Sonnets and in Drummond's, no less than in Spenser's and Shakespeare's, the sounding epigrammatic couplet at the end is still a constant feature. The English ear seems to have grown so accustomed to this ending as to require it, and it was usual to print Sonnets with these two final lines coupled together for the eye by indentation from the rest.

It was reserved mainly for Milton to emancipate the English Sonnet from this peculiarity of the final rhyming couplet, by reasserting the Italian rule that it should be optional and occasional only, while at the same time he reverted to the Italian construction in other respects. An early student of the Italian poets, he had learnt the true music of the Sonnet from Petrarch most of all,

so that, when he first ventured on trials of the Sonnet-form in English, he thought of it as the "Petrarchian Stanza." These first trials were made while he was still a Cambridge student, long before that "damp" fell round his path of which Wordsworth speaks as being already round it when he seized the Sonnet, and the thing in his hands became a trumpet. The series of his Sonnets, however, though beginning about 1630, extends to 1658; and most of them were those "soul-animating strains" which he blew at intervals from this instrument when other poetry was in forced abeyance from him, and he was engrossed in prose polemics. Milton's last sixteen Sonnets, indeed, with a verse or two besides, are the few occasional strains that connect, as by intermitted trumpet-blasts through twenty years, the rich minor poetry of his youth and early manhood with the greater poetry of his declining age in blindness after the Restoration.

SONNET I.: TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

There is no means of dating this Sonnet precisely; but it is placed first by Milton himself, and must be referred either to the close of the Cambridge period, or to some time in the Horton period. It is the Sonnet of a youth to whom the return of May brings the thought of his youth passing companionless and a sense of love-longing. There is a recollection of the superstition that he who hears the nightingale before he hears the cuckoo will woo fortunately before the year is over.

SONNET II.: ON HIS HAVING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.

Milton wrote this Sonnet at or about the moment when Time had "stolen on his wing" the "three-and-twentieth year" of his life; and that was on the 9th of December, 1631. He was then at Cambridge, a B.A. of three years' standing, and was looking forward to his degree of M.A., and the close of his Cambridge career, in a few months. But the occurrence of the draft of the Sonnet among the Cambridge MSS. adds other illustrative particulars. It occurs there as an insertion into the first of two drafts, in Milton's hand, of a prose letter, of some length, which he sent, or meant to send, to a friend. This friend, whose name we do not know, had remonstrated with Milton on the aimless course of merely studious life he was then leading, and on the impropriety of his continuing it instead of dedicating his talents to the Church or some other active profession. Milton's reply is a courteous acknowledgment of the interest shown by the friend in his behalf, with a defence of his conduct, and a statement of his reasons for being in no hurry to enter the Church. Though all ordinary motives conspired to urge him into that or some other profession, yet a "sacred reverence and religious advisement," a principle of "not taking thought of being *late*, so it gave advantage to be more *fit*," had hitherto held him back. "That you may see," he adds, "that I am something suspicious of myself, and do take notice of a certain *belatedness* in me, I am the bolder to send you some of my nightward thoughts some little while ago, because they come in not altogether unfitly, made up in a Petrarchian stanza, which I told you of." Here, accordingly, follows the Sonnet.

SONNETS III.—VII.: FIVE ITALIAN SONNETS, WITH AN ACCOMPANYING CANZONE.

These Italian pieces, which precede Sonnet II. in Milton's own editions, form a little group by themselves. They relate the story of Milton's love for some Italian lady, beautiful, black-eyed, dark-haired, accomplished, and fascinating by her grace and her powers of singing. Altogether there is an Italian air about the Sonnets; they breathe of Italy. They have been referred therefore, by common consent, to the time of Milton's Italian journey (1638-9). Some time and some where during that journey, it is supposed, he met the foreign beauty who captivated him. Warton imagines that she may have been the celebrated singer Leonora, whom Milton heard at Rome, and to whom he addressed three pieces of complimentary Latin verse (see them among the Latin Poems, and the Introduction to them). There is no real ground for the fancy. The lady, whoever she was, is described, in the first Sonnet, as a native of the Vale of the Reno, in the north of the Papal States, between Bologna and Ferrara. Now Milton visited this part of Italy in 1639, or towards the end of his tour, when, after having returned from Naples, and paid second visits, of two months each, to Rome and Florence, he passed through Bologna and Ferrara on his way to Venice and homewards. But the lady, though a Bolognese, may have been met in Venice, or perhaps even in Florence or Rome, before Milton had passed through Bologna. Nay, after all, may not the Italian Sonnets and Canzone have been written in England *before* the Italian journey, and even a good while before it? May not Milton, some time after he had left Cambridge, have met, in English society, the Bolognese beauty who charmed him? May not his attempts in Italian have been a tribute to her foreign loveliness, and to the sweetness of the language as heard from her lips? In the second of the Sonnets and in the Canzone there are expressions which might be construed in favour of this hypothesis. On the whole, however, it is not so likely as the former. Either way, it has to be added, Italian critics do not find the Italian idiom of the pieces quite perfect.

SONNET VIII.: "WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY."

This Sonnet, the first of those which refer to English public affairs, was written in November 1642, and probably on Saturday the 12th of that month. The Civil War had then begun; and Milton, already known as a vehement Anti-Episcopal pamphleteer and Parliamentarian, was living, with two young nephews whom he was educating, in his house in Aldersgate Street, a suburban thoroughfare just beyond one of the city gates of London. After some of the first actions of the war, including the indecisive Battle of Edgehill (Oct. 23), the King's army, advancing out of the Midlands, with the King and Prince Rupert present in it, had come as near to London as Hounslow and Brentford, and was threatening a farther march to crush the Londoners and the Parliament at once. They were at their nearest on Saturday the 12th of November; and all that day and the next there was immense excitement in London in expectation of an assault—chains put up across streets, houses barred, &c. It was not till the evening of the 13th that the citizens were reassured by the retreat of the King's army, which had been checked from a

closer advance by a rapid march-out of the Trained Bands under Essex and Skippon. Milton, we are to fancy, had shared the common alarm. His was one of the houses which, if the Cavaliers had been let loose, it would have given them particular pleasure to sack. Knowing this, the only precaution he takes is, half in jest, and yet perhaps with some anxiety, to write a Sonnet addressed to the imaginary Royalist Captain, Colonel, or Knight, who may command the Aldersgate Street sacking-party. "*On his dore when ye citty expected an assault*" is the original heading of the Sonnet in the copy of it, by an amanuensis, among the Cambridge MSS., as if the Sonnet had actually been pasted or nailed up on the outside of Milton's door. This title was afterwards deleted by Milton himself, and the other title substituted in his own hand; but the Sonnet appeared without any title at all in the editions of 1645 and 1673.

SONNET IX.: TO A LADY.

This Sonnet was left untitled by Milton: the title has been supplied by the editors. The date, almost certainly, was 1644; but who the lady was that is addressed is unknown.

SONNET X.: "TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY."

This Sonnet must have been written in 1644 or 1645; and the lady addressed was Lady Margaret Ley, one of the daughters of James Ley, first Earl of Marlborough, a nobleman of whom there still remained a respectful recollection in England. Born in 1552, he had been eminent as a lawyer before Queen Elizabeth's death; and, after a long career as Knight, Baronet, and Judge, he had been raised by James to the great office of Lord High Treasurer of England in 1624, and, at the same time, to a peerage as Baron Ley of Ley in Devonshire. The higher dignity of the Earldom of Marlborough was conferred on him by Charles in 1626-7, when he was seventy-four years of age. In 1628 he had been removed from the High Treasurership to the less laborious office of President of the Council, ostensibly on account of his old age, but really, it was thought, because he was not sufficiently compliant with the policy of Charles and Buckingham. He died in March 1628-9, immediately after the dissolution of Charles's Third Parliament; and, as the Sonnet hints, his death was believed to have been hastened by political anxiety at that crisis. He left three sons; the eldest of whom, Henry, succeeded him in the Earldom, but, dying in 1638, transmitted it to *his* son, James Ley, third Earl of Marlborough, who attained to unusual distinction by his services to the King in the Civil War, and by his various abilities. Among the surviving aunts of this young nobleman, and herself probably somewhat past her youth, was the Lady Margaret of the Sonnet. She had married a Captain Hobson, from the Isle of Wight; and both she and her husband seem to have taken the Parliamentary side. They resided in London, and Milton had become acquainted with them. His nephew and biographer Phillips expressly says that, after his desertion by his first wife in 1643, Milton "made it his chief diversion now and then of an evening to visit the Lady Margaret Ley," adding, "This lady, being a woman of great wit and ingenuity, had a particular honour for him, and took much delight in his company, as likewise Captain Hobson, her husband, a very

“accomplished gentleman.” Milton’s compliment to her in the Sonnet is that she was a true daughter of her liberal father. Her political and religious opinions probably agreed with Milton’s. This is the latest of the Sonnets printed in the edition of 1645, and it is there printed without a heading. The heading is from the Cambridge draft.

SONNETS XI. AND XII.: “ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON MY WRITING CERTAIN TREATISES,” AND “ON THE SAME.”

The Treatises in question were Milton’s four Treatises on the subject of Divorce, written between his desertion by his first wife in 1643 and her return to him and reconciliation with him in the autumn of 1645: viz. his *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, which came first and passed through two editions, and his *Judgment of Martin Bucer*, his *Tetrachordon*, and his *Colasterion*, which followed, at intervals, in defence of the original publication. As the opinion broached by Milton in these pamphlets was a new and daring one, it shocked people greatly, and especially the Presbyterians, who were then in the ascendant in Parliament, and all-powerful in the Westminster Assembly. Milton’s strange doctrine of Divorce was the subject of talk in society; it was attacked through the press; it even brought him into danger with the public authorities. Milton’s two Sonnets are his comments, one half jocose, the other contemptuous and indignant, on this execration with which he found himself surrounded. They were written late in 1645 or early in 1646, when the return of his wife and his reconciliation with her had abated his practical and personal interest in the success of his doctrine. The Scotch names ridiculed in Sonnet XI. are those of the *Gordons*, then much heard of as among the followers of the Marquis of Montrose in his Royalist enterprise in Scotland, and of a certain Highland warrior, who was Montrose’s Lieutenant-General, and called in Gaelic *Alexander Macdonnel*, *Mac-Colkittoch*, *Mac-Gillespie*, i.e., Alexander Macdonnel, son of Colkittoch (the left-handed), son of Gillespie. He was *Colkitto*, *Macdonnel*, and *Galasz*, all in one.

“ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE UNDER THE LONG PARLIAMENT.”

This is, in reality, a continuation or extension of the vein of the two Divorce Sonnets, and must have been written about the same time, or hardly later than 1647. Partly on account of the outcry against Milton’s Divorce Pamphlets among the Presbyterians, partly on more general grounds, he had parted company with them, and had attached himself rather to the party, or combination of parties, of which Cromwell was becoming the recognised head, and who were called by the general name of The Independents. It was the leading principle of this party, or combination of parties, to oppose the too rigorous establishment of that system of Presbyterian Church Government and Discipline, after the Scottish model, which had been decreed in England by the Long Parliament, and in part carried into effect, after the abolition of Episcopacy. It was their effort, at all events, to secure that, if this system were permanently established by the majority as the national English system, there should be room under it for freedom of conscience and worship for the dissenting minority. Gradually the notion of a Toleration of Independents and other Sects within

certain limits under the established Presbyterianism was gaining ground in Parliament, chiefly in consequence of the power of the Parliamentarian Army, which was composed largely of Independents, Baptists, and more extreme Sectaries; but the rigid Presbyterians, and especially the Presbyterian Divines of the Westminster Assembly, and most especially the small group of Scottish Divines who sat in that Assembly as assessors to their English brethren, were loud in their denunciations of the arch-heresy of Toleration, as they called it, and their calls for a suppression of all Sects and the enforcement of an absolute Presbyterian uniformity by the civil power. It is against these claims of strict Presbyterian supremacy that Milton speaks out in the present piece of verse. He intended it to be what may be called an Anti-Presbyterian and Pro-Toleration Sonnet; but by going beyond fourteen lines converted it into what the Italians called a "Sonnet with a tail."—*Classic Hierarchy* means *Presbyterian Hierarchy*, the English name for the Church-Court called "a Presbytery" in Scotland being "a Classis." *A.S.* stands for a Scottish pamphleteer, named Adam Steuart, who wrote with his initials; *Rutherford* is the Scottish divine, Samuel Rutherford, who was of the Westminster Assembly; *Shallow Edwards* is an English Presbyterian preacher, Thomas Edwards, who had written a book of virulent personalities against Independents and Heretics, Milton included; *Scotch what d'ye call* is probably the Rev. Robert Baillie, the historian, then one of the Westminster Assembly, who had also attacked Milton in print.

SONNET XIII.: "TO MR. H. LAWES, ON HIS AIRS."

One of the Cambridge drafts of this Sonnet fixes its date as Feb. 9, 1645-6. That draft is headed "To my Friend, Mr. Henry Lawes: Feb. 9, 1645," and signed "J. M.;" the other draft, though also in Milton's hand, bears this heading in another, "To Mr. Hen. Lawes, on the publishing of his Aires." Actually, the Sonnet first appeared in print, with Milton's name attached, as one of a few pieces of eulogistic verse prefixed to a volume published by Moseley in 1648 and entitled *Choice Psalmes, put into Musick for three Voices: composed by Henry and William Lawes, Brothers, and Servants to His Majestie.*

Milton's friendship from his boyhood with the musician Henry Lawes, and the main facts of that interesting person's life till his co-operation with Milton in the production of the *Arcades* at Harefield, and of *Comus* at Ludlow, have been recorded in the Introductions to those two poems (see *antè*, pp. 414-15, and 418-19). We have now to add that, in the intervening years, the reputation of Lawes in his art had been steadily growing, till there was perhaps no musical composer of his time more generally known and liked. Still retaining, in association with his brother William, his position as one of the King's musicians and gentlemen of the Chapel Royal, and still connected by special professional engagements with the Bridgewater family, he had done much work in the way of setting to music songs by Carew, Herrick, Waller, Cartwright, and other popular poets. These songs of Lawes were favourites in English households, and the poets whose words were thus recommended by his airs could not thank him enough. There are verses by Herrick and others in which affectionate mention is made of "Harry" and his musical skill. And so the publisher Moseley, or perhaps Milton himself, in bringing out the first edition of Milton's Poems in 1645, did not forget that Lawes's name

might be an advantage to the volume. "The Songs were set in Musick by Mr. Henry Lawes, Gentleman of the King's Chappel, and one of His Majesties private Musick," was the announcement on the title-page, referring to the songs in *Arcades* and *Comus*, and perhaps to others in the volume; and in the body of the volume was reprinted Lawes's Dedication of *Comus* to Lord Brackley. Clearly, therefore, Milton's intimacy with Lawes had not been interrupted even by the Civil War and the division of all Englishmen into Royalists and Parliamentarians. By his position, if not from his artistic temperament, Lawes was a Royalist; and indeed his brother William had been slain in the King's cause at the siege of Chester (1645), greatly to the King's grief, who is said to have put on private mourning for him. Not the less had Henry Lawes, who remained in London, his meetings with his old friend Milton, when they would lay politics aside and agree in music.

SONNET XIV.: "ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHERINE THOMSON, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND, DECEASED 16 DECEMB. 1646."

The Sonnet itself, with its heading, which does not occur in the printed volume, but is taken from the Cambridge MS., supplies all the information we have respecting the person addressed. Phillips, indeed, mentions that, some time in 1649, Milton "lodged at one Thomson's, next door to the Bull Head Tavern at Charing Cross, opening into the Spring Garden;" and it has been supposed that the Mrs. Catherine Thomson who died in 1646 may have been one of the Charing Cross family with whom Milton thus afterwards lodged. This is mere guess. Thomson, then as now, was a very common name in London.

SONNET XV.: "ON THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX AT THE SIEGE OF COLCHESTER."

The siege of Colchester in Essex lasted from the 15th of June to the 28th of August, 1648, and was one of the most memorable incidents of what is called "the Second Civil War," *i.e.* of that spasmodic new rising of the English and Scottish Royalists on behalf of Charles I., then a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, which it required all the energy of Fairfax, the Parliamentary commander-in-chief, and of Cromwell, his lieutenant-general, to put down, and which led very speedily to the King's trial and doom. While Cromwell managed the Northern department of the war, meeting and beating the Duke of Hamilton and the Royalist Scots and English at Preston, Fairfax in person superintended the siege of Colchester; which town had been seized for the King, and was defended by the Earl of Norwich, Lord Capel, Sir Charles Lucas, Sir George Lisle, and other Royalist chiefs. As Fairfax offered quarter only to the soldiers, but required the leaders to surrender at discretion, the defence was desperate, and both the garrison and the townspeople were reduced to the last straits of starvation, having to eat grass and the flesh of horses, cats, and dogs. When the surrender did take place, Sir Charles Lucas and Sir George Lisle were tried by court-martial, and immediately shot, as released prisoners of war who had broken their *parole* to the Parliament in again taking arms for the King. The Earl of Norwich and Lord Capel were left to the mercy

of Parliament; and Lord Capel was afterwards executed. The taking of Colchester was heard of with triumph by the Parliamentarians throughout England, and went as an addition to the renown of Fairfax acquired by his many actions since he had been made Parliamentary commander-in-chief in December 1644. Milton, in this Sonnet, expresses the general feeling of the hour, not only about the particular victory, but also about the character of Fairfax, and England's farther hopes from him. Although Fairfax afterwards retired from his connexion with the Commonwealth, and even co-operated at last in the Restoration, this Sonnet to him savoured too much of pre-Restoration politics to be allowable in Milton's edition of his *Minor Poems* in 1673. It was first published by Phillips in 1694, at the end of his memoir of Milton.

SONNET XVI.: "TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL, MAY 1652: ON THE PROPOSALS OF CERTAIN MINISTERS AT THE COMMITTEE FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE GOSPEL."

Milton's admiration of Cromwell is attested by many proofs, and, amongst them, by a long and impassioned outburst of Latin eulogium in the *Defensio Secunda*. No two men, I believe, were more essentially like-minded, more one at heart in their thoughts about the great problems of the English nation at that time, than the two whom fate had drawn together in such different capacities — Cromwell, the supreme soldier and man of action, raised at length to be the ruler; Milton, the poet and idealist, brought beside this ruler as a scholarly official. The Sonnet under notice, however, is not, as the mere title "*To Cromwell*" sometimes given to it might lead one to imagine, Milton's estimate of Cromwell from the whole of his career, or even after Milton's Secretaryship to him singly had begun. It is an address by Milton to Cromwell at a particular moment of Cromwell's career and on a particular occasion. The date was May 1652. Cromwell was not yet Protector, though he was the first man in the Republic, and they were proposing to make him its head. Since the execution of the King, and the establishment of the Commonwealth under the government of the Parliament with a Council of State, he had been away in Ireland, as Lord-Lieutenant of that country, trampling down its long Rebellion and reducing it to order (1649-50); he had also been in Scotland, and had fought the Battle of Dunbar (Sept. 3, 1650) there, and taken other measures which, when followed up by the crowning victory of Worcester (Sept. 3, 1651), utterly ruined the cause of Charles II. in Scotland, as well as in England, and united both parts of the island in one Commonwealth. These were the acts of Cromwell freshest in men's minds, and he had been again in London through the winter of 1651-2, when the Sonnet was written. The Sonnet breathes the feeling of many at that hour with respect to him. Now that he was at home again, would not things be better managed than they had been in his absence by the persistent Rump of the Long Parliament and the Council of State? Especially in matters of Religion was not fresh zeal necessary? Throughout England and Wales, or in many parts of them, Church matters were in chaos — Presbyterian ministers here and Independents there, mixed with the wrecks of the old parish clergy; no regular arrangement for the provision of ministers; disputes as to the method of such provision, whether by a common fund out of the tithes, or by voluntary contribution without tithes at all; many districts meanwhile in spiritual destitution for want of fit pastors

and preachers. For the consideration of such questions and the remedying of such evils there had been appointed a Parliamentary "Committee for the Propagation of the Gospel;" and this Committee seems to have been in unusual activity after Cromwell's return. There was then some new form of the controversy respecting a State Church and endowments for the clergy, and the Presbyterian ministers more especially seemed to their enemies to be trying to get for themselves all the property that had belonged to the abolished Prelatic Church. It was expected that Cromwell, whose sympathies had been with the Independents and Sectaries, would have something to say to this; and Milton's Sonnet expresses that expectation. Cromwell's Protectorate (Dec. 1653—Sept. 1658), with Milton's closer connexion with him during that Protectorate, came later. Yet the Sonnet may well stand as Milton's tribute of respect to Cromwell on the whole; and little wonder that he did not dare to print it in the edition of his Poems in 1673.

SONNET XVII.: "TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER."

This Sonnet breathes the same spirit as the last, and may have been written at the same time, or perhaps somewhat earlier. If it was written in 1652, Vane was in his fortieth year when it was addressed to him, and was one of the Council of State; but, as his father was still alive, he was always known as the Younger Vane. It was recollected, moreover, how he had entered the Long Parliament at the age of twenty-seven, having already distinguished himself in America, and how all through the Parliament he had acted and been regarded as one of the subtlest and boldest theorists of the extreme Revolutionary party. In his style of mind he was what would now be called a *doctrinaire*, or abstract thinker, with perhaps a dash of the fanatic; and, as Milton hints, he had exercised himself very particularly on the question of the relations and mutual limits of the Church and State, having had practical occasion to consider that question as early as 1636, when he was Governor of Massachusetts. After the Restoration he was brought to the scaffold, June 14, 1662. Milton's Sonnet to him was necessarily omitted in the volume of 1673.

SONNET XVIII.: "ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT."

This, the most powerful of Milton's Sonnets, was written in 1655, and refers to the persecution instituted, in the early part of that year, by Charles Emmanuel II., Duke of Savoy and Prince of Piedmont, against his Protestant subjects of the valleys of the Cottian Alps. This Protestant community, half French and half Italian, and known as the Waldenses or Vaudois, were believed to have kept up the tradition of a primitive Christianity from the time of the Apostles. There had been various persecutions of them since the Reformation; but that of 1655 surpassed all. By an edict of the Duke they were required to part with their property and leave their habitations within twenty days, or else to become Roman Catholics. On their resistance, forces were sent into their valleys, and the most dreadful atrocities followed. Many were butchered, others were taken away in chains, and hundreds of families were driven for refuge to the mountains covered with snow, to live there miserably, or perish with cold and hunger. Among the Protestant nations of

Europe, and especially in England, the indignation was immediate and violent. Cromwell, who was then Protector, took up the matter with his whole strength. He caused Latin letters, couched in the strongest terms, to be immediately sent, not only to the offending Duke of Savoy, but also to the chief Princes and Powers of Europe. These Letters were drawn up by Milton, and may be read among his Letters of State. An Ambassador was also sent to collect information; a Fast Day was appointed; a subscription of 40,000*l.* was raised for the sufferers; and altogether Cromwell's remonstrances were such that, backed as they would have been, if necessary, by armed force, the cruel edict was withdrawn, and a convention made with the Vaudois, allowing them the exercise of their worship. Milton's Sonnet is his private and more tremendous expression in verse of the feeling he expressed publicly, in Cromwell's name, in his Latin State Letters.

SONNET XIX.: ON HIS BLINDNESS.

The last Sonnet, if not also the two preceding it, had been written by Milton after he had lost his sight. His blindness, which had been coming on slowly for ten years, and had been hastened by his labour in writing his *Defensio Prima pro Populo Anglicano* in answer to Salmasius (1651), was complete in 1653, when he was only forty-five years of age. We are to imagine therefore, that, after having been Secretary to the Council of State for a year or two with his sight failing, he continued to act as Secretary through Cromwell's Protectorate (1653-58) with his sight totally gone. The fact was pointed to with coarse exultation by his enemies, at home and abroad, as a divine judgment on him for his defences of the execution of Charles I., and for the part he had otherwise taken in the English Revolution. Again and again in Milton's later writings, in prose and in verse, there are passages of the most touching sorrow over his darkened and desolate condition, with yet a tone of the most pious resignation, and now and then an outbreak of a proud conviction that God, in blinding his bodily eyes, had meant to enlarge and clear his inner vision, and make him one of the world's truest seers and prophets. The present Sonnet is one of the first of these confidences of Milton on the subject of his blindness. It may have been written any time between 1652 and 1655; but it follows the Sonnet on the Piedmontese Massacre in Milton's own volume of 1673.

SONNET XX.: TO MR. LAWRENCE.

One naturally refers such a mood of cheerfulness as this Sonnet exhibits to the time of Milton's life which preceded his blindness. Accordingly it has been argued by some that the Sonnet must have been written about 1646, and ought to be placed beside the Sonnet to Henry Lawes. In that case, however, the person addressed "Lawrence, of virtuous father virtuous son," cannot have been, as these words have always suggested, a son of the well-known Henry Lawrence of St. Ives, who, after having been member for Westmoreland in the Long Parliament, became a staunch Oliverian, and was made President of Cromwell's Council (1654) and one of his House of Lords (1657). For there is a letter of this Henry Lawrence extant which proves that in the year 1646

his eldest son was then exactly thirteen years of age (Wood's *Athenæ*, IV. 64: Note by Bliss). Milton's invitation to a neat repast and wine cannot have been to a youngster like that. Hence, still on the supposition that the Sonnet must have been written about 1646, some commentators have concluded that the person addressed was no other than Henry Lawrence himself, the future President, but then no more than M.P. for Westmoreland. But that he was only "the virtuous father" of the Sonnet, and not its recipient, is settled by Phillips in his *Life of Milton*, where, among the "particular friends" of Milton, who visited him most frequently during the eight years when he lived in his house in Petty France, Westminster (1652—1660), he mentions "Young Lawrence (the son of him that was President of Oliver's Council), to whom there is a Sonnet among the rest in his printed Poems." He does not mention which of the sons of the President was the "Young Lawrence" so often at Milton's house; but it was probably the second son, Henry Lawrence, who became heir in 1657, succeeded to the property on his father's death in 1664, and lived till 1679, or five years beyond Milton. In 1656 this "young Lawrence" was about two-and-twenty years of age. The Sonnet, then, we should say, was written about that time, and when Milton was in his condition of total blindness. And, though this may not at first seem consistent with the cheerful vein of the Sonnet, the explanation is easy. Phillips's account of his uncle's life gives us a glimpse of the household in Petty France which is not altogether one of gloom. Especially after Milton's marriage with his second wife in Nov. 1656, the house was enlivened by the little hospitalities that had to be shown to the numerous visitors that came to see him. Some of these were foreigners of distinction; others were Londoners of rank; but most assiduous of all were former pupils, and other enthusiastic young men, who accounted it a privilege to read to him, or act as his amanuenses, and to hear him talk. There was a group of such young admirers, and "young Lawrence" was one of them. Sometimes, as we are to fancy, he accompanied Milton in his walks, yielding him the attendance which a blind man required; and Milton's Sonnet is to be taken as a kindly message to the youth, in some season of bad weather, not to stop his visits on that account, but to let him have his company now and then within doors.

SONNET XXI.: TO CYRIACK SKINNER.

This Sonnet also, like the last, might appear, on a first reading, to belong to a time before Milton's blindness. For it also is in a hospitable vein, and invites to leisure and mirth. But all that we know of Cyriack Skinner and his connexion with Milton confirms the notion that the two Sonnets were written about the same time, *i.e.* about 1655, after Milton was blind and when he was living in his house in Petty France. Phillips, in his list of the friends of Milton who visited him there, mentions, "above all, Mr. Cyriack Skinner;" words which imply that Skinner was even a more frequent visitor than young Lawrence. There is even a probability that he had been one of Milton's pupils; for Wood describes him (*Ath. Oxon.* III. 1119) as "a merchant's son of London, an ingenious young gentleman and scholar to Jo: Milton," informing us farther that he became a leading member of Harrington's celebrated political debating club, called *The Rota*, which held its meetings in 1659 at

"the Turk's Head in the New Palace Yard at Westminster." From the Sonnet itself we learn that, besides being thus interested in political speculations, or before being so interested, Skinner was an eager student of mathematical and physical science. Wood seems to have been wrong in calling him "a merchant's son of London;" for he is otherwise known as the third son of William Skinner, a Lincolnshire squire, who had married Bridget, second daughter of the famous lawyer and judge Sir Edward Coke. This explains the compliment of pedigree in the first line of the Sonnet. As this William Skinner died in 1627, Cyriack, his son, though described as "an ingenious young gentleman" in 1659, must have been considerably older than young Lawrence. There is extant a deed of conveyance, of the date May 7, 1660, by which Milton makes over to "Cyriack Skinner, of Lincoln's Inn, Gentleman," a Bond for 400*l.* given to Milton by the Commissioners of Excise. The transaction proves how intimate Milton was with Skinner; for it was on the eve of the Restoration, when property invested in Excise Bonds was not likely to be worth much to Milton or his representatives.

SONNET XXII.: SECOND SONNET TO CYRIACK SKINNER.

This touching Sonnet must have been written some little time after the last; perhaps in 1655, but certainly not later than 1656. It is a Sonnet on Milton's blindness, written, as it purports, on the third anniversary of the day from which he dated the completeness of that calamity. The tenor of the closing lines prevented its publication in 1673.

SONNET XXIII.: TO THE MEMORY OF HIS SECOND WIFE.

After some years of widowhood, Milton, still residing in Petty France, Westminster, had married, Nov. 12, 1656, at St. Mary Aldermanbury, London, his second wife, Catherine Woodcock, daughter of a Captain Woodcock, of Hackney. His wedded life with her, however, was doomed to be brief. She died in childbirth fifteen months after her marriage, and was buried at St. Margaret's, Westminster, Feb. 10, 1657-8. The infant daughter she had borne survived but about a month. Thus, in his fiftieth year, Milton was left in second widowhood, with his three young daughters by his first wife, the eldest not twelve years of age, partly depending on his charge, and partly deputed to take charge of him. There can be no sadder picture than that of the blind, stern man, in 1658, going about his vacant house, the poor children not understanding him, and half afraid of him; and whoever visits the house now may do so with that picture in his mind. For the house still stands, and may be visited—actually the "pretty garden-house in Petty France, Westminster, next door to the Lord Scudamore's, and opening into St. James's Park," which Milton occupied from 1652 to 1660; though now not "pretty," nor a "garden-house" any longer, but sorely disguised, degraded, and blocked in, as "No. 19, York Street, Westminster." Going about in that house, or seated by himself in one of its rooms, as they may still be seen, Milton thinks much of his dead wife, far more really a partner of his heart than the first wife had been, but remembers also that first wife, the mother of his children, and wonders what may become of these children, left now with neither mother nor substitute. From his despondency, as

we know, he roused himself to resume that poem of *Paradise Lost* which he had schemed eighteen years before. But the sense of his loss recurs, and intrudes itself into his dreams. One night his dream is strangely happy. He sees his lately dead wife, not dead, but alive, and returned to him clad all in white like one of the Saints, her face veiled, and stooping to embrace him. He wakes from his dream to find it but a dream, and his night brought back: but he commemorates the dream in a Sonnet. The reader ought to notice the full significance of the words of the Sonnet. It seems to be implied that Milton had never actually beheld his second wife with his bodily eyes, but had married her after he was blind, and with no acquaintance with her dating from before his blindness. Hence, though in his dream he *sees* her, it is as a radiant figure with a veiled face. He had not carried into sleep the recollection out of which the face could be formed, and could only know that love, sweetness, and goodness must have dwelt in one who had that saint-like figure.

TRANSLATIONS.

“THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, *Lib. I.*, ENGLISHED.”

The particular Ode of Horace on the translation of which Milton bestowed so much pains is one on which many translators have since tried their hands; but it may be doubted whether any of them has beaten Milton. On the whole, however, the thing is a trifle. It must have been written after 1645, as it does not appear in the edition of that year.

“NINE OF THE PSALMS DONE INTO METRE, WHEREIN ALL BUT WHAT IS IN A DIFFERENT CHARACTER ARE THE VERY WORDS OF THE TEXT, TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL.”

The Psalms grouped together under this heading are Psalms LXXX.—LXXXVIII.; and the group is ushered in with the dating “*April 1648: 7. II.*,” showing at what time they were translated. There can be no doubt, I think, that Milton was moved to his experiment by the interest which was then felt, both in England and Scotland, and had been felt for some years, in the project of a complete new Version of the Psalms, which should supersede, for public worship, the old English Version of Sternhold and Hopkins and others, first published complete in 1562, and the Version, partly the same, that had been in use in Scotland since 1565, and was known as *Lekprevik’s*, from the name of the printer who had published it that year in Edinburgh. In spite of competing Versions of the Psalms, or of some of them, these had remained substantially the authorized Psalters in the two countries till the meeting of the Long Parliament. But, after the meeting of that body, and especially after the Westminster Assembly had been convoked to aid it in religious matters (July 1643), a revision or renovation of the Psalter had been much

discussed. It was one of those matters on which the Westminster Assembly were especially required to deliberate, and report to the Parliament. Hence a considerable activity in urging the claims of versions already made, either in print or in manuscript, by persons recently dead or still living. Not to speak of other Versions, acknowledged or anonymous, there was one by no less public a person in England than the pious Francis Rous, member of the Long Parliament for Truro, and himself a lay-member of the Westminster Assembly (1st edit. 1641, 2nd 1643). On the whole, Rous's Version had many friends; and a revised edition of it, carefully made, was recommended by the Westminster Assembly to the Parliament (Nov. 1645). With this Version, by one of themselves, the Commons were well satisfied; and it was again printed in its revised form in 1646. But, as the Lords, or some of them, had taken up a rival Version, "close and proper to the Hebrew," by a Mr. William Barton, M.A. of Oxford (published in 1644), they were slow to acquiesce in the preference for Rous; and, notwithstanding much urging of the subject by the Commons, and also by the Assembly, it stood over unsettled, so far as England was concerned. — That Milton, in his experiment in April 1648, had some view to the controversy then going on as to the national Psalter, and the rivalry between Rous and Barton, is rendered the likelier by the form his experiment took. He adopted the ordinary Service metre of eights and sixes, only rhyming the first and third lines as well as the second and fourth; and he made it a punctilio to translate direct from the Hebrew, and to indicate every addition to the original by the use of *Italic type*. With all his pains, his Version of these nine Psalms is much inferior to what we should have expected from him. It is perhaps inferior to Rous's, and it is certainly inferior to the authorized Scottish Version of 1650 founded on Rous's.

PSALMS I.—VIII.: DONE INTO VERSE.

The former experiment of a close translation of Nine of the Psalms into ordinary Service metre had been made by Milton in April 1648, when he was living in High Holborn, not yet blind, and (Charles I. being still alive) not yet Latin Secretary to the Commonwealth, nor with any prospect of being such. More than five years had elapsed since then, and Milton was living in Petty France, quite blind, and occupied with the duties of his Secretaryship, when something led him to recur to Psalm-translation. On a few successive days of August 1653 he dictated metrical versions of the first Eight of the Psalms. These versions, however, were done on a new principle. They did not profess to be close to the original, nor were they in the ordinary Service metre. On the contrary, very various metres were employed, some of them quite uncommon; and no two of the Eight Psalms were rendered in the same metre. Perhaps the main intention was to try the effect of such a freedom of metre.

SCRAPS OF TRANSLATED VERSE FROM THE PROSE WRITINGS.

It was Milton's laudable habit, and one rather unusual in his day, not to trouble the readers of his English pamphlets and other writings with quotations in Latin and Greek, but, where he did have occasion to quote a Latin or Greek author, either to give the English sense of the passage, or to

annex the English sense to the quoted bit of Latin or Greek. So with Italian. Hence, when he wanted to quote a line or two from a Latin, Greek, or Italian poet, or a passage of Latin verse occurring in a prose author, he generally took the trouble to translate it off hand himself at the moment. In such cases blank verse came easiest, and all the scraps of the kind in his prose writings are in blank verse. He did not think it worth while to collect these for either the first or the second edition of his Poems; but they have very properly been sought out and placed in later editions.

INTRODUCTIONS TO THE LATIN POEMS.

The Latin Poems were distinctly divided by Milton himself, in both editions, into two Books or sets—an “ELEGIARUM LIBER,” or “BOOK OF ELEGIES;” and a “SYLVARUM LIBER,” or “BOOK OF SYLVÆ.” The word *Sylva* (literally “a Wood”) was the name given by the Latin authorcraft of the Empire, as we learn from Quintilian, to any rough thing written off at a heat; and hence the Miscellanies of many poets are printed in their works under the title of *Sylva*. The distinction made by Milton between his ELEGIÆ or ELEGIES and his SYLVÆ or MISCELLANIES seems to have been one of metrical form merely, and not of matter. Among the ELEGIES he put all pieces, of whatever kind, and whether properly “elegiac” or not in the sense of “pensive” or “mournful,” that were written in the elegiac metre, or alternate Hexameters and Pentameters, so much used by Tibullus, Propertius, and his favourite Ovid. Among the SYLVÆ or MISCELLANIES, on the other hand, he put all pieces written in other kinds of verse, whether in Hexameters only, or in such more complex Horatian measures as Alcaics and varied Iambics. Later editors, indeed, have taken the liberty of cutting off a few of the smaller pieces from the end of the Book of Elegies, and combining them with two or three scraps of Latin verse from the prose-pamphlets, so as to constitute a third brief Book, called EPIGRAMMATUM LIBER, or BOOK OF EPIGRAMS. But, though the few pieces thus thrown together are of the nature of Epigrams, and some of them like Martial’s Epigrams, the liberty seems unwarrantable. Milton made the distinction into ELEGIES and SYLVÆ suffice, and we must do the same.

ELEGIARUM LIBER.

ELEGIA PRIMA:

Ad Carolum Diodatum.

The person addressed in this Elegy was Charles Diodati, the dearest and most intimate friend of Milton in his boyhood, and through his youth and early manhood, and for whose memory he entertained a singular affection in still later life, after he had lost him by death. He will be mentioned again in the course of these Introductions. At present we shall trace what is known of him as far as to the date of this Elegy, *i.e.* to the year 1626.

The family of Diodati (pronounce it Diodāti) was Italian, belonging originally to Lucca in the Tuscan States, but driven thence, apparently, on account of the Protestant opinions of its members. Of two brothers of the family, thus exiled from Italy by their Protestantism, one, named Giovanni Diodati, born in 1576, had become very eminent in Geneva, as a scholar and theologian, and was Professor of Hebrew and one of the ministers of that city. He was the author of various Calvinistic writings, much esteemed in their day by foreign Protestants and by the Puritans of England; he took a leading part in the famous Synod of Dort in 1618-19; and he would be yet remembered, if for nothing else, at all events for his Italian Version of the Scriptures, published in 1607, and known as "Diodati's Version." An elder brother of his, named Theodore Diodati, born in 1574, and educated for the medical profession, had made England his home, and, having married an English lady of some means, acquired a good practice and some celebrity as a physician, first at Brentford, and afterwards in London, where he resided in the parish of Little St. Bartholomew, not far from St. Paul's and Milton's native Bread Street. Of two sons of this naturalized London physician, by his English wife, one was called Charles and the other John. Milton knew both, but Charles was his especial friend. He was almost exactly of Milton's own age, or but a little older. He had been sent at a very early age to St. Paul's School, and it was there that Milton had become acquainted with him. He was probably somewhat in advance of Milton in the classes, for he left school for Trinity College, Oxford, in Feb. 1621-2, three years before Milton left the same school for Cambridge. The separation was no interruption of their friendship. The young Oxonian and the young Cantab corresponded with each other; and in the University vacations they were much together in London, or in excursions in its neighbourhood. Probably because Diodati was destined for his father's profession of medicine, and was preparing for it, we do not hear much of his career at Oxford; but he was well liked in his College there, and there is a copy of Latin Alcaics by him in a volume of Oxford Verses put forth in 1624 on the death of the great scholar Camden. He seems, however, to have been fond of writing his letters in Greek; and two Greek letters of his to Milton have been strangely preserved, and are now in the British Museum. In the second of these he writes from some place in the country, saying he is leading a most pleasant life on the whole, though he rather misses intellectual companionship, and he advises Milton not to "tie himself night and day to his books," but to take some relaxation. "I in all things else your inferior," he concludes, "am superior to you in this, that I know a measure in my labours."

It seems possible that in this Greek missive, now in the British Museum, we have that very letter of Diodati to which Milton's Latin Elegy is an avowed reply. It is, at all events, a reply to *some* letter of Diodati's sent from near Chester, and which reached Milton in London. The interest of Milton's Elegy in reply is, to a large extent, autobiographical; and there is one passage of particular moment to the commentators. It is that beginning line 9 and ending line 24. Milton is supposed to refer here (and the supposition seems inevitable) to a fact in his life of which there is other evidence — viz. a quarrel he had, in his undergraduateship, with the authorities of Christ's College, Cambridge, and his temporary retirement or rustication from the College in consequence. It is positively known that Milton, while he was an undergraduate at Christ's, had some disagreement with the tutor under whose charge he had been put at the

time of his first admission: viz. William Chappell, afterwards Provost of Trinity College, Dublin, and Bishop of Cloyne and Koss; and it is farther known that, in consequence of this disagreement—in the course of which Dr. Thomas Bainbrigge, the Master of the College, may have been called in, or may have interfered—Milton was transferred from the tutorship of Chappell to that of another of the Fellows of the College: viz. Nathaniel Tovey, afterwards parson of Lutterworth in Leicestershire. The probable date of this incident was the Lent or Easter term of Milton's second academic year, *i.e.* of the year 1625-6. The present Elegy was probably written during Milton's absence or rustication from College that summer; and in the passage indicated he speaks of this absence or rustication (*exilium* is the word he uses) as not such a bad thing after all. Nevertheless, as he says in the end of the Elegy, it *is* arranged that he shall return to Cambridge. Actually, as we know, he did return, to finish his undergraduate course, under Tovey's tutorship. His temporary absence, we also know, counted for nothing against him; for he did not lose a term, but took his B.A. degree at exactly the proper time.

ELEGIA SECUNDA.

Anno ætatis 17.

In obitum Præconis Academici Cantabrigiensis.

Richard Ridding, M.A. of St. John's College, was Senior Esquire Bedel of the University when Milton went to Cambridge. Through two University sessions Milton had been familiar with his venerable figure; but about the beginning of Milton's third University session (1626-7) Ridding died. I have not ascertained the exact day, but the probate of his will is dated Nov. 8, 1626. The death of a University personage so conspicuous naturally gave occasion for versifying; and Milton's Elegy was one of the results. It ought to be noted that Milton's own dating of the Elegy "*Anno ætatis 17*" is either wrong by a year, or must be translated laxly as meaning "at seventeen years of age."

ELEGIA TERTIA.

Anno ætatis 17.

In obitum Præsulis Wintoniensis.

On the 21st of September 1626, just before the beginning of Milton's third academic year at Cambridge, there died, at Winchester House, Southwark, the learned and eloquent Dr. Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, at the age of seventy-one. Milton's ecclesiastical opinions in his later life led him to be rather critical in his estimate of this famous Bishop, and indeed of Bishops generally; but in his Cambridge undergraduateship his anti-prelatic feelings were less pronounced, and he willingly joined in the chorus of regret over the loss of one of the brightest intellects in the English Church. The reader ought to note the historical allusions which the Elegy contains. The year of Bishop Andrewes's death had been one of great mortality by the Plague in England and of the deaths of several men of note abroad.

ELEGIA QUARTA.

Anno ætatis 18.

*Ad Thomam Junium, præceptorem suum, apud mercatores Anglicos
Hamburgæ agentes Pastoris munere fungentem.*

Thomas Young, Milton's first preceptor, was a Scotchman. He was born at Luncarty in Perthshire in or about 1588, was educated at the University of St. Andrews, and took his M.A. degree there. Perhaps because the accession of James to the English throne in 1603 had opened up for many Scots prospects of a better livelihood in England than their own country afforded, Young had migrated thither while still a young man; and there are indistinct traces of him in the capacity of curate or assistant to Puritan parish-ministers in London and its neighbourhood before 1618. He seems, however, to have employed himself chiefly in teaching; and, in the course of that employment, it was his good fortune to happen upon one pupil who was to be immortal. It is just possible that Milton had been boarded under Young's charge somewhere near London before he went to St. Paul's School; but it is more likely that Young had only been his first domestic preceptor, and continued to be his private preceptor while he was at St. Paul's School, adding to the education which he was receiving publicly from Mr. Alexander Gill, the head-master of the School, and his son and assistant, Mr. Alexander Gill the younger. In that case, however, Young's tutorship of Milton did not extend over the whole period of his training under the two Gills. Milton, so far as is known, went to St. Paul's School in 1620, when he was eleven years of age, and he remained there till the winter or spring of 1624-5, when he left for Cambridge at the age of sixteen. But Young had left England for his chaplaincy to the English merchants at Hamburg at least as early as 1622. He was then a married man, with children, and matters had not been so prosperous with him in England but that a foreign chaplaincy was acceptable.

Milton, it appears, had cherished a warm recollection of Young in his exile, and occasional communications had passed between them. The first of Milton's Latin *Familiar Epistles* is addressed to Young (*Thomæ Junio, præceptori suo*). It is dated "London, March 26, 1625," and was written, therefore, after Milton had been admitted at Christ's College, Cambridge, but before his residence at Cambridge had fairly commenced. It is expressed in terms of the most ardent affection and gratitude, with apologies for having been remiss in his correspondence, and especially for having allowed three years to elapse since his last letter; and there is an acknowledgment also of the gift of a Hebrew Bible which Young had sent to him. Two years more had passed since that Epistle was written, and Milton had again been remiss. The present Elegy is his atonement. He has been moved to write it by ominous news from the Continent. The great Continental war, known afterwards as *The Thirty Years' War*, was then in its second stage, when Christian IV. of Denmark was the leader of the Protestant Alliance against the Imperialists under Tilly and Wallenstein. Saxony, to which Hamburg was attached, was inextricably involved; and actually, while Milton wrote, the rumour was that the Imperialist soldiery were all round Hamburg and threatening it with siege. What might befall poor Young and his family? On this cause of alarm

Milton dilates, not without a touch of anger at the stupidity and cold-heartedness of Britain, which had driven such a man as Young abroad for bare subsistence, to live poorly and obscurely amid strangers, when he might have been a noted minister of the Gospel at home. But he bids Young take courage. God will protect him through all the dangers of war; nay more (and with this prediction the Elegy closes), better times are in store for him, and he will not remain much longer in exile.

Milton's prediction was very speedily fulfilled. Not many months after Young had received the Elegy, he returned to England; and on the 27th of March 1628, being then about forty years of age, he was inducted into the united Vicarages of St. Peter and St. Mary in Stowmarket, Suffolk. He had not been four months in his Vicarage at the date of a second letter to him from Milton, preserved among the Latin *Familiar Epistles*. It is dated "Cambridge, July 21, 1628," and shows that Milton and he must again have come together since his return to England. Young had invited Milton to come and see him at Stowmarket, and Milton accepts the invitation and promises to come soon. Accordingly, the tradition at Stowmarket is that Milton was a frequent visitor to Young during his incumbency.

Young's incumbency at Stowmarket lasted all the rest of his life. But he was destined to a wider celebrity than attached merely to that incumbency. As he was of strict Puritan principles, it is difficult to imagine how he contrived to tide through the time of the Laudian supremacy in the Church and State (1628—1640), during which Laud and his subordinate diocesans were so zealous in calling to account parish ministers of too Calvinistic doctrine, or too Puritanical in their dislike of vestments and ceremonies. Luck or prudence did carry him through, however; so that, at the close of Laud's supremacy, and the beginning of a new era for England with the Long Parliament (Nov. 1640), he was still Vicar of Stowmarket. During the two preceding years he had been sympathising with his fellow-countrymen, the Scots, in their Covenant, and their struggles against Laud and Charles; and in 1639 he had published a treatise in Latin entitled *Dies Dominica*, and consisting of a defence of the Puritan idea of the Sabbath-day and its proper observance. After the meeting of the Long Parliament, he is found coming decidedly to the front among the advocates of a radical Church Reform. In conjunction with four other parish ministers of noted Puritan principles—viz. Stephen Marshal, Edmund Calamy, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow—he wrote the famous Smectymnuan Pamphlet, or Treatise by SMECTYMNUS (a grotesque fancy-name composed of the initials of the five writers), in reply to Bishop Joseph Hall's defences of Episcopacy and of the English Liturgy. Of this Smectymnuan treatise, which was published in 1641, and was the first loud manifesto of Anti-Episcopal opinions within the Church itself, Young, it is now known, was the principal author. As Hall replied, and the Smectymnuans replied again, the controversy prolonged itself through a series of pamphlets, all now regarded as belonging to the Smectymnuan set, and two of which ("*Animadversions on the Remonstrant's Defence against Smectymnuus*," and "*An Apology against a Pamphlet called a Modest Confutation of the Animadversions*") were from Milton's own pen. He had been in Young's confidence from the beginning of the controversy, and thought it right at last to plunge in personally to the rescue of Young and his brother Smectymnuans.

It is doubtful whether the cordial intimacy between Milton and Young which

this co-operation indicates lasted much beyond those years, 1641-42, when the Smectymnuan controversy raged. Milton's subsequent Divorce Speculations, and his rupture with the Presbyterians, may have interfered with their intimacy, though not with their mutual regard. For Young was one of the divines of the Westminster Assembly, and went wholly with the great majority of that body in their aims towards the establishment in England of a strict Presbyterian system like that of Scotland. By this time he was so conspicuous a person that the Scots remembered he was their countryman, and would fain have induced him to return to Scotland by the offer of some suitable post. But England could outbid Scotland for him, and retained him to the end. In 1644, when the University of Cambridge was visited by Parliamentary authority and refractory Heads of Houses and Fellows were turned out, and their places filled with new men, Young was appointed to the Mastership of Jesus College, in place of the ultra-Royalist and Laudian Dr. Richard Sterne. On the 12th of April in that year he was incorporated in the University *ad eundem*, — *i.e.* to the same degree of M.A. which he had taken at St. Andrews nearly forty years before. On the 28th of February 1644-5 he preached a Fast-day Sermon before the House of Commons, which was published under the title of *Hope's Encouragement*. He lived for ten years longer, holding his Mastership of Jesus College in conjunction with his Vicarship of Stowmarket, and honoured as D.D. and otherwise. He died in 1655 at Stowmarket, at the age of about sixty-seven, and was there buried. A portrait of him, which was kept in the Vicarage, is still extant; and a print from it, after a photograph, is prefixed to "*Biographical Notices of Thomas Young, S.T.D., Vicar of Stowmarket, Suffolk*," privately printed in 1870 by Mr. David Laing, of Edinburgh. It exhibits, through the blur of age that had come over the original, a really powerful, calm, and well-featured face.

ELEGIA QUINTA.

Anno ætatis 20.

In Adventum Veris.

This Elegy may be referred to the early part of 1629, when Milton had just taken his B.A. degree at Cambridge. Bachelor-like, he exults in the arrival of Spring, hailing the glad season of Nature's renewal in a poem which may be described as a laborious Latin amplification of the sentiment of Tennyson's lines: —

"In the Spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove;
In the Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love."

ELEGIA SEXTA.

Ad Carolum Diodatum, ruri commorantem.

The life of Diodati, and the history of Milton's friendship with him, as far as to the year 1626, have been sketched in the Introduction to the *Elegia Prima*. Three years had elapsed since then, and the two friends had been pursuing their separate courses—Diodati with the medical profession in prospect, but retaining his connexion with Oxford, where he graduated M.A.

in July 1628, and Milton persevering at Cambridge, where he graduated B.A. in January 1628-9. But their friendship was firm as ever, and they may have had meetings in the interval. One such meeting, of more than ordinary interest to both, may have been at Cambridge in July 1629; for Diodati, though then an Oxford M.A. of but one year's standing, was incorporated *ad eundem* at Cambridge in the July Commencement of that year. So early an incorporation in the sister University was unusual, and I seem to see in the fact an arrangement between the two friends.

The heading of the Elegy tells the rest. The sprightly, quick-witted Italian had gone again into the country in 1629, either to the neighbourhood of Chester, as on the occasion of the First Elegy, or to some other part of England. There, in some pleasant country mansion, and among pleasant and hospitable friends, he is having a delightful winter holiday. It is but the 13th of December, but they are making Christmas of it already—good cheer, blazing fires, wine, music, dancing, games of forfeits, &c. So Diodati informs Milton, pleading these festivities in excuse for neglect of Poetry. The reply is very characteristic. After messages of affection, Milton playfully objects to Diodati's excuse, and maintains that festivity and poetry, Bacchus and Song, Venus and Song, are naturally kin and always have gone together. Suddenly, however, in this vein he checks himself. What he has said is true, he explains, only of certain kinds of poetry and certain orders of poets. For the greatest poetry there must be a different regimen. For those who would speak of high matters, the deeds of heroes and the counsels of the gods, for those whose poetry would rise to the prophetic strain, not wine and conviviality were fitted, but spare Pythagorean diet, the beechen bowl of pure water, a life even ascetic in its abstinence, and scrupulously pure. This is an eminently Miltonic idea, perhaps *pre-eminently the Miltonic idea*; and it occurs again and again in Milton's writings. Nowhere, however, is it more finely expressed than in the passage in this Elegy beginning "*At qui bella refert*" and ending "*ora Jovem*" (lines 55—78). These twenty-four lines are about Milton's noblest in Latin, and deserve to be learnt by heart with reference to himself, or to be written under his portrait. They give a value to the whole Elegy. The lines that follow them, however (79—90), have also a peculiar interest. They inform us that, at the very time when Milton was writing this Elegy to Diodati, he was engaged on his English Ode "On the Morning of Christ's Nativity." He had begun it, he says, on Christmas-day, and he promises to show it to Diodati. As the Ode, in its place among the English Poems in Milton's First Edition, is dated "1629," this fixes the date of the Elegy.

ELEGIA SEPTIMA.

Anno ætatis undevigesimo.

This Elegy, which is the last of any length in the Book, and the last to which Milton attached a number, is out of its proper chronological place. "*Anno ætatis undevigesimo*" ("in his nineteenth year") is the dating; and, as Milton here uses the numeral adjective, and not, as in other cases, the Arabic figures for the number, it is perhaps to be understood exactly—*i.e.* as implying that the Elegy was written between Dec. 9, 1626, and Dec. 9, 1627. Possibly, however, even with the use of the numeral adjective, Milton gives

himself the benefit of a year, and means "at nineteen years of age," or between Dec. 9, 1627, and Dec. 9, 1628. In either case, the precise month is fixed by the Elegy itself as May. The date therefore is either May 1627 or May 1628.

The Elegy is more decidedly and thoroughly a love-poem than any of the others. In the First Elegy, *Ad Carolum Diodatum*, there is a gallant mention of the London beauties to be seen in the parks and public gardens; and in a part of the Fifth, *In Adventum Veris*, there is a poetical recognition of Cupid's activity as one of the phenomena of Spring. But the present Elegy is a love-confession throughout, and quite precise and personal. It was May time, we are told, and Cupid had sworn to be revenged on Milton for his contempt of love and his boasts of being heart-whole. Fifty lines are taken up in telling this and describing the little love-god and his threats. Then, at line 51, the real story begins. Forgetting all about the love-god, he takes his walks, as usual, now in those parts of London where the citizens promenaded, and now in the neighbouring country, with its hamlets and villas. He observes, in the streets more especially, the crowd of beauties, perfect goddesses, that pass and repass. He indulges in the sight, as often before, pleased, but little thinking what was to come of it this time. For alas! one fair one, supereminent among all, caught his glance, and the wound was fatal. It was but the sight of a moment, for she was gone, never again to be seen on earth; but her face and her form were to remain with him a vision for ever. No longer now is he heart-whole, for he goes about sweetly miserable. Cupid has had his revenge, and he acknowledges now that little god's power. Oh, if ever he and such a fair one should meet again, might one arrow transfix both their hearts!

A peculiar circumstance about this Elegy is that it is followed by a Postscript. For the ten lines, beginning "*Hæc ego*" and ending "*ipsa Venus*," which I have caused to be printed in italics in the present edition, are not, as might be supposed at first sight, and has been generally assumed, an epilogue to the whole series of Seven Elegies preceding them. If the Epilogue is carefully read, it will be seen that in no mood of sternness could it be applicable to all the seven numbered Elegies, or to most of them. There were some of them of which, juvenile though they were, Milton could still approve in his manhood. But, in 1645, when he looked over those pieces before giving them to the printer for Moseley's volume, that love-confession of the Seventh Elegy delayed him. He thought it maudlin: perhaps he remembered the exact incident and its circumstantialities with half a blush. Ought he to print the thing? His hesitation to do so accounts perhaps for its coming out of its proper chronological place; but at last he lets it go, only adding the Postscript of recantation. That Postscript, therefore, has to be dated 1645, or eighteen years after the Elegy to which it is attached.

EPIGRAMS.

"IN PRODITIONEM BOMBARDICAM and IN INVENTOREM BOMBARDÆ."—The anniversary of the Gunpowder Plot seems to have been a regular occasion for versifying in English Schools and Colleges in Milton's time. Among the *Sylvæ* there is a long poem in Hexameters by Milton on this subject, entitled *In Quintum Novembris*; and the four little pieces on the same subject among

the Elegies may have been Milton's easier tributes to University custom on some one, or on several, of the Fifths of November of his Cambridge undergraduateship. They express rather wittily the popular Protestant horror of Guy Fawkes and his attempt. The fifth piece, not on the Gunpowder Treason, but on the Inventor of Gunpowder, is but a variation of the general theme: and the five together may be called the Gunpowder Group.

"AD LEONORAM ROMÆ CANENTEM." — These three pieces of compliment must have been written at Rome in one or other of Milton's two terms of residence in that city during his memorable Italian tour. His first visit, in October and November 1638, is the more likely time. An incident of that visit, recorded by Milton himself in one of his Familiar Epistles (*Luca Holstenio, Romæ, in Vaticano*), was his presence at a magnificent musical entertainment given by Cardinal Francesco Barberini in his palace. All the *élite* of Rome were present at this concert; but the courteous cardinal, receiving the crowding guests at the doors, had singled out the English stranger, and welcomed him with special attention. To Milton, with his love of music, this concert may have been an unusual pleasure, especially if it was there that he heard the singer Leonora to whom the present pieces are addressed. There or elsewhere in Rome he did hear that paragon of voices. For, throughout the world, or at all events the musical and Italian world, there was no singer then so renowned as Leonora Paroni. There is an article on her in Bayle's Dictionary, the substance of which, apart from minuter information in the notes, runs thus: "BARONI, LEONORA, "an Italian lady, one of the finest voices of the world, flourished in the seventeenth century. She was the daughter of the beautiful ADRIANA, a Mantuan, "and was so admired that an infinity of *beaux esprits* made verses in her praise. "There is a volume of excellent pieces, in Latin, Greek, French, Italian, and "Spanish, printed at Rome under the title of '*Applausi Poetici alle glorie della "Signora Leonora Baroni.*'" Leonora went about usually with her mother, the beautiful Adriana Baroni, and a sister called Katarina. Though Bayle makes the family Mantuan, it was originally Neapolitan, and had migrated from Naples to Mantua. From 1637 onwards, however, Rome was the headquarters of the fascinating three.

"APOLOGUS DE RUSTICO ET HERO." — There is nothing to date this Apologue, except that its non-appearance in the edition of 1645 suggests that it was written after that year.

DE MORO. — So we may entitle the lampoon on Milton's antagonist *Morus*, or Alexander More, which appeared in Milton's *Defensio Secunda pro Populo Anglicano* (1654), and was reproduced in his *Pro se Defensio contra Alexandrum Morum* (1655). More was a Frenchman, of Scottish parentage, born in 1616, who, after a varied career of celebrity as a Protestant preacher and Professor of Greek and of Theology in various parts of the Continent — at Geneva, in Holland, and again in France — died in Paris in 1670, four years before Milton. His collision with Milton dates from the year 1652, when he caused to be printed, at the Hague, a treatise against the English Commonwealth entitled "*Regii Sanguinis Clamor ad Cælum adversus Parricidas Anglicanos*" ("Cry of the King's Blood to Heaven against the English Parricides"). In this treatise Milton was attacked for his Defences of the Regicide; and, though it was anonymous, and was really not by More, but by Peter du Moulin the younger, Milton made More responsible. In his *Defensio Secunda* and in his *Pro se Defensio* he dragged More through a perfect ditch of invective,

publishing all sorts of scandals against More's private character, which had come to him from correspondents in Geneva and elsewhere. The present distich, though now printed as Milton's, because used by him twice, was really by some Dutch wit.

AD CHRISTINAM, SUECORUM REGINAM, NOMINE CROMWELLI. — The lines printed with this title in most modern editions of Milton's poems are supposed to have been written for Cromwell in 1654, the first year of his Protectorate, to accompany a portrait of himself which he then sent to the eccentric, and then famous Christina, Queen of Sweden. Being in elegiac verse, they have their proper place here in the *Elegiarum Liber*, if they are Milton's. But, almost certainly, they are Andrew Marvell's. They appeared as his, with only slight verbal variations, in his *Miscellaneous Poems*, published by his widow in 1681, three years after his death.

SYLVARUM LIBER.

IN OBITUM PROCANCELLARII MEDICI.

Anno ætatis 17.

In both Milton's editions this piece is dated "*Anno ætatis 16.*" This date is a blunder. For, even if we allow Milton his ordinary liberty of dating, according to which the phrase must be translated "at the age of 16 years" and not "in the 16th year of his age" (see Introductions to Elegies Second and Third), the dating will not correspond with the incident of the Poem. That incident was the death of John Gostlin, M.D., Master of Gonville and Caius College, Cambridge, from 1618, and Vice-Chancellor of the University for the second time in the year 1625-6. His Vice-Chancellorship would have expired Nov. 3, 1626; but he died some days before that date, and still holding the office: viz. on the 21st of October, 1626. The Michaelmas Term of Milton's third academic year had just begun, and Milton was full seventeen years of age, and, in fact, verging on eighteen. This dating "*anno ætatis 16*" was, therefore, a slip of memory. — The Dr. Gostlin, whose death is lamented in the poem, in very pretty mythological language and in good Horatian verse, was a Norwich man by birth, educated at Caius College, admitted M.D. in 1602, and afterwards Regius Professor of Physic in the University. When his turn came round to be Vice-Chancellor, it was something of a rarity in the University to see an M.D. rather than the customary D.D. in that office. "Here comes our medical Vice-Chancellor," one may fancy the Cantabs of 1625-6 saying to each other when they saw Gostlin in the streets. His death, just at the close of his year of office, and when the Colleges had reassembled for a new session, naturally occasioned versifying.

IN QUINTUM NOVEMBRIS.

Anno ætatis 17.

This is a Gunpowder Plot poem, written by Milton for Guy Fawkes's Day, or the Fifth of November, 1626. There are four Latin trifles on the same subject among the Elegies, but the present piece, in sustained Hexameters, is a much more elaborate performance. It is, indeed, one of the very best of

Milton's things in Latin. The spirit, it is true, is that of the common popular Protestantism of England in Milton's time, which firmly believed in all the traditional details of the Plot of 1605, and regarded it as a wide-spread conspiracy of the Roman Catholics, characteristic of their principles and prompted by the Papacy itself. Naturally, such a poem (and there are minuter ferocities against the Papacy in the filling-up) will be read in different humours by different persons. But the execution of the poem, the power of imagination and of language shown in it, cannot fail to strike even the reader who is least satisfied with its spirit. I would instance particularly the description of Satan flying through the air and beholding Britain (lines 7—47), that of the den of Murder and Treason (lines 139—156), and that of the Temple of Fame (lines 170—193). The ending of the poem is rather abrupt.

IN OBITUM PRÆSULIS ELIENSIS.

Anno ætatis 17.

On the 5th of October, 1626, or only a fortnight after the death of Dr. Lancelot Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester, there died another prelate, Dr. Nicholas Felton, Bishop of Ely. Like Andrewes, he was a Cambridge man, of Pembroke Hall, and he had, like Andrewes, been for some time Master of that Hall before he was made a bishop. Milton, who had just written his Elegy on Andrewes's death (*Elegia Tertia*), paid a similar honour to his brother-bishop, but employed Iambic verse of alternate Trimeters and Dimeters instead of Elegiacs. Hence this piece on Felton comes among the *Sylvæ*.

NATURAM NON PATI SENIUM.

From one of Milton's *Epistolæ Familiæres*, dated "Cambridge, July 2, 1628," and addressed to his former master at St. Paul's School, Alexander Gill the younger, it appears that these Latin Hexameters were one of the pieces of verse printed copies of which were distributed, according to custom, by the University Bedels at the Cambridge Commencement ceremonial, or annual meeting for the conferring of degrees, held in St. Mary's Church on Tuesday, the 1st of July, 1628.

The ceremonial, though held at the end of the academic year, was called the "Commencement," because those who graduated in Divinity, Arts, Law, Physic, and Music were then said to "commence" in their respective faculties, and were designated *Inceptores*. Part of the business in the graduation in each faculty consisted of what was called an Act or Disputation in that faculty, carried on in Latin between one appointed debater-in-chief called the Respondent (in the Divinity Act there were generally two Respondents) and other debaters who attacked him successively and were called Opponents. First, early in the morning, as soon as all had assembled in St. Mary's Church, the Vice-Chancellor presiding, there began the Divinity Act, or Debate, accompanied by a distribution of copies of verses, and ending in the ceremonious conferring of the degree of D.D. on all the candidates of the year for that degree. Next, and usually about mid-day, came on the Philosophical Act and Graduation in Arts. This was a richer and more diversified affair than the Divinity Graduation which had preceded it, not only because the candidates for the M.A. degree

each year were a very numerous body, consisting of young men from all the Colleges, but also because custom tolerated a great deal of liberty and even of fun in the philosophical discussion. Here also, however, the backbone of the business was the Latin logomachy between the appointed representative of the Arts faculty, called the Respondent, and the Opponents who successively attacked him; and here also the logomachy began with the reading of the Respondent's thesis, and the distribution of his verses, while he was reading it, by the University Bedels. After the Act was over, there was a specimen only of the actual graduation in Arts within the church, in the persons of the ten or twelve Commencers from King's College; and the rest were marched off to receive their M.A. degree in the Public School. For by this time it was growing late, and the Law Act, the Physic Act, and the Music Act, with their accompanying graduations, had still to come.

Milton may have been present already at three Commencements; but that of 1628 had a peculiar interest for him. Bainbrigge, Master of his own College of Christ's, was Vice-Chancellor of the University for the year 1627-8, and there was a relish for the undergraduates of Christ's in this fact, and in the prospect of his presidency in the Comitia of July 1628. Nor was that all. One of the Senior Fellows of Christ's, it appears, had been selected for the important post of Respondent in the Philosophical Act for that year; and he had found the bit of verse expected from him quite out of his habits, or had broken down over it at the last moment, and had asked Milton to help him out. With some pains, from the shortness of the time, Milton had furnished up what he thought would pass; and so the Christ's College people might congratulate themselves triply on the representation of their College at the Commencement of 1628. Not only would their Master preside as Vice-Chancellor, and not only would a Fellow of their College be Respondent in the Philosophical Act, but the Latin verses which the University Bedels would distribute in connexion with that Act would be (but perhaps it was a secret) by an undergraduate of Christ's. Actually the verses were put into print and distributed by the Bedels; and on the 2nd of July, or the day after the Commencement, Milton was able to send a copy, or some copies, of them to Gill in London.

One would like now to know which of the thirteen Fellows of Christ's it was that begged Milton's poetical help, and what was the subject of the thesis which the verses were to illustrate. We have light only on the last point from Milton's lines. "*That Nature is not subject to old age*" is the proposition they maintain. They are, in fact, a powerful, and very eloquent and poetical, protest against the notion of a gradual decadence or deterioration of the physical Universe or visible frame of things. The verses being in this strain, we are led to think that the Philosophical Thesis which they were written to illustrate must have been some form of the same proposition. It is certainly known, at all events, that a question much debated in the speculative world of England about 1628 was the question whether there were signs of decay in Nature, whether the Present were necessarily inferior to the Past, or whether endurance, or even general progressiveness and improvement, might not be the rule. Bacon's influence, opposed as it was to that abject reverence for antiquity which had prevailed since the Revival of Letters, had given an impulse to what was still perhaps the heterodox sentiment, namely faith in the present and in the future.

DE IDEÂ PLATONICÂ QUEMADMODUM ARISTOTELES INTELLEXIT.

This is, clearly, also an academic exercise; but in which year of Milton's residence at Cambridge it was written, and for what occasion, I cannot determine. It answers exactly to its title, "*On the Platonic Idea as understood by Aristotle.*" That is to say, with an evident admiration of Plato, and an imaginative sympathy with his doctrine of an eternal Idea or Archetype, one and universal, according to which Man was formed, and which reproduces itself in men's minds and thoughts, it yet shows how, by a too physical or too coldly rational construction of this doctrine, it may be turned into burlesque.

AD PATREM.

These Hexameters are undated, but their date is hinted by their meaning. They are an affectionate address to the poet's father, apparently in reply to some mild remarks of the father on the subject of the son's dedication of himself to a life of mere Poetry and Literature, and not, as had been hoped, to one of the professions. They were written, therefore, after Milton had left Cambridge, and had begun his secluded life of study at his father's country-place at Horton in Buckinghamshire. In lines 73—76 the reference to Horton seems to be distinct.

Milton's father was himself an excellent and interesting man. He was from the neighbourhood of Oxford, where a Roman Catholic family of Miltons, the poet's ancestors, are found living, in the rank of yeomen, from about 1550 onwards. One of the family, Richard Milton, of Stanton St. John's, yeoman, was very resolute in his adherence to the old Religion, and is mentioned twice in the Recusant Rolls for Oxfordshire as among those who were heavily fined towards the end of Elizabeth's reign (1601) for obstinate non-attendance at their parish churches. He was the poet's grandfather, one of his sons, John Milton, being the poet's father. This John Milton, who became a Protestant, and is said to have been cast off by his father on that account, had settled in London, and was in business there as a scrivener, before the above-mentioned date of his father's fines for recusancy. The business of a scrivener in Old London was an important, and sometimes a lucrative, one. It consisted in the drawing up of wills, marriage settlements, and other deeds, the lending out of money for clients, and much else now done partly by attorneys and partly by law-stationers. The house of the new scrivener, John Milton, which was also his place of business, was the Spread Eagle in Bread Street, Cheapside, in the very heart of London.

There the scrivener married, probably in 1600, and there his children were born. They were six in all; of whom only three survived to maturity—the eldest, a daughter Anne, afterwards Mrs. Phillips, and again, by a second marriage, Mrs. Agar; John Milton, the poet, born Dec. 9, 1608: and Christopher Milton, afterwards Sir Christopher Milton and a judge, born Dec. 3, 1615. The household in Bread Street seems to have been a peculiarly peaceful and happy one, with a tone of pious Puritanism prevailing in it, but with the liberal cheerfulness belonging to prosperous circumstances and to ingenious and cultivated tastes. For one thing, music was perpetual in it. The scrivener was not only passionately fond of music, but even of such note as a composer that, apart altogether from the great fame of his son, some

memory of him might have lingered among us to this day. Madrigals, songs, and psalm-tunes of his composition are to be seen yet in music-books published before his son was born, or while he was but in his boyhood, and not in mere inferior music-books, but in collections in which Morley, Wilbye, Bull, Dowland, Ellis Gibbons, Orlando Gibbons, and others of the best artists of the day, were his fellow-contributors. There must have been frequent musical evenings, with one or more musical acquaintances present, in the house in Bread Street; books of music and musical instruments were parts of its furniture; and the young poet was taught by his father both to sing and to play the organ. But the scrivener's designs for his children went beyond their mere training in his own art. It was his care to give them the best education possible, and to grudge nothing of his means towards that end. From the first there is proof that his heart was bound up in his son John, and that he had conceived the highest expectations of what that son would turn out to be. A portrait of the poet, as a sweet, serious, round-headed boy, at the age of ten, still exists, which his father caused to be done by the foreign painter then most in fashion, and which hung on the wall of one of the rooms in the house in Bread Street. Both father and mother doted on the boy and were proud of his promise. And so, after the most careful tuition of the boy at home, by his Scottish preceptor Young (see *antè*, p. 453), and his farther training by the two Gills at St. Paul's School, close to Bread Street (see *antè*, p. 453), he was sent to Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1625, whither his younger brother, Christopher, followed him in Feb. 1630-31. The expense of maintaining two sons at Cambridge was considerable, and proves that the scrivener must have succeeded well in his business.

That the scrivener's business had been a flourishing one is farther proved by the fact that he was able to retire from it, in whole or in part, in or about 1632, to the country-house at Horton, which he either took then, or had already been in possession of for some time. Thither, in that year, his son, having completed his seven years at the University and taken his M.A. degree, went to reside with him. So far all his highest hopes of that son had been fulfilled. He was then twenty-three years of age; and what youth comparable to him had the University sent out—what youth of such fair grace of form, of such genius and accomplishments, of character so manly and noble? A second portrait of Milton, done in the time of his Cambridge studentship, when he was about twenty-one years of age, attests the continued pride in him of his father and mother. Only one thing a little troubled the elderly people, and particularly the father. This son of theirs, whom they had destined for the Church, had clearly and resolutely abjured that destination of himself as against his conscience; the profession of the Law, thought of for a moment, had also been set aside; and here he was back on their hands, with no clear line of life before him, such as other young men of his age had, but buried in books and lost in Poetry. Some remonstrances to this effect may have been expressed by the father; but, if so, they must have been in the mildest and most hesitating terms (for Milton, I fancy, had learnt to be master and more in his father's house). Or, without any such remonstrances, Milton may have divined what was passing in the minds of his parents and in their colloquies concerning him. And so, on some occasion when the subject had been broached, or it was strong in Milton's musings, he writes this grateful and affectionate poem *Ad Patrem*.

"Well, John, I *have* faith in you: take your own way, whatever it is; God has given me enough of means, my son, for all immediate needs; and, while I live, what I have is yours." As surely as if we had heard these words spoken, they were the response of Milton's father to the pleading of this poem. They were his response not in words only, but in fact. Until Milton was thirty-two years of age, if even then, he did not earn a penny for himself.

GREEK VERSES.

Milton, though an assiduous and enthusiastic reader of the Greek classics, did not give much time to the practice of Greek composition. He has left but three pieces of Greek verse; and the verdict upon *them* by the critic of subsequent times who has published the minutest examination of them (Dr. Charles Burney, 1757—1817), is that they show imperfect Greek scholarship. He finds lax construction in them, questionable usages of words, and even false quantities.

PSALM CXIV. — This seems to have been a favourite Psalm with Milton, for it is one of the two which he had paraphrased in English when he was fifteen years of age (see *antè*, p. 403). The present version of it in Greek Hexameters was done in 1634, as appears by a Latin letter of Milton to Gill the younger, of date Dec. 4 in that year.

PHILOSOPHUS AD REGEM QUENDAM, ETC. — As these Hexameters appear in the Edition of 1645, and as their tenor suggests that they were done after the Civil War had begun, we may date them between 1642 and 1645.

IN EFFIGIEI EJUS SCULPTOREM. — These satirical Iambics were engraved by way of practical joke under Marshall's portrait of Milton in the 1645 Edition of his poems (see *antè*, p. 398); in the Edition of 1673, which did not contain that portrait, they were put into the text.

AD SALSILLUM, POETAM ROMANUM, ÆGROTANTEM. — SCAZONTES.

This was written at Rome, either in 1638 or in 1639, in one of Milton's two visits to that city. The person addressed is Joannes Salsillus, or Giovanni Salzilli, a Roman Poet, whose acquaintance Milton had made in these visits. He must have been of considerable note in Roman society in his day; for I find him a leading contributor to a volume published at Rome in 1637 and dedicated to Cardinal Cesarini under the title of "*Poesie de' Signori Accademici Fantastici*," i.e. Poems by members of the Academy of the Fantastics. Apparently he was a young man and habitually an invalid. He was in bad health, at all events, when Milton addressed to him these *Scazontes*, i.e. verses written in the "limping measure" employed by the Greek poet Hipponax, the peculiarity of which is that the verse is regular Iambic trimeter until the last foot, where, by the substitution of a spondee or trochee for the expected Iambus, an effect is given as of coming to the last step of a stair with the wrong emphasis. To bring out this effect fully, the fifth or penultimate foot ought always to be an Iambus; but Milton has not attended strictly to this rule. In the verses Milton expresses his wishes for Salzilli's recovery, pays him a compliment on his poetry, and refers to the four lines of Latin elegiac verse in which Salzilli had, with Italian politeness, so hyperbolically praised Milton,

on slight acquaintance, extolling him above Homer, Virgil, and Tasso. See the lines among the Testimonies to Milton by Italians, prefixed to the Latin Poems.

MANSUS.

This is a poem of remarkable interest, addressed to the most distinguished, in some respects, of all the Italians with whom Milton became personally acquainted during his Italian journey, viz. the Neapolitan, Giovanni Battista Manso, Marquis of Villa, and Lord of Bisaccio and Panca.

Manso was born in 1561, three years before Shakespeare; and his long life had been spent chiefly in such occupations as the political condition of Naples and Southern Italy, then subject to the Spaniards and governed by Viceroyes from Madrid, permitted to a wealthy and high-minded native of those parts. The cultivation of philosophy, art, and poetry for himself, and the encouragement of these pursuits in others, and of a life of at least pleasant sociability where political independence was denied, had been his business and delight. His life had been identified with the history of Italian Literature for half a century. No Italian of note during that period but Manso had known; few but had known and been indebted to Manso. Above all, he had been the friend, the bosom friend, of the two greatest poets of Italy in his generation, Tasso and Marini. — Tasso, in the strange madness that came over him in his manhood, clouding his beautiful mind, but leaving it still capable of the noblest poetry, had been led, in his wanderings over Italy, to Manso's door at Naples (1588). Manso, then in his twenty-eighth year, while Tasso was in his forty-fifth, had received the illustrious unfortunate, had kept him in his splendid villa at Naples and in his country-house at Bisaccio, had tended him in his fits of gloom, and soothed him in those moments when the frenzy was at its strongest, and the air around him was full of visions and voices, and he would call on Manso to look and listen. Thus had grown up a friendship which lasted with Tasso's life. Twice again he had been Manso's guest; it was in Manso's house, in one of these visits, that he completed his *Gerusalemme Conquistata*, in one of the books of which he introduces Manso's name; in his Dialogue on Friendship Manso is one of the speakers, and it is dedicated to Manso and entitled *Il Manso*; and there are other recognitions of their intimacy in sonnets of Tasso addressed to Manso. On Tasso's death-bed in Rome (1595) he spoke of Manso; a picture of Tasso which Manso had painted was bequeathed back to him; and it was Manso that, some years afterwards, caused the well-known inscription "*Torquati Tassi Ossa*" to be cut on Tasso's tomb. In 1619 there had been published at Naples a Life of Tasso, without Manso's name, but known to be his, and containing an affectionate collection of personal details respecting the poet. It was a popular book in Italy, and had been several times reprinted. — Hardly less intimate than Manso's friendship with his illustrious senior, Tasso, had been his friendship with his junior, Marini (born 1569), Tasso's most celebrated successor in Poetry, though a corruption of Italian taste in Poetry is traced now to his sweet and sensuous genius. Marini, a Neapolitan by birth, but, like Tasso, much of a wanderer, had also been a frequent guest at Manso's villa, had been protected by him and served in many ways; and, when Marini died, in 1625, two years after the publication of his *Adone*, the charge of his burial and of erecting his monument was left to Manso. It was understood that Manso was preparing a biography of Marini similar to that he had

written of Tasso. — And now, with all these recollections of the past circling round him, the Marquis Manso, verging on eighty years of age, was living on at Naples, the most venerable man in the city, and indeed the most conspicuous private patron of Art and Literature in all Italy. In the society of Naples he was supreme. He had founded there a club or academy, called the *Oziosi* ("The Idlers") of which he was president, and the meetings of which were held in his house; and there was another institution of his foundation, called the College *Dei Nobili*, the purpose of which was the education of the young Neapolitan nobles in manly arts and exercises. In the meetings of these institutions the old nobleman would be gay as the youngest present, joining even in their frolics. A certain high moral chivalry, however, for which he had been known from his youth, regulated his behaviour, and gave a dignity even to his humours in company. Also he was punctiliously scrupulous in matters of religion, and a most pious and orthodox son of the Church.

Milton's introduction to Manso, as he tells us himself (*Defensio Secunda*), was through a certain Eremite Friar, who was his companion in his journey from Rome to Naples in November 1638. The Marquis appears to have taken a great liking to the young Englishman, and to have been particularly gracious to him. "As long as I staid at Naples," says Milton, "I found him truly most friendly to me, he himself acting as my guide through the different parts of the city and the palace of the Viceroy, and coming himself more than once to my inn to visit me; and at my going away he seriously excused himself to me in that, though he wished extremely to have shown me much greater attention, he had not been able to do so in that city, because I would not be more close in the matter of Religion." In the two Latin lines of compliment given by Manso to Milton, and included by Milton among the Testimonies prefixed to his Latin Poems, there is a hint at this Protestantism of Milton as the only fault he had in the old man's eyes. "Were but your creed like your mind, form, grace, face, and morals, then you would not be Anglic only, but, in faith, Angelic," says the old man, reviving in Milton's favour the play upon the words *Anglus* and *Angelus* attributed in the legend to Pope Gregory when he beheld the English youths in the Roman slave-market and grieved that such comely youths should be Pagans. But Milton carried away with him another token of Manso's regard. He describes distinctly in his *Epitaphium Damonis* (lines 181—197) two cups which Manso had given him as a keepsake, carved round or painted by Manso himself with two designs, the one of an oriental subject, the other of a subject from classic mythology.

In return for Manso's distich and his cups, or possibly before receiving them, and in mere acknowledgment of Manso's great courtesy generally, Milton, before leaving Naples (Jan. 1638-9), sent to Manso the hundred hexameter lines now under notice. They are a very graceful acknowledgment indeed. There is one passage, of information and compliment finely blended, which may have told Manso more about the stranger than he already knew, and roused his curiosity. It is the passage beginning "*O mihi si mea sors*" at line 78, and containing the first published hint by Milton of his contemplated Arthurian Epic, or poem from British legendary History. The passage is worth reading, not only on this account, but also for its pathos and eloquence. Manso must have admired it, and may have thought of the young Englishman sometimes through the next few years, and wondered what he was doing in his native land. Much news of Milton, however, in Poetry at least, can hardly

have reached Manso before his death. He died at Naples, at the age of eighty-four, in 1645, the very year when Milton's first edition of his Poems was published.

EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS.

In the Introductions to the *Elegia Prima* and the *Elegia Sexta*, the story of Milton's friendship with the half-Italian youth Charles Diodati has been brought down to the end of the year 1629. Since then there had been no interruption of the friendship, but rather a strengthening of it by new ties as the two friends grew older. Two Latin letters of Milton to Diodati, both written in September 1637, and now printed among Milton's *Epistolæ Familiæres*, are the best information we have as to the mutual position of the two friends at that date, when Milton was in his thirtieth year and Diodati had just passed that age. Diodati, it appears from those letters, had finished his medical education, and was in practice somewhere in the north of England; near Chester, it has been supposed, but that is only a guess from the fact that he had been in that neighbourhood in 1626, the date of the *Elegia Prima*. Milton, on the other hand, was mainly at Horton, but sometimes in London; whence, indeed, his two letters are written. They are full of gossip and affection. "How is it with you, pray?" asks Milton in the first, dated Sept. 2. "Are you in good health? Are there in those parts any learned folks or so with whom you can willingly associate and chat, as we were wont, together? When do you return? How long do you intend to dwell among those hyperboreans?" Again, in the second, dated Sept. 23, Diodati having replied in the meanwhile, and there having been the usual excuses on both sides for laziness in letter-writing: "Your probity writes with me in your stead and indites true letters on my inmost heart; your blamelessness of morals writes to me, and your love of the good; your genius also, by no means a common one, writes to me, and commends you to me more and more. . . . Know that it is impossible for me not to love men like you." There is added some talk about Milton's doings. He is thinking, he says, of taking chambers in London, in one of the Inns of Court, having begun to find Horton inconvenient. He has been engaged in a continuous course of historical reading, and has reached the mediæval period. Could Diodati lend him the History of Venice by Justiniani? And what is Diodati doing? Is he crowing over his medical dignity? Is he troubling himself too much with family matters? Unless this step-motherly war is very bad indeed, worse than Dacian or Sarmatian, may not one hope to see him soon in winter quarters? (*Nisi bellum hoc novercale vel Dacico vel Sarmatico infestius sit, debebis profecto maturare, ut ad nos saltem in hiberna concedas.*) I can only construe this passage as implying that Diodati had recently received a step-mother, and was not much pleased with the acquisition.

Seven months after Milton had written these letters to Diodati, he went abroad on his Italian journey (April 1638). It is very possible that he and Diodati may have met in the interval, and talked over the intended tour. Diodati, as half an Italian, and acquainted with the Italian traditions and connexions of his family, may have had hints to give to Milton for his use abroad, or even letters of introduction. At all events, we find Milton, while abroad, thinking much of Diodati. He mentions expressly in his *Defensio Secunda* that, in the

second two months he spent at Florence (March and April 1639), he found time for an excursion of "a few days" to Lucca, about forty miles distant; and I suspect that his main motive in the excursion was to see the town whence the Diodati family had derived their origin. Then, again, in one of the Five Italian Love Sonnets, written, as is generally believed, in the north of Italy, towards the end of Milton's Italian tour, we find Diodati directly addressed, and, as it were, taken, though absent, into his friend's confidence in the sudden love-incident that had befallen him (see *Introd. to the Italian Sonnets*). I feel sure that Milton talked of Diodati, his half-Italian friend at home, to the various groups of Italian wits and literati in the midst of whom he found himself in the different Italian cities he visited, and especially to his acquaintances of the Florentine group, Gaddi, Dati, Frescobaldi, Coltellini, Chimentelli, Francini, and others. It is not a matter of fancy, but of actual information by Milton himself, that, as he parted from these groups of new friends, and took his way at length back from Italy homewards, through Switzerland and France, it was with a kind of impatience to meet Diodati again, after so long an absence, so as to pour into his ear, in long sittings within-doors, or in walks together through English fields and country lanes, the connected story of all he had done and seen in the wondrous southern land of olives and myrtles, blue skies and soft winds, art and antiquities, poetry and beauty.

All the more terrible was the shock that awaited Milton. His friend Diodati was no longer alive. He had died soon after Milton had left England. "*Mr. Charles Deodate, from Mr. Dollam's,*" is his burial-entry, under date, August 27, 1638, recently discovered by Colonel Chester, in the Registers of the parish of St. Anne, Blackfriars, London; where also, dated the tenth of the same month, there is this previous burial-entry — "*Mrs. Philadelphia Deodate, from Mr. Dollam's.*" The inference is that, in consequence of the second marriage of old Dr. Theodore Diodati, young Charles and a sister of his had taken lodgings together at a Mr. Dollam's in Blackfriars, — in which district, Colonel Chester has found, their brother John was then residing, as a married man, — and that here, within seventeen days of each other, they had fallen victims to some epidemic. The rumour may have reached Milton on the Continent, if only at Geneva in June 1639; but not till he was back in England did he learn all the particulars. Whatever they were, they impressed him greatly. For some time he seems to have gone about, between London and Horton, thinking of Charles Diodati's death. His reminiscences of Italy and all the delights of his tour were saddened and spoiled to him by this one irremediable loss. His musings over it take poetic form, and in the late autumn of 1639, or in the winter of 1639-40, he writes his *Epitaphium Damonis*.

The poem is, beyond all question, the finest, the deepest in feeling, of all that Milton has left us in Latin, and one of the most interesting of all his poems, whether Latin or English. It is purely the accident of its being in Latin that has prevented it from being as well known as *Lycidas*, and that has transferred to the subject of that English pastoral, Edward King of Christ's College, Cambridge, the honour of being remembered and spoken of as the pre-eminent friend of Milton's youth and early manhood. Not *Lycidas* but *Damon*, not the Irish-born Edward King, but the half-Italian Charles Diodati, was Milton's dearest, most intimate, most peculiar friend. The records prove this irresistibly, and a careful perusal of the two poems

will add to the impression. Whoever will read the Latin *Epitaphium Damonis* will perceive in it a passionateness of personal grief, an evidence of bursts of tears and sobbings interrupting the act of writing, to which there is nothing equivalent in the English *Lycidas*, affectionate and exquisitely beautiful as that poem is. Yet the two poems are, in a sense, companions, and ought to be recollected in connexion. Both are pastorals; in both the form is that of a surviving shepherd bewailing the death of a dear fellow-shepherd. In the one case the dead shepherd is named Lycidas, while the surviving shepherd who mourns him is left unnamed, and only seen at the end as the "uncouth swain" who has been singing; in the other the dead shepherd is named Damon, and Milton, under the name of Thyrsis, is avowedly the shepherd who laments him. The reader may here refer to what has been said, in the Introduction to *Lycidas*, concerning the Pastoral form of Poetry and the objections that have been taken to it. What was said there in defence of the Pastoral form applies especially to the *Epitaphium Damonis*; for it is a pastoral of the most artificial variety. It is in Latin; and this, in itself, removes it into the realm of the artificial. But, in the Latin, the precedents of the Greek pastoralists, Theocritus, Bion, and Moschus, as well as of the Latin Virgil, have been studied, and every device of classic pastoralism has been imitated. There are the sheep, the kids, the reed flutes, the pastures, the shepherds and shepherdesses wondering at the mourner and coming round him to comfort him. The measure used is the Virgilian Hexameter, and the poem is broken into musical parts or bursts by a recurring phrase as in some of the Greek Idylls; the names used for the shepherds and shepherdesses are from the Greek Idyllists or from Virgil; the very title of the poem is an echo of that of the third Idyll of Moschus, *Epitaphium Bionis*. All the more strange, to those whose notion of the Pastoral has not gone beyond Dr. Johnson's in his criticism of *Lycidas*, may seem the assertion that in this Latin pastoral, the *Epitaphium Damonis*, the pastoralism of which is more subtle and artificial in every point than that of the corresponding English poem, Milton will be found, undeniably, and with an earnestness which breaks through the assumed guise and thrills the nerves of the reader, speaking his own heart. For my own part, I risk the assertion and will leave the verification to the reader. To the reader also I will leave the pleasure of finding out what is interesting in this extraordinary poem. Only let him rest a little, for special reasons, over the memorable passage beginning "*Ipse etiam*" (line 155) and extending to "*Orcades undis*" (line 178). That passage is an important shred of Milton's autobiography. It tells, more minutely, and in a more emphatic manner, what he had already hinted in his Latin poem to Manso, viz.: that at this period of his life his thoughts were full of the project of an Epic poem founded on British legendary History, and especially on the subject of King Arthur. Combined with this glimpse of what was shaping itself in Milton's mind at that time (1639-40) is the farther information that he had then also resolved to give up Latin for the purposes of poetry, and to confine himself to English.

AD JOANNEM ROUSIUM,
OXONIENSIS ACADEMIÆ BIBLIOTHECARIUM.

January 23, 1646-7.

John Rous, M.A. and Fellow of Oriel College, was elected Chief Librarian of the Bodleian May 9, 1620, and he remained in that post till his death in April 1652. Milton may have become acquainted with him in some visit to Oxford during the Cambridge period of his life, or, at all events, in 1635, when, as a Cambridge M.A. of three years' standing, he was incorporated, in the same degree, at Oxford. It is almost certain that "our common friend Mr. R." mentioned by Sir Henry Wotton in his letter to Milton of April 13, 1638, as having sent to Wotton a copy of Lawes's anonymous edition of *Comus* of the previous year, bound up with a volume of inferior poetry printed at Oxford, was this John Rous, the Oxford Librarian. In any case, Milton had come to know Rous. Who in those days could avoid doing so that had dealings with books, and was drawn to the sight of such a collection of books as that in the great Bodleian? It may have been a recommendation of Rous in Milton's eyes that, Oxonian though he was, his sympathies were decidedly Parliamentary. Possibly he was a relative of Francis Rous, the Puritan member of the Long Parliament for Truro.

Milton, at Rous's request, had sent him, for the Bodleian, in 1646, a set of his published writings complete to that date: to wit, his eleven Prose-pamphlets of 1641-4 (the five on the Episcopacy question, the four on Divorce, the *Areopagitica*, and the tract on Education); and, separately bound, the edition of his Poems in English and Latin published by Moseley in the end of 1645. Of these, however, only the Prose-pamphlets had reached their destination; the Poems had been lost or stolen on their way to Oxford, or had otherwise gone astray. Rous, accordingly, both in his own behalf and in the interest of the Library, begs for another copy, to make the set of Milton's writings complete, as had been intended. Milton complies with the request, and sends a second copy of the Poems. But, amused by the incident of the loss of the first, he composes a Latin Ode on the subject; and a transcript of this Ode, carefully written out on a sheet of paper by himself, or some one else, in an Italian hand, he causes to be inserted in the second copy, between the English and the Latin contents of the volume. Accordingly, there are now in the Bodleian *two* volumes of Milton's writings, his own gift to the Library. One is the volume of the eleven collected Prose-pamphlets, with an inscription in Milton's undoubted autograph; the other is the supplementary volume of his Poems, sent to Rous, "*ut cum aliis nostris reponeret*" ("that he might replace it beside our other things"), and containing the Ode to Rous in an inserted sheet of MS., generally supposed to be also Milton's autograph, in an unusual form of laboured elegance, but probably, I think, a transcript by some calligraphist whom he employed.

The Ode is a curious one, in respect of both its form and its matter. — The *form*, as Milton takes care to explain in a note (appended in his edition, though now more conveniently prefixed), is peculiarly arbitrary. It is a kind of experiment in Latin, after few classical precedents in that language, of the mixed verse, or verse of various metres, common in the Greek choral odes.

Even within that range Milton has taken liberties at the bidding of his own ear, paying regard, as he says, rather to facility of reading than to ancient rule. Altogether, the experiment was very daring. — The *matter* of the Ode is simple enough. It is addressed not directly to Rous, but to the little volume itself. The double contents of the volume, Latin and English, are spoken of in modest terms; the loss of the first copy, mysteriously abstracted from the bundle of its brothers, when they were on their way from London to Oxford, is playfully mentioned, with wonder what had become of it and into what rough hands it may have fallen; Rous's friendly interest, both in having repeatedly applied at first for the whole set of writings and in having applied again for the missing volume, is acknowledged; and there are the due applauses of Oxford and her great Library. In this last connexion there is an amplification of what had been hinted in the inscription in the volume of the Prose-pamphlets. The time would come, he had there hoped, when even his Prose-pamphlets, now procuring him nothing but ill-will and calumny, might be better appreciated. This hope he now repeats more strongly with reference to his Poems. The following is Cowper's translation of the Epode, or closing strain: —

“Ye, then, my works, no longer vain
 And worthless deemed by me,
 Whate'er this sterile genius has produced,
 Expect at last, the rage of envy spent,
 An unmolested, happy home,
 Gift of kind Hermes, and my watchful friend,
 Where never flippant tongue profane
 Shall entrance find,
 And whence the coarse unlettered multitude
 Shall babble far remote.
 Perhaps some future distant age,
 Less tinged with prejudice, and better taught
 Shall furnish minds of power
 To judge more equally.
 Then, malice silenced in the tomb,
 Cooler heads and sounder hearts,
 Thanks to Rous, if aught of praise
 I merit, shall with candour weigh the claim.”

EPIGRAMS ON SALMASIUS.

Salmasius is a great name in the Biography of Milton. The person called by it, according to the custom, then common in the scholarly world of Europe, of Latinizing the names of its important members, was Claude de Saumaise, a Frenchman, born in 1588, and therefore Milton's senior by about twenty years. From his earliest youth he had been a prodigious reader; and by a series of publications, partly in France and partly in Germany, some against the Papal power, but others more purely historical and antiquarian, he had acquired the fame of being perhaps the most learned European scholar of his generation. Princes and States contended for the honour of possessing and pensioning him; but, after various travels, he had taken up his residence chiefly at Leyden, in Holland. Thus brought into contact with Charles II. and the English Royalist exiles after the execution of Charles I., he had been employed or induced, in an evil hour for himself, to write a defence of the late King and an attack on the English Commonwealth. It appeared in Holland

in 1649, under the title of *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I.* A book of the kind by a man of his fame was felt in England to be a serious matter; and Milton, then Latin Secretary to the Council of State, was requested to answer it. He did so in his famous *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano contra Claudii Salmasii Defensionem Regiam*, published in the end of 1650, or beginning of 1651. Soon all Europe rang from side to side with the power of this pamphlet; and the legend is that Salmasius, who had recently gone to reside at the Court of Sweden on the pressing invitation of the eccentric Queen Christina, was so chagrined at the applause with which the pamphlet was everywhere received, and especially by Christina's consequent coldness to himself, that he soon afterwards died. He did quit Sweden, and return to Holland, where he died Sept. 3, 1653, leaving an unfinished reply to Milton, and the task of continuing the controversy to other persons. Among these was the Gallo-Scot, Alexander More or Morus, already mentioned in the Introduction to the brief epigram *De Moro* among the Latin Elegies. Milton's *Defensio Secunda pro Populo Anglicano*, published in 1654, was in reply to a treatise of the same year, which More was supposed to have written, but which he had only seen through the press, entitled *Regii Sanguinis Clamor adversus Parricidas Anglicanos*. In this "Second Defence," though More was the person directly attacked, Milton went back upon his dead opponent Salmasius. Hence, while the first of the two Epigrams against Salmasius now under notice is from the original pamphlet against the living Salmasius (called now, generally, the *Defensio Prima*), the second is from the *Defensio Secunda*, in which More receives the direct attack and Salmasius is only recollected for posthumous chastisement.

IN SALMASII HUNDREDAM. — This Epigram occurs in the 8th chapter of the *Defensio Prima*, and is a rough jest against Salmasius for his parade of his knowledge of a few English law-terms, or terms of public custom, such as "County Court," and "Hundred" or "Hundreda," in the sense of a division of a shire or an aggregation of parishes. "Where did Salmasius, that magpie, get his scraps of bad English, and especially his *Hundreda*?" asks the Epigram. "Why, he got a hundred Jacobuses, the last in the pouch of the 'poor exiled King, for writing his pamphlet! The prospect of more cash 'would make him write up the very Pope, and sing the Song of the Cardinals, 'though he once demonstrated the Papacy to be Antichrist.'" Such is the substance of the Epigram; a poor thing after all, and a mere momentary parody of the last seven lines of the Prologue to the Satires of Persius.

IN SALMASIUM. — This is from the *Defensio Secunda*, where it is introduced in a passage in reply to an immense eulogy on Salmasius occurring in the *Sanguinis Clamor*. The writer of that book, assumed by Milton to be Alexander More, had anticipated the tremendous castigation that would be given to Milton in the forthcoming "impression" of the Answer to the *Defensio Prima* that had been written by the divine Salmasius himself, that prodigy of erudition and of genius. Milton professes to be very easy under the expectation of this posthumous reply, which he knew Salmasius had been busy with at the time of his death. People know that he has his own opinion of the genius and erudition of the famous deceased! "You, therefore, it 'seems,' he says, addressing More, "are like the little client-fish in advance 'of Whale Salmasius, who is threatening 'impressions' on these shores: *we* 'are sharpening our irons so as to be ready to squeeze out whatever may be

“in the ‘impressions’ and ‘castigations,’ whether of oil or pickle. Meanwhile “we shall admire the more than Pythagorean goodness of the great man, who, “in his pity for the animals, and especially for the fishes, which are not spared “even in Lent, poor things, has provided so many volumes for decently “wrapping them up in, and has bequeathed by will, I may say, to so many “thousands of poor sprats and herrings paper coats individually.” After this ponderous piece of Latin prose-fun comes the Epigram. It simply prolongs the joke, in verse which is a cross between Catullus and Martial, by calling on all the herrings and other fishes to rejoice in their prospect of abundant paper wrappages from the books of Salmasius.

POEMS:
ENGLISH AND LATIN,
WITH A FEW IN ITALIAN AND GREEK.
COMPOSED AT SEVERAL TIMES.

POEMS, ENGLISH AND LATIN, ETC.

The title-pages of the two original Editions, of 1645 and 1673, have been given in the General Introduction (p. 393 and p. 394). The Second Edition had no Preface; but the First had the following, by the publisher, Humphrey Moseley: —

“THE STATIONER TO THE READER.

“It is not any private respect of gain, Gentle Reader (for the slightest Pamphlet is nowadays more vendible than the works of learnedest men), but it is the love I have to our own Language, that hath made me diligent to collect and set forth such Pieces, both in Prose and Verse, as may renew the wonted honour and esteem of our English tongue; and it's the worth of these both English and Latin Poems, not the flourish of any prefixed encomions, that can invite thee to buy them — though these are not without the highest commendations and applause of the learnedest Academicks, both domestic and foreign, and, amongst those of our own country, the unparalleled attestation of that renowned Provost of Eton, SIR HENRY WOOTTON. I know not thy palate, how it relishes such dainties, nor how harmonious thy soul is: perhaps more trivial Airs may please thee better. But, howsoever thy opinion is spent upon these, that encouragement I have already received from the most ingenious men, in their clear and courteous entertainment of MR. WALLER's late choice Pieces, hath once more made me adventure into the world, presenting it with these ever-green and not to be blasted laurels. The Author's more peculiar excellency in these studies was too well known to conceal his Papers, or to keep me from attempting to solicit them from him. Let the event guide itself which way it will, I shall deserve of the age by bringing into the light as true a birth as the Muses have brought forth since our famous SPENSER wrote; whose Poems in these English ones are as rarely imitated as sweetly excelled. Reader, if thou art eagle-eyed to censure their worth, I am not fearful to expose them to thy exactest perusal.

“Thine to command,
“HUMPH. MOSELEY.”

ENGLISH POEMS.

A PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV.

This and the following Psalm were done by the Author at fifteen years old.

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

10

PSALM CXXXVI.

LET us with a gladsome mind
Praise the Lord, for he is kind;
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his name abroad,
 For of gods he is the God;
 For his, &c.

O let us his praises tell,
 Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell; 10
 For his, &c.

Who with his miracles doth make
 Amazed heaven and earth to shake;
 For his, &c.

Who by his wisdom did create
 The painted heavens so full of state; 19
 For his, &c.

Who did the solid earth ordain
 To rise above the watery plain;
 For his, &c.

Who, by his all-commanding might,
 Did fill the new-made world with light;
 For his, &c.

And caused the golden-tressèd sun
 All the day long his course to run; 30
 For his, &c.

The hornèd moon to shine by night
 Amongst her spangled sisters bright;
 For his, &c.

He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
 Smote the first-born of Egypt land; 39
 For his, &c.

And, in despite of Pharaoh fell,
 He brought from thence his Israel;
 For his, &c.

The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
 Of the Erythræan main;
 For his, &c.

- The floods stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass ;
For his, &c. 50
- But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power ;
For his, &c.
- His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness ;
For his, &c. 59
- In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown ;
For his, &c.
- He foiled bold Seon and his host,
That ruled the Amorrean coast ;
For his, &c.
- And large-limbed Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew ;
For his, &c. 70
- And to his servant Israel
He gave their land, therein to dwell ;
For his, &c.
- He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery ;
For his, &c. 79
- And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy ;
For his, &c.
- All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need ;
For his, &c.
- Let us, therefore, warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth ;
For his, &c. 90
- That his mansion hath on high,
Above the reach of mortal eye ;
For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT DYING OF A
COUGH.

Anno ætatis 17.

I.

O FAIREST flower, no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst outlasted
Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
For he, being amorous on that lovely dye
That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But killed, alas! and then bewailed his fatal bliss.

II.

For, since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
By boisterous rape the Athenian damsel got,
He thought it touched his deity full near,
If likewise he some fair one wedded not, 10
Thereby to wipe away the infamous blot
Of long uncoupled bed and childless eld,
Which 'mongst the wanton gods a foul reproach was held.

III.

So, mounting up in icy-pearlèd car,
Through middle empire of the freezing air
He wandered long, till thee he spied from far;
There ended was his quest, there ceased his care:
Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,
But, all unwares, with his cold-kind embrace, 20
Unhoused thy virgin soul from her fair bidding-place.

IV.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-lovèd mate.
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
But then transformed him to a purple flower:
Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power!

V.

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
 Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb, 30
 Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed
 Hid from the world in a low-delvèd tomb;
 Could Heaven, for pity, thee so strictly doom?
 Oh no! for something in thy face did shine
 Above mortality, that showed thou wast divine.

VI.

Resolve me, then, O Soul most surely blest
 (If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear)!
 Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
 Whether above that high first-moving sphere, 40
 Or in the Elysian fields (if such there were),
 Oh, say me true if thou wert mortal wight,
 And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight.

VII.

Wert thou some star, which from the ruined roof
 Of shaked Olympus by mischance didst fall;
 Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof
 Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?
 Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall
 Of sheeny Heaven, and thou some goddess fled
 Amongst us here below to hide thy nectared head?

VIII.

Or wert thou that just Maid who once before 50
 Forsook the hated earth, oh! tell me sooth,
 And camest again to visit us once more?
 Or wert thou [Mercy], that sweet smiling Youth?
 Or that crowned Matron, sage white-robed Truth?
 Or any other of that heavenly brood
 Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

IX.

Or wert thou of the golden-wingèd host,
 Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
 To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
 And after short abode fly back with speed, 60
 As if to show what creatures Heaven doth breed;
 Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
 To scorn the sordid world, and unto Heaven aspire?

X.

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below
 To bless us with thy heaven-loved innocence,
 To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
 To turn swift-rushing black perdition hence,
 Or drive away the slaughtering pestilence,
 To stand 'twixt us and our deservèd smart?
 But thou canst best perform that office where thou art.

70

XI.

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

AT A VACATION EXERCISE IN THE COLLEGE, PART
 LATIN, PART ENGLISH.

Anno ætatis 19.

The Latin Speeches ended, the English thus began:—

HAIL, Native Language, that by sinews weak
 Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
 And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
 Half unpronounced, slide through my infant lips,
 Driving dumb Silence from the portal door,
 Where he had mutely sat two years before:
 Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask
 That now I use thee in my latter task!
 Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee;
 I know my tongue but little grace can do thee.
 Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first;
 Believe me, I have thither packed the worst:
 And, if it happen as I did forecast,
 The daintiest dishes shall be served up last.
 I pray thee then deny me not thy aid,
 For this same small neglect that I have made;
 But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
 And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure;

10

Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight
 Which takes our late fantastics with delight; 20
 But cull those richest robes and gayest attire,
 Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire.
 I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
 And loudly knock to have their passage out,
 And, weary of their place, do only stay
 Till thou hast decked them in thy best array;
 That so they may, without suspect or fears,
 Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears.
 Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
 Thy service in some graver subject use, 30
 Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
 Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:
 Such where the deep transported mind may soar
 Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
 Look in, and see each blissful deity
 How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
 Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings
 To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
 Immortal nectar to her kingly sire;
 Then, passing through the spheres of watchful fire, 40
 And misty regions of wide air next under,
 And hills of snow and lofts of piled thunder,
 May tell at length how green-eyed Neptune raves,
 In heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;
 Then sing of secret things that came to pass
 When beldam Nature in her cradle was;
 And last of kings and queens and heroes old,
 Such as the wise Demodocus once told
 In solemn songs at king Alcinous' feast,
 While sad Ulysses' soul and all the rest 50
 Are held, with his melodious harmony,
 In willing chains and sweet captivity.
 But fie, my wandering Muse, how thou dost stray!
 Expectance calls thee now another way.
 Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent
 To keep in compass of thy Predicament.
 Then quick about thy purposed business come,
 That to the next I may resign my room.

Then ENS is represented as Father of the Predicaments, his ten Sons; whereof the eldest stood for SUBSTANCE with his Canons; which ENS, thus speaking, explains:—

Good luck befriend thee, Son; for at thy birth
 The faery ladies danced upon the hearth. 60

The drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
 Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
 And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
 Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
 She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still
 From eyes of mortals walk invisible.

Yet there is something that doth force my fear;
 For once it was my dismal hap to hear

A sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
 That far events full wisely could presage,
 And, in Time's long and dark prospective-glass,
 Foresaw what future days should bring to pass.
 "Your son," said she, "(nor can you it prevent,
 Shall subject be to many an *Accident*."

70

O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king;
 Yet every one shall make him underling,
 And those that cannot live from him asunder
 Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under.

In worth and excellence he shall outgo them;
 Yet, being above them, he shall be below them.

80

From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
 Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.

To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
 And peace shall lull him in her flowery lap;

Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
 Devouring war shall never cease to roar;

Yea, it shall be his natural property
 To harbour those that are at enmity."

What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
 Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?

90

*The next, QUANTITY and QUALITY, spake in prose: then RELATION
 was called by his name.*

Rivers, arise: whether thou be the son
 Of utmost Tweed, or Ouse, or gulfy Dun,
 Or Trent, who, like some earth-born giant, spreads
 His thirty arms along the indented meads,
 Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath,
 Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death,
 Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lea,
 Or coaly Tyne, or ancient hallowed Dee,
 Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name,
 Or Medway smooth, or royal-towered Thame.

100

The rest was prose.

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

Composed 1629.

I.

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
 Wherein the Son of Heaven's eternal King,
 Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
 Our great redemption from above did bring;
 For so the holy sages once did sing,
 That he our deadly forfeit should release,
 And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

II.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
 And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
 Wherewith he went at Heaven's high council-table 10
 To sit the midst of Trinal Unity,
 He laid aside, and, here with us to be,
 Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
 And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

III.

Say, Heavenly Musè, shall not thy sacred vein
 Afford a present to the Infant God?
 Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
 To welcome him to this his new abode,
 Now while the heaven, by the Sun's team untrod,
 Hath took no print of the approaching light, 20
 And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

IV.

See how from far upon the eastern road
 The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet!
 Oh! run; prevent them with thy humble ode,
 And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
 Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
 And join thy voice unto the Angel Quire,
 From out his secret altar touched with hallowed fire.

THE HYMN.

I.

It was the winter wild,
 While the heaven-born child
 All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies ;
 Nature, in awe to him,
 Had doffed her gaudy trim,
 With her great Master so to sympathize :
 It was no season then for her
 To wanton with the Sun, her lusty paramour.

30

II.

Only with speeches fair
 She woos the gentle air
 To hide her guilty front with innocent snow,
 And on her naked shame,
 Pollute with sinful blame,
 The saintly veil of maiden white to throw ;
 Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
 Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

40

III.

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

50

IV.

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

60

V.

But peaceful was the night
 Wherein the Prince of Light
 His reign of peace upon the earth began.
 The winds, with wonder whist,
 Smoothly the waters kissed,
 Whispering new joys to the mild Ocean,
 Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
 While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmèd wave.

VI.

The stars, with deep amaze,
 Stand fixed in steadfast gaze, 70
 Bending one way their precious influence,
 And will not take their flight,
 For all the morning light,
 Or Lucifer that often warned them thence;
 But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
 Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

VII.

And, though the shady gloom
 Had given day her room,
 The Sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
 And hid his head for shame, 80
 As his inferior flame
 The new-enlightened world no more should need:
 He saw a greater Sun appear
 Than his bright throne or burning axletree could bear.

VIII.

The shepherds on the lawn,
 Or ere the point of dawn,
 Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
 Full little thought they than
 That the mighty Pan
 Was kindly come to live with them below: 90
 Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
 Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

IX.

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

99

X.

Nature, that heard such sound
 Beneath the hollow round
 Of Cynthia's seat the Airy region thrilling,
 Now was almost won
 To think her part was done,
 And that her reign had here its last fulfilling :
 She knew such harmony alone
 Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

XI.

At last surrounds their sight
 A globe of circular light,
 That with long beams the shamefaced Night arrayed ;
 The helmèd cherubim
 And sworded seraphim
 Are seen in glittering ranks with wings displayed,
 Harping in loud and solemn quire,
 With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born Heir.

110

XII.

Such music (as 'tis said)
 Before was never made.
 But when of old the Sons of Morning sung,
 While the Creator great
 His constellations set,
 And the well-balanced World on hinges hung,
 And cast the dark foundations deep,
 And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

120

XIII.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
 Once bless our human ears,
 If ye have power to touch our senses so;
 And let your silver chime
 Move in melodious time;
 And let the bass of heaven's deep organ blow;
 And with your ninefold harmony
 Make up full consort to the angelic symphony. 130

XIV

For, if such holy song
 Enwrap our fancy long,
 Time will run back and fetch the Age of Gold;
 And speckled Vanity
 Will sicken soon and die,
 And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;
 And Hell itself will pass away,
 And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day. 140

XV.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
 Will down return to men,
 Orbed in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
 Mercy will sit between,
 Throned in celestial sheen,
 With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
 And Heaven, as at some festival,
 Will open wide the gates of her high palace-hall.

XVI.

But wisest Fate says No,
 This must not yet be so; 150
 The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy
 That on the bitter cross
 Must redeem our loss,
 So both himself and us to glorify:
 Yet first, to those ychained in sleep,
 The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through the deep.

XVII.

With such a horrid clang
 As on Mount Sinai rang,
 While the red fire and smouldering clouds outbrake :
 The aged Earth, aghast
 With terror of that blast, 160
 Shall from the surface to the centre shake,
 When, at the world's last session,
 The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

XVIII.

And then at last our bliss
 Full and perfect is,
 But now begins; for from this happy day
 The Old Dragon under ground,
 In straiter limits bound,
 Not half so far casts his usurpèd sway, 170
 And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
 Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

XIX.

The Oracles are dumb;
 No voice or hideous hum
 Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving.
 Apollo from his shrine
 Can no more divine,
 With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
 No nightly trance, or breathèd spell,
 Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell. 180

XX.

The lonely mountains o'er,
 And the resounding shore,
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
 From haunted spring, and dale
 Edged with poplar pale,
 The parting Genius is with sighing sent;
 With flower-inwoven tresses torn
 The Nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

XXI.

In consecrated earth,
 And on the holy hearth, 190
 The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
 In urns, and altars round,
 A drear and dying sound
 Affrights the flamens at their service quaint;
 And the chill marble seems to sweat,
 While each peculiar power forgoes his wonted seat.

XXII.

Peor and Baälim
 Forsake their temples dim,
 With that twice-battered god of Palestine;
 And moonèd Ashtaroth, 200
 Heaven's queen and mother both,
 Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine:
 The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn;
 In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.

XXIII.

And sullen Moloch, fled,
 Hath left in shadows dread
 His burning idol all of blackest hue;
 In vain with cymbals' ring
 They call the grisly king,
 In dismal dance about the furnace blue; 210
 The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
 Isis, and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste.

XXIV.

Nor is Osiris seen
 In Memphian grove or green,
 Trampling the unshowered grass with lowings loud;
 Nor can he be at rest
 Within his sacred chest;
 Nought but profoundest Hell can be his shroud;
 In vain, with timbreled anthems dark,
 The sable-stolèd sorcerers bear his worshiped ark. 220

XXV.

He feels from Juda's land
 The dreaded Infant's hand;
 The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyn;
 Nor all the gods beside
 Longer dare abide,
 Not Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
 Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
 Can in his swaddling bands control the damnèd crew.

XXVI.

So, when the sun in bed,
 Curtained with cloudy red,
 Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
 The flocking shadows pale
 Troop to the infernal jail,
 Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave,
 And the yellow-skirted fays
 Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-loved maze. 230

XXVII.

But see! the Virgin blest
 Hath laid her Babe to rest.
 Time is our tedious song should here have ending:
 Heaven's youngest-teemèd star
 Hath fixed her polished car, 240
 Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending;
 And all about the courtly stable
 Bright-harnessed Angels sit in order serviceable.

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

YE flaming Powers, and wingèd Warriors bright,
 That erst with music, and triumphant song,
 First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
 So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along,
 Through the soft silence of the listening night,
 Now mourn; and, if sad share with us to bear
 Your fiery essence can distil no tear,

Burn in your sighs, and borrow
 Seas wept from our deep sorrow.
 He who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere 10
 Entered the world now bleeds to give us ease.
 Alas! how soon our sin
 Sore doth begin
 His infancy to seize!

O more exceeding love, or law more just?
 Just law, indeed, but more exceeding love!
 For we, by rightful doom remediless,
 Were lost in death, till he, that dwelt above
 High-throned in secret bliss, for us frail dust 20
 Emptied his glory, even to nakedness;
 And that great covenant which we still transgress
 Entirely satisfied,
 And the full wrath beside
 Of vengeful justice bore for our excess,
 And seals obedience first with wounding smart
 This day; but oh! ere long,
 Huge pangs and strong
 Will pierce more near his heart.

THE PASSION.

I.

EREWHILE of music, and ethereal mirth,
 Wherewith the stage of Air and Earth did ring,
 And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,
 My muse with Angels did divide to sing;
 But headlong joy is ever on the wing,
 In wintry solstice like the shortened light
 Soon swallowed up in dark and long outliving night.

II.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
 And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
 Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long, 10
 Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
 Which he for us did freely undergo:
 Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
 Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

III.

He, sovran Priest, stooping his regal head,
 That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
 Poor fleshly tabernacle enterèd,
 His starry front low-roofed beneath the skies:
 Oh, what a mask was there, what a disguise!

Yet more: the stroke of death he must abide:
 Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.

20

IV.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;
 To this horizon is my Phœbus bound.
 His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,
 And former sufferings, elsewhere are found;
 Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound:

Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
 Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

V.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief!
 Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
 And work my flattered fancy to belief
 That heaven and earth are coloured with my woe;
 My sorrows are too dark for day to know:

The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
 And letters, where my tears have washed, a wannish white.

30

VI.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
 That whirled the prophet up at Chebar flood;
 My spirit some transporting cherub feels
 To bear me where the towers of Salem stood,
 Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood.

There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
 In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.

40

VII.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
 That was the casket of Heaven's richest store,

And here, though grief my feeble hands up-lock,
 Yet on the softened quarry would I score
 My plaining verse as lively as before;
 For sure so well instructed are my tears
 That they would fitly fall in ordered characters.

VIII.

Or, should I thence, hurried on viewless wing, 50
 Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
 The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
 Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild;
 And I (for grief is easily beguiled)
 Might think the infection of my sorrows loud
 Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

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

ON TIME.

FLY, envious Time, till thou run out thy race:
 Call on the lazy leaden-stepping Hours,
 Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
 And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
 Which is no more than what is false and vain,
 And merely mortal dross;
 So little is our loss,
 So little is thy gain!
 For, whenas each thing bad thou hast entombed,
 And, last of all, thy greedy self consumed, 10
 Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
 With an individual kiss,
 And Joy shall overtake us as a flood;
 When every thing that is sincerely good
 And perfectly divine,
 With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
 About the supreme throne
 Of Him, to whose happy-making sight alone
 When once our heavenly-guided soul shall climb,
 Then, all this earthy grossness quit, 20
 Attired with stars we shall for ever sit,
 Triumphant over Death, and Chance, and thee, O Time!

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
 Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
 Wed your divine sounds, and mixed power employ,
 Dead things with inbreathed sense able to pierce;
 And to our high-raised phantasy present
 That undisturbed song of pure concert,
 Aye sung before the sapphire-coloured throne
 To Him that sits thereon,
 With saintly shout and solemn jubilee;
 Where the bright Seraphim in burning row 10
 Their loud uplifted angel-trumpets blow,
 And the Cherubic host in thousand quires
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires.
 With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms
 Singing everlastingly:
 That we on Earth, with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise;
 As once we did, till disproportioned sin
 Jarred against nature's chime, and with harsh din 20
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion swayed
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good.
 O, may we soon again renew that song,
 And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
 To his celestial consort us unite,
 To live with Him, and sing in endless morn of light!

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

Now the bright morning-star, Day's harbinger,
 Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
 The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
 The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
 Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
 Mirth, and youth, and warm desire!
 Woods and groves are of thy dressing;
 Hill and dale doth boast thy blessing.
 Thus we salute thee with our early song,
 And welcome thee, and wish thee long. 10

ON SHAKESPEARE. 1630.

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

10

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

Who sickened in the time of his Vacancy, being forbid to go to London by reason of the Plague.

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

10

ANOTHER ON THE SAME.

HERE lieth one who did most truly prove
 That he could never die while he could move;
 So hung his destiny, never to rot
 While he might still jog on and keep his trot;
 Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
 Until his revolution was at stay.
 Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
 'Gainst old truth) motion numbered out his time;
 And, like an engine moved with wheel and weight,
 His principles being ceased, he ended straight. 10
 Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,
 And too much breathing put him out of breath;
 Nor were it contradiction to affirm
 Too long vacation hastened on his term.
 Merely to drive the time away he sickened,
 Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quickened.
 "Nay," quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretched,
 "If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetched,
 But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
 For one carrier put down to make six bearers." 20
 Ease was his chief disease; and, to judge right,
 He died for heaviness that his cart went light.
 His leisure told him that his time was come,
 And lack of load made his life burdensome,
 That even to his last breath (there be that say't),
 As he were pressed to death, he cried, "More weight!"
 But, had his doings lasted as they were,
 He had been an immortal carrier.
 Obedient to the moon he spent his date
 In course reciprocal, and had his fate 30
 Linked to the mutual flowing of the seas;
 Yet (strange to think) his wain was his increase.
 His letters are delivered all and gone;
 Only remains this superscription.

AN EPITAPH ON THE MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.

THIS rich marble doth inter
 The honoured wife of Winchester,
 A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
 Besides what her virtues fair
 Added to her noble birth,
 More than she could own from Earth.

Summers three times eight save one
 She had told; alas! too soon,
 After so short time of breath,
 To house with darkness and with death! 10
 Yet, had the number of her days
 Been as complete as was her praise,
 Nature and Fate had had no strife
 In giving limit to her life.
 Her high birth and her graces sweet
 Quickly found a lover meet;
 The virgin quire for her request
 The god that sits at marriage-feast;
 He at their invoking came,
 But with a scarce well-lighted flame; 20
 And in his garland, as he stood,
 Ye might discern a cypress-bud.
 Once had the early matrons run
 To greet her of a lovely son,
 And now with second hope she goes,
 And calls Lucina to her throes;
 But, whether by mischance or blame,
 Atropos for Lucina came,
 And with remorseless cruelty
 Spoiled at once both fruit and tree. 30
 The hapless babe before his birth
 Had burial, not yet laid in earth;
 And the languished mother's womb
 Was not long a living tomb.
 So have I seen some tender slip,
 Saved with care from winter's nip,
 The pride of her carnation train,
 Plucked up by some unheedy swain,
 Who only thought to crop the flower
 New shot up from vernal shower; 40
 But the fair blossom hangs the head
 Sideways, as on a dying bed,
 And those pearls of dew she wears
 Prove to be presaging tears
 Which the sad morn had let fall
 On her hastening funeral.
 Gentle Lady, may thy grave
 Peace and quiet ever have!
 After this thy travail sore,
 Sweet rest seize thee evermore, 50
 That, to give the world increase,
 Shortened hast thy own life's lease!
 Here, besides the sorrowing

That thy noble house doth bring,
 Here be tears of perfect moan
 Weept for thee in Helicon;
 And some flowers and some bays
 For thy hearse, to strew the ways,
 Sent thee from the banks of Came,
 Devoted to thy virtuous name; 60
 Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sitt'st in glory,
 Next her, much like to thee in story,
 That fair Syrian shepherdess,
 Who, after years of barrenness,
 The highly-favoured Joseph bore
 To him that served for her before,
 And at her next birth, much like thee,
 Through pangs fled to felicity,
 Far within the bosom bright 70
 Of blazing Majesty and Light:
 There with thee, new-welcome Saint,
 Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
 With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
 No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

L'ALLEGRO.

HENCE, loathed Melancholy,
 Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born
 In Stygian cave forlorn
 'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights unholy!
 Find out some uncouth cell,
 Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,
 And the night-raven sings:
 There, under ebon shades and low-browed rocks,
 As ragged as thy locks,
 In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell. 10
 But come, thou Goddess fair and free,
 In heaven yclept Euphrosyne, ~~×~~
 And by men heart-easing Mirth;
 Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
 With two sister Graces more,
 To ivy-crownèd Bacchus bore:
 Or whether (as some sager sing)
 The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
 Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
 As he met her once a-Maying,
 There, on beds of violets blue, 20

And fresh-blown roses washed in dew,
 Filled her with thee, a daughter fair,
 So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
 Hasten thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
 Jest, and youthful Jollity,
 Quips and Cranks and wanton Wiles,
 Nods and Becks and wreathed Smiles,
 Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
 And love to live in dimple sleek;
 Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
 And Laughter holding both his sides.
 Come, and trip it, as you go,
 On the light fantastic toe;
 And in thy right hand lead with thee
 The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
 And, if I give thee honour due,
 Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
 To live with her, and live with thee,
 In unreproved pleasures free;
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And, singing, startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tower in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
 Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
 And at my window bid good-morrow,
 Through the sweet-briar or the vine,
 Or the twisted eglantine;
 While the cock, with lively din,
 Scatters the rear of darkness thin;
 And to the stack, or the barn-door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before:
 Oft listening how the hounds and horn
 Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
 From the side of some hoar hill,
 Through the high wood echoing shrill:
 Sometime walking, not unseen,
 By hedgerow elms, on hillocks green,
 Right against the eastern gate
 Where the great Sun begins his state,
 Robed in flames and amber light,
 The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
 While the ploughman, near at hand,
 Whistles o'er the furrowed land,
 And the milkmaid singeth blithe,
 And the mower whets his scythe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.

30

40

50

60

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
 Whilst the landskip round it measures: 70
 Russet lawns, and fallows grey,
 Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
 Mountains on whose barren breast
 The labouring clouds do often rest;
 Meadows trim, with daisies pied;
 Shallow brooks, and rivers wide;
 Towers and battlements it sees
 Bosomed high in tufted trees,
 Where perhaps some beauty lies, 80
 The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
 Hard by a cottage chimney smokes
 From betwixt two aged oaks,
 Where Corydon and Thyrsis met
 Are at their savoury dinner set
 Of herbs and other country messes,
 Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
 And then in haste her bower she leaves,
 With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
 Or, if the earlier season lead,
 To the tanned haycock in the mead. 90
 Sometimes, with secure delight,
 The upland hamlets will invite,
 When the merry bells ring round,
 And the jocund rebecks sound
 To many a youth and many a maid
 Dancing in the chequered shade,
 And young and old come forth to play
 On a sunshine holiday,
 Till the livelong daylight fail:
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale, 100
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How Faery Mab the junkets eat.
 She was pinched and pulled, she said;
 And he, by Friar's lantern led,
 Tells how the drudging goblin sweat
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,
 When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath threshed the corn
 That ten day-labourers could not end;
 Then lies him down, the lubber fiend, 110
 And, stretched out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength,
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.
 Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,

By whispering winds soon lulled asleep.
 Towered cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
 In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold, 120
 With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
 Rain influence, and judge the prize
 Of wit or arms, while both contend
 To win her grace whom all commend.
 There let Hymen oft appear
 In saffron robe, with taper clear,
 And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
 With mask and antique pageantry;
 Such sights as youthful poets dream
 On summer eves by haunted stream. 130
 Then to the well-trod stage anon,
 If Jonson's learned sock be on,
 Or sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
 Warble his native wood-notes wild,
 And ever, against eating cares,
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse,
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
 In notes with many a winding bout
 Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out 140
 With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
 The melting voice through mazes running,
 Untwisting all the chains that tie
 The hidden soul of harmony;
 That Orpheus' self may heave his head
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heaped Elysian flowers, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto to have quite set free
 His half-regained Eurydice. 150
 These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

HENCE, vain deluding Joys,
 The brood of Folly without father bred!
 How little you bested,
 Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
 Dwell in some idle brain,

And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless

As the gay motes that people the sun-beams,
Or likest hovering dreams,

The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train. 10

But, hail! thou Goddess sage and holy!

Hail, divinest Melancholy!

Whose saintly visage is too bright

To hit the sense of human sight,

And therefore to our weaker view

O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;

Black, but such as in esteem

Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,

Or that starred Ethiop queen that strove

To set her beauty's praise above 20

The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended.

Yet thou art higher far descended:

Thee bright-haired Vesta long of yore

To solitary Saturn bore;

His daughter she; in Saturn's reign

Such mixture was not held a stain.

Oft in glimmering bowers and glades

He met her, and in secret shades

Of woody Ida's inmost grove,

Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove. 30

Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,

Sober, steadfast, and demure,

All in a robe of darkest grain,

Flowing with majestic train,

And sable stole of cypress lawn

Over thy decent shoulders drawn.

Come; but keep thy wonted state,

With even step, and musing gait,

And looks commercing with the skies,

Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes: 40

There, held in holy passion still,

Forget thyself to marble, till

With a sad leaden downward cast

Thou fix them on the earth as fast.

And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,

Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet,

And hears the Muses in a ring

Aye round about Jove's altar sing;

And add to these retired Leisure,

That in trim gardens takes his pleasure; 50

But, first and chiefest, with thee bring

Him that yon soars on golden wing,

Guiding the fiery-wheelèd throne,
 The Cherub Contemplation ;
 And the mute Silence hist along,
 'Less Philomel will deign a song,
 In her sweetest saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,
 While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke
 Gently o'er the accustomed oak.

60

Sweet bird, that shunn'st the noise of folly,
 Most musical, most melancholy !
 Thee, chauntress, oft the woods among
 I woo, to hear thy even-song ;
 And, missing thee, I walk unseen
 On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wandering moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 Through the heaven's wide pathless way,
 And oft, as if her head she bowed,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.

70

Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off curfew sound,
 Over some wide-watered shore,
 Swinging slow with sullen roar ;
 Or, if the air will not permit,
 Some still removèd place will fit,
 Where glowing embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom,

80

Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the bellman's drowsy charm
 To bless the doors from nightly harm.
 Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
 Be seen in some high lonely tower,
 Where I may oft outwatch the Bear,
 With thrice great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What worlds or what vast regions hold
 The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook ;
 And of those demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or underground,
 Whose power hath a true consent
 With planet or with element.

90

Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In sceptred pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,

Or the tale of Troy divine, 100
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskined stage.
But, O sad Virgin! that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower;
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek;
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold, 110
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That owned the virtuous ring and glass,
And of the wondrous horse of brass
On which the Tartar king did ride;
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear. 120
Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frownced, as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kerchieft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,
Or ushered with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the rustling leaves,
With minute-drops from off the eaves. 130
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To archèd walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe with heavèd stroke
Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallowed haunt.
There, in close covert, by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look, 140
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honeyed thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feathered Sleep.

And let some strange mysterious dream
Wave at his wings, in airy stream
Of lively portraiture displayed,
Softly on my eyelids laid; 150
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high embowèd roof,
With antique pillars massy-proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light. 160
There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voiced quire below,
In service high and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstasies,
And bring all Heaven before mine eyes.
And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell 170
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew,
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
These pleasures, Melancholy, give;
And I with thee will choose to live.

ARCADES.

Part of an Entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield by some Noble Persons of her Family; who appear on the Scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this song:

I. Song.

LOOK, Nymphs and Shepherds, look!
 What sudden blaze of majesty
 Is that which we from hence descry,
 Too divine to be mistook?

This, this is she
 To whom our vows and wishes bend:
 Here our solemn search hath end.
 Fame, that her high worth to raise
 Seemed erst so lavish and profuse,
 We may justly now accuse
 Of detraction from her praise:
 Less than half we find expressed;
 Envy bid conceal the rest.

10

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

Might she the wise Latona be,
 Or the towered Cybele,
 Mother of a hundred gods?
 Juno dares not give her odds:
 Who had thought this clime had held
 A deity so unparalleled?

20

As they come forward, THE GENIUS OF THE WOOD appears, and, turning toward them, speaks.

Gen. Stay, gentle Swains, for, though in this disguise,
 I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
 Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung

Of that renownèd flood, so often sung,
 Divine Alpheus, who, by secret sluice, 30
 Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
 And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
 Fair silver-buskined Nymphs, as great and good.
 I know this quest of yours and free intent
 Was all in honour and devotion meant
 To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
 Whom with low reverence I adore as mine,
 And with all helpful service will comply
 To further this night's glad solemnity,
 And lead ye where ye may more near behold 40
 What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;
 Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
 Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon.
 For know, by lot from Jove, I am the Power
 Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
 To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
 With ringlets quaint and wanton windings wove;
 And all my plants I save from nightly ill
 Of noisome winds and blasting vapours chill;
 And from the boughs brush off the evil dew, 50
 And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
 Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
 Or hurtful worm with cankered venom bites.
 When evening grey doth rise, I fetch my round
 Over the mount, and all this hallowed ground;
 And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
 Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tasselled horn
 Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
 Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
 With puissant words and murmurs made to bless. 60
 But else, in deep of night, when drowsiness
 Hath locked up mortal sense, then listen I
 To the celestial Sirens' harmony;
 That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
 And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
 And turn the adamantine spindle round
 On which the fate of gods and men is wound.
 Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
 To lull the daughters of Necessity,
 And keep unsteady Nature to her law, 70
 And the low world in measured motion draw
 After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
 Of human mould with gross unpurgèd ear.
 And yet such music worthiest were to blaze
 The peerless height of her immortal praise

Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
 If my inferior hand or voice could hit
 Inimitable sounds. Yet, as we go,
 Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show
 I will assay, her worth to celebrate,
 And so attend ye toward her glittering state;
 Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
 Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

80

II. *Song.*

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

90

III. *Song.*

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

100

COMUS.

“A MASQUE PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634, &c.”

(For the Title-pages of the Editions of 1637 and 1645 see Introduction at p. 420 and p. 421.)

DEDICATION OF THE ANONYMOUS EDITION OF 1637.

(Reprinted in the Edition of 1645, but omitted in that of 1673.)

“*To the Right Honourable John, Lord Brackley, son and heir-apparent to the Earl of Bridgewater, &c.*”

“My Lord,

“This Poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself and others of your noble family, and much honour from your own person in the performance, now returns again to make a final dedication of itself to you. Although not openly acknowledged by the Author, yet it is a legitimate offspring, so lovely and so much desired that the often copying of it hath tired my pen to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessity of producing it to the public view, and now to offer it up, in all rightful devotion, to those fair hopes and rare endowments of your much-promising youth, which give a full assurance to all that know you of a future excellence. Live, sweet Lord, to be the honour of your name; and receive this as your own from the hands of him who hath by many favours been long obliged to your most honoured Parents, and, as in this representation your attendant *Thyrsis*, so now in all real expression

“Your faithful and most humble Servant,

“H. LAWES.”

“*The Copy of a Letter written by Sir Henry Wotton to the Author upon the following Poem.*”

(In the Edition of 1645: omitted in that of 1673.)

“From the College, this 13 of April, 1638.

“Sir,

“It was a special favour when you lately bestowed upon me here the first taste of your acquaintance, though no longer than to make me know that I wanted more time to value it and to enjoy it rightly; and, in truth, if I could then have imagined your farther stay in these parts, which I understood afterwards by Mr. H., I would have been bold, in our vulgar phrase, to mend my draught (for you left me with an extreme thirst), and to have begged

your conversation again, jointly with your said learned friend, over a poor meal or two, that we might have banded together some good Authors of the ancient time; among which I observed you to have been familiar.

"Since your going, you have charged me with new obligations, both for a very kind letter from you dated the 6th of this month, and for a dainty piece of entertainment which came therewith. Wherein I should much commend the tragical part, if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Doric delicacy in your Songs and Odes, whereunto I must plainly confess to have seen yet nothing parallel in our language: *Ipsa mollities*. But I must not omit to tell you that I now only owe you thanks for intimating unto me (how modestly soever) the true artificer. For the work itself I had viewed some good while before with singular delight; having received it from our common friend Mr. R., in the very close of the late R.'s Poems, printed at Oxford: whereunto it was added (as I now suppose) that the accessory might help out the principal, according to the art of Stationers, and to leave the reader *con la bocca dolce*.

"Now, Sir, concerning your travels; wherein I may challenge a little more privilege of discourse with you. I suppose you will not blanch Paris in your way: therefore I have been bold to trouble you with a few lines to Mr. M. B., whom you shall easily find attending the young Lord S. as his governor; and you may surely receive from him good directions for the shaping of your farther journey into Italy where he did reside, by my choice, some time for the King, after mine own recess from Venice.

"I should think that your best line will be through the whole length of France to Marseilles, and thence by sea to Genoa; whence the passage into Tuscany is as diurnal as a Gravesend barge. I hasten, as you do, to Florence or Siena, the rather to tell you a short story, from the interest you have given me in your safety.

"At Siena I was tabled in the house of one Alberto Scipioni, an old Roman courtier in dangerous times; having been steward to the Duca di Pagliano, who with all his family were strangled, save this only man that escaped by foresight of the tempest. With him I had often much chat of those affairs, into which he took pleasure to look back from his native harbour; and, at my departure toward Rome (which had been the centre of his experience), I had won his confidence enough to beg his advice how I might carry myself there without offence of others or of mine own conscience. '*Signor Arrigo mio*,' says he, '*I pensieri stretti ed il viso sciolto* will go safely over the whole world.' Of which Delphian oracle (for so I have found it) your judgment doth need no commentary; and therefore, Sir, I will commit you, with it, to the best of all securities, God's dear love, remaining

"Your friend, as much to command as any of longer date,

"HENRY WOTTON."

Postscript.

"Sir: I have expressly sent this my footboy to prevent your departure without some acknowledgment from me of the receipt of your obliging letter; having myself through some business, I know not how, neglected the ordinary conveyance. In any part where I shall understand you fixed, I shall be glad and diligent to entertain you with home-novelties, even for some fomentation of our friendship, too soon interrupted in the cradle."

THE PERSONS.

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT, afterwards in the habit of THYRSIS.
COMUS, with his Crew.

THE LADY.

FIRST BROTHER.

SECOND BROTHER.

SABRINA, the Nymph.

The Chief Persons which presented were: —

The Lord Brackley ;

Mr. Thomas Egerton, his Brother;

The Lady Alice Egerton.

[This list of the Persons, &c., appeared in the Edition of 1645, but was omitted
in that of 1673.]



COMUS.

The first Scene discovers a wild wood.

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
 My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
 Of bright aerial spirits live insphered
 In regions mild of calm and serene air,
 Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot
 Which men call Earth, and, with low-thoughted care,
 Confined and pestered in this pinfold here,
 Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
 Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
 After this mortal change, to her true servants
 Amongst the enthroned gods on sainted seats.
 Yet some there be that by due steps aspire
 To lay their just hands on that golden key
 That opes the palace of eternity.

10

To such my errand is; and, but for such,
 I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
 With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.

But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
 Of every salt flood and each ebbing stream,
 Took in, by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove,
 Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles
 That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
 The unadornèd bosom of the deep;
 Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
 By course commits to several government,
 And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns
 And wield their little tridents. But this Isle,

20

The greatest and the best of all the main,
 He quarters to his blue-haired deities;
 And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
 A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
 Has in his charge, with tempered awe to guide
 An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
 Where his fair offspring, nursed in princely lore,
 Are coming to attend their father's state,

30

(And new-intrusted sceptre. But their way
 Lies through the perplexed paths of this drear wood,
 The nodding horror of whose shady brows
 Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
 And here their tender age might suffer peril, 40
 But that, by quick command from sovran Jove,
 I was despatched for their defence and guard!
 And listen why; for I will tell you now
 What never yet was heard in tale or song,
 From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
 Crushed the sweet poison of misused wine,
 After the Tuscan mariners transformed,
 Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
 On Circe's island fell. ((Who knows not Circe, 50
 The daughter of the Sun, whose charmèd cup
 Whoever tasted lost his upright shape,
 And downward fell into a grovelling swine?))

This Nymph, that gazed upon his clustering locks,
 With ivy berries wreathed, and his blithe youth,
 Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
 Much like his father, but his mother more,
 Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus named:
 Who, ripe and frolic of his full-grown age,
 Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,

At last betakes him to this ominous wood, 60
 And, in thick shelter of black shades imbowered,
 Excels his mother at her mighty art;
 Offering to every weary traveller
 His orient liquor in a crystal glass,
 To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they taste
 (For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst),
 Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
 The express resemblance of the gods, is changed 70
 Into some brutish form of wolf or bear,
 Or ounce or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
 All other parts remaining as they were.

And they, so perfect is their misery,
 Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
 But boast themselves more comely than before,
 And all their friends and native home forget,
 To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
 Therefore, when any favoured of high Jove
 Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
 Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star 80
 I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
 As now I do. But first I must put off)

These my sky-ropes, spun out of Iris' woof,
 And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
 That to the service of this house belongs,
 Who, with his soft pipe and smooth-dittied song,
 Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
 And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
 And in this office of his mountain watch
 Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
 Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
 Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

90

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

Comus. The star that bids the shepherd fold
 Now the top of heaven doth hold;
 And the gilded car of day
 His glowing axle doth allay
 In the steep Atlantic stream:
 And the slope sun his upward beam
 Shoots against the dusky pole,
 Pacing toward the other goal
 Of his chamber in the east.
 Meanwhile, welcome joy and feast,
 Midnight shout and revelry,
 Tipsy dance and jollity.
 Braid your locks with rosy twine,
 Dropping odours, dropping wine.
 Rigour now is gone to bed;
 And Advice with scrupulous head,
 Strict Age, and sour Severity,
 With their grave saws, in slumber lie.
 We, that are of purer fire,
 Imitate the starry quire,
 Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
 Lead in swift round the months and years.
 The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
 Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;
 And on the tawny sands and shelves
 Trip the pert fairies and the dapper elves.
 By dimpled brook and fountain-brim,
 The wood-nymphs, decked with daisies trim,
 Their merry wakes and pastimes keep:
 What hath night to do with sleep?

100

110

120

Night hath better sweets to prove ;
 Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
 Come, let us our rights begin ;
 'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
 Which these dun shades will ne'er report.
 Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
 Dark-veiled Cotytto, to whom the secret flame
 Of midnight torches burns! mysterious dame,
 That ne'er art called but when the dragon womb
 Of Stygian darkness spets her thickest gloom,
 And makes one blot of all the air!
 Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
 Wherein thou ridest with Hecat', and befriend
 Us thy vowed priests, till utmost end
 Of all thy dues be done, and none left out
 Ere the blabbing eastern scout,
 The nice Morn on the Indian steep,
 From her cabined loop-hole peep,
 And to the tell-tale Sun descry
 Our concealed solemnity.
 Come, knit hands, and beat the ground
 In a light fantastic round.)

130

140

The Measure.

Break off, break off! I feel the different pace
 Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
 Run to your shrouds within these brakes and trees ;
 Our number may affright. Some virgin sure
 (For so I can distinguish by mine art)
 Benighted in these woods! Now to my charms,
 And to my wily trains: I shall ere long
 Be well stocked with as fair a herd as grazed
 About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
 My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
 Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
 And give it false presentments, lest the place
 And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
 And put the damsel to suspicious flight ;
 Which must not be, for that's against my course.)
 I, under fair pretence of friendly ends,
 And well-placed words of glozing courtesy,
 Baited with reasons not unplausible,
 Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
 And hug him into snares. (When once her eye
 Hath met the virtue of this magic dust
 I shall appear some harmless villager,

150

160

Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
 But here she comes; I fairly step aside,
 And hearken, if I may her business hear.)

The LADY enters.

Lady. (This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
 My best guide now. Methought it was the sound 170
 Of riot and ill-managed merriment,
 Such as the jocund flute or gamesome pipe
 Stirs up among the loose unlettered hinds,
 When, for their teeming flocks and granges full,
 In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
 And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
 To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
 Of such late wassailers; yet, oh! where else 180
 Shall I inform my unacquainted feet
 In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
 My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
 With this long way, resolving here to lodge
 Under the spreading favour of these pines,
 Stepped, as they said, to the next thicket-side
 To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
 As the kind hospitable woods provide.
 They left me then when the grey-hooded Even,
 Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
 Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain. 190
 But where they are, and why they came not back,
 Is now the labour of my thoughts. 'Tis likeliest
 They had engaged their wandering steps too far;
 And envious darkness, ere they could return,
 Had stole them from me. Else, O thievish Night,
 Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
 In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars
 That Nature hung in heaven, and filled their lamps
 With everlasting oil, to give due light
 To the misled and lonely traveller? 200
 (This is the place, as well as I may guess,
 Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
 Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
 Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
 What might this be? A thousand fantasies
 Begin to throng into my memory,
 Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
 And airy tongues that syllable men's names
 On sands and shores and desert wildernesses.

(These thoughts may startle well, but not astound)
 The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
 By a strong siding champion, Conscience.
 O, welcome, pure-eyed Faith, white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering angel girt with golden wings,
 And thou unblemished form of Chastity!
 I see thee visibly, and now believe
 That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
 To keep my life and honour unassailed. . . . 220
 Was I deceived, or did a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
 I did not err: there does a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
 And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.
 I cannot hallo to my brothers, but
 Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
 I'll venture; for my new-enlivened spirits
 Prompt me, and they perhaps are not far off.)

Song.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen 230
 Within thy airy shell
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet-embroidered vale
 Where the love-lorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well:
 Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair
 That likest thy Narcissus are?
 O, if thou have
 Hid them in some flowery cave,
 Tell me but where, 240
 Sweet Queen of Parley, Daughter of the Sphere!
 So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
 And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies!

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
 Breathe such divine enchanting ravishment?
 Sure something holy lodges in that breast,
 And with these raptures moves the vocal air
 To testify his hidden residence.
 How sweetly did they float upon the wings
 Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night, 250
 At every fall smoothing the raven down
 Of darkness till it smiled! I have oft heard

My mother Circe with the Sirens three,
 Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
 Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs,
 Who, as they sung, would take the prisoned soul,
 And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
 And chid her barking waves into attention,
 And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause.
 Yet they in pleasing slumber lulled the sense, 260
 And in sweet madness robbed it of itself;
 But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
 Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
 I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
 And she shall be my queen.—Hail, foreign wonder!
 Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
 Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
 Dwell'st here with Pan or Sylvan, by blest song
 Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
 To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood. 270

Lady. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise
 That is addressed to unattending ears.
 Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
 How to regain my severed company,
 Compelled me to awake the courteous Echo
 To give me answer from her mossy couch.

Comus. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?

Lady. Dim darkness and this leavy labyrinth.

Comus. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?

Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf. 280

Comus. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?

Lady. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.

Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?

Lady. They were but twain, and purposed quick return

Comus. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.

Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!

Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present need?

Lady. No less than if I should my brothers lose.

Comus. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?

Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazored lips. 290

Comus. Two such I saw, what time the laboured ox

In his loose traces from the furrow came,
 And the swinked hedger at his supper sat.
 I saw them under a green mantling vine,
 That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
 Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
 Their port was more than human, as they stood.
 I took it for a faery vision
 Of some gay creatures of the element.

That in the colours of the rainbow live,
 And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-strook,
 And, as I passed, I worshiped. If those you seek,
 It were a journey like the path to Heaven
 To help you find them. 300

Lady. Gentle villager,
 What readiest way would bring me to that place?

Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.

Lady. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
 In such a scant allowance of star-light,
 Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
 Without the sure guess of well-practised feet. 310

Comus. I know each lane, and every alley green,
 Dingle, or bushy dell, of this wild wood,
 And every bosky bourn from side to side,
 My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
 And, if your stray attendance be yet lodged,
 Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
 Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
 From her thatched pallet rouse. If otherwise,
 I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
 But loyal cottage, where you may be safe 320
 Till further quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
 And trust thy honest-offered courtesy,
 Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds,
 With smoky rafters, than in tapestry halls,
 And courts of princes, where it first was named,
 And yet is most pretended. In a place
 Less warranted than this, or less secure,
 I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
 Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
 To my proportioned strength! Shepherd, lead on. . . . 330

The Two Brothers.

Eld. Bro. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
 That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
 Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
 And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
 In double night of darkness and of shades;
 Or, if your influence be quite dammed up
 With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
 Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
 Of some clay habitation, visit us
 With thy long levelled rule of streaming light, 340

And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. Bro.

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

350

Eld. Bro. (Peace, brother: be not over-exquisite

To cast the fashion of uncertain evils;
For, grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestall his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or, if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!

360

I do not think my sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.

370

(Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk.) And Wisdom's self
Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude,
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That, in the various bustle of resort,
Were all to-ruffled, and sometimes impaired.

380

(He that has light within his own clear breast
May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day:
But he that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

Sec. Bro.

'Tis most true

That musing Meditation most affects
 The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
 Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
 And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
 For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
 His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
 Or do his grey hairs any violence? 390

But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
 Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye
 To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
 From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
 You may as well spread out the unsunned heaps
 Of miser's treasure by an outlaw's den,
 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope 400
 Danger will wink on Opportunity,
 And let a single helpless maiden pass
 Uninjured in this wild surrounding waste.
 Of night or loneliness it recks me not;
 I fear the dread events that dog them both,
 Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
 Of our unowned sister.

Eld. Bro. I do not, brother,
 Infer as if I thought my sister's state
 Secure without all doubt or controversy;
 Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear 410
 Does arbitrate the event, my nature is
 That I incline to hope rather than fear,
 And gladly banish squint suspicion.
 My sister is not so defenceless left
 As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
 Which you remember not.)

Sec. Bro. (What hidden strength,
 Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?
Eld. Bro. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
 Which, if Heaven gave it, may be termed her own.
 'Tis chastity, my brother, chastity: 420

She that has that is clad in complete steel,
 And, like a quivered nymph with arrows keen,
 May trace huge forests, and unharboured heaths,
 Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
 Where, through the sacred rays of chastity,
 No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
 Will dare to soil her virgin purity.
 Yea, there where very desolation dwells,
 By grots and caverns shagged with horrid shades,
 She may pass on with unblenched majesty, 430

Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
 Some say no evil thing that walks by night,
 In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
 Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost,
 That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
 No goblin or swart faery of the mine,
 Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
 Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
 Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
 To testify the arms of chastity? 440
 Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
 Fair silver-shafted queen for ever chaste,
 Wherewith she tamed the brinded lioness
 And spotted mountain-pard, but set at nought
 The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men
 Feared her stern frown, and she was queen o' the woods.
 What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield
 That wise Minerva wore, unconquered virgin,
 Wherewith she freezed her foes to congealed stone,
 But rigid looks of chaste austerity, 450
 And noble grace that dashed brute violence
 With sudden adoration and blank awe?
 So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity
 That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
 A thousand liveried angels lackey her,
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt,
 And in clear dream and solemn vision
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
 Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
 Begin to cast a beam on the outward shape, 460
 The unpolluted temple of the mind,
 And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
 Till all be made immortal. But, when lust,
 By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
 But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
 Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
 The soul grows clotted by contagion,
 Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
 The divine property of her first being.
 Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp 470
 Oft seen in charnel-vaults and sepulchres,
 Lingering and sitting by a new-made grave,
 As loth to leave the body that it loved,
 And linked itself by carnal sensuality
 To a degenerate and degraded state.

Sec. Bro. (How charming is divine Philosophy!
 Not harsh and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,

But musical as is Apollo's lute,
And a perpetual feast of nectared sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.)

Eld. Bro.

List! list! I hear

480

Some far-off hallo break the silent air.

Sec. Bro. Methought so too; what should it be?

Eld. Bro.

For certain,

Either some one, like us, night-founded here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.

Sec. Bro. Heaven keep my sister! Again, again, and near!
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

Eld. Bro.

I'll hallo.

If he be friendly, he comes well: if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us!)

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT, habited like a shepherd.

That hallo I should know. What are you? speak.

490

Come not too near; you fall on iron stakes else.)

Spir. What voice is that? my young lord? speak again.

Sec. Bro. O brother, 'tis my father's Shepherd, sure.

Eld. Bro. Thyrsis! whose artful strains have oft delayed

The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
And sweetened every musk-rose of the dale.

How camest thou here, good swain? Hath any ram

Slipped from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,

Or straggl'g wether the pent flock forsook?

How couldst thou find this dark sequestered nook?

500

Spir. (O my loved master's heir, and his next joy,)

I came not here on such a trivial toy

As a strayed ewe, or to pursue the stealth

Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth

That doth enrich these downs is worth a thought

To this my errand, and the care it brought.

But, oh! (my virgin Lady, where is she?)

How chance she is not in your company?)

Eld. Bro. (To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame

Or our neglect, we lost her as we came.

510

Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

Eld. Bro. What fears, good Thyrsis? Prithee briefly shew.

Spir. (I'll tell ye. 'Tis not vain or fabulous)

(Though so esteemed by shallow ignorance)

What the sage poets, taught by the heavenly Muse,

Storied of old in high immortal verse

Of dire Chimeras and enchanted isles,

And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.

Within the navel of this hideous wood, 520
Immured in cypress shades, a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skilled in all his mother's witcheries,
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mixed, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Charactered in the face. This have I learnt 530
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts
That brow this bottom glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecate
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
Yet have they many baits and guileful spells
To inveigle and invite the unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks 540
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, (and began,)
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy,
Till fancy had her fill. But ere a close
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And filled the air with barbarous dissonance; 550
At which I ceased, and listened them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy-flighted steeds
That draw the litter of close-curtained Sleep.
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a stream of rich distilled perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wished she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displaced. (I was all ear, 560
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death. But, oh! ere long
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honoured Lady, your dear sister.

Amazed I stood, harrowed with grief and fear;
 And 'O poor hapless nightingale,' thought I,
 'How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!'
 Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
 Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
 Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place
 Where that damned wizard, hid in sly disguise
 (For so by certain signs I knew), had met
 Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
 The aidless innocent lady, his wished prey;
 Who gently asked if he had seen such two,
 Supposing him some neighbour villager.
 Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guessed
 Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
 Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
 But further know I not.)

570

Sec. Bro. (O night and shades,
 How are ye joined with hell in triple knot
 Against the unarmed weakness of one virgin,
 Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
 You gave me, brother?)

580

Eld. Bro. (Yes, and keep it still;
 Lean on it safely; not a period
 Shall be unsaid for me. Against the threats
 Of malice or of sorcery, or that power
 Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:
 (Virtue may be assailed, but never hurt.)
 Surprised by unjust force, but not enthralled;
 Yea, even that which Mischief meant most harm
 Shall in the happy trial prove most glory.)

590

But evil on itself shall back recoil,
 And mix no more with goodness, when at last,
 Gathered like scum, and settled to itself,
 It shall be in eternal restless change
 Self-fed and self-consumed. If this fail,
 The pillared firmament is rottenness,
 And earth's base built on stubble. (But come, let's on!
 Against the opposing will and arm of Heaven
 May never this just sword be lifted up;
 But, for that damned magician, let him be girt
 With all the griesly legions that troop
 Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
 Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
 'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
 And force him to return his purchase back,
 Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
 Cursed as his life.)

600

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

Eld. Bro. Why, prithee, Shepherd,
 How durst thou then thyself approach so near
 As to make this relation?)

Spir. Care and utmost shifts
 How to secure the Lady from surprisal
 Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
 Of small regard to see to, yet well skilled
 In every virtuous plant and healing herb
 That spreads her verdant leaf to the morning ray.

He loved me well, and oft would beg me sing;
 Which when I did, he on the tender grass
 Would sit, and hearken even to ecstasy,
 And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
 And show me simples of a thousand names,
 Telling their strange and vigorous faculties.
 Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
 But of divine effect, he culled me out.

The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:
 Unknown, and like esteemed, and the dull swain
 Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon;
 And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave.

He called it Hæmony, and gave it me,
 And bade me keep it as of sovran use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
 Or ghastly Furies' apparition.

I pursed it up, but little reckoning made,
 Till now that this extremity compelled.
 But now I find it true; for by this means
 I knew the foul enchanter, though disguised,
 Entered the very lime-twigs of his spells,
 And yet came off. If you have this about you
 (As I will give you when we go) you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
 And brandished blade rush on him: break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquor on the ground;
 But seize his wand. Though he and his curst crew

Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or, like the sons of Vulcan, vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

Eld. Bro. Thyrsis, lead on apace; I'll follow thee;
And some good angel bear a shield before us!

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS appears with his rabble, and THE LADY set in an enchanted chair: to whom he offers his glass; which she puts by, and goes about to rise.

Comus. Nay, Lady, sit. If I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chained up in alabaster, 660
And you a statue, or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo!

Lady. Fool, do not boast.
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled while Heaven sees good.

Comus. Why are you vexed, Lady? why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far. See, here be all the pleasures
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns 670
Brisk as the April buds in primrose season.

And first behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant syrups mixed.
Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst!
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent 680
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?

But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you received on other terms,
Scorning the unexempt condition
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tired all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted. But, fair virgin,
This will restore all soon. 690

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
That thou hast banished from thy tongue with lies.
Was this the cottage and the safe abode

Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
 These oughly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
 Hence with thy brewed enchantments, foul deceiver!
 Hast thou betrayed my credulous innocence
 With vizored falsehood and base forgery?
 And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
 With liquorish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
 Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
 I would not taste thy treasonous offer. None
 But such as are good men can give good things;
 And that which is not good is not delicious
 To a well-governed and wise appetite.

700

Comus. (O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
 To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
 And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
 Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence!

710

Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
 With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
 Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
 Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
 But all to please and sate the curious taste?
 And set to work millions of spinning worms,
 That in their green shops weave the smooth-haired silk,
 To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
 Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
 She hatched the all-worshipped ore and precious gems,
 To store her children with. (If all the world
 Should, in a pet of temperance, feed on pulse,
 Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
 The All-giver would be unthanked, would be unpraised,
 Not half his riches known, and yet despised;
 And we should serve him as a grudging master,
 As a penurious niggard of his wealth,
 And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
 Who would be quite surcharged with her own weight,
 And strangled with her waste fertility:

720

The earth cumbered, and the winged air darked with plumes,
 The herds would over-multitude their lords;
 The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
 Would so emblaze the forehead of the deep,
 And so bestud with stars, that they below
 Would grow inured to light, and come at last
 To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
 List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozened
 With that same vaunted name, Virginity.

731

Beauty is Nature's coin; must not be hoarded,
 But must be current; and the good thereof

740

Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
 Unsavoury in the enjoyment of itself,
 If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
 It withers on the stalk with languished head.
 Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
 In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
 Where most may wonder at the workmanship.
 It is for homely features to keep home;
 They had their name thence: coarse complexions
 And cheeks of sorry grain will serve to ply
 The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
 What need a vermeil-tinctured lip for that,
 Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
 There was another meaning in these gifts;
 Think what, and be advised; you are but young yet.

750

Lady. (I had not thought to have unlocked my lips
 In this unhallowed air, but that this juggler
 Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
 Obtruding false rules pranked in reason's garb.)

760

I hate when vice can bolt her arguments
 And virtue has no tongue to check her pride.
 Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
 As if she would her children should be riotous
 With her abundance. She, good cateress,
 Means her provision only to the good,
 That live according to her sober laws,
 And holy dictate of spare Temperance.

If every just man that now pines with want
 Had but a moderate and beseeing share
 Of that which lewdly-pampered Luxury
 Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
 Nature's full blessings would be well-dispensed
 In unsuperfluous even proportion,

770

And she no whit encumbered with her store;
 And then the Giver would be better thanked,
 His praise due paid: for swinish gluttony
 Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
 But with besotted base ingratitude
 Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?

780

Or have I said enow? To him that dares
 Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
 Against the sun-clad power of chastity
 Fain would I something say;—yet to what end?
 Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
 The sublime notion and high mystery
 That must be uttered to unfold the sage
 And serious doctrine of Virginity;

And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.

Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinced.

790

Yet, should I try, the uncontrollèd worth
Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence
That dumb things would be moved to sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
Till all thy magic structures, reared so high,
Were shattered into heaps o'er thy false head.)

Comus. (She fables not. I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And, though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder and the chains of Erebus
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly. — Come, no more!
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation.
I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood.

800

But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.) . .

810

The BROTHERS rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground: his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The ATTENDANT SPIRIT comes in.

Spir. What! have you let the false enchanter scape?
O ye mistook; ye should have snatched his wand,
And bound him fast. Without his rod reversed,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fixed and motionless.

Yet stay: be not disturbed; now I bethink me,
Some other means I have which may be used,
Which once of Melibœus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er piped on plains.

820

There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream:
Sabrina is her name; a virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Lochrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit

Of her enragèd stepdame, Guendolen, 830
 Commended her fair innocence to the flood
 That stayed her flight with his cross-flowing course.
 The water-nymphs, that in the bottom played,
 Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
 Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
 Who, piteous of her woes, reared her lank head,
 And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
 In nectared lavers strewed with asphodil,
 And through the porch and inlet of each sense
 Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she revived, 840
 And underwent a quick immortal change,
 Made Goddess of the river. Still she retains
 Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
 Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
 Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
 That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,
 Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals;
 For which the shepherds, at their festivals,
 Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
 And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream 850
 Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
 And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
 The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
 If she be right invoked in warbled song;
 For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
 To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
 In hard-besetting need. This will I try,
 And add the power of some adjuring verse.)

Song.

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting 860
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
 Listen for dear honour's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake,
 Listen and save!

Listen, and appear to us,
 In name of great Oceanus,
 By the earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
 And Tethys' grave majestic pace; 870
 By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
 And the Carpathian wizard's hook;)

By scaly Triton's winding shell,
 And old soothsaying Glaucus' spell;
 By Leucothea's lovely hands,
 And her son that rules the strands;
 By Thetis' tinsel-slippered feet,
 And the songs of Sirens sweet;
 By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
 And fair Ligea's golden comb,
 Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks
 Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
 By all the nymphs that nightly dance
 Upon thy streams with wily glance;
 Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head
 From thy coral-paven bed,
 And bridle in thy headlong wave,
 Till thou our summons answered have.

88c

Listen and save!

SABRINA rises, attended by Water-nymphs, and sings.

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

89c

90c

Spir. Goddess dear,
 We implore thy powerful hand
 To undo the charmed band
 Of true virgin here distressed
 Through the force and through the wile
 Of unblessed enchanter vile.

Sabr. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
 To help ensnared chastity.
 Brightest Lady, look on me.
 Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
 Drops that from my fountain pure
 I have kept of precious cure;
 Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
 Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
 Next this marble venom'd seat,

91c

Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
 I touch with chaste palms moist and cold.
 Now the spell hath lost his hold;
 And I must haste ere morning hour
 To wait in Amphitrite's bower.)

SABRINA descends, and THE LADY rises out of her seat.

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

Come, Lady; while Heaven lends us grace,
 Let us fly this cursèd place,
 Lest the sorcerer us entice
 With some other new device.)
 Not a waste or needless sound
 Till we come to holier ground.
 I shall be your faithful guide
 Through this gloomy covert wide;
 And not many furlongs thence
 Is your Father's residence,
 Where this night are met in state
 Many a friend to gratulate
 His wished presence, and beside
 All the swains that there abide
 With jigs and rural dance resort.
 We shall catch them at their sport,
 And our sudden coming there
 Will double all their mirth and cheer.
 Come, let us haste; the stars grow high,
 But Night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.)

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow Town, and the President's Castle: then come in Country Dancers; after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, with the two BROTHERS and THE LADY.

Song.

Spir. (Back, shepherds, back! Enough your play
Till next sun-shine holiday.
Here be, without duck or nod, 960
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise
With the mincing Dryades
On the lawns and on the leas.)

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

(Noble Lord and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight.
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own.
Heaven hath timely tried their youth, 970
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual folly and intemperance.)

The dances ended, the SPIRIT epiloguizes.

Spir. (To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky.
There I suck the liquid air, 980
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree.)
Along the crispèd shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;
The Graces and the rosy-bosomed Hours
Thither all their bounties bring.
There eternal Summer dwells,
And west winds with musky wing
About the cedarn alleys fling 990
Nard and cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purpled scarf can shew,
And drenches with Elysian dew

(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
 Beds of hyacinth and roses,
 Where young Adonis oft reposes,
 Waxing well of his deep wound, 1000
 In slumbers soft, and on the ground
 Sadly sits the Assyrian queen.
 But far above, in spangled sheen,
 Celestial Cupid, her famed son, advanced
 Holds his dear Psyche, sweet entranced
 After her wandering labours long,
 Till free consent the gods among
 Make her his eternal bride,
 And from her fair unspotted side
 Two blissful twins are to be born, 1010
 Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.

But now my task is smoothly done:
 I can fly, or I can run
 Quickly to the green earth's end,
 Where the bowed welkin slow doth bend,
 And from thence can soar as soon
 To the corners of the moon.
 Mortals, that would follow me,
 Love Virtue; she alone is free.
 She can teach ye how to climb 1020
 Higher than the sphyry chime;
 Or, if Virtue feeble were,
 Heaven itself would stoop to her.

LYCIDAS.

In this Monody the Author bewails a learned Friend, unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish Seas, 1637; and, by occasion, foretells the ruin of our corrupted Clergy, then in their height.

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

10

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

20

For we were nursed upon the self-same hill,
 Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill;
 Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
 Under the opening eyelids of the Morn, — *para.*
 We drove a-field, and both together heard
 What time the grey-fly winds her sultry horn, *met.*
 Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
 Oft till the star that rose at evening bright
 Toward heaven's descent had sloped his westering wheel. *v.*
 Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute;
 Tempered to the oaten flute
 Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel
 From the glad sound would not be absent long;

30

And old Damœtas loved to hear our song.

But, oh! the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone and never must return!

Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods and desert caves,
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes, mourn.

40

The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen

Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.

As killing as the canker to the rose,

Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,

Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,

When first the white-thorn blows;

Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Closed o'er the head of your loved Lycidas?

50

For neither were ye playing on the steep

Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,

Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,

Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream.

Ay me! I fondly dream

"Had ye been there," . . . for what could that have done?

What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,

The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,

Whom universal nature did lament,

60

When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,

His gory visage down the stream was sent,

Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with uncessant care

To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,

And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?

Were it not better done, as others use,

To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,

Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?

Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise

70

(That last infirmity of noble mind)

To scorn delights and live laborious days;

But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,

And think to burst out into sudden blaze,

Comes the blind Fury with the abhorred shears,

And slits the thin-spun life. "But not the praise,"

Phœbus replied, and touched my trembling ears;

"Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,

Nor in the glistening foil

Set off to the world, nor in broad rumour lies,

80

But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes

And perfect witness of all-judging Jove;

As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in heaven expect thy meed."

O fountain *Arethuse*, and thou honoured flood,
Smooth-sliding *Mincius*, crowned with vocal reeds,
That strain I heard was of a higher mood.

But now my oar proceeds,
And listens to the Herald of the Sea,
That came in Neptune's plea.

He asked the waves, and asked the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doomed this gentle swain?
And questioned every gust of rugged wings
That blows from off each beaked promontory.

They knew not of his story;
And sage *Hippotades* their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon strayed:
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek *Panope* with all her sisters played.

It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the eclipse, and rigged with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.

Next, *Camus*, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,

Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge
Like to that sanguine flower inscribed with woe.

"Ah! who hath reft," quoth he, "my dearest pledge?"
Last came, and last did go,

The Pilot of the Galilean Lake; — *It puts most
authority on earth*

Two massy keys he bore of metals twain
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain).

He shook his *mitred* locks, and stern bespake: —

"How well could I have spared for thee, young swain,
Enow of such as, for their bellies' sake,

Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold!

Of other care they little reckoning make
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest.

Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to hold
A sheep-hook, or have learnt aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs!

What recks it them? What need they? They are sped;
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;

The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread;

Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said.

Daily devours apace, and nothing said.

But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more." 130

Return, Alpheus; the dread voice is past
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart star sparely looks,
Throw hither all your quaint enamelled eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honeyed showers, 140
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,
The glowing violet,

The musk-rose, and the well-attired woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears;
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears. 150
To strew the laureate hearse where Lycid lies.

For so, to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise.
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurled;
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps under the whelming tide
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus old, 160

Where the great Vision of the guarded mount
Looks toward Namancos and Bayona's hold.
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas, your sorrow, is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore 170
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:

So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
Through the dear might of Him that walked the waves,
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,

In the blest kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the Saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and singing in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more;
Henceforth thou art the Genius of the shore,
In thy large recompense, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.

180

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

190

SONNETS.

I.

[TO THE NIGHTINGALE.]

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

II.

[ON HIS HAVING ARRIVED AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-THREE.]

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
 Stolen on his wing my three-and-twentieth year
 My hasting days fly on with full career,
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth
 That I to manhood am arrived so near;
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
 That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
 Yet, be it less or more, or soon or slow,
 It shall be still in strictest measure even
 To that same lot, however mean or high,
 Toward which Time leads me, and the will of Heaven.
 All is, if I have grace to use it so,
 As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

III.

DONNA leggiadra, il cui bel nome onora
 L'erbosa val di Reno e il nobil varco,
 Bene è colui d' ogni valore scarco
 Qual tuo spirito gentil non innamora,
 Che dolcemente mostrasi di fuora,
 De' sui atti soavi giammai parco,
 E i don', che son d' amor saette ed arco,
 Là onde l' alta tua virtù s' infiora.
 Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti,
 Che mover possa duro alpestre legno,
 Guardi ciascun agli occhi ed agli orecchi
 L' entrata chi di te si truova indegno;
 Grazia sola di sù gli vaglia, innanti
 Che 'l disio amoroso al cuor s' invecchi.

IV.

QUAL in colle aspro, all' imbrunir di sera,
 L'avezza giovinetta pastorella
 Va bagnando l' erbetta strana e bella
 Che mal si spande a disusata spera
 Fuor di sua natia alma primavera,
 Così Amor meco insù la lingua snella
 Desta il fior novo di strania favella,
 Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera,
 Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso,
 E 'l bel Tamigi cangio col bell' Arno.
 Amor lo volse, ed io all' altrui peso
 Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno.
 Deh! foss' il mio cuor lento e 'l duro seno
 A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

CANZONE.

RIDONSI donne e giovani amorosi
 M' accostandosi attorno, e 'Perchè scrivi,
 Perchè tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
 Verseggiando d' amor, e come t' osi?
 Dinne, se la tua speme sia mai vana,
 E de' pensieri lo miglior t' arrivi!
 Così mi van burlando: 'altri rivi,
 Altri lidi t' aspettan, ed altre onde,
 Nelle cui verdi sponde
 Spuntati ad or ad or alla tua chioma

L' immortal guiderdon d' eterne frondi.
Perchè alle spalle tue soverchia soma?'

Canzon, dirotti, e tu per me rispondi:
'Dice mia Donna, e 'l suo dir è il mio cuore,
"Questa è lingua di cui si vanta Amore."'

V.

DIODATI (e te 'l dirò con meraviglia),
Quel ritroso io, ch' amor spreggiar solea
È de' suoi lacci spesso mi ridea,
Già caddi, ov' uom dabben talor s' impiglia.
Nè trecchie d' oro nè guancia vermiglia
M' abbaglian sì, ma sotto nova idea
Pellegrina bellezza che 'l cuor bea,
Portamenti alti onesti, e nelle ciglia
Quel sereno fulgor d' amabil nero,
Parole adorne di lingua più d'una,
E 'l cantar che di mezzo l' emispero
Traviar ben può la faticosa Luna;
E degli occhi suoi avventa sì gran fuoco
Che l' incerar gli orecchi mi fia poco.

VI.

PER certo i bei vostr' occhi, Donna mia,
Esser non può che non sian lo mio sole;
Sì mi percuoton forte, come ei suole
Per l' arene di Libia chi s' invia,
Mentre un caldo vapor (nè sentì pria)
Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,
Che forse amanti nelle lor parole
Chiaman sospir; io non so che si sia.
Parte rinchiusa e turbida si cela
Scossomi il petto, e poi n' uscendo poco
Quivi d' attorno o s' agghiaccia o s' ingiela;
Ma quanto agli occhi giunge a trovar loco
Tutte le notti a me suol far piovose,
Finchè mia alba rivien colma di rose.

VII.

GIOVANE, piano, e semplicetto amante,
Poichè fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,
Madonna, a voi del mio cuor l' umil dono
Farò divoto. Io certo a prove tante

L' ebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
 Di pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono.
 Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
 S' arma di se, e d' intero diamante,
 Tanto del forse e d' invidia sicuro,
 Di timori, e speranze al popol use,
 Quanto d' ingegno e d' alto valor vago,
 E di cetra sonora, e delle Muse.
 Sol troverete in tal parte men duro
 Ove Amor mise l' insanabil ago.

VIII.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY.

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

IX.

[TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.]

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

X.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY.

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

XI.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON MY WRITING
 CERTAIN TREATISES.

A BOOK was writ of late called *Tetrachordon*,
 And woven close, both matter, form, and style;
 The subject new: it walked the town a while,
 Numbering good intellects; now seldom pored on.
 Cries the stall-reader, "Bless us! what a word on
 A title-page is this!"; and some in file
 Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
 End Green. Why, is it harder, sirs, than *Gordon*,
Colkitto, or *Macdonnel*, or *Galasp*?
 Those rugged names to our like mouths grow sleek
 That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp.
 Thy age, like ours, O soul of Sir John Cheek,
 Hated not learning worse than toad or asp.
 When thou taught'st Cambridge and King Edward Greek

XII.

ON THE SAME.

I DID but prompt the age to quit their clogs
 By the known rules of ancient liberty,
 When straight a barbarous noise environs me
 Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes, and dogs;
 As when those hinds that were transformed to frogs

Railed at Latona's twin-born progeny,
 Which after held the Sun and Moon in fee.
 But this is got by casting pearl to hogs,
 That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
 And still revolt when Truth would set them free
 Licence they mean when they cry Liberty;
 For who loves that must first be wise and good:
 But from that mark how far they rove we see,
 For all this waste of wealth and loss of blood.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE UNDER THE LONG
 PARLIAMENT.

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

XIII.

TO MR. H. LAWES ON HIS AIRS.

HARRY, whose tuneful and well-measured song
 First taught our English music how to span
 Words with just note and accent, not to scan
 With Midas' ears, committing short and long,
 Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
 With praise enough for Envy to look wan;
 To after age thou shalt be writ the man
 That with smooth air couldst humour best our tongue.

Thou honour'st Verse, and Verse must send her wing
 To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,
 That tunest their happiest lines in hymn or story.
 Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
 Than his Casella, whom he wooed to sing,
 Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

XIV.

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHERINE THOMSON, MY
 CHRISTIAN FRIEND, DECEASED DEC. 16, 1646.

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

XV.

ON THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX, AT THE SIEGE OF COLCHESTER.

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

XVI.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL, MAY 1652,
ON THE PROPOSALS OF CERTAIN MINISTERS AT THE COMMITTEE FOR PROP-
AGATION OF THE GOSPEL.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud
Not of war only, but detractions rude,
Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
To peace and truth thy glorious way hast ploughed,
And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud
Hast reared God's trophies, and his work pursued,
While Darwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,
And Dunbar field, resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureate wreath: yet much remains
To conquer still; Peace hath her victories
No less renowned than War: new foes arise,
Threatening to bind our souls with secular chains.
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose Gospei is their maw,

XVII.

TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.

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

XVIII.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT.

AVENGE, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,

When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
 Forget not: in thy book record their groans
 Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
 Slain by the bloody Piemontese, that rolled
 Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
 The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
 To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
 O'er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
 The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
 A hundredfold, who, having learnt thy way,
 Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

XIX.

[ON HIS BLINDNESS.]

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

XX.

[TO MR. LAWRENCE.]

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
 Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
 Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
 Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
 From the hard season gaining? Time will run
 On smoother, till Favonius reinspire
 The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
 The lily and rose, that neither sowed nor spun.
 What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
 Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
 To hear the lute well touched, or artful voice

Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
 He who of those delights can judge, and spare
 To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

XXI.

[TO CYRIACK SKINNER.]

CYRIACK, whose grandsire on the royal bench
 Of British Themis, with no mean applause,
 Pronounced, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
 Which others at their bar so often wrench,
 To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
 In mirth that after no repenting draws;
 Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
 And what the Swede intend, and what the French.
 To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
 Toward solid good what leads the nearest way;
 For other things mild Heaven a time ordains,
 And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
 That with superfluous burden loads the day,
 And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

XXII.

[TO THE SAME.]

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

XXIII.

[ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.]

METHOUGHT I saw my late espoused saint
 Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,

Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from Death by force, though pale and faint.
Mine, as whom washed from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the Old Law did save,
And such as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind.
Her face was veiled; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shined
So clear as in no face with more delight.
But, oh! as to embrace me she inclined,
I waked, she fled, and day brought back my night.

[TRANSLATIONS.]

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, LIB. I.,

Quis multâ gracilis te puer in rosâ.

Rendered almost word for word, without rhyme, according to the Latin measure, as near as the language will permit.

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

[As Milton inserts the original with his translation, as if to challenge comparison, it is right that we should do so too.]

AD PYRRHAM. ODE V.

Horatius ex Pyrrhæ illecebris tanquam e naufragio enataverat, cujus amore irretitos affirmat esse miseros.

QUIS multâ gracilis te puer in rosâ
 Perfusus liquidis urget odoribus
 Grato, Pyrrha, sub antro?

Cui flavam religas comam
 Simplex munditie? Heu, quoties fidem
 Mutatosque Deos flebit, et aspera
 Nigris æquora ventis
 Emirabitur insolens,
 Qui nunc te fruitur credulus aureâ;
 Qui semper vacuam, semper amabilem,
 Sperat, nescius auræ
 Fallacis! Miseri quibus
 Intentata nites. Me tabulâ sacer
 Motivâ paries indicat uvida
 Suspendisse potenti
 Vestimenta maris Deo.

April, 1648. — J. M.

Nine of the Psalms done into Metre; wherein all, but what is in a different character, are the very words of the Text, translated from the original.

PSALM LXXX.

- 1 THOU Shepherd that dost Israel *keep*,
 Give ear *in time of need*,
 Who leadest like a flock of sheep
Thy loved Joseph's seed,
 That sitt'st between the Cherubs *bright*,
Between their wings outspread;
 Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light*,
And on our foes thy dread.
- 2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
 And in Manasseh's sight,
 Awake¹ thy strength, come, and *be seen*
To save us by thy might.
- 3 Turn us again; *thy grace divine*
To us, O God, vouchsafe;
 Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
 And then we shall be safe.
- 4 Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
 How long wilt thou declare
 Thy² smoking wrath, *and angry brow*,
 Against thy people's prayer?
- 5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;
 Their bread with tears they eat;
 And mak'st them largely³ drink the tears
- 10
¹ *Gnorera.*
² *Gnashanta.*
 20
³ *Shalish.*

- Wherewith their cheeks are wet.*
- 6 A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey*
 To every neighbour foe;
 Among themselves they⁴ laugh, they⁴ play,
 And⁴ flouts at us they throw. ⁴ *Jilgnagu.*
- 7 Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
 O God of Hosts, *vouchsafe;* 30
 Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
 And then we shall be safe.
- 8 A Vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
Thy free love made it thine,
 And drov'st out nations *proud and haunt,*
 To plant this *lovely* Vine.
- 9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
 And root it deep and fast,
 That it *began to grow apace,*
And filled the land at last. 40
- 10 With her *green* shade that covered *all*
 The hills were *overspread;*
 Her boughs as *high as* cedars tall
Advanced their lofty head.
- 11 Her branches *on the western side*
 Down to the sea she sent,
 And *upward* to that river *wide*
 Her other branches *went.*
- 12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
 And broken down her fence, 50
 That all may pluck her, as they go,
With rudest violence?
- 13 The *tusked* boar out of the wood
 Upturns it by the roots;
 Wild beasts there browse, and make their food
Her grapes and tender shoots.
- 14 Return now, God of Hosts; look down
 From Heaven, thy seat divine;
 Behold us, *but without a frown,*
 And visit this *thy* Vine. 60
- 15 Visit this Vine, which thy right hand
 Hath set, and planted *long,*
 And the young branch, that for thyself
 Thou hast made firm and strong.
- 16 But now it is consumed with fire,
 And cut *with axes* down;
 They perish at thy dreadful ire,
 At thy rebuke and frown.
- 17 Upon the Man of thy right hand
 Let thy *good* hand be *laid;* 70

- Upon the Son of Man, whom Thou
 Strong for thyself hast made.
 18 So shall we not go back from thee
To ways of sin and shame:
 Quicken us thou; then *gladly* we
 Shall call upon thy Name.
 19 Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
 Lord God of Hosts, *vouchsafe:*
 Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
 And then we shall be safe.

80

PSALM LXXXI.

- 1 To God our strength sing loud *and clear;*
 Sing loud to God *our King;*
 To Jacob's God, *that all may hear,*
 Loud acclamations ring.
 2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song;
 The timbrel hither bring;
 The *cheerful* psaltery bring along,
 And harp *with* pleasant *string.*
 3 Blow, *as is wont,* in the new moon,
 With trumpets' *lofty sound,*
 The appointed time, the day whereon
 Our solemn feast *comes round.*
 4 This was a statute *given of old*
 For Israel *to observe,*
 A law of Jacob's God *to hold,*
From whence they might not swerve.
 5 This he a testimony ordained
 In Joseph, *not to change,*
 When as he passed through Egypt-land;
 The tongue I heard was strange.
 6 From burden, *and from slavish toil,*
 I set his shoulder free;
 His hands from pots, *and miry soil,*
 Delivered were *by me.*
 7 When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call,
 And I to free thee *did not fail,*
And led thee out of thrall.
 I answered thee in ¹thunder deep,
 With clouds encompassed round:
 I tried thee at the water *steep*
 Of Meriba *renowned.*
 8 Hear, O my people, *hearken well:*
 I testify to thee,

10

20

¹ Be Sether
 ragnam.

31

- Thou ancient stock of Israel,*
 If thou wilt list to me:
 9 Throughout the land of thy abode
 No alien God shall be,
 Nor shalt thou to a foreign god
 In honour bend thy knee. 40
- 10 I am the Lord thy God, which brought
 Thee out of Egypt-land;
 Ask large enough, and I, *besought,*
 Will grant thy full demand.
- 11 And yet my people would not *hear,*
 Nor hearken to my voice;
 And Israel, *whom I loved so dear,*
 Misliked me for his choice.
- 12 Then did I leave them to their will,
 And to their wandering mind; 50
 Their own conceits they followed still,
 Their own devices blind.
- 13 Oh that my people would *be wise,*
 To serve me *all their days!*
 And oh that Israel would *advise*
 To walk my *righteous ways!*
- 14 Then would I soon bring down their foes,
 That now so *proudly rise,*
 And turn my hand against *all those*
 That are their enemies. 60
- 15 Who hate the Lord should *then be fain*
 To bow to him and bend;
 But *they, his people, should remain;*
 Their time should have no end.
- 16 And he would feed them *from the shock*
 With flour of finest wheat,
 And satisfy them from the rock
 With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

- ¹ *Bagna-* 1 GOD in the ¹great¹ assembly stands
dath-el. *Of kings and lordly states;*
- ² *Bekerev.* ² Among the gods² on both his hands
 He judges and debates.
- ³ *Tishphetu* 2 How long will ye³ pervert the right
gnavel. With³ judgment false and wrong,
 Favouring the wicked *by your might,*
 Who thence grow bold and strong?

- 3 ⁴ Regard the ⁴ weak and fatherless ;
⁴ Despatch the ⁴ poor man's cause ;
 And ⁵ raise the man in deep distress
 By ⁵ just and equal laws. ⁴ *Shiph tudal.*
- 4 Defend the poor and desolate,
 And rescue from the hands
 Of wicked men the low estate
 Of him *that help demands.* 11
- 5 They know not, nor will understand ;
 In darkness they walk on ;
 The earth's foundations all are ⁶ moved,
 And ⁶ out of order gone. ⁶ *Jimmotu.*
- 6 I said that ye were gods, yea all
 The sons of God Most High ;
- 7 But ye shall die like men, and fall
 As other princes *die.* 20
- 8 Rise, God ; ⁷ judge thou the earth in might ;
 This *wicked earth* ⁷ redress ;
 For thou art he who shalt by right
 The nations all possess. ⁷ *Shiph ta.*

PSALM LXXXIII.

- 1 BE not thou silent *now at length* ;
 O God, hold not thy peace :
 Sit thou not still, O God *of strength* ;
We cry and do not cease.
- 2 For lo ! thy *furious* foes *now* ¹ swell,
 And ¹ storm outrageously ;
 And they that hate thee, *prond and fell*,
 Exalt their heads full high. ¹ *Jehemajun.*
- 3 Against thy people they ² contrive
³ Their plots and counsels deep ;
⁴ Them to ensnare they chiefly strive
⁵ Whom thou dost hide and keep. ² *Jagnari-*
mu.
- 4 "Come, let us cut them off," say they,
 "Till they no nation be ;
 That Israel's name for ever may
 Be lost in memory." ³ *Sod.*
- 5 For they consult ⁶ with all their might,
 And all as one in mind
 Themselves against thee they unite,
 And in firm union bind. ⁴ *Jithjag-*
natsu gual.
- 6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
 Of *scornful* Ishmael, ⁵ *Tsephu-*
neca.
- 20

- Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
That in the desert dwell,
- 7 Gebal and Ammon *there conspire,*
And hateful Amalec,
 The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
Whose bounds the sea doth check.
- 8 With them *great* Ashur also bands,
And doth confirm the knot;
All these have lent their armed hands 30
 To aid the sons of Lot.
- 9 Do to them as to Midian *bold,*
That wasted all the coast;
 To Sisera, and as *is told*
Thou didst to Jabin's host,
When at the brook of Kishon old
They were repulsed and slain,
- 10 At Endor quite cut off, and rolled
 As dung upon the plain. 40
- 11 As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
 So let their princes speed;
 As Zeba and Zalmunna *bled,*
 So let their princes *bleed.*
- 12 *For they amidst their pride* have said,
 "By right now shall we seize
 God's houses, and *will now invade*
⁷ Their stately palaces."
- 13 My God, oh make them as a wheel;
No quiet let them find:
 Giddy and *restless* let them *reel,*
 Like stubble from the wind. 50
- 14 *As, when an aged wood* takes fire
Which on a sudden strays,
 The *greedy* flame runs higher and higher,
 Till all the mountains blaze;
- 15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
 And with thy tempest chase;
- 16 ⁸ And till they ⁸ yield thee honour due,
 Lord, fill with shame their face. 60
- 17 Ashamed and troubled let them be,
 Troubled and shamed for ever,
 Ever confounded, and so die
 With shame, *and scape it never.*
- 18 Then shall they know that thou, whose name
 Jehovah is, alone
 Art the Most High, *and thou the same*
 O'er all the earth *art One.*

⁷ Neoth Elo-
 him bears
 both.

⁸ They seek
 thy name:
 Heb.

PSALM LXXXIV.

- 1 How lovely are thy dwellings fair!
 O Lord of Hosts, how dear
 The *pleasant* tabernacles are
Where thou dost dwell so near!
- 2 My soul doth long and almost die
 Thy courts, O Lord, to see;
 My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
 O living God, for thee.
- 3 There even the sparrow, *freed from wrong,*
 Hath found a house of *rest*; 10
 The swallow there, to lay her young,
 Hath built her *brooding* nest;
 Even *by* thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode;
And home they fly from round the coasts
Toward thee, my King, my God.
- 4 Happy who in thy house reside,
 Where thee they ever praise!
- 5 Happy whose strength in thee doth bide,
 And in their hearts thy ways! 20
- 6 They pass through Baca's *thirsty* vale,
That dry and barren ground,
 As through a fruitful watery dale
 Where springs and showers abound.
- 7 They journey on from strength to strength
With joy and gladsome cheer,
Till all before our God at length
 In Sion do appear.
- 8 Lord God of Hosts, hear *now* my prayer,
 O Jacob's God, give ear: 30
- 9 Thou, God, our shield, look on the face
 Of thy anointed *dear*.
- 10 For one day in thy courts *to be*
 Is better *and more blest*
 Than *in the joys of vanity*
 A thousand days *at best*.
 I in the temple of my God
 Had rather keep a door
 Than dwell in tents *and rich abode*
 With sin *for evermore*. 40
- 11 For God, the Lord, both sun and shield,
 Gives grace and glory *bright*;
 No good from them shall be withheld
 Whose ways are just and right.

- 12 Lord *God of Hosts that reign'st on high,*
 That man is *truly* blest
 Who *only* on thee doth rely,
 And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

- 1 THY land to favour graciously
 Thou hast not, Lord, been slack;
 Thou hast from *hard* captivity
 Returned Jacob back.
- 2 The iniquity thou didst forgive
That wrought thy people woe,
 And all their sin *that did thee grieve*
 Hast hid *where none shall know.*
- 3 Thine anger all thou hadst removed,
 And *calmly* didst return
 From thy¹ fierce wrath, which we had proved
 Far worse than fire to burn.
- 4 God of our saving health and peace,
 Turn us, and us restore;
 Thine indignation cause to cease
 Toward us, *and chide no more.*
- 5 Wilt thou be angry without end,
 For ever angry thus?
 Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
 From age to age on us?
- 6 Wilt thou not² turn and *hear our voice,*
 And thus again² revive,
 That so thy people may rejoice,
 By thee preserved alive?
- 7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord;
 To us thy mercy shew;
 Thy saving health to us afford,
And life in us renew.
- 8 *And now* what God the Lord will speak
 I will *go straight* and hear,
 For to his people he speaks peace,
 And to his saints *full dear*;
 To his dear saints he will speak peace;
 But let them never more
 Return to folly, *but surcease*
To trespass as before.
- 9 Surely to such as do him fear
 Salvation is at hand,
 And glory shall *ere long appear*

¹ *Heb.*: The
 burning heat of
 thy wrath.

² *Heb.*: Turn
 to quicken us.

10

20

30

- To dwell within our land. , 40
- 10 Mercy and Truth, *that long were missed*,
Now *joyfully* are met;
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kissed,
And hand in hand are set.
- 11 Truth from the earth *like to a flower*
Shall bud and blossom *then* ;
And Justice from her heavenly bower
Look down *on mortal men.*
- 12 The Lord will also then bestow
Whatever thing is good ; 50
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
Her fruits *to be our food.*
- 13 Before him Righteousness shall go,
His royal harbinger ;
Then³ will he come, and not be slow ;
His footsteps cannot err.

³ Heb.: He will set his steps to the way.

PSALM LXXXVI.

- 1 THY *gracious* ear, O Lord, incline ;
O hear me, *I thee pray* ;
For I am poor, and almost pine
With need *and sad decay.*
- 2 Preserve my soul ; for ¹ I have trod
Thy ways, and love the just ;
Save thou thy servant, O my God,
Who *still* in thee doth trust.
- 3 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
I call ; 4 Oh make rejoice 10
Thy servant's soul ! for, Lord, to thee
I lift my soul *and voice.*
- 5 For thou art good ; thou, Lord, art prone
To pardon ; thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou *alone*,
To them that on thee call.
- 6 Unto my supplication, Lord,
Give ear, and to the cry
Of my *incessant* prayers afford
Thy hearing *graciously.* 20
- 7 I in the day of my distress
Will call on thee *for aid* ;
For thou wilt *grant* me *free access*,
And answer what I prayed.
- 8 Like thee among the gods is none,
O Lord ; nor any works

¹ Heb.: I am good, loving, a doer of good & holy things.

- Of all that other gods have done*
 Like to thy *glorious* works.
- 9 The nations all whom thou hast made
 Shall come, *and all shall frame* 30
 To bow them low before thee, Lord,
 And glorify thy name.
- 10 For great thou art, and wonders great
 By thy strong hand are done;
 Thou *in thy everlasting seat*
 Remainest God alone.
- 11 Teach me, O Lord, thy way *most right*;
 I in thy truth will bide;
 To fear thy name my heart unite;
So shall it never slide. 40
- 12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God,
Thee honour and adore
 With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
 Thy name for evermore.
- 13 For great thy mercy is toward me,
 And thou hast freed my soul,
 Ev'n from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul.
- 14 O God, the proud against me rise,
 And violent men are met 50
 To seek my life, and in their eyes
 No fear of thee have set.
- 15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
 Radiest thy grace to shew,
 Slow to be angry, and *art styled*
 Most merciful, most true.
- 16 Oh turn to me *thy face at length*,
 And me have mercy on;
 Unto thy servant give thy strength,
 And save thy handmaid's son. 60
- 17 Some sign of good to me afford,
 And let my foes *then* see,
 And be ashamed, because thou, Lord,
 Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

- 1 AMONG the holy mountains *high*
 Is his foundation fast;
There seated in his sanctuary,
His temple there is placed.
- 2 Zion's *fair* gates the Lord loves more

- Than all the dwellings *fair*
 Of Jacob's land, though there be store,
 And all within his care.
- 3 City of God, most glorious things
 Of thee *abroad* are spoke. 10
 I mention Egypt, where proud kings
 Did our forefathers yoke;
- 4 I mention Babel to my friends,
 Philistia full of scorn,
 And Tyre, with Ethiop's utmost ends:
 Lo! this man there was born.
- 5 But twice that praise shall in our ear
 Be said of Sion last:
 This and this man was born in her;
 High God shall fix her fast. 20
- 6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll,
 That ne'er shall be out-worn,
 When he the nations doth enroll,
 That this man there was born.
- 7 Both they who sing and they who dance
 With sacred songs are there;
 In thee fresh brooks and soft streams glance,
 And all my fountains clear.

PSALM LXXXVIII.

- 1 LORD GOD, that dost me save and keep,
 All day to thee I cry,
 And all night long before thee weep,
 Before thee *prostrate lie*.
- 2 Into thy presence let my prayer,
 With sighs devout, ascend;
 And to my cries, that ceaseless are,
 Thine ear with favour bend.
- 3 For, cloyed with woes and trouble store,
 Surcharged my soul doth lie; 10
 My life, at death's uncheerful door,
 Unto the grave draws nigh.
- 4 Reckoned I am with them that pass
 Down to the dismal pit;
 I am a ¹man but weak, alas!
 And for that name unfit,
- 5 From life discharged and parted quite
 Among the dead to sleep,
 And like the slain in bloody fight
 That in the grave lie deep; 20

¹ Heb.: A man without manly strength.

- Whom thou rememberest no more,
 Dost never more regard:
 Them, from thy hand delivered o'er,
Death's hideous house hath barred.
- 6 Thou, in the lowest pit *profound*,
 Hast set me *all forlorn*,
 Where thickest darkness *hovers round*,
 In horrid deeps *to mourn*.
- 7 Thy wrath, *from which no shelter saves*,
 Full sore doth press on me;
 2 Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
 2 And all thy waves break me. 30
- 8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
 And mak'st me odious,
 Me to them odious, *for they change*,
 And I here pent up thus.
- 9 Through sorrow and affliction great
 Mine eye grows dim and dead;
 Lord, all the day I thee entreat,
 My hands to thee I spread. 40
- 10 Wilt thou do wonders on the dead?
 Shall the deceased arise
 And praise thee *from their loathsome bed*
With pale and hollow eyes?
- 11 Shall they thy loving-kindness tell
 On whom the grave *hath hold?*
 Or they *who* in perdition dwell
 Thy faithfulness *unfold?*
- 12 In darkness can thy mighty *hand*
 Or wondrous acts be known? 50
 Thy justice in the *gloomy land*
 Of *dark oblivion?*
- 13 But I to thee, O Lord, do cry
Ere yet my life be spent;
 And *up to thee* my prayer doth hie
 Each morn, and thee prevent.
- 14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake
 And hide thy face from me,
 15 That am already bruised, and³ shake
 With terror sent from thee; 60
 Bruised and afflicted, and *so low*
 As ready to expire,
 While I thy terrors undergo,
 Astonished with thine ire?
- 16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow;
 Thy threatenings cut me through:
 17 All day they round about me go;

² The Hebrew bears both.

³ Heb.: *Præ concussione.*

Like waves they me pursue.
 18 Lover and friend thou hast removed,
 And severed from me far:
 They *fly me now* whom I have loved,
 And as in darkness are.

70

PSALM I.

Done into verse 1653.

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

10

PSALM II.

Done August 8, 1653.—Terzetti.

WHY do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations
 Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand
 With power, and princes in their congregations
 Lay deep their plots together through each land
 Against the Lord and his Messiah dear?
 "Let us break off," say they, "by strength of hand,
 Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
 Their twisted cords." He who in Heaven doth dwell
 Shall laugh; the Lord shall scoff them, then severe
 Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell
 And fierce ire trouble them. "But I," saith he,
 "Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
 On Sion my holy hill." A firm decree

10

I will declare: the Lord to me hath said,
 "Thou art my Son; I have begotten thee
 This day; ask of me, and the grant is made:
 As thy possession I on thee bestow
 The Heathen, and, as thy conquest to be swayed,
 Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
 With iron sceptre bruised, and them disperse
 Like to a potter's vessel shivered so."
 And now be wise at length, ye kings averse;
 Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear
 Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
 With trembling; kiss the Son, lest he appear
 In anger, and ye perish in the way,
 If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere.
 Happy all those who have in him their stay.

20

PSALM III.

*August 9, 1653.**When he fled from Absalom.*

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

10

20

PSALM IV.

August 10, 1653.

ANSWER me when I call,
 God of my righteousness;
 In straits and in distress
 Thou didst me disenthral
 And set at large: now spare,
 Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
 Great ones, how long will ye
 My glory have in scorn?
 How long be thus forborne
 Still to love vanity? 10
 To love, to seek, to prize
 Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?
 Yet know the Lord hath chose,
 Chose to himself apart,
 The good and meek of heart
 (For whom to choose he knows);
 Jehovah from on high
 Will hear my voice what time to him I cry.
 Be awed, and do not sin;
 Speak to your hearts alone 20
 Upon your beds, each one,
 And be at peace within.
 Offer the offerings just
 Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.
 Many there be that say
 "Who yet will show us good?"
 Talking like this world's brood;
 But, Lord, thus let me pray:
 On us lift up the light,
 Lift up the favour, of thy count'nance bright. 30
 Into my heart more joy
 And gladness thou hast put
 Than when a year of glut
 Their stores doth over-cloy,
 And from their plenteous grounds
 With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.
 In peace at once will I
 Both lay me down and sleep;
 For thou alone dost keep
 Me safe where'er I lie: 40
 As in a rocky cell
 Thou, Lord, alone in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSALM V.

August 12, 1653.

JEHOVAH, to my words give ear,
 My meditation weigh;
 The voice of my complaining hear,
 My King and God, for unto thee I pray.
 Jehovah, thou my early voice
 Shalt in the morning hear;
 I' the morning I to thee with choice
 Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
 For thou art not a God that takes
 In wickedness delight; 10
 Evil with thee no biding makes;
 Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.
 All workers of iniquity
 Thou hat'st; and them unblest
 Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie;
 The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
 But I will in thy mercies dear,
 Thy numerous mercies, go
 Into thy house; I, in thy fear,
 Will towards thy holy temple worship low. 20
 Lord, lead me in thy righteousness,
 Lead me, because of those
 That do observe if I transgress;
 Set thy ways right before where my step goes.
 For in his faltering mouth unstable
 No word is firm or sooth;
 Their inside, troubles miserable;
 An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.
 God, find them guilty; let them fall
 By their own counsels quelled; 30
 Push them in their rebellions all
 Still on; for against thee they have rebelled.
 Then all who trust in thee shall bring
 Their joy, while thou from blame
 Defend'st them: they shall ever sing,
 And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name.
 For thou, Jehovah, wilt be found
 To bless the just man still:
 As with a shield thou wilt surround
 Him with thy lasting favour and good will. 40

PSALM VI.

August 13, 1653.

LORD, in thy anger do not reprehend me,
 Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
 Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
 And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
 For all my bones, that even with anguish ache,
 Are troubled; yea, my soul is troubled sore;
 And thou, O Lord, how long? Turn, Lord; restore
 My soul; oh, save me, for thy goodness' sake!
 For in death no remembrance is of thee;
 Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise? 10
 Wearied I am with sighing out my days;
 Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
 My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
 Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
 I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark.
 Depart, all ye that work iniquity,
 Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping
 The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath heard my prayer;
 My supplication with acceptance fair
 The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping. 20
 Mine enemies shall all be blank, and dashed
 With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,
 They shall return in haste the way they came,
 And in a moment shall be quite abashed.

PSALM VII.

*August 14, 1653.**Upon the words of Chush the Benjamite against him.*

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

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

10

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

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

20

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

30

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

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

40

God is a just judge and severe,
 And God is every day offended;

If the unjust will not forbear,
His sword he whets; his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death that waits him near.

(His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute.) Behold 50
He travails big with vanity;
Trouble he hath conceived of old
As in a womb, and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digg'd a pit, and delved it deep,
And fell into the pit he made:
His mischief, that due course doth keep,
Turns on his head: and his ill trade
Of violence will undelayed 60
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

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

PSALM VIII.

August 14, 1653.

O JEHOVAH our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy name through all the earth,
So as above the heavens thy praise to set!
Out of the tender mouths of latest bearth,
Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou
Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
To stint the enemy, and slack the avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
The moon and stars, which thou so bright hast set 10
In the pure firmament, then saith my heart,
Oh, what is man that thou rememberest yet
And think'st upon him, or of man begot
That him thou visit'st, and of him art found?
Scarce to be less than gods thou mad'st his lot;
With honour and with state thou hast him crowned.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him lord;
 Thou hast put all under his lordly feet,
 All flocks and herds, by thy commanding word,
 All beasts that in the field or forest meet,
 Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the wet
 Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.
 O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
 And glorious is thy name through all the earth!

20

SCRAPS FROM THE PROSE WRITINGS.

FROM "OF REFORMATION TOUCHING CHURCH DISCIPLINE
 IN ENGLAND," 1641.

[DANTE, *Inferno*, xix. 115.]

AH, Constantine, of how much ill was cause,
 Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
 That the first wealthy Pope received of thee!

[PETRARCH, *Sonnet* 107.]

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

[ARIOSTO, *Orl. Fur.* xxxiv. Stanz. 80.]

THEN passed he to a flowery mountain green,
 Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously:
 This was that gift (if you the truth will have)
 That Constantine to good Sylvestro gave.

FROM THE APOLOGY FOR SMECTYMNUUS, 1642.

[HORACE, *Sat.* i. 1, 24.]

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

[HORACE, *Sat.* i. 10, 14.]

JOKING decides great things
 Stronglier and better oft than earnest can.

[SOPHOCLES, *Electra*, 624.]

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

FROM AREOPAGITICA, 1644.

[EURIPIDES, *Supplices*, 438.]

THIS is true Liberty, when freeborn men,
 Having to advise the public, may speak free:
 Which he who can and will deserves high praise:
 Who neither can nor will may hold his peace.
 What can be juster in a state than this?

FROM TETRACHORDON, 1645.

[HORACE, *Epist.* i. 16, 40.]

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

FROM "THE TENURE OF KINGS AND MAGISTRATES," 1649

[SENECA, *Her. Fur.* 922.]

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

FROM THE HISTORY OF BRITAIN, 1670.

[In Geoffrey of Monmouth the story is that Brutus the Trojan, wandering through the Mediterranean, and uncertain whither to go, arrived at a dispeopled island called Leogecia, where he found, in a ruined city, a temple and oracle of Diana. He consulted the oracle in certain Greek verses, of which Geoffrey gives a version in Latin elegiacs; and Milton translates these.]

GODDESS of Shades, and Huntress, who at will
Walk'st on the rolling sphere, and through the deep,
On thy third reign, the Earth, look now, and tell
What land, what seat of rest thou bidd'st me seek,
What certain seat, where I may worship thee
For aye, with temples vowed, and virgin quires.

[Sleeping before the altar of the Goddess, Brutus received from her, in vision, an answer to the above in Greek. Geoffrey quotes the traditional version of the same in Latin elegiacs, which Milton thus translates.]

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

LATIN POEMS.

Separate Title-page in Edition of 1645: — “Joannis Miltoni Londinensis Poemata. Quorum pleraque intra annum ætatis vigesimum conscripsit. Nunc primum edita. Londini, Typis R. R. Prostant ad Insignia Principis, in Cœmeterio D. Pauli, apud Humphredum Moseley. 1645.”

Separate Title-page in Edition of 1673: — Same as above, word for word, as far as to “Londini,” inclusively; after which the rest runs thus: “Excudebat W. R. anno 1673.”

[DE AUCTORE TESTIMONIA.]

Hæc quæ sequuntur de Authore testimonia. tametsi ipse intelligebat non tam de se quam supra se esse dicta, eo quod præcuro ingenio viri, nec non amici, ita fere solent laudare ut omnia suis potius virtutibus quam veritati congruentia nimis cupide affingant, noluit tamen horum egregiam in se voluntatem non esse notam, cum alii præsertim ut id faceret magnopere suaderent. Dum enim nimis laudis invidiam totis ab se viribus amolitur, sibi quod plus æquo est non attributum esse mavult, judicium interim hominum cordatorum atque illustrium quin summo sibi honori ducat negare non potest.

JOANNES BAPTISTA MANSUS, MARCHIO VILLENSIS NEAPOLITANUS, AD
JOANNEM MILTONIUM ANGLUM.

Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verùm herclè Angelus ipse, fores.

AD JOANNEM MILTONEM ANGLUM, TRIPLICI POESEOS LAUREÂ
CORONANDUM, GRÆCÂ NIMIRUM, LATINÂ, ATQUE HETRUSCÂ,
EPIGRAMMA JOANNIS SALSILLI ROMANI.

Cede, Meles; cedat depressâ Mincius urnâ;
Sebetus Tassum desinat usque loqui;
At Thamesis victor cunctis ferat altior undas;
Nam per te, Milto, par tribus unus erit.

AD JOANNEM MILTONUM.

Græcia Mæonidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem;
Anglia Miltonum jactat utrique parem.

SELVAGGI.

AL SIGNOR GIO. MILTONI, NOBILE INGLESE.

ODE.

Ergimi all' Etra o Clio,
Perchè di stelle intreccierò corona!
Non più del biondo Dio
La fronde eterna in Pindo, e in Elicona:
Diensi a merto maggior maggiori i fregi,
A celeste virtù celesti pregi.

Non può del Tempo edace
Rimaner preda eterno alto valore;
Non può l' obbligo rapace
Furar dalle memorie eccelso onore.
Sull' arco di mia cetra un dardo forte
Virtù m' adatti, e ferirò la Morte.

10

Dell' Ocean profondo
Cinta dagli ampi gorghi Anglia risiede
Separata dal mondo,
Però che il suo valor l' umano eccede:
Questa feconda sa produrre Eroi,
Ch' hanno a ragion del sovrumano tra noi.

Alla virtù sbandita
Danno nei petti lor fido ricetta,
Quella gli è sol gradita,
Perchè in lei san trovar gioia e diletto;
Ridillo tu, Giovanni, e mostra in tanto,
Con tua vera virtù, vero il mio Canto.

20

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

30

Così l' ape ingegnosa
Trae con industria il suo liquor pregiato

Dal giglio e dalla rosa,
 E quanti vaghi fiori ornano il prato;
 Formano un dolce suon diverse corde,
 Fan varie voci melodia concorde.

Di bella gloria amante
 Milton, dal Ciel natio, per varie parti
 Le peregrine piante
 Volgesti a ricercar scienze ed arti; 40
 Dell Gallo regnator vedesti i Regni,
 E dell' Italia ancor gl' Eroi più degni.

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

Quanti nacquero in Flora,
 O in lei del parlar Tosco appreser l' arte, 50
 La cui memoria onora
 Il mondo fatta eterna in dotte carte,
 Volesti ricercar per tuo tesoro,
 E parlasti con lor nell' opre loro.

Nell' altera Babelle
 Per te il parlar confuse Giove in vano,
 Che per varie favelle
 Di se stessa trofeo cadde sul piano:
 Ch' ode, oltr' all' Anglia, il suo più degno idioma
 Spagna, Francia, Toscana, e Grecia, e Roma. 60

I più profondi arcani
 Ch' occulta la Natura, e in cielo e in terra
 Ch' a Ingegni sovrumani
 Troppo avara talor gli chiude, e serra,
 Chiaramente conosci, e giungi al fine
 Della moral virtude al gran confine.

Non batta il Tempo l' ale,
 Fermisi immoto, e in un ferminsi gli anni,
 Che di virtù immortale
 Scorrin di troppo ingiuriosi ai danni; 70
 Che s' opre degne di poema e storia
 Furon già, l' hai presenti alla memoria.

Dammi tua dolce Cetra,
 Se vuoi ch' io dica del tuo dolce canto,
 Ch' inalzandoti all' Etra
 Di farti uomo celeste ottiene il vanto ;
 Il Tamigi il dirà, chè gli è concesso
 Per te, suo cigno, pareggiar Permesso.

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

80

Del Sig. ANTONIO FRANCINI,
 Gentiluomo Fiorentino.

JOANNI MILTONI, LONDINENSI,

Juveni patriâ, virtutibus, eximio :

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

Polyglotto. in cujus ore linguæ jam deperditæ sic reviviscunt ut idiomata omnia sint in ejus laudibus infacunda ; et jure ea percallet ut admirationes et plausus populorum ab propriâ sapientiâ excitatos intelligat :

Illi, cujus animi dotes corporisque sensus ad admirationem commovent, et per ipsam motum cuique auferunt ; cujus opera ad plausus hortantur, sed venustate vocem laudatoribus adimunt :

Cui in Memoriâ totus orbis ; in Intellectu sapientia ; in Voluntate ardor gloriæ ; in Ore eloquentia ; harmonicos cælestium sphaerarum sonitus Astronomiâ duce audienti ; characteres mirabilium Naturæ per quos Dei magnitudo describitur magistrâ Philosophiâ legenti ; antiquitatum latebras, vetustatis excidia, eruditionis ambages, comite assiduâ Autorum lectione, 'exquirenti, restauranti, percurrenti'

(At cur nitor in arduum?) :

Illi in cujus virtutibus evulgandis ora Famæ non sufficiant, nec hominum stupor in laudandis satis est, Reverentiæ et Amoris ergo hoc ejus meritis debitum admirationis tributum offert

CAROLUS DATUS, Patricius Florentinus,
 Tanto homini servus, tantæ virtutis amator.

ELEGIARUM LIBER.

ELEGIA PRIMA.

AD CAROLUM DIODATUM.

TANDEM, chare, tuæ mihi pervenere tabellæ,
 Pertulit et voces nuncia charta tuas;
 Pertulit occiduâ Devæ Cestrensis ab orâ
 Vergivium pronò quâ petit amne salum.
 Multùm, crede, juvat terras aluisse remotas
 Pectus amans nostri, tamque fidele caput,
 Quòdque mihi lepidum tellus longinqua sodalem
 Debet, at unde brevi reddere jussa velit.
 Me tenet urbs refuâ quam Thamesis alluit undâ,
 Meque nec invitum patria dulcis habet. 10
 Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
 Nec dudum vetiti me laris angit amor.
 Nuda nec arva placent, umbrasque negantia molles;
 Quàm male Phœbicolis convenit ille locus!
 Nec duri libet usque minas perferre Magistri,
 Cæteraque ingenio non subeunda meo.
 Si sit hoc exilium, patrios adiisse penates,
 Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
 Non ego vel profugi nomen sortemve recuso,
 Lætus et exili conditione fruor. 20
 O utinam vâtes nunquam graviora tulisset
 Ille Tomitano flebilis exul agro;
 Non tunc Ionio quicquam cessisset Homero,
 Neve foret victo laus tibi prima, Maro.
 Tempora nam licet hic placidis dare libera Musis,
 Et totum rapiunt me, mea vita, libri.
 Excipit hinc fessum sinuosi pompa theatri,
 Et vocat ad plausus garrula scena suos.
 Seu catus auditur senior, seu prodigus hæres,
 Seu procus, aut positâ casside miles adest, 30
 Sive decennali fœcundus lite patronus
 Detonat inculto barbarâ verba foro;
 Sæpe vafer gnato succurrit servus amanti,
 Et nasum rigidi fallit ubique patris;
 Sæpe novos illic virgo mirata calores
 Quid sit amor nescit, dum quoque nescit amat:
 Sive cruentatum furiosa Tragœdia sceptrum
 Quassat, et effusis crinibus ora rotat;

Et dolet, et specto, juvat et spectasse dolendo;
 Interdum et lacrymis dulcis amaror inest: 40
 Seu puer infelix indelibata reliquit
 Gaudia, et abrupto flendus amore cadit;
 Seu ferus e tenebris iterat Styga criminis ultor,
 Conscia funereo pectora torre movens;
 Seu mœret Pelopeia domus, seu nobilis Ili,
 Aut luit incestos aula Creontis avos.
 Sed neque sub tecto semper nec in urbe latemus,
 Irrita nec nobis tempora veris eunt.
 Nos quoque lucus habet vicinâ consitus ulmo,
 Atque suburbanâ nobilis umbra loci. 50
 Sæpius hic, blandas spirantia sidera flammæ,
 Virgineos videas præteriisse choros.
 Ah quoties dignæ stupui miracula formæ
 Quæ possit senium vel reparare Jovis!
 Ah quoties vidi superantia lumina gemmas,
 Atque faces quotquot volvit uterque polus;
 Collaque bis vivi Pelopis quæ brachia vincant,
 Quæque fluit puro nectare tincta via,
 Et decus eximium frontis, tremulosque capillos, 60
 Aurea quæ fallax retia tendit Amor;
 Pellacesque genas, ad quas hyacinthina sordet
 Purpura, et ipse tui floris, Adoni, rubor!
 Cedite laudatæ toties Heröides olim,
 Et quæcunque vagum cepit amica Jovem;
 Cedite Achæmenia turritâ fronte puellæ,
 Et quot Susa colunt, Memnoniamque Ninon;
 Vos etiam Danaæ fascès submittite Nymphæ,
 Et vos Iliacæ, Romuleæque nurus;
 Nec Pompeianas Tarpëia Musa columnas 70
 Jactet, et Ausoniis plena theatra stolis.
 Gloria virginibus debetur prima Britannis;
 Extera sat tibi sit fœmina posse sequi.
 Tuque urbs Dardaniis, Londinum, structa colonis,
 Turrigerum latè conspicienda caput,
 Tu nimium felix intra tua mœnia claudis
 Quicquid formosi pendulus orbis habet.
 Non tibi tot cælo scintillant astra sereno,
 Endymioneæ turba ministra deæ,
 Quot tibi conspicuæ formæque auroque puellæ 80
 Per medias radiant turba videnda vias.
 Creditur huc geminis venisse invecta columbis
 Alma pharetrigero milite cincta Venus,
 Huic Cnidon, et riguas Simoentis flumine valles,
 Huic Paphon, et roseam posthabitura Cypron.
 Ast ego, dum pueri sinit indulgentia cæci.

Mœnia quàm subitò linquere fausta paro;
 Et vitare procul malefidæ infamia Circes
 Atria, divini Molyos usus ope.
 Stat quoque juncosas Cami remeare paludes,
 Atque iterum raucæ murmur adire Scholæ.
 Interea fidi parvum cape munus amici,
 Paucaque in alternos verba coacta modos.

90

ELEGIA SECUNDA.

Anno ætatis 17.

IN OBITUM PRÆCONIS ACADEMICI CANTABRIGIENSIS.

TE, qui conspicuus baculo fulgente solebas
 Palladium toties ore ciere gregem,
 Ultima præconum præconem te quoque sæva
 Mors rapit, officio nec favet ipsa suo.
 Candidiora licet fuerint tibi tempora plumis
 Sub quibus accipimus delituisse Jovem,
 O dignus tamen Hæmonio juvenescere succo,
 Dignus in Æsonios vivere posse dies.
 Dignus quem Stygiis medicâ revocaret ab undis
 Arte Coronides, sæpe rogante deâ.
 Tu si jussus eras acies accire togatas,
 Et celer a Phœbo nuntius ire tuo,
 Talis in Iliacâ stabat Cyllenius aulâ
 Alipes, æthereâ missus ab arce Patris;
 Talis et Eurybates ante ora furentis Achillei
 Rettulit Atridæ jussa severa ducis.
 Magna sepulchrorum regina, satelles Averni,
 Sæva nimis Musis, Palladi sæva nimis,
 Quin illos rapias qui pondus inutile terræ?
 Turba quidem est telis ista petenda tuis.
 Vestibus hunc igitur pullis, Academia, luge,
 Et madeant lacrymis nigra feretra tuis.
 Fundat et ipsa modos querebunda Elegiæ tristes,
 Personet et totis nœnia mœsta scholis.

10

20

ELEGIA TERTIA.

Anno ætatis 17.

IN OBITUM PRÆSULIS WINTONIENSIS.

MÆSTUS eram, et tacitus, nullo comitante, sedebam,
 Hærebantque animo tristia plura meo:

Protinus en subiit funestæ cladis imago
 Fecit in Angliaco quam Libitina solo;
 Dum procerum ingressa est splendentes marmore turres
 Dira sepulchrali Mors metuenda face,
 Pulsavitque auro gravidos et jaspide muros,
 Nec metuit satrapum sternere falce greges.
 Tunc memini clarique ducis, fratrisque verendi,
 Intempestivis ossa cremata rogis; 10
 Et memini Heroum quos vidit ad æthera raptos,
 Flevit et amissos Belgia tota duces.
 At te præcipuè luxi, dignissime Præsul,
 Wintoniæque olim gloria magna tuæ;
 Delicui fletu, et tristi sic ore querebar:
 “Mors fera, Tartareo diva secunda Jovi,
 Nonne satis quod sylva tuas persentiat iras,
 Et quod in herbosos jus tibi detur agros,
 Quodque afflata tuo marcescant lilia tabo,
 Et crocus, et pulchræ Cypridi sacra rosa? 20
 Nec sinis ut semper fluvio contermina quercus
 Miretur lapsus prætereuntis aquæ;
 Et tibi succumbit liquido quæ plurima cælo
 Evehitur pennis, quamlibet augur, avis,
 Et quæ mille nigris errant animalia sylvis,
 Et quod alunt mutum Proteos antra pecus.
 Invida, tanta tibi cum sit concessa potestas,
 Quid juvat humanâ tingere cæde manus?
 Nobileque in pectus certas acuisse sagittas,
 Semideamque animam sede fugâsse suâ?” 30
 Talia dum lacrymans alto sub pectore volvo,
 Roscidus occiduis Hesperus exit aquis,
 Et Tartessiaci submerserat æquore currum
 Phœbus, ab Eöo littore mensus iter.
 Nec mora; membra cavo posui refovenda cubili;
 Condiderant oculos noxque soporque meos,
 Cum mihi visus eram lato spatiarier agro;
 Heu! nequit ingenium visa referre meum.
 Illic puniceâ radiabant omnia luce,
 Ut matutino cum juga sole rubent; 40
 Ac veluti cum pandit opes Thaumantia proles
 Vestitu nituit multicolore solum;
 Non dea tam variis ornavit floribus hortos
 Alcinoi Zephyro Chloris amata levi.
 Flumina vernantes lambunt argentea campos;
 Ditiior Hesperio flavet arena Tago;
 Serpit odoriferas per opes levis aura Favoni,
 Aura sub innumeris humida nata rosis:
 Talis in extremis terræ Gangetidis oris

Luciferi regis fingitur esse domus. 50
 Ipse racemiferis dum densas vitibus umbras
 Et pellucentes miror ubique locos,
 Ecce mihi subitò Præsul Wintonius astat!
 Sidereum nitido fulsit in ore jubar;
 Vestis ad auratos defluxit candida talos;
 Infula divinum cinxerat alba caput.
 Dumque senex tali incedit venerandus amictu,
 Intremuit læto florea terra sono;
 Agmina gemmatis plaudunt cælestia pennis;
 Pura triumphali personat æthra tubâ. 60
 Quisque novum amplexu comitem cantuque salutat,
 Hosque aliquis placido misit ab ore sonos:
 "Nate, veni, et patrii felix cape gaudia regni;
 Semper abhinc duro, nate, labore vaca."
 Dixit, et aligeræ tetigerunt nablia turmæ;
 At mihi cum tenebris aurea pulsa quies;
 Flebam turbatos Cephaleiâ pellice somnos.
 Talia contingant somnia sæpe mihi!

ELEGIA QUARTA.

Anno ætatis 18.

AD THOMAM JUNIUM, PRÆCEPTOREM SUUM, APUD MERCATORES
 ANGLICOS HAMBURGÆ AGENTES PASTORIS MUNERE FUNGENTEM.

CURRE per immensum subitò, mea littera, pontum;
 I, pete Teutonicos læve per æquor agros;
 Segnes rumpe moras, et nil, precor, obstet eunti,
 Et festinantis nil remoretur iter.
 Ipse ego Sicanio frænantem carcere ventos
 Æolon, et virides sollicitabo Deos,
 Cæruleamque suis comitatam Dorida Nymphis,
 Ut tibi dent placidam per sua regna viam.
 At tu, si poteris, celeres tibi sume jugales,
 Vecta quibus Colchis fugit ab ore viri; 10
 Aut quis Triptolemus Scythicas devenit in oras,
 Gratus Eleusinâ missus ab urbe puer.
 Atque, ubi Germanas flavere videbis arenas,
 Ditis ad Hamburgæ mœnia flecte gradum,
 Dicitur occiso quæ ducere nomen ab Hamâ,
 Cimbrica quem fertur clava dedisse neci.
 Vivit ibi antiquæ clarus pietatis honore
 Præsul, Christicolas pascere doctus oves;
 Ille quidem est animæ plusquam pars altera nostræ;
 Dimidio vitæ vivere cogor ego. 20

Hei mihi, quot pelagi, quot montes interjecti,
 Me faciunt aliâ parte carere mei!
 Charior ille mihi quàm tu, doctissime Graiùm,
 Cliniadi, pronepos qui Telamonis erat;
 Quàmque Stagirites generoso magnus alumno,
 Quem peperit Lybico Chaonis alma Jovi.
 Qualis Amyntorides, qualis Philyrëus Heros
 Myrmidonum regi, talis et ille mihi.
 Primos ego Aonios illo præeunte recessus
 Lustrabam, et bifidi sacra vireta jugi,
 Pierosque hausit latices, Clioque favente
 Castalio sparsi læta ter ora mero. 30
 Flammeus at signum ter viderat arietis Æthon
 Induxitque auro lanea terga novo,
 Bisque novo terram sparsisti, Chlorig, senilem
 Gramine, bisque tuas abstulit Auster opes;
 Necdum ejus licuit mihi lumina pascere vultu,
 Aut linguæ dulces aure bibisse sonos.
 Vade igitur, cursuque Eurum præverte sonorum;
 Quàm sit opus monitis res docet, ipsa vides. 40
 Invenies dulci cum conjuge fortè sedentem,
 Mulcentem gremio pignora chara suo;
 Forsitan aut veterum prælargæ volumina Patrum
 Versantem, aut veri Bibilia sacra Dei,
 Cælestive animas saturantem rore tenellas,
 Grande salutiferæ religionis opus.
 Utque solet, multam sit dicere cura salutem,
 Dicere quam decuit, si modo adesset, herum.
 Hæc quoque, paulùm oculos in humum defixa modestos,
 Verba verecundo sis memor ore loqui: 50
 "Hæc tibi, si teneris vacat inter prælia Musis,
 Mittit ab Angliaco littore fida manus.
 Accipe sinceram, quamvis sit sera, salutem;
 Fiat et hoc ipso gratior illa tibi.
 Sera quidem, sed vera fuit, quam casta recepit
 Icaris a lento Penelopeia viro.
 Ast ego quid volui manifestum tollere crimen,
 Ipse quod ex omni parte levare nequit?
 Arguitur tardus meritò, noxamque fatetur,
 Et pudet officium deseruisse suum. 60
 Tu modò da veniam fasso, veniamque roganti;
 Crimina diminui quæ patuere solent.
 Non ferus in pavidos rictus diducit hiantes,
 Vulnifico pronos nec rapit ungue leo.
 Sæpe sarissiferi crudelia pectora Thracis
 Supplicis ad mœstas deliquere preces;
 Extensæque manus avertunt fulminis ictus,

Placat et iratos hostia parva Deos.
 Jamque diu scripsisse tibi fuit impetus illi,
 Neve moras ultra ducere passus Amor; 70
 Nam vaga Fama refert, heu nuntia vera malorum!
 In tibi finitimis bella tumere locis,
 Teque tuamque urbem truculento milite cingi,
 Et jam Saxonicos arma parâsse duces.
 Te circum latè campos populatur Enyo,
 Et sata carne virûm jam cruor arva rigat.
 Germanisque suum concessit Thracia Martem;
 Illuc Odrysios Mars pater egit equos;
 Perpetuòque comans jam deflorescit oliva;
 Fugit et ærisonam Diva perosa tubam, 80
 Fugit, io! terris, et jam non ultima Virgo
 Creditur ad superas justa volâsse domos.
 Te tamen interea belli circumsonat horror,
 Vivis et ignoto solus inopsque solo;
 Et, tibi quam patrii non exhibuere penates,
 Sede peregrinâ quæris egenus opem.
 Patria, dura parens, et saxis sævior albis
 Spumea quæ pulsat littoris unda tui,
 Siccine te decet innocuos exponere fœtus,
 Siccine in externam ferrea cogis humum, 90
 Et sinis ut terris quærant alimenta remotis
 Quos tibi prospiciens miserat ipse Deus,
 Et qui læta ferunt de cælo nuntia, quique
 Quæ via post cineres ducat ad astra docent?
 Digna quidem Stygiis quæ vivas clausa tenebris,
 Æternâque animæ digna perire fame!
 Haud aliter vates terræ Thesbitidis olim
 Pressit inassueto devia tesqua pede,
 Desertasque Arabum salebras, dum regis Achabi
 Effugit, atque tuas, Sidoni dira, manus. 100
 Talis et, horrisono laceratus membra flagello,
 Paulus ab Æmathiâ pellitur urbe Cilix;
 Piscosæque ipsum Gergessæ civis Iësum
 Finibus ingratus jussit abire suis.
 At tu sume animos, nec spes cadat anxia curis,
 Nec tua concutiat decolor ossa metus.
 Sis etenim quamvis fulgentibus obsitus armis,
 Intendentque tibi millia tela necem,
 At nullis vel inerme latus violabitur armis,
 Deque tuo cuspis nulla cruore bibet. 110
 Namque eris ipse Dei radiante sub ægide tutus;
 Ille tibi custos, et pugil ille tibi;
 Ille Sionææ qui tot sub mœnibus arcis
 Assyrios fudit nocte silente viros;

Inque fugam vertit quos in Samaritidas oras
 Misit ab antiquis prisca Damascus agris;
 Terruit et densas pavido cum rege cohortes,
 Aëre dum vacuo buccina clara sonat,
 Cornea pulvereum dum verberat ungula campum,
 Currus arenosam dum quatit actus humum,
 Auditurque hinnitus equorum ad bella ruentum,
 Et strepitus ferri, murmuraque alta virum.
 Et tu (quod superest miseris) sperare memento,
 Et tua magnanimo pectore vince mala;
 Nec dubites quandoque frui melioribus annis,
 Atque iterum patrios posse videre lares."

120

ELEGIA QUINTA.

Anno ætatis 20.

IN ADVENTUM VERIS.

IN se perpetuo Tempus revolubile gyro
 Jam revocat Zephyros, vere tepente, novos;
 Induiturque brevem Tellus reparata juventam,
 Jamque soluta gelu dulcè virescit humus.
 Fallor? an et nobis redeunt in carmina vires,
 Ingeniumque mihi munere veris adest?
 Munere veris adest, iterumque vigescit ab illo
 (Quis putet?) atque aliquod jam sibi poscit opus.
 Castalis ante oculos, bifidumque cacumen oberrat,
 Et mihi Pirenen somnia nocte ferunt;
 Concitaque arcano fervent mihi pectora motu,
 Et furor, et sonitus me sacer intus agit.
 Delius ipse venit (video Penëide lauro
 Implicitos crines), Delius ipse venit.
 Jam mihi mens liquidi raptatur in ardua cæli,
 Perque vagas nubes corpore liber eo;
 Perque umbras, perque antra feror, penetralia vatum;
 Et mihi fana patent interiora Deum;
 Intuiturque animus toto quid agatur Olympo,
 Nec fugiunt oculos Tartara cæca meos.
 Quid tam grande sonat distento spiritus ore?
 Quid parit hæc rabies, quid sacer iste furor?
 Ver mihi, quod dedit ingenium, cantabitur illo;
 Profuerint isto reddita dona modo.
 Jam, Philomela, tuos, foliis adoperta novellis,
 Instituis modulos, dum silet omne nemus:
 Urbe ego, tu sylvâ, simul incipiamus utrique.

10

20

Et simul adventum veris uterque canat.
 Veris, io! rediere vices; celebremus honores
 Veris, et hoc subeat Musa perennis opus. 30
 Jam sol, Æthiopus fugiens Tithoniaque arva,
 Flectit ad Arctos aurea lora plagas.
 Est breve noctis iter, brevis est mora noctis opacæ,
 Horrida cum tenebris exulat illa suis.
 Jamque Lycaonius plaustrum cæleste Bootes
 Non longâ sequitur fessus ut ante viâ;
 Nunc etiam solitas circum Jovis atria toto
 Excubias agitant sidera rara polo.
 Nam dolus, et cædes, et vis cum nocte recessit,
 Neve Giganteum Dii timuere scelus. 40
 Fortè aliquis scopuli recubans in vertice pastor,
 Roscida cum primo sole rubescit humus,
 "Hac," ait, "hac certè caruisti nocte puellâ,
 Phœbe, tuâ, celeres quæ retineret equos."
 Læta suas repetit sylvas, pharetramque resumit
 Cynthia, luciferas ut videt alta rotas,
 Et, tennes ponens radios, gaudere videtur
 Officium fieri tam breve fratris ope.
 "Desere," Phœbus ait, "thalamos, Aurora, seniles;
 Quid juvat effæcto procubuisse toro? 50
 Te manet Æolides viridi venator in herbâ;
 Surge; tuos ignes altus Hymettus habet."
 Flava verecundo dea crimen in ore fatetur,
 Et matutinos ocius urget equos.
 Exiit invisam Tellus rediviva senectam,
 Et cupit amplexus, Phœbe, subire tuos.
 Et cupit, et digna est; quid enim formosius illâ,
 Pandit ut omniferos luxuriosa sinus,
 Atque Arabum spirat messes, et ab ore venusto
 Mitia cum Paphiis fundit amoma rosis? 60
 Ecce, coronatur sacro frons ardua luco,
 Cingit ut Idæam pinea turris Opim;
 Et vario madidos intexit flore capillos,
 Floribus et visa est posse placere suis.
 Floribus effusos ut erat redimita capillos,
 Tænario placuit diva Sicana Deo.
 Aspice, Phœbe; tibi faciles hortantur amores,
 Mellitasque movent flamina verna preces;
 Cinnamê Zephyrus leve plaudit odorifer alâ;
 Blanditiasque tibi ferre videntur aves. 70
 Nec sine dote tuos temeraria quærit amores
 Terra, nec optatos poscit egena toros;
 Alma saluferum medicos tibi gramen in usus
 Præbet, et hinc titulos adjuvat ipsa tuos.

Quòd si te pretium, si te fulgentia tangunt
 Munera (muneribus sæpe coemptus amor),
 Illa tibi ostentat quascunque sub æquore vasto,
 Et superinjectis montibus, abdit opes.
 Ah! quoties, cum tu clivoso fessus Olympo
 In vespertinas præcipitaris aquas, 80
 "Cur te," inquit, "cursu languentem, Phœbe, diurno
 Hesperiiis recipit cærula mater aquis?
 Quid tibi cum Tethy? quid cum Tartesside lymphâ?
 Dia quid immundo perluis ora salo?
 Frigora, Phœbe, meâ melius captabis in umbrâ;
 Huc ades; ardentes imbue rore comas.
 Mollior egelidâ veniet tibi somnus in herbâ;
 Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
 Quaque jaces circum mulcebit lenè susurrans
 Aura per humentes corpora fusa rosas. 90
 Nec me (crede mihi) terrent Semelëia fata,
 Nec Phaëtonteo fumidus axis equo;
 Cum tu, Phœbe, tuo sapientiùs uteris igni,
 Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo."
 Sic Tellus lasciva suos suspirat amores;
 Matris in exemplum cætera turba ruunt.
 Nunc etenim toto currit vagus orbe Cupido,
 Languentesque foveat solis ab igne faces.
 Insonuere novis lethalia cornua nervis,
 Triste micant ferro tela corusca novo. 100
 Jamque vel invictam tentat superâsse Dianam,
 Quæque sedet sacro Vesta pudica foco.
 Ipsa senescentem reparat Fenus annua formam,
 Atque iterum tepido creditur orta mari.
 Marmoreas juvenes clamant *Hymenæe* per urbes;
 Littus *io Hymen* et cava saxa sonant.
 Cultior ille venit, tunicâque decentior aptâ;
 Puniceum redolet vestis odora crocum.
 Egrediturque frequens ad amœni gaudia veris
 Virgineos auro cincta puella sinus. 110
 Votum est cuique suum; votum est tamen omnibus unum,
 Ut sibi quem cupiat det Cytherea virum.
 Nunc quoque septenâ modulatur arundinæ pastor,
 Et sua quæ jungat carmina Phyllis habet.
 Navita nocturno placat sua sidera cantu,
 Delphinisque leves ad vada summa vocat.
 Jupiter ipse alto cum conjuge ludit Olympo,
 Convocat et famulos ad sua festa Deos.
 Nunc etiam Satyri, cum sera crepuscula surgunt,
 Pervolitant celeri florea rura choro, 120
 Sylvanusque suâ cyparissi fronde revinctus,

Semicaperque Deus, semideusque caper.
 Quæque sub arboribus Dryades latuere vetustis
 Per juga, per solos expatiantur agros.
 Per sata luxuriat fruticetaque Mænalius Pan;
 Vix Cybele mater, vix sibi tuta Ceres;
 Atque aliquam cupidus prædatur Oreada Faunus,
 Consulit in trepidos dum sibi nympha pedes,
 Jamque latet, latitansque cupit malè tecta videri,
 Et fugit, et fugiens pervelit ipsa capi. 130
 Dii quoque non dubitant cælo præponere sylvas,
 Et sua quisque sibi numina lucus habet.
 Et sua quisque diu sibi numina lucus habeto,
 Nec vos arboreâ, dii, precor, ite domo.
 Te referant, miseris te, Jupiter, aurea terris
 Sæcla! quid ad nimbos, aspera tela, redis?
 Tu saltem lentè rapidos age, Phœbe, jugales
 Quà potes, et sensim tempora veris eant:
 Brumaque productas tardè ferat hispida noctes,
 Ingruat et nostro serior umbra polo! 140

ELEGIA SEXTA.

AD CAROLUM DIODATUM, RURI COMMORANTEM;

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

MITTO tibi sanam non pleno ventre salutem,
 Quâ tu distento fortè carere potes.
 At tua quid nostram prolecat Musa camœnam,
 Nec sinit optatas posse sequi tenebras?
 Carmine scire velis quàm te redamemque colamque;
 Crede mihi vix hoc carmine scire queas.
 Nam neque noster amor modulis includitur arcis,
 Nec venit ad claudos integer ipse pedes.
 Quàm bene solennes epulas, hilaremque Decembrim,
 Festaque cælifugam quæ coluere Deum, 10
 Deliciasque refers, hiberni gaudia ruris,
 Haustaque per lepidos Gallica musta focos!
 Quid quereris refugam vino dapibusque poesin?
 Carmen amat Bacchum, carmina Bacchus amat.
 Nec puduit Phœbum virides gestâsse corymbos,
 Atque hederam lauro præposuisse suæ.
 Sæpiùs Aoniis clamavit collibus *Euæ*

Mista Thyoneo turba novena choro.
 Naso Corallæis mala carmina misit ab agris ;
 Non illic epulæ, non sata vitis erat. 20
 Quid nisi vina, rosasque, racemiferumque Lyæum,
 Cantavit brevibus Tēia Musa modis?
 Pindaricosque inflat numeros Teumesius Euan,
 Et redolet sumptum pagina quæque merum ;
 Dum gravis everso currus crepat axe supinus,
 Et volat Eleo pulvere fuscus eques.
 Quadrimoque madens Lyricen Romanus Iaccho
 Dulcè canit Glyceran, flavicomamque Chloen.
 Jam quoque lauta tibi generoso mensa paratu
 Mentis alit vires, ingeniumque fovet. 30
 Massica fœcundam despumant pocula venam,
 Fundis et ex ipso condita metra cado.
 Addimus his artes, fusumque per intima Phœbum
 Corda ; favent uni Bacchus, Apollo, Ceres.
 Scilicet haud mirum tam dulcia carmina per te,
 Numine composito, tres peperisse Deos.
 Nunc quoque Thressa tibi cælato barbitos auro
 Insonat argutâ molliter icta manu ;
 Auditurque chelys suspensa tapetia circum,
 Virgineos tremulâ quæ regat arte pedes. 40
 Illa tuas saltem teneant spectacula Musas,
 Et revocent quantum crapula pellit iners.
 Crede mihi, dum psallit ebur, comitataque plectrum
 Implet odoratos festa chorea tholos,
 Percipies tacitum per pectora serpere Phœbum,
 Quale repentinus permeat ossa calor ;
 Perque puellares oculos digitumque sonantem
 Irruet in totos lapsa Thalia sinus.
 Namque Elegia levis multorum cura deorum est,
 Et vocat ad numeros quemlibet illa suos ; 50
 Liber adest elegis, Eratoque, Ceresque, Venusque,
 Et cum purpureâ matre tenellus Amor.
 Talibus inde licent convivia larga poetis,
 Sæpiùs et veteri commaduisse mero.
 At qui bella refert, et adulto sub Jove cælum,
 Heroasque pios, semideosque duces,
 Et nunc sancta canit superûm consulta deorum,
 Nunc latrata fero regna profunda cane,
 Ille quidem parcè, Samii pro more magistri,
 Vivat, et innocuos præbeat herba cibos ; 60
 Stet prope fagineo pellucida lympha catillo,
 Sobriaque e puro pocula fonte bibat.
 Additur huic scelerisque vacans et casta juvenus,
 Et rigidi mores, et sine labe manus ;

Qualis veste nitens sacrâ, et lustralibus undis,
 Surgis ad infensos augur iture Deos.
 Hoc ritu vixisse ferunt post rapta sagacem
 Lumina Tiresian, Ogygiumque Linon,
 Et lare devoto profugum Calchanta, senemque
 Orpheon edomitis sola per antra feris; 7c
 Sic dapis exiguus, sic rivi potor Homerus
 Dulichium vexit per freta longa virum,
 Et per monstrificam Perseïæ Phœbados aulam,
 Et vada fœmineis insidiosa sonis,
 Perque tuas, rex ime, domos, ubi sanguine nigro
 Dicitur umbrarum detinuisse greges:
 Diis etenim sacer est vates, divûmque sacerdos,
 Spirat et occultum pectus et ora Jovem.
 At tu si quid agam scitabere (si modò saltem
 Esse putas tanti noscere siquid agam). 8c
 Paciferum canimus cœlesti semine regem,
 Faustaque sacratis sæcula pacta libris;
 Vagitumque Dei, et stabulantem paupere tecto
 Qui suprema suo cum patre regna colit;
 Stelliparumque polum, modulantesque æthere turmas,
 Don subito elisos ad sua fana Deos.
 Dona quidem dedimus Christi natalibus illa;
 Illa sub auroram lux mihi prima tulit.
 Te quoque pressa manent patriis meditata cicutis;
 Tu mihi, cui recitem, iudicis instar eris. 9c

ELEGIA SEPTIMA.

Anno ætatis undevigesimo.

NONDUM blanda tuas leges, Amathusia, nôram,
 Et Paphio vacuum pectus ab igne fuit.
 Sæpe cupidineas, puerilia tela, sagittas,
 Atque tuum sprevi maxime numen, Amor.
 "Tu puer imbelles" dixi "transfige columbas;
 Conveniunt tenero mollia bella duci:
 Aut de passeribus tumidos age, parve, triumphos;
 Hæc sunt militiæ digna trophæa tuæ.
 In genus humanum quid inania dirigis arma?
 Non valet in fortes ista pharetra viros." 1c
 Non tulit hoc Cyprius (neque enim Deus ullus ad iras
 Promptior), et duplici jam ferus igne calet.
 Ver erat, et summæ radians per culmina villæ
 Attulerat primam lux tibi, Maie, diem;

At mihi adhuc refugam quærebant lumina noctem,
 Nec matutinum sustinere jubar.
 Astat Amor lecto, pictis Amor impiger alis;
 Prodidit astantem mota pharetra Deum;
 Prodidit et facies, et dulcè minantis ocelli,
 Et quicquid puero dignum et Amore fuit. 20
 Talis in æterno juvenis Sigeius Olympo
 Miscet amatorî pocula plena Jovi;
 Aut, qui formosas pellexit ad oscula nymphas,
 Thiodamantæus Naiade raptus Hylas.
 Addideratque iras, sed et has decuisse putares;
 Addideratque truces, nec sine felle, minas.
 Et "Miser exemplo sapiisses tutiùs," inquit;
 "Nunc mea quid possit dextera testis eris.
 Inter et expertos vires numerabere nostras,
 Et faciam vero per tua damna fidem. 30
 Ipse ego, si nescis, strato Pythone superbum
 Edomui Phœbum, cessit et ille mihi;
 Et, quoties meminit Penëidos, ipse fatetur
 Certiùs et graviùs tela nocere mea.
 Me nequit adductum curvare peritiùs arcum,
 Qui post terga solet vincere, Parthus eques.
 Cydoniusque mihi cedit venator, et ille
 Inscius uxori qui necis author erat.
 Est etiam nobis ingens quoque victus Orion,
 Herculeæque manus, Herculeusque comes. 40
 Jupiter ipse licet sua fulmina torqueat in me,
 Hærebunt lateri spicula nostra Jovis.
 Cætera quæ dubitas meliùs mea tela docebunt,
 Et tua non leviter corda petenda mihi.
 Nec te, stulte, tuæ poterunt defendere Musæ;
 Nec tibi Phœbæus porriget anguis opem."
 Dixit, et, aurato quatiens mucrone sagittam,
 Evolat in tepidos Cypridos ille sinus.
 At mihi risuro tonuit ferus ore minaci,
 Et mihi de puero non metus ullus erat. 50
 Et modò quæ nostri spatiantur in urbe Quirites,
 Et modò villarum proxima rura placent.
 Turba frequens, facieque simillima turba dearum,
 Splendida per medias itque reditque vias;
 Auctaque luce dies gemino fulgore coruscat.
 Fallor? an et radios hinc quoque Phœbus habet?
 Hæc ego non fugi spectacula grata severus,
 Impetus et quò me fert juvenilis agor;
 Lumina luminibus malè providus obvia misi,
 Neve oculos potui continuisse meos. 60
 Unam fortè aliis supereminuisse notabam;

Principium nostri lux erat illa mali.
 Sic Venus optaret mortalibus ipsa videri,
 Sic regina Deum conspicienda fuit.
 Hanc memor objecit nobis malus ille Cupido,
 Solus et hos nobis texuit antè dolos.
 Nec procul ipse vafer latuit, multæque sagittæ,
 Et facis a tergo grande pependit onus.
 Nec mora; nunc ciliis hæsit, nunc virginis ori,
 Insilit hinc labiis, insidet inde genis; 70
 Et quascunque agilis partes jaculator oberrat,
 Hei mihi! mille locis pectus inerme ferit.
 Protinùs insoliti subierunt corda furores;
 Uror amans intus, flammaque totus eram.
 Interea misero quæ jam mihi sola placebat
 Ablata est, oculis non reditura meis;
 Ast ego progredior tacitè querebundus, et excors,
 Et dubius volui sæpe referre pedem.
 Findor; et hæc remanet, sequitur pars altera votum;
 Raptaque tam subito gaudia flere iuvat. 80
 Sic dolet amissum proles Junonia cælum,
 Inter Lemniacos præcipitata focos;
 Talis et abreptum solem respexit ad Orcum
 Vectus ab attonitis Amphiaræus equis.
 Quid faciam infelix, et luctu victus? Amores
 Nec licet inceptos ponere, neve sequi.
 O utinam spectare semel mihi detur amatos
 Vultus, et coràm tristia verba loqui!
 Forsitan et duro non est adamante creata,
 Fortè nec ad nostras surdeat illa preces! 90
 Crede mihi, nullus sic infeliciter arsit;
 Ponar in exemplo primus et unus. ego.
 Parce, precor, teneri cum sis Deus ales amoris;
 Pugnent officio nec tua facta tuo.
 Jam tuus O certè est mihi formidabilis arcus,
 Nate deâ, jaculis nec minus igne potens:
 Et tua fumabunt nostris altaria donis,
 Solus et in Superis tu mihi summus eris.
 Deme meos tandem, verùm nec deme, furores;
 Nescio cur, miser est suaviter omnis amans: 100
 Tu modò da facilis, posthæc mea siqua futura est,
 Cuspis amatuos figat ut una duos.

*Hæc ego mente olim lævâ, studioque supino,
 Nequitia posui vana trophæa meæ.
 Scilicet abreptum sic me malus impulit error,
 Indocilisque ætas prava magistra fuit;*

*Donec Socraticos umbrosa Academia rivos
Præbuit, admissum dedocuitque jugum.
Protinùs, extinctis ex illo tempore flammis,
Cincta rigent multo pectora nostra gelu;
Unde suis frigus metuit puer ipse sagittis,
Et Diomedeam vim timet ipsa Venus.*

[EPIGRAMMATA.]

IN PRODITIONEM BOMBARDICAM.

CUM simul in regem nuper satrapasque Britannos
Ausus es infandum, perfide Fauxe, nefas,
Fallor? an et mitis voluisti ex parte videri,
Et pensare malâ cum pietate scelus?
Scilicet hos alti missurus ad atria cæli,
Sulphureo curru flammivolisque rotis;
Qualiter ille, feris caput inviolabile Parcis,
Liquit Iördanios turbine raptus agros.

IN EANDEM.

SICCINE tentâsti cælo donâsse Iäcobum,
Quæ septemgemino Bellua monte lates?
Ni meliora tuum poterit dare munera numen,
Parce, precor, donis insidiosa tuis.
Ille quidem sine te consortia serus adivit
Astra, nec inferni pulveris usus ope.
Sic potiùs fœdos in cælum pelle cucullos,
Et quot habet brutos Roma profana Deos;
Namque hac aut aliâ nisi quemque adjuveris arte,
Crede mihi, cæli vix bene scandet iter.

10

IN EANDEM.

PURGATOREM animæ derisit Iäcobus ignem,
Et sine quo superûm non adeunda domus.
Frendit hoc trinâ monstrum Latiale coronâ,
Movit et horrificum cornua dena minax.
Et "Nec inultus" ait "temnes mea sacra, Britanne;
Supplicium spretâ religione dabis;
Et, si stelligeras unquam penetraveris arces,
Non nisi per flammis triste patebit iter."
O quàm funesto cecinisti proxima vero,
Verbaque ponderibus vix caritura suis!
Nam prope Tartareo sublimine rotatus ab igni
Ibat ad æthereas, umbra perusta, plagas.

10

IN EANDEM.

QUEM modò Roma suis devoverat impia diris,
 Et Styge damnârat, Tænarioque sinu,
 Hunc, vice mutatâ, jam tollere gestit ad astra,
 Et cupit ad superos evehere usque Deos.

IN INVENTOREM BOMBARDÆ.

IAPETIONIDEM laudavit cæca vetustas,
 Qui tulit ætheream solis ab axe facem;
 At mihi major erit qui lurida creditur arma
 Et trifidum fulmen surripuisse Jovi.

AD LEONORAM ROMÆ CANENTEM.

ANGELUS unicuique suus (sic credite, gentes)
 Obtigit æthereis ales ab ordinibus.
 Quid mirum, Leonora, tibi si gloria major?
 Nam tua præsentem vox sonat ipsa Deum.
 Aut Deus, aut vacui certè mens tertia cæli,
 Per tua secretò guttura serpit agens;
 Serpit agens, facilisque docet mortalia corda
 Sensim immortalis assuescere posse sono.
 Quòd, si cuncta quidem Deus est, per cunctaque fusus,
 In te unâ loquitur, cætera mutus habet.

10

AD EANDEM.

ALTERA Torquatum cepit Leonora poetam,
 Cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.
 Ah miser ille tuo quanto feliciùs ævo
 Perditus, et propter te, Leonora, foret!
 Et te Pieriâ sensisset voce canentem
 Aurea maternæ fila movere lyræ!
 Quamvis Dirçæo torsisset lumina Pentheo
 Sævior, aut totus desipuisset iners,
 Tu tamen errantes cæcâ vertigine sensus
 Voce eadem poteris composuisse tuâ;
 Et poteris, ægro spirans sub corde quietem,
 Flexanimo cântu restituïsse sibi.

10

AD EANDEM.

CREDULA quid liquidam Sirena, Neapoli, jactas,
 Claraque Parthenopes fana Achelöiados,
 Littoreamque tuâ defunctam Naiada ripâ
 Corpore Chalcidico sacra dedisse rogo?
 Illa quidem vivitque, et amœnâ Tiberidis undâ
 Mutavit rauci murmura Pausilipi.
 Illic, Romulidum studiis ornata secundis,
 Atque homines cantu detinet atque Deos.

APOLOGUS DE RUSTICO ET HERO.

RUSTICUS ex malo sapidissima poma quotannis
 Legit, et urbano lecta dedit Domino:
 Hic, incredibili fructûs dulcedine captus,
 Malum ipsam in proprias transtulit areolas.
 Hactenûs illa ferax, sed longo debilis ævo,
 Mota solo assueto, protinus aret iners.
 Quod tandem ut patuit Domino, spe lusus inani,
 Damnavit celeres in sua damna manus;
 Atque ait, "Heu quanto satius fuit illa Coloni
 (Parva licet) grato dona tulisse animo;
 Possem ego avaritiam frænare, gulamque voracem:
 Nunc periere mihi et fœtus et ipse parens."

10

[DE MORO.]

GALLI ex concubitu gravidam te, Pontia, Mori
 Quis bene moratam morigeramque neget?

AD CHRISTINAM, SUECORUM REGINAM, NOMINE CROMWELLI.

BELLIPOTENS Virgo, Septem regina Trionum,
 Christina, Arctoi lucida stella poli!
 Cernis quas merui durâ sub casside rugas,
 Utque senex armis impiger ora tero,
 Invia fatorum dum per vestigia nitor,
 Exequor et populi fortia jussa manu.
 Ast tibi submittit frontem reverentior umbra,
 Nec sunt hi vultus Regibus usque truces.

Elegiarum Finis.

SYLVARUM LIBER.

Anno ætatis 17.

IN OBITUM PROCANCELLARII MEDICI.

PARERE Fati discite legibus,
 Manusque Parcæ jam date supplices,
 Qui pendulum telluris orbem
 Iæpeti colitis nepotes.
 Vos si relicto Mors vaga Tænaro
 Semel vocârit flebilis, heu! moræ
 Tentantur incassum dolique;
 Per tenebras Stygis ire certum est.
 Si destinatam pellere dextera
 Mortem valeret, non ferus Hercules
 Nessi venenatus cruore
 Æmathiâ jacuisset Cætâ;
 Nec fraude turpi palladis invidæ
 Vidisset occisum Ilion Hectora, aut
 Quem larva Pelidis peremit
 Ense Locro, Jove lacrymante.
 Si triste Fatum verba Hecatæia
 Fugare possint, Telegoni parens
 Vixisset infamis, potentique
 Ægiali soror usa virgâ.
 Numenque trinum fallere si queant
 Artes medentum, ignotaque gramina,
 Non gnarus herbarum Machaon
 Eurypyli cecidisset hastâ;
 Læsisset et nec te, Philyreie,
 Sagitta Echidnæ perlita sanguine;
 Nec tela te fulmenque avitum,
 Cæse puer genetricis alvo.
 Tuque, O alumno major Apolline,
 Gentis togatæ cui regimen datum,
 Froncosa quem nunc Cirrha luget,
 Et mediis Helicon in undis,
 jam præfuisses Palladio gregi
 Lætus superstes, nec sine gloriâ;
 Nec puppe lustrâsses Charontis
 Horribiles barathri recessus.

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At fila rupit Persephone tua,
 Irata cum te viderit artibus
 Succoque pollenti tot atris
 Faucibus eripuisse Mortis.
 Colende Præses, membra precor tua
 Molli quiescant cespite, et ex tuo
 Crescant rosæ calthæque busto,
 Purpureoque hyacinthus ore.
 Sit mite de te iudicium Æaci,
 Subrideatque Ætnæa Proserpina,
 Interque felices perennis
 Elysio spatiere campo!

40

IN QUINTUM NOVEMBRIS.

Anno ætatis 17.

JAM pius extremâ veniens Iacobus ab arcto
 Teucrigenas populos, latèque patentia regna
 Albionum tenuit, jamque inviolabile fœdus
 Sceptra Caledoniis conjunxerat Anglica Scotis:
 Pacificusque novo, felix divesque, sedebat
 In solio, occultique doli securus et hostis:
 Cum ferus ignifluo regnans Acheronte tyrannus,
 Eumenidum pater, æthereo vagus exul Olympo,
 Fortè per immensum terrarum erraverat orbem,
 Dinumerans sceleris socios, vernasque fideles,
 Participes regni post funera mœsta futuros.
 Hic tempestates medio ciet aëre diras;
 Illic unanimes odium struit inter amicos:
 Armata et invictas in mutua viscera gentes,
 Regnaque oliviferâ vertit florentia pace;
 Et quoscunque videt puræ virtutis amantes,
 Hos cupit adjicere imperio, fraudumque magister
 Tentat inaccessum sceleri corrumpere pectus;
 Insidiasque locat tacitas, cassesque latentes
 Tendit, ut incautos rapiat, ceu Caspia, tigris
 Insequitur trepidam deserta per avia prædam
 Nocte sub illuni, et somno nictantibus astris.
 Talibus infestat populos Summanus et urbes,
 Cinctus cæruleæ fumanti turbine flammæ.
 Jamque fluentisonis albertia rupibus arva
 Apparent, et terra Deo dilecta marino,
 Cui nomen dederat quondam Neptunia proles,
 Amphitryoniaden qui non dubitavit atrocem,
 Æquore tranato, furiali poscere bello,
 Ante expugnataæ crudelia sæcula Trojæ.

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At simul hanc, opibusque et festâ pace beatam,
 Aspicit, et pingues donis Cerealibus agros,
 Quodque magis doluit, venerantem numina veri
 Sancta Dei populum, tandem suspiria rupit
 Tartareos ignes et luridum olentia sulphur;
 Qualia Trinacriâ trux ab Jove clausus in Ætnâ
 Efflat tabifico monstrosus ab ore Typhœus.
 Ignescunt oculi, stridetque adamantinus ordo
 Dentis, ut armorum fragor, ictaque cuspide cuspis;
 Atque "Pererrato solum hoc lacrymabile mundo
 Inveni" dixit; "gens hæc mihi sola rebellis,
 Contemtrixque jugi, nostrâque potentior arte.
 Illa tamen, mea si quicquam tentamina possunt,
 Non feret hoc impune diu, non ibit inulta."
 Hactenus; et piceis liquido natat aëre pennis:
 Quâ volat, adversi præcursant agmine venti,
 Densantur nubes, et crebra tonitrua fulgent.

40

Jamque pruinosas velox superaverat Alpes,
 Et tenet Ausoniæ fines. A parte sinistra
 Nimbifer Apenninus erat, priscique Sabini;
 Dextra veneficiis infamis Hetruria; nec non
 Te furtiva, Tiberis, Thetidi videt oscula dantem:
 Hinc Mavortigenæ consistit in arce Quirini.
 Reddiderant dubiam jam sera crepuscula lucem,
 Cum circumgreditur totam Tricoronifer urbem,
 Panificosque Deos portat, scapulisque virorum
 Evehitur; præeunt submisso poplite reges,
 Et mendicantûm series longissima fratrum;
 Cereaque in manibus gestant funalia cæci,
 Cimмериis nati in tenebris vitamque trahentes.
 Templâ dein multis subeunt lucentia tædis
 (Vesper erat sacer iste Petro), fremitusque canentûm
 Sæpe tholos implet vacuos, et inane locorum:
 Qualiter exululat Bromius, Bromiique caterva,
 Orgia cantantes in Echionio Aracyntho,
 Dum tremit attonitus vitreis Asopus in undis,
 Et procul ipse cavâ responsat rupe Cithæron.

50

60

His igitur tandem solenni more peractis,
 Nox senis amplexus Erebi taciturna reliquit,
 Præcipientesque impellit equos stimulante flagello,
 Captum oculis Typhlontâ, Melanchætēque ferocem,
 Atque Acherontæo prognatam patre Siopen
 Torpidam, et hirsutis horrentem Phrica capillis.

70

Interea regum domitor, Phlegetontius hæres,
 Ingreditur thalamos (neque enim secretus adulter
 Producit steriles molli sine pellice noctes);
 At vix compositos somnus claudebat ocellos

Cum niger umbrarum dominus, rectorque silentum,
 Prædatorque hominum, falsâ sub imagine tectus
 Astitit. Assumptis micuerunt tempora canis; 80
 Barba sinus promissa tegit; cineracea longo
 Syrmate verrit humum vestis; pendetque cucullus
 Vertice de raso; et, ne quicquam desit ad artes,
 Cannabeo lumbos constrinxit fune salaces,
 Tarda fenestris figens vestigia calceis.
 Talis, uti fama est, vastâ Franciscus eremo
 Tetra vagabatur solus per lustra ferarum,
 Sylvestrique tulit genti pia verba salutis
 Impius, atque lupos domuit, Libyosque leones.
 Subdolos at tali Serpens velatus amictu 90
 Solvit in has fallax ora execrantia voces:
 "Dormis, nate? Etiamne tuos sopor opprimit artus?
 Immemor O fidei, pecorumque oblite tuorum!
 Dum cathedram, venerande, tuam diademaque triplex
 Ridet Hyperboreo gens barbara nata sub axe,
 Dumque pharetrati spernunt tua jura Britanni:
 Surge, age! surge piger, Latius quem Cæsar adorat,
 Cui reserata patet convexi janua cæli;
 Turgentes animos et fastus frange procaces,
 Sacrilegique sciant tua quid maledictio possit, 100
 Et quid Apostolicæ possit custodia clavis;
 Et memor Hesperia disjectam ulciscere classem,
 Mersaque Iberorum lato vexilla profundo,
 Sanctorumque cruci tot corpora fixa probrosæ,
 Thermodoonteâ nuper regnante puellâ.
 At tu si tenero mavis torpescere lecto,
 Crescentesque negas hosti contundere vires,
 Tyrrhenum implebit numeroso milite pontum,
 Signaque Aventino ponet fulgentia colle;
 Reliquias veterum franget, flammisque cremabit, 110
 Sacraque calcabit pedibus tua colla profanis,
 Cujus gaudebant soleis dare basia reges.
 Nec tamen hunc bellis et aperto Marte lacesses;
 Irritus ille labor; tu callidus utere fraude:
 Quælibet hæreticis disponere retia fas est.
 Jamque ad consilium extremis rex magnus ab oris
 Patricios vocat, et procerum de stirpe creatos,
 Grandævosque patres trabeâ canisque verendos:
 Hos tu membratim poteris conspergere in auras,
 Atque dare in cineres, nitrati pulveris igne 120
 Ædibus injecto, quâ convenere, sub imis.
 Protinùs ipse igitur quoscunque habet Anglia fidos
 Propositi factique mone: quisquamne tuorum
 Audebit summi non jussa facessere Papæ?

Perculososque metu subito, casuque stupentes,
 Invadat vel Gallus atrox, vel sævus Iberus.
 Sæcula sic illic tandem Mariana redibunt,
 Tuque in belligeros iterum dominaberis Anglos.
 Et, nequid timeas, divos divasque secundas
 Accipe, quotque tuis celebrantur numina fastis.”
 Dixit, et adscitos ponens malefidus amictus
 Fugit ad infandam, regnum illætabile, Lethen.

130

Jam rosea Eoas pandens Tithonia portas
 Mæstaque adhuc nigri deplorans funera nati
 Irrigat ambrosiis montana cacumina guttis;
 Cum somnos pepulit stellatæ janitor aulæ,
 Nocturnos visus et somnia grata revolvens.

Est locus æternâ septus caligine noctis,
 Vasta ruinosi quondam fundamina tecti,
 Nunc torvi spelunca Phoni, Prodotæque bilinguis,
 Effera quos uno peperit Discordia partu.

140

Hic inter cæmenta jacent præruptaque saxa
 Ossa inhumata virûm, et trajecta cadavera ferro;
 Hic Dolus intortis semper sedet ater ocellis,
 Jurgiaque, et stimulis armata Calumnia fauces;
 Et Furor, atque viæ moriendi mille, videntur,
 Et Timor; exanguisque locum circumvolat Horror;
 Perpetuòque leves per muta silentia Manes
 Exululant; tellus et sanguine conscia stagnat.

150

Ipse etiam pavidi latitant penetralibus antri
 Et Phonos et Prodotes; nulloque sequente per antrum,
 Antrum horrens, scopulosum, atrum feralibus umbris,
 Diffugiunt sontes, et retrò lumina vortunt.

Hos pugiles Romæ per sæcula longa fideles
 Evocat antistes Babylonius, atque ita fatur:

“Finibus occiduis circumfusum incolit æquor
 Gens exosa mihi; prudens Natura negavit
 Indignam penitùs nostro conjungere mundo.

160

Illuc, sic jubeo, celeri contendite gressu,
 Tartareoque leves diffentur pulvere in auras
 Et rex et pariter satrapæ, scelerata propago;
 Et quotquot fidei caluere cupidine veræ
 Consilii socios adhibete, operisque ministros.”
 Finierat: rigidi cupidè paruere gemelli.

Interea longo flectens curvamine cælos
 Despiciat æthereâ Dominus qui fulgurat arce,
 Vanaque perversæ ridet conamina turbæ,
 Atque sui causam populi volet ipse tueri.

Esse ferunt spatium, quâ distat ab Aside terrâ
 Fertilis Europe, et spectat Mareotidas undas;

170

Hic turris posita est Titanidos ardua Famæ,
 Ærea, lata, sonans, rutilus vicinior astris
 Quàm superimpositum vel Athos vel Pelion Ossæ.
 Mille fores aditusque patent, totidemque fenestræ,
 Amplaque per tenues translucent atria muros.
 Excitat hic varios plebs agglomerata susurros;
 Qualiter instrepitant circum mulctralia bombis
 Agmina muscarum, aut texto per ovilia junco,
 Dum Canis æstivum cæli petit ardua culmen. 180
 Ipsa quidem summâ sedet ultrix matris in arce:
 Auribus innumeris cinctum caput eminent olli,
 Queis sonitum exiguum trahit, atque levissima captat
 Murmura, ab extremis patuli confinibus orbis;
 Nec tot, Aristoride, servator inique juvencæ
 Isidos, immiti volvebas lumina vultu,
 Lumina non unquam tacito nutantia somno,
 Lumina subjectas latè spectantia terras.
 Istis illa solet loca luce carentia sæpe
 Perillustrare, etiam radianti impervia soli; 190
 Millenisque loquax auditaque visaque linguis
 Cuilibet effundit temeraria; veraque mendax
 Nunc minuit, modò confictis sermonibus auget.
 Sed tamen a nostro meruisti carmine laudes,
 Fama, bonum quo non aliud veracius ullum,
 Nobis digna cani, nec te memorâsse pigebit
 Carmine tam longo; servati scilicet Angli
 Officiis, vaga diva, tuis tibi reddimus æqua.
 Te Deus, æternos motu qui temperat ignes,
 Fulmine præmisso, alloquitur, terrâque tremente: 200
 "Fama, siles? an te latet impia Papistarum
 Conjurata cohors in meque meosque Britannos,
 Et nova sceptrigero cædes meditata Iäcobo?"
 Nec plura: illa statim sensit mandata Tonantis,
 Et, satis antè fugax, stridentes induit alas,
 Induit et variis exilia corpora plumis;
 Dextra tubam gestat Temesæo ex ære sonoram.
 Nec mora; jam pennis cedentes remigat auras,
 Atque parum est cursu celeres prævertere nubes;
 Jam ventos, jam solis equos, post terga reliquit: 210
 Et primò Angliacas, solito de more, per urbes
 Ambiguas voces incertaque murmura spargit;
 Mox arguta dolos et detestabile vulgat
 Proditionis opus, nec non facta horrida dictu,
 Authorèsque addit sceleris, nec garrula cæcis
 Insidiis loca structa silet. Stupuere relatis,
 Et pariter juvenes, pariter tremuere puellæ,
 Effœctique senes pariter, tantæque ruinæ

Sensus ad ætatem subitò penetraverat omnem.
 Attamen interea populi miserescit ab alto
 Æthereus Pater, et crudelibus obstittit ausis
 Papicolùm. Capti pœnas raptantur ad acres:
 At pia thura Deo et grati solvuntur honores;
 Compita læta focis genialibus omnia fumant;
 Turba choros juvenilis agit; Quintoque Novembris
 Nulla dies toto occurrit celebratior anno.

220

Anno ætatis 17.

IN OBITUM PRÆSULIS ELIENSIS.

ADHUC madentes rore squalebant genæ,
 Et sicca nondum lumina
 Adhuc liquentis imbre turgebant salis
 Quem nuper effudi pius
 Dum mœsta charo justa persolvi rogo
 Wintoniensis Præsulis,
 Cum centilinguis Fama (proh! semper mali
 Cladisque vera nuntia)
 Spargit per urbes divitis Britanniaë,
 Populosque Neptuno satos,
 Cessisse Morti et ferreis Sororibus,
 Te, generis humani decus,
 Qui rex sacrorum illâ fuisti in insulâ
 Quæ nomen Anguillaë tenet.
 Tunc inquietum pectus irâ protinùs
 Ebulliebat fervidâ,
 Tumulis potentem sæpe devovens deam:
 Nec vota Naso in Ibida
 Concepit alto diriora pectore;
 Graiusque vates parciùs
 Turpem Lycambis execratus est dolum,
 Sponsamque Neobulen suam.
 At ecce! diras ipse dum fundo graves,
 Et imprecor Neci necem,
 Audisse tales videor attonitus sonos
 Leni, sub aurâ, flamine:
 "Cæcos furores pone; pone vitream
 Bilemque et irritas minas.
 Quid temerè violas non nocenda numina,
 Subitòque ad iras percita?
 Non est, ut arbitraris elusus miser,
 Mors atra Noctis filia,

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Erebove patre creta, sive Erinnye,
 Vastove nata sub Chao:
 Ast illa, cælo missa stellato, Dei
 Messes ubique colligit;
 Animasque mole carneâ reconditas
 In lucem et auras evocat.
 (Ut cum fugaces excitant Horæ diem,
 Themidos Jovisque filiaë.) 40
 Et sempiterni ducit ad vultus Patris,
 At justa raptat impios
 Sub regna furvi luctuosa Tartari
 Sedesque subterraneas.
 Hanc ut vocantem lætus audivi, citò
 Fœdum reliqui carcerem,
 Volatilesque faustus inter milites
 Ad astra sublimis feror,
 Vates ut olim raptus ad cælum senex,
 Auriga currus ignei. 50
 Non me Bootis terruere lucidi
 Sarraca tarda frigore, aut
 Formidolosi Scorpionis brachia;
 Non ensis, Orion, tuus.
 Prætervolavi fulgidi solis globum;
 Longèque sub pedibus deam
 Vidi triformem, dum coërcebat suos
 Frænis dracones aureis.
 Erraticorum siderum per ordines,
 Per lacteas vehor plagas, 60
 Velocitatem sæpe miratus novam,
 Donec nitentes ad fores
 Ventum est Olympi, et regiam crystallinam, et
 Stratum smaragdis atrium.
 Sed hic tacebo, nam quis effari queat
 Oriundus humano patre
 Amœnitates illius loci? Mihi
 Sat est in æternum frui."

NATURAM NON PATI SENIUM.

HEU! quàm perpetuis erroribus acta fatiscit
 Avia mens hominum, tenebrisque immersa profundis
 CEdipodioniam volvit sub pectore noctem!
 Quæ vesana suis metiri facta deorum
 Audet, et incisas leges adamante perenni
 Assimilare suis, nulloque solubile sæclo
 Consilium Fati perituris alligat horis.

Ergone marcescet sulcantibus obsita rugis
 Naturæ facies, et rerum publica Mater,
 Omniparum contracta uterum, sterilest ab ævo? 10
 Et, se fassa senem, malè certis passibus ibit
 Sidereum tremebunda caput? Num tetra vetustas
 Annorumque æterna fames, squalorque situsque,
 Sidera vexabunt? An et insatiabile Tempus
 Esuriet Cælum, rapietque in viscera patrem?
 Heu! potuitne suas imprudens Jupiter arces
 Hoc contra munisse nefas, et Temporis isto
 Exemisse malo, gyrosque dedisse perennes?
 Ergo erit ut quandoque, sono dilapsa tremendo,
 Convexi tabulata ruant, atque obvius ictu 20
 Stridat uterque polus, superâque ut Olympius aulâ
 Decidat, horribilisque relectâ Gorgone Pallas;
 Qualis in Ægæam proles Junonia Lemnon
 Deturbata sacro cecidit de limine cæli.
 Tu quoque, Phœbe, tui casus imitabere nati
 Præcipiti curru, subitâque ferere ruinâ
 Pronus, et extinctâ fumabit lampade Nereus,
 Et dabit attonito feralia sibila ponto.
 Tunc etiam aërei divulsis sedibus Hæmi
 Dissultabit apex, imoque allisa barathro 30
 Terrebunt Stygium dejecta Ceraunia Ditem,
 In superos quibus usus erat, fraternaue bella.
 At pater Omnipotens, fundatis fortiùs astris,
 Consuluit rerum summæ, certoque peregit
 Pondere Fatorum lances, atque ordine summo
 Singula perpetuum jussit servare tenorem.
 Volvitur hinc lapsu Mundi rota prima diurno,
 Raptat et ambitos sociâ vertigine cælos.
 Tardior haud solito Saturnus, et acer ut olim
 Fulmineum rutilat cristatâ casside Mavors. 40
 Floridus æternùm Phœbus juvenile coruscat,
 Nec fovet effœtas loca per declivia terras
 Devexo temone Deus; sed semper, amicâ
 Luce potens, eadem currit per signa rotarum.
 Surgit odoratis pariter formosus ab Indis
 Æthereum pecus albenti qui cogit Olympo,
 Manè vocans, et serus agens in pascua cæli;
 Temporis et gemino dispertit regna colore.
 Fulget, obitque vices alterno Delia cornu,
 Cæruleumque ignem paribus complectitur ulnis. 50
 Nec variant elementa fidem, solitoque fragore
 Lurida percussas jaculantur fulmina rupes.
 Nec per inane furit leviori murmure Corus;
 Stringit et armiferos æquali horrore Gelonos

Trux Aquilo, spiratque hiemem, nimbosque volutat.
 Utque solet, Siculi diverberat ima Pelori
 Rex maris, et raucâ circumstrepit æquora conchâ
 Oceani Tubicen, nec vastâ mole minorem
 Ægæona ferunt dorso Balearica cete.
 Sed neque, Terra, tibi sæcli vigor ille vetusti
 Priscus abest; servatque suum Narcissus odorem;
 Et puer ille suum tenet, et puer ille, decorem,
 Phœbe, tuusque, et, Cypri, tuus; nec ditior olim
 Terra datum sceleri celavit montibus aurum
 Conscia, vel sub aquis gemmas. Sic denique in ævum
 Ibit cunctarum series justissima rerum;
 Donec flamma orbem populabitur ultima, latè
 Circumplexa polos et vasti culmina cæli,
 Ingentique rogo flagrabit machina Mundi.

60

DE IDEÂ PLATONICÂ QUEMADMODUM ARISTOTELES INTELLEXIT.

DICITE, sacrorum præsidēs nemorum deæ,
 Tuque O noveni perbeata numinis
 Memoria mater, quæque in immenso procul
 Antro recumbis otiosa Æternitas,
 Monumenta servans, et ratas leges Jovis,
 Cælique fastos atque ephemeridas Deûm,
 Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
 Natura solers finxit humanum genus,
 Æternus, incorruptus, æquævus polo,
 Unusque et universus, exemplar Dei?
 Haud ille, Palladis gemellus innubæ,
 Interna proles insidet menti Jovis;
 Sed, quamlibet natura sit communior,
 Tamen seorsus extat ad morem unius,
 Et, mira! certo stringitur spatio loci:
 Seu sempiternus ille siderum comes
 Cæli pererrat ordines decemplicis,
 Citimumve terris incolit Lunæ globum;
 Sive, inter animas corpus adituras sedens,
 Obliviosas torpet ad Lethes aquas;
 Sive in remotâ fortè terrarum plagâ
 Incedit ingens hominis archetypus gigas,
 Et diis tremendus erigit celsum caput,
 Atlante major portitore siderum.
 Non, cui profundum cæcitas lumèn dedit,
 Dircæus augur vidit hunc alto sinu;

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Non hunc silenti nocte Pléïones nepos
 Vatum sagaci præpes ostendit choro;
 Non hunc sacerdos novit Assyrius, licet
 Longos vetusti commemoret atavos Nini,
 Priscumque Belon, inclytumque Osiridem;
 Non ille trino gloriosus nomine
 Ter magnus Hermes (ut sit arcani sciens)
 Talem reliquit Isidis cultoribus.
 At tu, perenne ruris Academi decus,
 (Hæc monstra si tu primus induxti scholis)
 Jam jam poetas, urbis exules tuæ,
 Revocabis, ipse fabulator maximus;
 Aut institutor ipse migrabis foras.

30

AD PATREM.

NUNC mea Pierios cupiam per pectora fontes
 Irriguas torquere vias, totumque per ora
 Volvere laxatum gemino de vertice rivum;
 Ut, tenues oblita sonos, audacibus alis
 Surgat in officium venerandi Musa parentis.
 Hoc utcunque tibi gratum, pater optime, carmen
 Exiguum meditatur opus; nec novimus ipsi
 Aptius a nobis quæ possint munera donis
 Respondere tuis, quamvis nec maxima possint
 Respondere tuis, nedum ut par gratia donis
 Esse queat vacuis quæ redditur arida verbis.
 Sed tamen hæc nostros ostendit pagina census,
 Et quod habemus opum chartâ numeravimus istâ,
 Quæ mihi sunt nullæ, nisi quas dedit aurea Clio,
 Quas mihi semoto somni peperere sub antro,
 Et nemoris laureta sacri, Parnassides umbræ.
 Nec tu, vatis opus, divinum despice carmen,
 Quo nihil æthereos ortus et semina cæli,
 Nil magis humanam commendat origine mentem,
 Sancta Prometheæ retinens vestigia flammæ.
 Carmen amant Superi, tremebundaque Tartara carmen
 Ima ciere valet, divosque ligare profundos,
 Et triplici duos Manes ademante coerces.
 Carmine sepositi retegunt arcana futuri
 Phœbades, et tremulæ pallentes ora Sibyllæ;
 Carmina sacrificus sollennes pangit ad aras,
 Aurea seu sternit motantem cornua taurum,
 Seu cum fata sagax fumantibus abdita fibris
 Consulit, et tepidis Parcam scrutatur in extis.

10

20

Nos etiam, patrium tunc cum repetemus Olympum, 30
 Æternæque moræ stabunt immobilis ævi,
 Ibimus auratis per cæli templa coronis,
 Dulcia suaviloquo sociantes carmina plectro,
 Astra quibus geminique poli convexa sonabunt.
 Spiritus et rapidos qui circinat igneus orbis
 Nunc quoque sidereis intercinit ipse choreis
 Immortale melos et inenarrabile carmen,
 Torrida dum rutilus compescit sibila Serpens,
 Demissoque ferox gladio mansuescit Orion,
 Stellarum nec sentit onus Maurusius Atlas. 40
 Carmina regales epulas ornare solebant,
 Cum nondum luxus, vastæque immensa vorago
 Nota gulæ, et modico spumabat cœna Lyæo.
 Tum de more sedens festa ad convivia vates,
 Æsculeâ intonsos redimitus ab arbore crines,
 Heroumque actus imitandaque gesta canebat,
 Et Chaos, et positi latè fundamina Mundi,
 Reptantesque deos, et alentes numina glandes,
 Et nondum Ætnæo quæsitum fulmen ab antro.
 Denique quid vocis modulamen inane juvabit, 50
 Verborum sensusque vacans, numerique loquacis?
 Silvestres decet iste chorus, non Orphea, cantus,
 Qui tenuit fluvios, et quercubus addidit aures,
 Cærmine, non citharâ, simulacraque functa canendo
 Compulit in lacrymas: habet has a carmine laudes.
 Nec tu perge, precor, sacras contemnere Musas,
 Nec vanas inopesque puta, quarum ipse peritus
 Munere mille sonos numeros componis ad aptos,
 Millibus et vocem modululis variare canoram
 Doctos Arionii meritò sis nominis hæres. 60
 Nunc tibi quid mirum si me genuisse poëtam
 Contigerit, charo si tam propè sanguine juncti
 Cognatas artes studiumque affine sequamur?
 Ipse volens Phæbus se dispertire duobus,
 Altera dona mihi, dedit altera dona parenti;
 Dividuumque Deum, genitorque puerque, tenemus.
 Tu tamen ut simules teneras odisse Camœnas,
 Non odisse reor. Neque enim, pater, ire jubebas
 Quà via lata patet, quà pronior area lucri,
 Certeque condendi fulget spes aurea nummi; 70
 Nec rapis ad leges, malè custoditaque gentis
 Jura, nec insulsis damnas clamoribus aures.
 Sed, magis excultam cupiens ditescere mentem,
 Me, procul urbano strepitu, secessibus altis
 Abductum, Aoniæ jucunda per otia ripæ,
 Phæbæo lateri comitem sinis ire beatum.

Officium chari taceo commune parentis ;
 Me poscunt majora. Tuo, pater optime, sumptu
 Cum mihi Romulæ patuit facundia linguæ,
 Et Latii veneres, et quæ Jovis ora decebant 80
 Grandia magniloquis elata vocabula Graiis,
 Addere suasisti quos jactat Gallia flores,
 Et quam degeneri novus Italus ore loquelam
 Fundit, barbaricos testatus voce tumultus,
 Quæque Palæstinus loquitur mysteria vates.
 Denique quicquid habet cælum, subjectaque cælo
 Terra parens, terræque et cælo interfluis aër,
 Quicquid et unda tegit, pontique agitabile marmor,
 Per te nôsse licet, per te, si nôsse libebit ;
 Dimotâque venit spectanda Scientia nube, 90
 Nudaque conspicuos inclinat ad oscula vultus,
 Ni fugisse velim, ni sit libâsse molestum.

I nunc, confer opes, quisquis malesanus avitas
 Austriaci gazas Perüanaque regna præoptas.
 Quæ potuit majora pater tribuisse, vel ipse
 Jupiter, excepto, donâsset ut omnia, cælo?
 Non potiora dedit, quamvis et tuta fuissent,
 Publica qui juveni commisit lumina nato,
 Atque Hyperionios currus, et fræna diei,
 Et circum undantem radiatâ luce tiaram. 100
 Ergo ego, jam doctæ pars quamlibet ima catervæ,
 Victrices hederas inter laurosque sedebo ;
 Jamque nec obscurus populo miscebor inerti,
 Vitabuntque oculos vestigia nostra profanos.
 Este procul vigiles Curæ, procul este Querelæ,
 Invidiæque acies transverso tortilis hirquo ;
 Sæva nec anguiferos extende, Calumnia, rictus ;
 In me triste nihil, fœdissima turba, potestis,
 Nec vestri sum juris ego ; securaque tutus
 Pectora vipereo gradiar sublimis ab ictu. 110

At tibi, chare pater, postquam non æqua merenti
 Posse referre datur, nec dona rependere factis,
 Sit memorâsse satis, repetitaque munera grato
 Percensere animo, fidæque reponere menti.

Et vos, O nostri, juvenilia carmina, lusus,
 Si modò perpetuos sperare audebitis annos,
 Et domini superesse rogo, lucemque tueri,
 Nec spisso rapient oblivia nigra sub Orco,
 Forsitan has laudes, decantatumque parentis
 Nomen, ad exemplum, sero servabitis ævo. 120

PSALM CXIV.

Ἰσραὴλ ὅτε παῖδες, ὅτ' ἀγλαὰ φῦλ' Ἰακώβου
 Αἰγύπτιον λίπε δῆμον, ἀπεχθέα, βαρβαρόφωνον,
 Δὴ τότε μῶνον ἔην ὄσιον γένος υἴες Ἰουδα·
 Ἐν δὲ Θεὸς λαοῖσι μέγα κρείων βασιλευεν.
 Εἶδε καὶ ἐντροπάδην φύγαδ' ἐρρώησε θάλασσα,
 Κύματι εἰλυμένη ῥοθίῳ, ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἐστυφελίχθη
 Ἰρὸς Ἰορδάνης ποτὶ ἀργυροειδέα πηγὴν·
 Ἐκ δ' ὄρεα σκαρθμοῖσιν ἀπειρέσια κλονέοντο,
 Ὡς κριοὶ σφριγιόωντες εὐτραφερῶ ἐν ἄλωῃ·
 Βαιότεραι δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι ἀνασκίρτησαν ἐρίπναι,
 Οἷα παραλὸν σύριγγι φίλην ὑπὸ μητέρι ἄρνες.
 Τίπτε σύγ', αἰνὰ θάλασσα, πέλωρ φύγαδ' ἐρρώησας
 Κύματι εἰλυμένη ῥοθίῳ; τί δ' ἄρ' ἐστυφελίχθης
 Ἰρὸς Ἰορδάνη ποτὶ ἀργυροειδέα πηγὴν;
 Τίπτ' ὄρεα σκαρθμοῖσιν ἀπειρέσια κλονέεσθε,
 Ὡς κριοὶ σφριγιόωντες εὐτραφερω ἐν ἄλωῃ;
 Βαιότεραι τί δ' ἄρ' ὕμμες ἀνασκιρτήσατ' ἐρίπναι,
 Οἷα παραλὸν σύριγγι φίλην ὑπὸ μητέρι ἄρνες;
 Σείεο γαῖα τρέουσα Θεὸν μεγάλ' ἐκτυπέοντα,
 Γαῖα Θεὸν τρέουσα ὑπατον σέβας Ἰσσακίδαο,
 Ὅς τε καὶ ἐκ σπιλάδων ποταμοὺς χέε μορμύροντας,
 Κρήνην τ' ἀέναον πέτρης ἀπὸ δακρυόεσσης.

*Philosophus ad Regem quendam, qui eum ignotum et insontem
 inter reos forte captum inscius damnauerat, τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ
 πορευόμενος ἡὲν subito misit.*

ὦ ἄνα, εἰ ὀλέσης με τὸν ἔννομον, οὐδέ τιν' ἀνδρῶν
 Δεινὸν ὄλως δράσαντα, σοφώτατον ἴσθι κάρηνον
 Ῥηϊδίως ἀφέλοι, τὸ δ' ὕστερον αἰθι νοήσεις,
 Μαψιδίως δ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα τὸν πρὸς θυμὸν ὀδύρη,
 Τοῖόνδ' ἐκ πόλιος περιώνυμον ἄλκαρ ὀλέσσας.

In effigiei ejus sculptorem.

Ἀμαθεὶ γεγράφθαι χειρὶ τήνδε μὲν εἰκόνα
 Φαίης τάχ' ἄν, πρὸς εἶδος αὐτοφυνὲς βλέπων.
 Τὸν δ' ἐκτυπωτὸν οὐκ ἐπιγνόντες, φίλοι,
 Γελᾶτε φαύλου δυσμίμημα ζωγράφου.

AD SALSILLUM, POETAM ROMANUM, ÆGROTANTEM. SCAZONTES.

O MUSA gressum quæ volens trahis claudum,
 Vulcanioque tarda gaudes incessu,
 Nec sentis illud in loco minus gratum
 Quam cum decentes flava Dëiope suras
 Alternat aureum ante Junonis lectum,
 Adesdum, et hæc s'is verba pauca Salsillo
 Refer, Camœna nostra cui tantum est cordi,
 Quamque ille magnis prætulit immeritò divis.
 Hæc ergo alumnus ille Londini Milto, 10
 Diebus hisce qui suum linquens nidum
 Polique tractum (pessimus ubi ventorum,
 Insanientis impotensque pulmonis,
 Pernix anhela sub Jove exercet flabra)
 Venit feraces Itali soli ad glebas,
 Visum superbâ cognitas urbes famâ,
 Virosque, doctæque indolem juventutis,
 Tibi optat idem hic fausta multa, Salsille,
 Habitumque fesso corpori penitùs sanum;
 Cui nunc profunda bilis infestat renes,
 Præcordiisque fixa damnosum spirat; 20
 Nec id pepercit impia quòd tu Romano
 Tam cultus ore Lesbium condis melos.
 O dulce divùm munus, O Salus, Hebes
 Germana! Tuque, Phœbe! morborum terror,
 Pythone cæso, sive tu magis Præan
 Libenter audis, hic tuus sacerdos est.
 Querceta Fauni, vosque rore vinoso
 Colles benigni, mitis Evandri sedes,
 Siquid salubre vallibus frondet vestris,
 Levamen ægro ferte certatim vati. 30
 Sic ille charis redditus rursùm Musis
 Vicina dulci prata mulcebit cantu.
 Ipse inter atros emirabitur lucos
 Numa, ubi beatum degit otium æternum,
 Suam reclivis semper Ægeriam spectans;
 Tumidusque et ipse Tiberis, hinc delinitus,
 Spei favebit annuæ colonorum;
 Nec in sepulchris ibit obsessum reges,
 Nimiùm sinistro latus irruens loro;
 Sed fræna meliùs temperabit undarum, 40
 Adusque curvi salsa regna Portumni.

MANSUS.

Joannes Baptista Mansus, Marchio Villensis, vir ingenii laude, tum literarum studio, nec non et bellicâ virtute, apud Italos clarus in primis est. Ad quem Torquati Tassi Dialogus extat de Amicitâ scriptus; erat enim Tassi amicissimus: ab quo etiam inter Campaniæ principes celebratur, in illo poemate cui titulus GERUSALEMME CONQUISTATA, lib. 20.

Fra cavalier magnanimi e cortesî
Risplende il Manso

Is authorem, Neapoli commorantem, summâ benevolentâ prosecutus est, multaque ei detulit humanitatis officia. Ad hunc itaque hospes ille, antequam ab eâ urbe discederet, ut ne ingratum se ostenderet, hoc carmen misit.

HÆC quoque, Manse, tuæ meditantur carmina laudi
Pierides; tibi, Manse, choro notissime Phœbi,
Quandoquidem ille alium haud æquo est dignatus honore,
Post Galli cineres, et Mecænatis Hetrusci.
Tu quoque, si nostræ tantum valet aura Camœnæ,
Victrices hederas inter laurosque sedebis.

Te pridem magno felix concordia Tasso
Junxit, et æternis inscripsit nomina chartis.
Mox tibi dulciloquum non inscia Musa Marinum
Tradidit; ille tuum dici se gaudet alumnum, 10
Dum canit Assyrios divûm prolixus amores,
Mollis et Ausonias stupefecit carmine nymphas.
Ille itidem moriens tibi soli debita vates
Ossa, tibi soli, supremaque vota reliquit:
Nec Manes pietas tua chara fefellit amici;
Vidimus arridentem operoso ex ære poetam.

Nec satis hoc visum est in utrumque, et nec pia cessant
Officia in tumulo; cupis integros rapere Orco,
Quà potes, atque avidas Parcarum eludere leges:
Amborum genus, et variâ sub sorte peractam 20
Describis vitam, moresque, et dona Minervæ;
Æmulus illius Mycalen qui natus ad altam
Rettulit Æolii vitam facundus Homeri.

Ergo ego te, Cliûs et magni nomine Phœbi,
Manse pater, jubeo longum salvere per ævum,
Missus Hyperboreo juvenis peregrinus ab axe.
Nec tu longinquam bonus aspernabere Musam,
Quæ nuper, gelidâ vix enutrita sub Arcto,
Imprudens Italas ausa est volitare per urbes.
Nos etiam in nostro modulantes flumine cygnos 30
Credimus obscuras noctis sensisse per umbras,
Quà Thamesis latè puris argenteus urnis
Oceani glaucos perfundit gurgite crines;
Quin et in has quondam pervenit Tityrus oras.

Sed neque nos genus incultum, nec inutile Phœbo,
 Quà plaga septeno mundi sulcata Trione
 Brumalem patitur longâ sub nocte Booten.
 Nos etiam colimus Phœbum, nos munera Phœbo,
 Flaventes spicas, et lutea mala canistris,
 Halantemque crocum (perhibet nisi vana vetustas) 40
 Misimus, et lectas Druidum de gente choreas.
 (Gens Druides antiqua, sacris operata deorum,
 Heroum laudes imitandaque gesta canebant.)
 Hinc quoties festo cingunt altaria cantu
 Delo in herbosâ Graiæ de more puellæ,
 Carminibus lætis memorant Corinœida Loxo,
 Fatidicamque Upin, cum flavicomâ Hecaërge,
 Nuda Caledonio variatas pectora fuco.
 Fortunate senex ! ergo quacunq̄ue per orbem
 Torquati decus et nomen celebrabitur ingens, 50
 Claraque perpetui succrescet fama Marini,
 Tu quoque in ora frequens venies plausumque virorum,
 Et parili carpes iter immortale volatu.
 Dicitur tum sponte tuos habitâsse penates
 Cynthius, et famulas venisse ad limina Musas.
 At non sponte domum tamen idem et regis adivit
 Rura Pheretiadæ cælo fugitivus Apollo,
 Ille licet magnum Alciden susceperat hospes ;
 Tantùm, ubi clamoros placuit vitare bubulcos,
 Nobile mansueti cessit Chironis in antrum, 60
 Irriguos inter saltus frondosaque tecta,
 Peneium prope rivum : ibi sæpe sub ilice nigrâ,
 Ad citharæ strepitum, blandâ prece victus amici,
 Exilii duros lenibat voce labores.
 Tum neque ripa suo, barathro nec fixa sub imo
 Saxa stetero loco ; nutat Trachinia rupes,
 Nec sentit solitas, immania pondera, silvas ;
 Emotæque suis properant de collibus orni,
 Mulcenturque novo maculosi carmine lynces.
 Diis dilecte senex ! te Jupiter æquus oportet 70
 Nascentem et miti lustrârît lumine Phœbus,
 Atlantisque nepos ; neque enim nisi charus ab ortu
 Diis superis poterit magno favisse poetæ.
 Hinc longæva tibi lentô sub flore senectus
 Vernat, et Æsonios lucratur vivida fusos,
 Nondum deciduos servans tibi frontis honores,
 Ingeniumque vigen, et adultum mentis acumen.
 O mihi si mea sors talem concedat amicum,
 Phœbæos decorâsse viros qui tam bene nôrit,
 Siquando indigenas revocabo in carmina reges, 80
 Arturumque etiam sub terris bella moventem,

Aut dicam invictæ sociali fœdere mensæ
 Magnanimos Heroas, et (O modò spiritus adsit)
 Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges!
 Tandem, ubi, non tacitæ permeñsus tempora vitæ,
 Annorumque satur, cineri sua jura relinquam,
 Ille mihi lecto madidis astartet ocellis;
 Astanti sat erit si dicam, 'Sim tibi curæ';
 Ille meos artus, liventi morte solutos,
 Curaret parvâ componi molliter urnâ: 90
 Forsitan et nostros ducat de marmore vultus,
 Nectens aut Paphiâ myrti aut Parnasside lauri
 Fronde comas; et ego securâ pace quiescam.
 Tum quoque, si qua fides, si præmia certa bonorum,
 Ipse ego, calicolum semotus in æthera divum,
 Quò labor et mens pura vehunt atque ignea virtus,
 Secreti hæc aliquâ mundi de parte videbo
 (Quantum fata sinunt), et totâ mente serenum
 Ridens purpureo suffundar lumine vultus,
 Et simul æthereo plaudam mihi lætus Olympo. 100

EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS.

ARGUMENTUM.

THYRSIS et DAMON, ejusdem viciniæ pastores, eadem studia sequuti, a pueritiâ amici erant, ut qui plurimum. THYRSIS, animi causâ profectus, peregrè de obitu DAMONIS nuncium accepit. Domum postea reversus, et rem ita esse comperto, se suamque solitudinem hoc carmine deplorat. DAMONIS autem subpersonâ hîc intelligitur CAROLUS DEODATUS, ex urbe Hetruriæ Lucâ paterno genere oriundus, cætera Anglus; ingenio, doctrinâ, clarissimisque cæteris virtutibus, dum viveret, juvenis egregius.

HIMERIDES Nymphæ (nam vos et Daphnin et Hylan,
 Et plorata diu meministis fata Bionis).
 Dicite Sicelicum Thamesina per oppida carmen:
 Quas miser effudit voces, quæ murmura Thyrsis,
 Et quibus assiduis exercuit antra querelis,
 Fluminaque, fontesque vagos, nemorumque recessus,
 Dum sibi præreptum queritur Damona, neque altam
 Luctibus exemit noctem, loca sola pererrans.
 Et jam bis viridi surgebat culmus aristâ,
 Et totidem flavas numerabant horrea messes, 10
 Ex quo summa dies tulerat Damona sub umbras,
 Nec dum aderat Thyrsis; pastorem scilicet illum
 Dulcis amor Musæ Thuscâ retinebat in urbe.
 Ast ubi mens expleta domum pecorisque relictî

Cura vocat, simul assuetâ sedique sub ulmo,
Tum verò amissum, tum denique, sentit amicum,
Cœpit et immensum sic exonerare dolorem:—

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.

Hei mihi! quæ terris, quæ dicam numina cælo,
Postquam te inmiti rapuerunt funere, Damon?
Siccine nos linquis? tua sic sine nomine virtus
Ibit, et obscuris numero sociabitur umbris?

20

At non ille animas virgâ qui dividit aureâ
Ista velit, dignumque tui te ducat in agmen,
Ignavumque procul pecus arceat omne silentium.

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.

Quicquid erit, certè, nisi me lupus antè videbit,
Indeplorato non comminuere sepulchro,
Constatitque tuus tibi honos, longumque vigebit
Inter pastores. Illi tibi vota secundo

30

Solvere post Daphnin, post Daphnin dicere laudes,
Gaudebunt, dum rura Pales, dum Faunus amabit;
Si quid id est, priscamque fidem coluisse, piumque,
Palladiusque artes, sociumque habuisse canorum.

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.

Hæc tibi certa manent, tibi erunt hæc præmia, Damon.
At mihi quid tandem fiet modò? quis mihi fidus

Hærebit lateri comes, ut tu sæpe solebas,
Frigoribus duris, et per loca fœta pruinis,
Aut rapido sub sole, siti morientibus herbis,
Sive opus in magnos fuit eminens ire leones,
Aut avidos terrere lupos præsepibus altis?

40

Quis fando sopire diem cantuque solebit?

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.

Pectora cui credam? quis me lenire docebit
Mordaces curas, quis longam fallere noctem
Dulcibus alloquiis, grato cum sibilat igni
Molle pirum, et nucibus strepitat focus, at malus Auster
Miscet cuncta foris, et desuper intonat ulmo?

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.

50

Aut æstate, dies medio dum vertitur axe,
Cum Pan æsculeâ somnum capit abditus umbrâ,
Et repetunt sub aquis sibi nota sedilia Nymphæ,
Pastoresque latent, stertit sub sepe colonus,
Quis mihi blanditiasque tuas, quis tum mihi risus,
Cécropiosque sales referet, cultosque lepores?

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.

At jam solus agros, jam pascua solus oberro,
Sicubi ramosæ densantur vallibus umbræ;
Hic serum expecto; supra caput imber et Eurus
Triste sonant, fractæque agitata crepuscula silvæ.

60

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Heu! quam culta mihi prius arva procacibus herbis
 Involvuntur, et ipsa situ seges alta fatiscit!
 Innuba neglecto marcescit et uva racem,
 Nec myrteta juvant; ovium quoque tædet, at illæ
 Mœrent. inque suum convertunt ora magistrum.

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Tityrus ad corylos vocat, Alpheisibæus ad ornos,
 Ad salices Ægon, ad flumina pulcher Amyntas:
 ‘Hic gelidi fontes, hic illita gramina musco,
 Hic Zephyri, hic placidas interstrepit arbutus undas.’
 Ista canunt surdo; frutices ego nactus abibam.

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Mopsus ad hæc, nam me redeuntem fortè notârat
 (Et callebat avium linguas et sidera Mopsus),
 ‘Thyrsi, quid hoc?’ dixit; ‘quæ te coquit improbabilis?
 Aut te perdit amor, aut te malè fascinat astrum;
 Saturni grave sæpe fuit pastoribus astrum,
 Intimaque obliquo figit præcordia plumbo.’

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Mirantur nymphæ, et ‘Quid te, Thyrsi, futurum est?
 Quid tibi vis?’ aiunt: ‘non hæc solet esse juventæ
 Nubila frons, oculique truces, vultusque severi:
 Illa choros, lususque leves, et semper amorem
 Jure petit; bis ille miser qui serus amavit.’

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Venit Hyas, Dryopeque, et filia Baucidis Ægle,
 Docta modos, citharæque sciens, sed perdita fastu;
 Venit Idumanii Chloris vicina fluenti:
 Nil me blanditiæ, nil me solantia verba,
 Nil me si quid adest movet, aut spes ulla futuri.

“Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Hei mihi! quam similes ludunt per prata juveni,
 Omnes unanimi secum sibi lege sodales!
 Nec magis hunc alio quisquam secernit amicum
 De grege; sic densi veniunt ad pabula thoes,
 Inque vicem hirsuti paribus junguntur onagri:
 Lex eadem pelagi; deserto in littore Proteus
 Agmina phocarum numerat: vilisque volucrum
 Passer habet semper quicum sit, et omnia circum
 Farra libens volitet, serò sua tecta revisens;
 Quem si sors letho objecit, seu milvus adunco
 Fata tulit rostro, seu stravit arundine fossor,
 Protinùs ille alium socio petit inde volatu.
 Nos durum genus, et diris exercita fatis
 Gens, homines, aliena animis, et pectore discors;
 Vix sibi quisque parem de milibus invenit unum;

70

80

90

100

- Aut, si sors dederit tandem non aspera votis,
 Illum inopina dies, quâ non speraveris horâ. 110
 Surripit, æternum linquens in sæcula damnum.
 "Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Heu! quis me ignotas traxit vagus error in oras
 Ire per aëreas rupes, Alpemque nivosam?
 Ecquid erat tanti Romam vidisse sepultam
 (Quamvis illa foret, qualem dum viseret olim
 Tityrus ipse suas et oves et rura reliquit),
 Ut te tam dulci possem caruisse sodale,
 Possem tot maria alta, tot interponere montes,
 Tot silvas, tot saxa tibi, fluviosque sonantes? 120
 Ah! certè extremùm licuisset tangere dextram,
 Et bene compositos placidè morientis ocellos,
 Et dixisse 'Vale! nostri memor ibis ad astra.'
 "Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Quamquam etiam vestri! nunquam meminisse pigebit,
 Pastores Thusci, Musis operata juvenus,
 Hic Charis, atque Lepos; et Thuscus tu quoque Damon,
 Antiquâ genus unde petis Lucumonis ab urbe.
 O ego quantus eram, gelidi cum stratus ad Arni
 Murmura, populeumque nemus, quâ mollior herba, 130
 Carpere nunc violas, nunc summas carpere myrtos,
 Et potui Lycidæ certantem audire Menalcam!
 Ipse etiam tentare ausus sum; nec puto multùm
 Displicui; nam sunt et apud me munera vestra,
 Fiscellæ, calathique, et cerea vincla cicutæ:
 Quin et nostra suas docuerunt nomina fagos
 Et Datis et Francinus; erant et vocibus ambo
 Et studiis noti, Lydorum sanguinis ambo.
 "Ite domum impasti; domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Hæc mihi tum læto dictabat roscida luna. 140
 Dum solus teneros claudebam cratibus hædos.
 Ah! quoties dixi, cum te cinis ater habebat,
 'Nunc canit, aut lepori nunc tendit retia Damon;
 Vimina nunc textit varios sibi quod sit in usus;'
 Et quæ tum facili sperabam mente futura
 Arripui voto levis, et præsentia finxi.
 'Heus bone! numquid agis? nisi te quid fortè retardat,
 Imus, et argutâ paulùm recubamus in umbrâ.
 Aut ad aquas Colni, aut ubi jugera Cassibelauni?
 Tu mihi percurres medicos, tua gramina, succos, 150
 Helleborumque, humilesque crocos, foliumque hyacinthi,
 Quasque habet ista palus herbas, artesque medentùm.'
 Ah! pereant herbæ, pereant artesque medentùm,
 Gramina, postquam ipsi nil profecere magistro!
 Ipse etiam — nam nescio quid mihi grande sonabat

Fistula — ab undecimâ jam lux est altera nocte —

Et tum fortè novis admòram labra cicutis :

Dissiluere tamen, ruptâ compage, nec ultra

Ferre graves potuere sonos : dubito quoque ne sim

Turgidulus ; tamen et referam ; vos cedite, sylvæ.

160

“Ite domum impasti ; domino jam non vacat, agni.

Ipse ego Dardaniâs Rutupina per æquora puppes

Dicam, et Pandrasidos regnum vetus Inogeniæ,

Brennumque Arviragumque duces, priscumque Belinum,

Et tandem Armoricos Britonum sub lege colonos ;

Tum gravidam Arturo fatali fraude Iögernem ;

Mendaces vultus, assumptaque Goriôis arma,

Merlini dolus. O, mihi tum si vita supersit,

Tu procul annosâ pendebis, fistula, pinu

Multùm oblita mihi, aut patriis mutata Camœnis

170

Brittonicum strides ! Quid enim ? omnia non licet uni,

Non sperâsse uni licet omnia ; mî satis amplâ

Merces, et mihi grande decus (sim ignotus in ævum

Tum licet, externo penitùsque inglorius orbi),

Si me flava comas legat Usa, et potor Alauni,

Vorticibusque frequens Abra, et nemus omne Treantæ,

Et Thamesis meus ante omnes, et fusca metallis

Tamara, et extremis me discant Orcades undis.

“Ite domum impasti ; domino jam non vacat, agni.

Hæc tibi servabam lentâ sub cortice lauri,

180

Hæc, et plura simul ; tum quæ mihi pocula Mansus,

Mansus, Chalcidicæ non ultima gloria ripæ,

Bina dedit, mirum artis opus, mirandus et ipse,

Et circum gemino cælaverat argumento.

In medio Rubri Maris unda, et odiferum ver,

Littora longa Arabum, et sudantes balsama sylvæ ;

Has inter Phoenix, divina avis, unica terris,

Cæruleùm fulgens diversicoloribus alis,

Auroram vitreis surgentem respicit undis ;

Parte aliâ polus omnipatens, et magnus Olympus :

190

Quis putet ? hic quoque Amor, pictæque in nube pharetræ,

Arma corusca, faces, et spicula tincta pyropo ;

Nec tenues animas, pectusque ignobile vulgi,

Hinc ferit ; at, circum flammantia lumina torquens,

Semper in erectum spargit sua tela per orbis

Impiger, et pronos nunquam collimat ad ictus :

Hinc mentes ardere sacræ, formæque deorum.

“Tu quoque in his — nec me fallit spes lubrica, Damon —

Tu quoque in his certè es ; nam quò tua dulcis abiret

Sanctaque simplicitas ? nam quò tua candida virtus ?

200

Nec te Lethæo fas quæsisvisse sub Orco ;

Nec tibi conveniunt lacrimæ, nec flebimus ultra.

Ite procul, lacrymæ; purum colit æthera Damon,
 Æthera purus habet, pluvium pede reppulit arcum;
 Heroumque animas inter, divosque perennes,
 Æthereos haurit latices et gaudia potat
 Ore sacro. Quin tu, cæli post jura recepta,
 Dexter ades, placidusque fave, quicumque vocaris;
 Seu tu noster eris Damon, sive æquior audis
 DIODOTUS, quo te divino nomine cuncti
 Cælicolæ nôrint, sylvisque vocabere Damon.
 Quòd tibi purpureus pudor, et sine labe juvenus
 Grata fuit, quòd nulla tori libata voluptas,
 En! etiam tibi virginei servantur honores!
 Ipse, caput nitidum cinctus rutilante coronâ,
 Lætaque frondentis gestans umbracula palmæ,
 Æternùm perages immortales hymenæos,
 Cantus ubi, choreisque furit lyra mista beatis
 Festa Sionæo bacchantur et Orgia thyrsò."

210

Jan. 23, 1646.

AD JOANNEM ROUSIUM,

OXONIENSIS ACADEMIÆ BIBLIOTHECARIUM.

De libro Poematum amisso, quem ille sibi denuo mitti postulabat, ut cum aliis nostris in Bibliothecâ Publicâ reponeret, Ode.

Ode tribus constat Strophis, totidemque Antistrophis, unâ demum Epodo clausis; quas, tametsi omnes nec versuum numero nec certis ubique cõlis exactè respondeant, ita tamen secuimus, commodè legendi potius quam ad antiquos concinendi modos rationem spectantes. Alioquin hoc genus rectius fortasse dici *monostrophicum* debuerat. Metra partim sunt *κατὰ σχέσιν*, partim *ἀπολελυμένα*. Phaleucia quæ sunt spondæum tertio loco bis admittunt, quod idem in secundo loco Catullus ad libitum fecit.

STROPHE I.

GEMELLE cultu simplici gaudens liber,
 Fronde licet geminâ,
 Munditiæque nitens non operosâ,
 Quam manus attulit
 Juvenilis olim
 Sedula, tamen haud nimii poetæ;
 Dum vagus Ausonias nunc per umbras,
 Nunc Britannica per vireta ludit,

Insons populi, barbitoque devius
 Indulsit patrio, mox itidem pectine Daunio 10
 Longinquum intonuit melos
 Vicinis, et humum vix tetigit pede :

ANTISTROPHE.

Quis te, parve liber, quis te fratribus
 Subduxit reliquis dolo,
 Cum tu missus ab urbe,
 Docto jugiter obsecrante amico,
 Illustre tendebas iter
 Thamesis ad incunabula
 Cærulci patris,
 Fontes ubi limpidi 20
 Aonidum, thyasusque sacer,
 Orbi notus per immensos
 Temporum lapsus redeunte cælo,
 Celeberque futurus in ævum?

STROPHE 2.

Modò quis deus, aut editus deo,
 Pristinam gentis miseratus indolem,
 (Si satis noxas luimus priores,
 Mollique luxu degener otium)
 Tollat nefandos civium tumultus,
 Almaque revocet studia sanctus, 30
 Et relegatas sine sede Musas
 Jam penè totis finibus Angligenum,
 Immundasque volucres
 Unguibus imminentes
 Figat Apollineâ pharetrâ,
 Phineamque abigat pestem procul amne Pegaseo?

ANTISTROPHE.

Quin tu, libelle, nuntii licet malâ
 Fide, vel oscitantiâ,
 Semel erraveris agmine fratrum,
 Seu quis te teneat specus, 40
 Seu qua te latebra, forsân unde vili

Callo tereris institoris insulsi,
 Lætare felix; en! iterum tibi
 Spes nova fulget posse profundam
 Fugere Lethen, vehique superam
 In Jovis aulam remige pennâ:

STROPHE 3.

Nam te Rousius sui
 Optat peculi, numeroque justo
 Sibi pollicitum queritur abesse,
 Rogatque venias ille, cujus inclyta
 Sunt data virum monumenta curæ;
 Teque adytis etiam sacris
 Voluit reponi, quibus et ipse præsidet
 Æternorum operum custos fidelis,
 Quæstorque gazæ nobilioris
 Quam cui præfuit Ion,
 Clarus Erechtheides,
 Opulenta dei per templa parentis,
 Fulvosque tripodas, donaque Delphica,
 Ion Actæâ genitus Creusâ.

50

60

ANTISTROPHE.

Ergo tu visere lucos
 Musarum ibis amœnos;
 Diamque Phœbi rursus ibis in domum
 Oxoniâ quam valle colit,
 Delo posthabitâ,
 Bifidoque Parnassi jugo;
 Ibis honestus,
 Postquam egregiam tu quoque sortem
 Nactus abis, dextri prece sollicitatus amici.
 Illic legeris inter alta nomina
 Authorum. Graiæ simul et Latinæ
 Antiqua gentis lumina et verum decus.

70

EPODOS.

Vos tandem haud vacui mei labores,
 Quicquid hoc sterile fudit ingenium,
 Jam serò placidam sperare jubeo
 Perfunctam invidiâ requiem, sedesque beatas

Quas bonus Hermes
 Et tutela dabit solers Roüsî,
 Quò neque lingua procax vulgi penetrabit, atque longè
 Turba legentùm prava facesset; 8c
 At ultimi nepotes
 Et cordatior ætas
 Judicia rebus æquiora forsitan
 Adhibebit integro sinu.
 Tum, livore sepulto,
 Si quid meremur sana posteritas sciet,
 Roüsio favente.

IN SALMASII HUNDREDAM.

QUIS expeditvit Salmasio suam *Hundredam*,
 Picamque docuit verba nostra conari?
 Magister artis venter, et Jacobæi
 Centum, exulantis viscera marsupii regis.
 Quòd, si dolosi spes refulserit nummi,
 Ipse Antichristi qui modò primatum Papæ
 Minatus uno est dissipare sufflatu,
 Cantabit ultrò Cardinalitium melos.

IN SALMASIUM.

GAUDETE, scombri, et quicquid est piscium salo,
 Qui frigidâ hieme incolitis argentes freta!
 Vestrum misertus ille Salmasius Eques
 Bonus amicire nuditatem cogitat;
 Chartæque largus apparat papyrinos
 Vobis cucullos, præferentes Claudii
 Insignia, nomenque et decus, Salmasii;
 Gestetis ut per omne cetarium forum
 Equitis clientes, scriniis mungentium
 Cubito virorum, et capsulis, gratissimos.







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