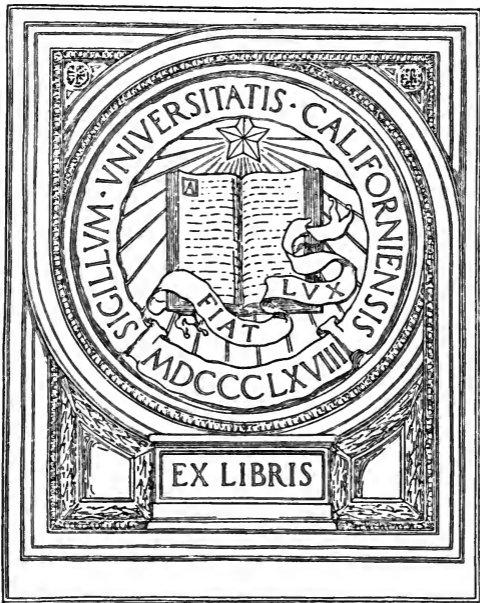


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THE
POETICAL WORKS

OF

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THE
POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.

PRINTED FROM THE TEXT OF

TODD, HAWKINS AND OTHERS.



**A NEW EDITION
COMPLETE IN ONE VOLUME.**



WITH THE POET'S LIFE

BY

EDWARD PHILIPS.

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THE
L I F E O F M I L T O N,

BY HIS NEPHEW

E D W A R D P H I L I P S.

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

- Isaac Walton, who wrote the lives of Sir Henry Wotton, D. Donne; and for his divine poems, the admired Mr. George Herbert. Lastly, not to mention several other biographers of considerable note, the great Gassendus of France, the worthy celebrator of two no less

worthy subjects of his impartial pen; viz. the noble philosopher Epicurus, and the most politely learned virtuoso of his age, his country-man, Monsieur Periesk. And pity it is the person whose memory we have here undertaken to perpetuate, by recounting the most memorable transactions of his life, (though his works sufficiently recommend him to the world) finds not a well-informed pen able to set him forth, equal with the best of those here mentioned: for doubtless had his fame been as much spread through Europe, in Thuanus's time as now it is, and hath been for several years, he had justly merited from that great historian, an eulogy not inferior to the highest, by him given to all the learned and ingenious that lived within the compass of his history. For we may safely and justly affirm, that take him in all respects, for acumen of wit, quickness of apprehension, sagacity of judgment, depth of argument, and elegancy of style, as well in Latin as English, as well in verse as prose, he is scarce to be paralleled by any the best of writers our nation hath in any age brought forth. He was born in London, in a house in Bread-street, the lease whereof, as I take it, but for certain it was a house in Bread-street, became in time part of his estate in the year of our Lord, 1606. His father, John Milton, an honest, worthy, and substantial citizen of London, by profession a scrivener, to which profession he voluntarily betook himself, by the advice and assistance of an intimate friend of his, eminent in that calling, upon his being cast out by his father, a bigoted Roman Catholic, for embracing, when young, the Protestant faith, and abjuring the Popish tenets; for he is said to have been descended of an ancient family of the Miltons, of Milton, near Abington in Oxfordshire; where they had been a long time seated, as appears by the monuments still to be seen in Milton church, till one of the family having taken the wrong side, in the contests between the houses of York and Lancaster, was sequestered of all his estate, but what he held by his wife. However, certain it is, that this vocation he followed for many years, at his said house in Bread-street, with success suitable to his industry, and prudent conduct of his affairs; yet did he not so far quit his own generous and ingenious inclinations, as to make

himself wholly a slave to the world: for he sometimes found vacant hours to the study (which he made his recreation) of the noble science of music, in which he advanced to that perfection, that as I have been told, and as I take it, by our author himself, he composed an *Il Nomine* of forty parts: for which he was rewarded with a gold medal and chain by a Polish prince, to whom he presented it. However, this is a truth not to be denied, that for several songs of his composition, after the way of these times, three or four of which are still to be seen in Old Wilby's set of airs, besides some compositions of his in Ravenscroft's Psalms, he gained the reputation of a considerable master in this most charming of all the liberal sciences: yet all this while, he managed his grand affair of this world with such prudence and diligence that by the assistance of divine providence favouring his honest endeavours, he gained a competent estate, whereby he was enabled to make a handsome provision both for the education and maintenance of his children; for three he had, and no more, all by one wife, Sarah, of the family of the Castons, derived originally from Wales. A woman of incomparable virtue and goodness; John, the eldest, the subject of our present work; Christopher, and an only daughter, Ann; Christopher being principally designed for the study of the common law of England, was entered young a student of the Inner-Temple, of which house he lived to be an ancient bencher, and keeping close to that study and profession all his lifetime, except in the time of the civil wars of England; when being a great favourer and assertor of the king's cause, and obnoxious to the parliament's side, by acting to his utmost power against them, so long as he kept his station at Reading; and after that town was taken by the parliament forces, being forced to quit his house there, he steered his course according to the motion of the king's army.

But when the war was ended with victory and success to the parliament party, by the valour of General Fairfax, and the craft and conduct of Cromwell; and his composition made by the help of his brother's interest, with the then prevailing power, he betook himself again to his former study and profession, following chan-

ber-practice every term, yet came to no advancement in the world in a long time, except some small employ in the town of Ipswich, where (and near it) he lived all the latter time of his life. For he was a person of a modest quiet temper, preferring justice and virtue before all worldly pleasure or grandeur: but in the beginning of the reign of King James the II. for his known integrity and ability in the law, he was by some persons of quality recommended to the king, and at a call of Serjeants received the coif, and the same day was sworn one of the barons of the exchequer, and soon after made one of the judges of the common pleas; but his years and indisposition not well brooking the fatigue of public employment, he continued not long in either of these stations; but having his quietus est, retired to a country life, his study and devotion. Ann, the only daughter of the said John Milton the elder, had a considerable dowry given her by her father, in marriage with Edward Philips, (the son of Edward Philips of Shrewsbury,) who coming up young to town, was bred up in the crown office in chancery, and at length came to be secondary of the office under old Mr. Bembo; by him she had, besides other children that died infants, two sons yet surviving, of whom more hereafter; and by a second husband, M. Thomas Agar, who (upon the death of his intimate friend Mr. Philips) worthily succeeded in the place, which except some time of exclusion before and during the interregnum, he held for many years, and left it to Mr. Thomas Milton (the son of the aforementioned Sir Christopher) who at this day executes it with great reputation and ability. Two daughters, Mary who died very young, and Ann yet surviving.

But to hasten back to our matter in hand: John our author, who was destined to be the ornament and glory of his country, was sent, together with his brother, to Paul's school, whereof Dr. Gill, the elder, was then chief master; where he was entered into the first rudiments of learning, and advanced therein with that admirable success, not more by the discipline of the school and good instructions of his masters, (for that he had another master possibly at his father's house, appears by the fourth elegy of his Latin poems written in his

eighteenth year, to Thomas Young, pastor of the English company of merchants at Hamborough, wherein he owns and stiles him his master) than by his own happy genius, prompt wit and apprehension; and insuperable industry; for he generally sat up half the night, as well in voluntary improvements of his own choice, as the exact perfecting of his school exercises: so that at the age of fifteen he was full ripe for academic learning, and accordingly was sent to the University of Cambridge; where in Christ's College, under the tuition of a very eminent learned man, whose name I cannot call to mind, he studied seven years, and took his degree of master of arts; and for the extraordinary wit and reading he had shown in his performances to attain his degree, (some whereof spoken at a vacation exercise in his nineteenth year of age, are to be yet seen in his miscellaneous poems) he was loved and admired by the whole university, particularly by the fellows and most ingenious persons of his house. Among the rest there was a young gentleman, one Mr. King, with whom, for his great learning and parts, he had contracted a particular friendship and intimacy; whose death (for he was drowned on the Irish Seas in his passage from Chester to Ireland) he bewails in that most excellent monody in his forementioned poems, intituled Lycidas. Never was the loss of friend so elegantly lamented; and among the rest of his juvenile poems, some he wrote at the age of fifteen, which contain a poetical genius scarce to be paralleled by any English writer. Soon after he had taken his master's degree, he thought fit to leave the university: not upon any disgust or discontent for want of preferment, as some ill-willers have reported; nor upon any cause whatsoever forced to fly, as his detractors maliciously feign; but from which aspersion he sufficiently clears himself in his second answer to Alexander Morus, the author of a book called *Clamor Regii Sanguinis ad Caelum*, the chief of his calumniators; in which he plainly makes it out, that after his leaving the university, to the no small trouble of his fellow-collegiates, who in general regretted his absence, he for the space of five years lived for the most part with his father and mother at their house at Horton, near Colebrook, in Berkshire; whither his father

having got an estate to his content, and left off all business, was retired from the cares and fatigues of the world. After the said term of five years, his mother then dying, he was willing to add to his acquired learning the observation of foreign customs, manners, and institutions; and thereupon took a resolution to travel, more especially designing for Italy; and accordingly, with his father's consent and assistance, he put himself into an equipage suitable to such a design; and so intending to go by the way of France, he set out for Paris, accompanied only with one man, who attended him through all his travels; for his prudence was his guide, and his learning his introduction and presentation to persons of most eminent quality. However, he had also a most civil and obliging letter of direction and advice from Sir Henry Wotton, then provost of Eaton, and formerly resident ambassador from King James the First to the state of Venice; which letter is to be seen in the first edition of his miscellaneous poems. At Paris being recommended by the said Sir Henry and other persons of quality, he went first to wait upon my Lord Scudamore, then ambassador in France from King Charles the First. My lord received him with wonderful civility; and understanding he had a desire to make a visit to the great Hugo Grotius, he sent several of his attendants to wait upon him, and to present him in his name to that renowned doctor, and statesman, who was at that time ambassador from Christina, Queen of Sweden, to the French king. Grotius took the visit kindly, and gave him entertainment suitable to his worth, and the high commendations he had heard of him. After a few days not intending to make the usual tour of France, he took his leave of my lord, who at his departure from Paris, gave him letters to the English merchants residing in any part through which he was to travel, in which they were requested to show him all the kindness, and do him all the good offices that lay in their power.

From Paris he hastened on his journey to Nicaea, where he took shipping, and in a short space arrived at Genoa; from whence he went to Leghorn, thence to Pisa, and so to Florence: in this city he met with many charming objects, which invited him to stay a longer time than he intended; the pleasant situation of the place, the noble-

ness of the structures, the exact humanity and civility of the inhabitants, the more polite and refined sort of language there, than elsewhere. During the time of his stay here, which was about two months; he visited all the private academies of the city, which are places established for the improvement of wit and learning, and maintained a correspondence and perpetual friendship among gentlemen fitly qualified for such an institution: and such sort of academies there are in all or most of the most noted cities in Italy. Visiting these places, he was soon taken notice of by the most learned and ingenious of the nobility, and the grand wits of Florence, who caressed him with all the honours and civilities imaginable, particularly Jacobo Gaddi, Carolo Dati, Antonio Francini, Frescobaldo, Cultellino, Banmatthei and Clementillo: whereof Gaddi hath a large elegant Italian Canzonet in his praise: Dati, a Latin epistle; both printed before his Latin poems, together with a Latin distich of the Marquess of Villa, and another of Selvaggi, and a Latin tetrastich of Giovanni Salsilli, a Roman.

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

From Rome he travelled to Naples, where he was introduced by a certain hermit, who accompanied him in his journey from Rome thither, into the knowledge of Giovanni Baptista Manso, Marquess of Villa, a Neapolitan by birth, a person of high nobility, virtue and honour, to whom the famous Italian poet, Torquato Tasso, wrote his treatise de Amicitia; and moreover mentions him with great honour in that illustrious poem of his, intituled, *Gerusalemme Liberata*: this noble marquess received him with extraordinary respect and civility, and went with him himself to give him a sight of all that was of note and remark in the city, particularly the viceroy's palace, and was often in person to visit him at his lodgings. Moreover, this noble marquess honoured him so far, as to

make a Latin distich in his praise, as hath been already mentioned; which being no less pithy than short, though already in print, it will not be unworth the while here to repeat.

Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, si*) pietas, sic,
Non Anglus, verum Herce Angelus, ipse foret.

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

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

*) This word relates to his being a Protestant not a Roman Catholic.

as long as at his first coming, except an excursion of a few days to Luca, crossing the Apennine, and passing through Bononia and Ferrara, he arrived at Venice, where when he had spent a month's time in viewing of that stately city, and shipped up a parcel of curious and rare books which he had picked up in his travels; particularly a chest or two of choice music-books, of the best masters flourishing about that time in Italy, namely, Luca Marrenzo, Monte Verde, Horatio Vecchi, Cafa, the prince of Venosa, and several others, he took his course through Verona, Milan, and the Poenine Alps, and so by the Lake Lemman to Geneva, where he staid for some time, and had daily converse with the most learned Giovanni Deodati, theology-professor in that city, and so returning through France, by the same way he had passed it going to Italy, he, after a peregrination of one complete year and about three months, arrived safe in England, about the time of the king's making his second expedition against the Scots. Soon after his return, and visits paid to his father and other friends, he took him a lodging in St. Bride's church-yard, at the house of Russel a tailor, where he first undertook the education and instruction of his sister's two sons, the younger whereof had been wholly committed to his charge and care. And here by the way, I judge it not impertinent to mention the many authors both of the Latin and Greek, which through his excellent judgment and way of teaching, far above the pedantry of common public schools, (where such authors are scarce ever heard of) were run over within no greater compass of time, even than from ten to fifteen or sixteen years of age. Of the Latin the four grand authors De Re Rustica, Cato, Varro, Columella, and Palladius; Cornelius Celsus, an ancient physician of the Romans; a great part of Pliny's Natural History, Vitruvius's Architecture, Frontinus's Stratagems, with the two egregious poets, Lucretius and Manilius. Of the Greek, Hesiod, a poet equal with Homer; Aratus's Phaenomena and Diosemeia, Dionysius, Afer de situ Orbis, Oppian's Cynegeticks and Halieuticks. Quintus Calaber's poem of the Trojan War, continued from Homer; Apollonius Rhodius's Argonauticks, and in prose, Plutarch's Placita Philosophorum, *Περὶ Παιδων Ἀγωγίας*, Geminus's Astronomy; Xenophon's Cyri In-

stitutio et Anabasis, Aelian's Tactics, and Polyænus's Warlike Stratagems; thus thy teaching; he in some measure increased his own knowledge, having the reading of all these authors as it were by proxy; and all this might possibly have conduced to the preserving of his eye-sight, had he not moreover, been perpetually busied in his own laborious undertakings of the book or pen. Nor did the time thus studiously employed in conquering the Greek and Latin tongues hinder the attaining to the chief Oriental languages, viz. the Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac, so far as to go through the Pentateuch, or Five Books of Moses in Hebrew, to make a good entrance into the Targum or Chaldee Paraphrase, and to understand several chapters of St. Matthew in the Syriac Testament, besides an Introduction into several Arts and Sciences, by reading Urstisius's Arithmetic, Riff's Geometry, Petiscus's Trigonometry, Joannes de Sacro Bosco de Sphaera; and into the Italian and French tongues, by reading in Italian Giovan Villani's History of the Transactions between several petty States of Italy; and in French a great part of Pierre Davity, the famous Geographer of France in his time. The Sunday's work was for the most part the reading each day a chapter of the Greek Testament, and hearing his learned exposition upon the same (and how this savoured of Atheism in him, I leave to the courteous backbiter to judge). The next work after this was the writing from his own dictation, some part, from time to time, of a Tractate, which he thought fit to collect from the ablest of divines, who had written of that subject, Amesius, Wellebius, &c. viz. A perfect System of Divinity, of which more hereafter. Now persons so far manducted into the highest paths of literature, both divine and human, had they received his documents with the same acuteness of wit and apprehension, the same industry, alacrity, and thirst after knowledge, as the instructor was endued with, what prodigies of wit and learning might they have proved! the scholars might in some degree have come near to the equalling of the master, or at least have in some sort made good what he seems to predict in the close of an elegy he made in the seventeenth year of his age, upon the death of one of his sister's children, (a daughter) who died in her infancy.

Then thou the mother of so sweet a child,
Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That to the world's last end, shall make thy name to live.

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

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

In this house he continued several years, in the one or two first whereof, he set out several treatises, viz. that of Reformation; that against Prelatical Episcopacy; the Reason of Church Government; the Defence of Smeectimnus, at least the greatest part of them, but as I take it, all; and some time after, one sheet of Education, which he dedicated to Mr. Samuel Hartlib, he that wrote so much of husbandry; this sheet is printed at the end of the second edition of his poems; and lastly, Areopagitica. During the time also of his continuance in this house, there fell out several occasions of the increasing of his family. His father, who till the taking of Reading, by the Earl of Essex's forces, had lived with his other son at his house there; was upon that sons's dissettlement neces-

sitated to betake himself to this his eldest son, with whom he lived for some years, even to his dying day. In the next place he had an addition of some scholars, to which may be added, his entering into matrimony; but he had his wife's company so small a time, that he may well be said to have become a single man again soon after. About Whitsuntide it was, or a little after, that he took a journey into the country, nobody about him certainly knowing the reason, or that it was any more than a journey of recreation. After a month's stay, home he returns a married man, that went out a bachelor; his wife being Mary, the eldest daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, then a justice of peace, of Forrest-hill, near Shotover, in Oxfordshire, some few of her nearest relations accompanying the bride to her new habitation, which by reason the father nor any body else were yet come, was able to receive them, where the feasting held for some days, in celebration of the nuptials, and for entertainment of the bride's friends. At length they took their leave, and returning to Forrest-hill, left the sister behind, probably not much to her satisfaction, as appeared by the sequel; by that time she had for a month or thereabout, led a philosophical life (after having been used to a great house, and much company and joviality.) Her friends, possibly incited by her own desire, made earnest suit by letter, to have her company the remaining part of the summer, which was granted, on condition of her return at the time appointed, Michaelmas, or thereabouts: in the mean time came his father, and some of the forementioned disciples. And now the studies went on with so much the more vigour, as there were more hands and heads employed, the old gentleman living wholly retired to his rest and devotion, without the least trouble imaginable. Our author, now as it were, a single man again, made it his chief diversion, now and then in an evening, to visit the lady Margaret Lee, daughter to the — Lee, Earl of Marlborough, lord high treasurer of England, and president of the privy council to King James the First. This lady being a woman of great wit and ingenuity, had a particular honour for him, and took much delight in his company, as likewise her husband, Captain Hobson, a very accomplished gentleman; and what esteem he at the same time had for her, appears by a sonnet he made in

praise of her, to be seen among his other sonnets in his extant poems. Michaelmas being come, and no news of his wife's return, he sent for her by letter, and receiving no answer, sent several other letters, which were also unanswered; so that at last he dispatched down a foot messenger with a letter, desiring her return; but the messenger came back not only without an answer, at least a satisfactory one, but to the best of my remembrance, reported that he was dismissed with some sort of contempt. This proceeding, in all probability, was grounded upon no other cause but this, namely, that the family being generally addicted to the cavalier party, as they called it, and some of them possibly engaged in the king's service, who by this time had his head quarters at Oxford, and was in some prospect of success, they began to repent them of having matched the eldest daughter of the family to a person so contrary to them in opinion, and thought it would be a blot in their escutcheon whenever that court should come to flourish again; however, it so incensed our author that he thought it would be dishonourable ever to receive her again, after such a repulse, to that he forthwith prepared to fortify himself with arguments for such a resolution, and accordingly wrote two treatises, by which he undertook to maintain, that it was against reason (and the enjoyment of it not proveable by scripture) for any married couple disagreeable in humour and temper, or having an aversion to each, to be forced to live yoked together all their days. The first was, his *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*; of which there was printed a second edition, with some additions. The other in prosecution of the first, was styled *Tetrachordon*. Then the better to confirm his own opinion, by the attestation of others, he set out a piece called the *Judgment of Martin Bucer*, a protestant minister, being a translation out of that reverend divine, of some part of his works, exactly agreeing with him in sentiment. Lastly, he wrote in answer to a pragmatistical clerk, who would needs give himself the honour of writing against so great a man, his *Colasterion, or Rod of Correction for a Saucy Impertinent*. Not very long after the setting forth of these treatises, having application made to him by several gentlemen of his acquaintance, for the education of their sons, as understanding haply the progress

he had infixed by his first undertakings of that nature, he laid out for a larger house, and soon found it out; but in the interim before he removed, there fell out a passage, which though it altered not the whole course he was going to steer, yet it put a stop or rather an end to a grand affair, which was more than probably thought to be then in agitation. It was, indeed, a design of marrying one of Dr. Davis's daughters, a very handsome and witty gentlewoman, but averse as it is said to this motion; however, the intelligence hereof, and the then declining state of the king's cause, and consequently of the circumstances of Justice Powell's family, caused them to set all engines on work, and to restore the late married woman to the station wherein they a little before had planted her; at last this device was pitched upon. There dwelt in the Lane of St. Martin's le Grand, which was hard by, a relation of our author's, one Blackborough, whom it was known he often visited, and upon this occasion the visits were the more narrowly observed, and possibly there might be a combination between both parties; the friends on both sides concentrating in the same action though on different behalfs. One time above the rest, he making his usual visit, the wife was ready in another room, and on a sudden he was surprised to see one whom he thought to have never seen more, making submission and begging pardon on her knees before him; he might probably at first make some shew of aversion and rejection; but partly his own generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger and revenge; and partly the strong intercession of friends on both sides soon brought him to an act of oblivion, and a firm league of peace for the future; and it was at length concluded, that she should remain at a friend's house till such time as he was settled in his new house at Barbican, and all things for her reception in order; the place agreed on for her present abode was the widow Webber's house in St. Clement's church-yard, whose second daughter had been married to the other brother many years before; the first fruits of her return to her husband was a brave girl, born within a year after; though, whether by ill constitution or want of care, she grew more and more decrepit. But it was not only by children that she increased the number of the fa-

mily, for in no very long time after her coming, she had a great resort of her kindred with her in the house, viz. her father and mother, and several of her brothers and sisters, which were in all pretty numerous; who upon his father's sickening and dying soon after, went away. And now the house looked again like a house of the Muses only, though the accession of scholars was not great. Possibly his proceeding thus far in the education of youth may have been the occasion of some of his adversaries calling him pedagogue and schoolmaster. Whereas it is well known he never set up for a public school to teach all the young fry of a parish, but only was willing to impart his learning and knowledge to relations, and the sons of some gentlemen that were his intimate friends; besides, that neither his converse, nor his writings, nor his manner of teaching, ever savoured in the least any thing of pedantry; and probably he might have some prospect of putting in practice his academical institution, according to the model laid down in his sheet of education. The progress of which design was afterwards diverted by a series of alteration in the affairs of state; for I am much mistaken if there were not about this time a design in agitation of making him adjutant-general in Sir William Waller's army; but the new modelling of the army soon following, proved an obstruction to that design; and Sir William's commission being laid down, as the common saying is, to turn cat in pan. It was not long after the march of Fairfax and Cromwell through the city of London with the whole army, to quell the insurrections, Brown and Massey, now malcontents also, were endeavouring to raise in the city against the army's proceedings, ere he left his great house in Barbican, and betook himself to a smaller in High Holborn, among those that open backward into Lincoln's-Inn-Fields, here he lived a private and quiet life, still prosecuting his study and curious search into knowledge, the grand affair perpetually of his life; till such time as the war being now at an end, with complete victory to the parliament's side, as the parliament then stood purged of all its dissenting members, and the king after some treaties with the army, reinfected, brought to his trial; the form of government being now changed into a free state, he was hereupon obliged to write a treatise

called the Tenure of Kings and Magistrates. After which his thoughts were bent upon retiring again to his own private studies, and falling upon such subjects as his proper genius prompted him to write of, among which was the history of our own nation from the beginning till the Norman conquest, wherein he had made some progress. When for this his last treatise, reviving the fame of other things he had formerly published, being more and more taken notice of for his excellency of stile, and depth of judgment, he was courted into the service of this new commonwealth, and at last prevailed with (for he never hunted after preferment, nor affected the tintamar and hurry of public business) to take upon him the office of Latin secretary to the counsel of state; for all their letters to foreign princes and states; for they stuck to this noble and generous resolution, not to write to any, or receive answers from them, but in a language most proper to maintain a correspondence among the learned of all nations in this part of the world; scorning to carry on their affairs in the wheedling, lispig jargon of the cringing French, especially having a minister of state able to cope with the ablest any prince or state could employ for the Latin tongue; and so well he acquitted himself in this station, that he gained from abroad both reputation to himself, and credit to the state that employed him; and it was well the business of his office came not very fast upon him; for he was scarce well warm in his secretaryship before other work flowed in upon him, which took him up for some considerable time. In the first place there came out a book said to have been written by the king, and finished a little before his death, entitled, *Εικων Βασιλικη*, that is, The Royal Image; a book highly cried up for its smooth style, and pathetical composure; wherefore to obviate the impression it was like to make among the many, he was obliged to write an answer, which he entitled *Εικονοκλαστης*, or Image-breaker; and upon the heels of that, out comes in public the great Kill-cow of Christendom, with his *Defensio Regis contra Populum Anglicanum*; a man so famous and cried up for his Plinian Exercitations, and other pieces of reputed learning, that there could no where have been found a champion that durst lift up the pen against so formidable an adversary, had not our little English

David had the courage to undertake this great French Goliath, to whom he gave such a hit in the forehead, that he presently staggered, and soon after fell; for immediately upon the coming out of the answer, entitled, *Defensio Populi Anglicani, contra Claudium Anonymum, &c.* he that till then had been chief minister and superintendant in the court of the learned Christina, Queen of Sweden, dwindled in esteem to that degree, that he at last vouchsafed to speak to the meanest servant. In short, he was dismissed with so cold and slighting an adieu, that after a faint dying reply, he was glad to have recourse to death, the remedy of evils, and ender of controversies, and now I presume our author had some breathing space; but it was not long; for though Salmasius was departed, he left some stings behind, new enemies started up, barkers, though no great biters; who the first assertor of Salmasius's cause was, is not certainly known, but variously conjectured at, some supposing it to be one Janus, a Lawyer of Gray's-Inn, some Dr. Bramhal, made by King Charles the Second, after his restoration, Archbishop of Armagh in Ireland; but whoever the author was, the book was thought fit to be taken into correction, and our author not thinking it worth his own undertaking, to the disturbing the progress of whatever more chosen work he had then in hands, committed this task to the youngest of his nephews, but with such exact emendations before it went to the press, that it might have very well have passed for his, but that he was willing the person that took the pains to prepare it for his examination and polishment, should have the name and credit of being the author; so that it came forth under this title, *Joannis Philippi Angli Defensio pro Populo Anglicano contra, &c.* during the writing and publishing of this book, he lodged at one Thompson's, next door to the Bull-Head tavern at Charing Cross, opening into the Spring Garden, which seems to have been only a lodging taken, till his designed apartment in Scotland Yard was prepared for him; for hither he soon removed from the foresaid place; and here his third child, a son, was born, which through the ill usage, or bad constitution of an ill chosen nurse, died an infant; from this apartment, whether he thought it not healthy, or otherwise convenient for his use, or what-

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

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

There is another very remarkable passage in the composition of this poem, which I have a particular occasion to remember; for whereas I had the perusal of it from the very beginning: for some years as I went from time to time to visit him, in a parcel of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time, which being written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want correction as to the orthography and pointing; having as the summer came on, not been shewed any for a considerable while, and desiring the reason thereof, was answered, that his vein never happily flowed, but from the autumnal equinoctial to the vernal, and that whatever he attempted was never to his satisfaction, though he courted his fancy never so much; so that in all the years he was about this poem, he may be said to have spent but half his time therein. It was but a little before the king's restoration that he wrote and published his book in defence of a commonwealth; so undaunted he was in declaring his true sentiments to the world; and not long before, his power of the civil magistrate in ecclesiastical affairs; and his treatise against Hirelings, just upon the king's coming over; having a little before been sequestered from his office of Latin secretary, and the salary thereunto belonging, he was forced to leave his house also, in Petty France, where all the time of his abode there, which was eight years, as above-mentioned, he was frequently visited by persons of quality, particularly my Lady Ranala, whose son for some time he instructed; all learned foreigners of note, who could not part out of this city, without giving a visit to a person so eminent; and lastly, by particular friends that had a high esteem for him, viz. Mr. Andrew Marvel, young

Laurence, (the son of him that was president of Oliver's council) to whom there is a sonnet among the rest, in his printed poems; Mr. Marchamont Needham, the writer of *Politicus*; but above all, Mr. Syriak Skinner, whom he honoured with two sonnets, one long since public among his poems; the other but newly printed. His next removal was, by the advice of those that wished him well, and had a concern for his preservation, into a place of retirement and abscondence, till such time as the current of affairs for the future should instruct him what farther course to take; it was a friend's house, in Bartholomew Close, where he lived till the act of oblivion came forth, which it pleased God proved as favourable to him as could be hoped or expected, through the intercession of some that stood his friends both in council and parliament; particularly in the House of Commons, Mr. Andrew Marvel, a member for Hull, acted vigorously in his behalf, and made a considerable party for him; so that, together with John Goodwin, of Coleman Street, he was only so far excepted as not to bear any office in the commonwealth. Soon after appearing again in public, he took a house in Holborn, near Red-Lion Fields, where he stayed not long before his pardon having passed the seal, he removed to Jewin Street, there he lived when he married his third wife, recommended to him by his old friend Dr. Paget, in Coleman Street; but he stayed not long after his new marriage ere he removed to a house in the Artillery-walk, leading to Bunhill Fields. And this was his last stage in this world, but it was of many years continuance, more perhaps than he had had in any other place besides. Here he finished his noble poem, and published it in the year 1666; the first edition was printed in quarto, by one Simons, a printer, in Aldersgate Street; the other in a large octavo, by Starky, near Temple Bar, amended, enlarged, and differently disposed as to the number of books, by his own hand — that is by his own appointment; the last set forth many years since his death in a large folio, with cuts, added by Jacob Tonson. Here it was also that he finished and published his history of our nation till the conquest, all complete so far as he went, some passages only excepted, which being thought too sharp against the clergy, could not pass the hand of

the licencer, were in the hands of the late Earl of Anglesey, while he lived, where at present is uncertain. It cannot certainly be concluded when he wrote his excellent tragedy entitled *Samson Agonistes*, but sure enough it is that it came forth after his publication of *Paradise Lost*, together with his other poem called *Paradise Regained*, which doubtless was begun and finished and printed after the other was published, and that in a wonderful short space, considering the sublimeness of it; however, it is generally censured to be much inferior to the other, though he could not hear with patience any such thing when related to him; possibly the subject may not afford such variety of invention, but it is thought by the most judicious to be little or nothing inferior to the other for style and decorum. The said Earl of Anglesey, whom he presented with a copy of the unlicensed papers of his history, came often here to visit him, as very much coveting his society and converse, as likewise others of the nobility, and many persons of eminent quality; nor were the visits of foreigners ever more frequent than in this place, almost to his dying day. His treatise of true Religion, Heresy, Schism and Toleration, &c. was doubtless the last thing of his writing that was published before his death. He had, as I remember, prepared for the press an answer to some little scribing quack in London, who had written a scurrilous libel against him, but whether by the dissuasion of friends, as thinking him a fellow no worth his notice, or for whatever cause I know not, this answer was never published. He died in the year 1673, towards the latter end of the summer, and had a very decent interment according to his quality, in the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate, being attended from his house to the church by several gentlemen then in town, his principal well-wishers and admirers. He had three daughters, who survived him many years, (and a son) all by his first wife, (of whom sufficient mention hath been made). Anne, his eldest, as abovesaid, and Mary, his second, who were both born at his house in Barbican; and Debora, the youngest, who is yet living, born at his house in Petty France, between whom and his second daughter, the son, named John, was born as abovementioned, at his apartment in Scotland Yard. By his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of

Captain Woodcock, of Hackney, he had only one daughter, of which the mother, the first year after her marriage, died in childbed, and the child also within a month after. By his third wife, Elizabeth, the daughter of one Mr. Minshal, of Cheshire, (and kinswoman to Dr. Paget) who survived him, and is said to be yet living, he never had any child; and those he had by the first he made serviceable to him in that very particular in which he most wanted their service, and supplied his want of eye-sight by their eyes and tongue; for though he had daily about him one or other to read to him, some person of man's estate, who of their own accord greedily caught at the opportunity of being his readers, that they might as well reap the benefit of what they read to him, as oblige him by the benefit of their reading; others, of younger years sent by their parents to the same end, yet excusing only the eldest daughter by reason of her bodily infirmity, and difficult utterance of speech, (which to say truth I doubt was the principal cause of excusing her) the other two were condemned to the performance of reading, and exactly pronouncing of all the languages of whatever book he should at one time or other think fit to peruse; viz. the Hebrew (and I think the Syriac), the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, Spanish and French. All which sorts of books to be confined to read, without understanding one word, must needs be a trial of patience, almost beyond endurance; yet it was endured by both for a long time, yet the irksomeness of this employment could not be always concealed, but broke out more and more into expressions of uneasiness; so that at length they were all (even the eldest also) sent out to learn some curious and ingenious sorts of manufacture, that are proper for women to learn, particularly embroideries in gold or silver. It had been happy indeed if the daughters of such a person had been made in some measure inheritrixes of their father's learning; but since fate otherwise decreed, the greatest honour that can be ascribed to this now living (and so would have been to the others had they lived) is to be daughter to a man of his extraordinary character.

He is said to have died worth 1500*l.* in money, (a considerable estate, all things considered,) besides house-

hold goods; for he sustained such losses as might well have broke any person less frugal and temperate than himself; no less than 2000*l.* which he had put for security and improvement into the excise office, but neglecting to recal it in time, could never after get it out, with all the power and interest he had in the great ones of those times; besides another great sum, by mismanagement and for want of good advice.

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

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

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

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

In the next place there came a person with a very sumptuous train; pretending himself an agent from the Prince of Conde, then in arms against Cardinal Mazarine: the parliament mistrusting him, set their instrument so busily at work, that in four or five days they had procured

intelligence from Paris, that he was a spy from King Charles; whereupon the very next morning our author's kinsman was sent to him, with an order of council commanding him to depart the kingdom within three days, or expect the punishment of a spy.

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

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P A R A D I S E L O S T .

B O O K I .

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

The first Book proposes, first in brief, the whole subject, Man's disobedience, and the loss thereupon of Paradise, wherein he was placed: then touches the prime cause of his fall, the serpent, or rather Satan in the serpent; who, revolting from God, and drawing to his side many legions of angels, was, by the command of God, driven out of heaven, with all his crew, into the great deep. Which action passed over, the poem hastens into the midst of things, presenting Satan, with his angels, now falling into hell, described here, not in the center (for heaven and earth may be supposed as yet not made, certainly not yet accursed), but in a place of utter darkness, fittest 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 a new kind of creature to be created, according to an ancient prophecy, or report, in heaven; for, that angels were long before this visible creation, was the opinion of many ancient fathers. To find out the truth of this prophecy, and what to determine thereon, he refers to a full council. What his associates thence attempt. Pandemonium, the place of Satan, rises, suddenly built out of the deep: the infernal peers there sit in council.

OF man's first disobedience, and the fruit
Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste
Brought death into the world, and all our woe,
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man
Restore us, and regain the blissful seat, 5
Sing, heav'nly muse, that on the secret top
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire
That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed,
In the beginning how the heav'ns and earth
Rose out of chaos: or, if Sion hill 10
Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God; I thence
Invoke thy aid to my advent'rous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues 15
Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.
And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer

A

Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,
 Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first
 Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread, 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, 25
 And justify the ways of God to men.
 Say first, for heav'n hides nothing from thy view,
 Nor the deep tract of hell; say first, what cause
 Mov'd our grand parents, in that happy state,
 Favour'd of heav'n so highly, to fall off 30
 From their Creator, and transgress his will
 For one restraint, lords of the world besides?
 Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?
 Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile,
 Stirr'd up with envy and revenge, deceiv'd 35
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride
 Had cast him out from heav'n, with all his host
 Of rebel angels; by whose aid, aspiring
 To set himself in glory above his peers,
 He trusted to have equall'd the Most High, 40
 If he oppos'd; and, with ambitious aim
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,
 Rais'd impious war in heav'n, and battle proud,
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power 45
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky,
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down
 To bottomless perdition; there to dwell
 In adamantin chains and penal fire,
 Who durst defy th' Omnipotent to arms.
 Nine times the space that measures day and night 50
 To mortal men, he with his horrid crew
 Lay vanquish'd, rolling in the fiery gulf,
 Confounded, though immortal: but his doom
 Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought 55
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain
 Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,
 That witness'd huge affliction and dismay,
 Mix'd with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:
 At once, as far as angels ken, he views
 The dismal situation waste and wild; 60
 A dungeon horrible on all sides round,
 As one great furnace flam'd; yet from those flames
 No light, but rather darkness visible
 Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace 65
 And rest can never dwell; hope never comes
 That comes to all: but torture without end
 Still urges, and a fiery deluge, fed
 With ever-burning sulphur unconsum'd:
 Such place eternal Justice had prepar'd 70
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordain'd
 In utter darkness, and their portion set

As far remov'd from God and light of heav'n,
 As from the center thrice to th' utmost pole.
 O, how unlike the place from whence they fell! 75
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelm'd
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,
 He soon discerns; and welt'ring by his side
 One next himself in pow'r, and next in crime,
 Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd 80
 Beëlzebub. To whom th' arch-enemy,
 And thence in heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:
 'If thou beest he; but O, how fall'n! how chang'd
 From him, who, in the happy realms of light, 85
 Cloth'd with transcendent brightness, didst outshine
 Myriads though bright! If he whom mutual league,
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,
 Join'd with me once, now misery hath join'd 90
 In equal ruin! Into what pit thou seest
 From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd
 He with his thunder: and till then who knew
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage 95
 Can else inflict, do I repent or change,
 Though chang'd in outward lustre, that fix'd mind,
 And high disdain from sense of injur'd merit,
 That with the Mightiest rais'd me to contend,
 And to the fierce contention brought along 100
 Innumerable force of spirits arm'd,
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,
 His utmost pow'r with adverse pow'r oppos'd
 In dubious battle on the plains of heaven,
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost?
 All is not lost; th' unconquerable will,
 And study of revenge, immortal hate,
 And courage never to submit or yield,
 And what is else not to be overcome;
 That glory never shall his wrath or might 110
 Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace
 With suppliant knee, and deify his power,
 Who from the terror of this arm so late
 Doubted his empire; that were low indeed,
 That were an ignominy, and shame beneath 115
 This downfall: since by fate the strength of gods
 And this empyreal substance cannot fail;
 Since through experience of this great event
 In arms not worse, in foresight much advanc'd,
 We may with more successful hope resolve 120
 To wage by force or guile eternal war,
 Irreconcilable to our grand foe,
 Who now triumphs, and, in th' excess of joy
 Sole reigning, holds the tyranny of heaven.'
 So spake th' apostate angel, though in pain, 125
 Vaunting aloud, but rack'd with deep despair;
 And him thus answer'd soon his bold compeer:

'O Prince, O Chief of many throned Powers,
 That led th' embattled Seraphim to war
 Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds 130
 Fearless, endanger'd heav'n's perpetual king,
 And put to proof his high supremacy,
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate;
 Too well I see, and rue the dire event,
 That with sad overthrow, and foul defeat, 135
 Hath lost us heav'n, and all this mighty host
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,
 As far as gods and heav'nly essences
 Can perish; for the mind and spirit remains
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns, 140
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state
 Here swallow'd up in endless misery.
 But what if he our Conqu'ror (whom I now
 Of force believe almighty, since no less
 Than such could have o'erpow'r'd such force as ours) 145
 Have left us this our spirit and strength entire
 Strongly to suffer and support our pains,
 That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,
 Or do him mightier service as his thralls
 By right of war, whate'er his business be, 150
 Here in the heart of hell to work in fire,
 Or do his errands in the gloomy deep:
 What can it then avail, though yet we feel
 Strength undiminish'd, or eternal being
 To undergo eternal punishment? 155
 Whereto with speedy words th' arch-fiend replied:
 'Fall'n Cherub, to be weak is miserable
 Doing or suffering; but of this be sure,
 To do aught good never will be our task,
 But ever to do ill our sole delight, 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; 165
 Which oft-times may succeed, so as perhaps
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb
 His inmost counsels from their destin'd aim.
 But see, the angry victor hath recall'd
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170
 Back to the gates of heav'n: the sulphurous hail,
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown, hath laid
 The fiery surge, that from the precipice
 Of heav'n receiv'd us falling; and the thunder,
 Wing'd with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now
 To bellow through the vast and boundless deep.
 Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn
 Or satiate fury yield it from our foe.
 Seest thou yon dreary plain, forlorn and wild, 180
 The seat of desolation, void of light,
 Save what the glimmering of these livid flames

Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend
 From off the tossing of these fiery waves;
 There rest, if any rest can harbour there; 185
 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 up-lift above the wave, and eyes
 That sparkling blaz'd; his other parts besides
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large, 195
 Lay floating many a rood; in bulk as huge
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,
 Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove;
 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 th' ocean stream:
 Him, haply, slumb'ring on the Norway foam,
 The pilot of some small night-founder'd skiff
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell, 205
 With fixed anchor in his scaly rind
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night
 Invests the sea, and wished morn delays:
 So stretch'd out huge in length the arch-fiend lay,
 Chain'd on the burning-lake: nor ever thence 210
 Had ris'n, or heav'd his head; but that the will
 And high permission of all-ruling heaven
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,
 That with reiterated crimes he might
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215
 Evil to others; and, enrag'd, might see
 How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shown
 On man by him seduc'd; but on himself
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance pour'd, 220
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames,
 Driv'n backward, slope their pointing spires, and, roll'd
 In billows, leave i' th' midst a horrid vale.
 Then with expanded wings he steers his flight 225
 Aloft, incumbent on the dusky air,
 That felt unusual weight; till on dry land
 He lights, if it were land that ever burn'd
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire;
 And such appear'd in hue, as when the force 230
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side
 Of thund'ring Aetna, whose combustible
 And fuell'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
 Sublim'd with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235
 And leave a singed bottom all involv'd
 With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole

Of unblest feet. Him follow'd his next mate:
Both glorying to have 'scap'd the Stygian flood
As gods, and by their own recover'd strength, 240
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

'Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,'
Said then the lost Arch-angel, 'this the seat
That we must change for heav'n; this mournful gloom
For that celestial light? Be it so, since he, 245
Who now is Sovran, can dispose and bid
What shall be right; farthest from him is best,
Whom reason hath equall'd, force hath made supreme
Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,
Where joy for ever dwells! Hail, horrors, hail, 250
Infernal world, and thou profoundest hell,
Receive thy new possessor; one who brings
A mind not to be chang'd by place or time:
The mind is its own place, and in itself
Can make a heav'n of hell, a hell of heaven. 255
What matter where, if I be still the same,
And what I should be; all but less than he
Whom thunder hath made greater? Here at least
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: 260
Here we may reign secure, and, in my choice,
To reign is worth ambition, though in hell:
Better to reign in hell, than serve in heaven!
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,
Th' associates and copartners of our loss, 265
Lie thus astonish'd on th' oblivious pool,
And call them not to share with us their part
In this unhappy mansion; or once more
With rallied arms to try what may be yet
Regain'd in heav'n; or what more lost in hell?' 270

So Satan spake, and him Beëlzebub
Thus answer'd: 'Leader of those armies bright,
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foil'd,
If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge
Of hope in fears and dangers; heard so oft 275
In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge,
Of battle when it rag'd, in all assaults
Their surest signal, they will soon resume
New courage and revive; though now they lie
Gro'ling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd;
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.'

He scarce had ceas'd, when the superior fiend
Was moving toward the shore: his pond'rous shield,
Ethereal temper, massy, large, and round, 285
Behind him cast; the broad circumference
Hung on his shoulders like the moon, whose orb
Through optic glass the Tuscan artist views
At evening from the top of Fesolè,
Or in Valdarno, to descry new lands, 290
Rivers, or mountains, in her spotty globe.
His spear, to equal which the tallest pine

Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
 Of some great ammiral, were but a wand,
 He walk'd with, to support uneasy steps 295
 Over the burning marle, not like those steps
 On heaven's azure, and the torrid clime
 Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with fire:
 Nathless he so endur'd, till on the beach
 Of that inflamed sea he stood, and call'd 300
 His legions, Angel forms, who lay intranc'd
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
 In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades,
 High over-arch'd, imbow'r; or scatter'd sedge
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion arm'd 305
 Hath vex'd the Red-Sea coast, whose waves o'erthrew
 Busiris and his Memphian chivalry,
 While with perfidious hatred they pursued
 The sojourners of Goshen, who beheld
 From the safe shore their floating carcasses 310
 And broken chariot-wheels: so thick bestrown,
 Abject and lost lay these, covering the flood,
 Under amazement of their hideous change.
 He call'd so loud, that all the hollow deep
 Of hell resounded. 'Princes, potentates, 315
 Warriors, the flow'r of heav'n, once yours, now lost,
 If such astonishment as this can seize
 Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place
 After the toil of battle to repose
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 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 scatter'd arms and ensigns, till anon 325
 His swift pursuers from heav'n-gates discern
 Th' advantage; and descending, tread us down
 Thus drooping, or with linked thunderbolts
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf.
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.' 330
 They heard, and were abash'd, and up they sprung
 Upon the wing; as when men wont to watch
 On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;
 Yet to their general's voice they soon obey'd
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod
 Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,
 Wav'd round the coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud 340
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung
 Like night, and darken'd all the land of Nile:
 So numberless were those bad angels seen
 Hovering on wing under the cope of hell, 345
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires
 Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted spear

Of their great sultan waving to direct
 Their course, in even balance down they light
 On the firm brimstone, and fill all the plain; 350
 A multitude, like which the populous north
 Pour'd never from her frozen loins, to pass
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons
 Came like a deluge on the south, and spread
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands. 355
 Forthwith from every squadron and each band
 The heads and leaders thither haste where stood
 Their great commander; godlike shapes and forms
 Excelling human, princely dignities;
 And pow'rs that erst in heaven sat on thrones, 360
 Though of their names in heav'nly records now
 Be no memorial; blotted out and ras'd
 By their rebellion from the books of life.
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve
 Got them new names; till, wand'ring o'er the earth, 365
 Through God's high sufferance for the trial of man,
 By falsities and lies the greatest part
 Of mankind they corrupted to forsake
 God their Creator, and th' invisible
 Glory of him that made them to transform 370
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorn'd
 With gay religions, full of pomp and gold,
 And devils to adore for deities:
 Then were they known to men by various names,
 And various idols through the heathen world. 375
 Say, muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
 Rous'd from the slumber on that fiery couch,
 At their great emp'ror's call, as next in worth
 Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof. 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 ador'd
 Among the nations round, and durst abide 385
 Jehovah thund'ring out of Sion, thron'd
 Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd
 Within his sanctuary itself their shrines,
 Abominations; and with cursed things
 His holy rites and solemn feasts profan'd, 390
 And with their darkness durst affront his light.
 First, Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
 Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;
 Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
 Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire 395
 To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
 Worshipp'd in Rabba and her wat'ry plain,
 In Argob and in Basan, to the stream
 Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 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 call'd, the type of hell. 405
 Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moab's sons,
 From Aroer to Nebo, and the wild
 Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond
 The flow'ry dale of Sibma clad with vines, 410
 And Eleäle to th' asphaltic pool.
 Peor his other name, when he entic'd
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarg'd 415
 Ev'n to that hill of scandal, by the grove
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate;
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to hell.
 With these came they, who, from the bord'ring flood
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
 Of Baälim and Ashtaroth; those male,
 These feminine: for spirits, when they please,
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft
 And uncompounded is their essence pure; 425
 Not tied or manacled with joint or limb,
 Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,
 Like cumbrous flesh; but, in what shape they choose,
 Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
 Can execute their aery purposes, 430
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook
 Their living strength, and unfrequented left
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down
 To bestial gods; for which their heads as low 435
 Bow'd down in battle, sunk before the spear
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians call'd
 Astarte, queen of heav'n, 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 th' offensive mountain, built
 By that uxorious king, whose heart, though large,
 Beguil'd by fair idolatresses, fell 445
 To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind,
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day;
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450
 Ran purple to the sea, suppos'd with blood
 Of Thammuz yearly wounded: the love-tale
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat;
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led, 455
 His eye survey'd the dark idolatries
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one

Who mourn'd in earnest, when the captive ark
 Maim'd his brute image, head and hands lopt off
 In his own temple, on the grunsel edge, 460
 Where he fell flat, and sham'd his worshippers:
 Dagon his name, sea-monster, upward man
 And downward fish: yet had his temple high
 Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the coast
 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon, 465
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.
 Him follow'd 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 gain'd 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 475
 Whom he had vanquish'd. After these appear'd
 A crew, who, under names of old renown,
 Osiris, Isis, Orus, and their train,
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests, to seek 480
 Their wand'ring gods disguis'd in brutish forms.
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel 'scape
 Th' infection, when their borrow'd gold compos'd
 The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan, 485
 Lik'ning his Maker to the grazed ox;
 Jehovah, who in one night, when he pass'd
 From Egypt marching, equall'd 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 smok'd; yet who more oft than he
 In temples and at altars, when the priest
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who fill'd 495
 With lust and violence the house of God?
 In courts and palaces he also reigns,
 And in luxurious cities, where the noise
 Of riot ascends above their loftiest towers,
 And injury and outrage: and when night 500
 Darkens the streets, then wander forth the sons
 Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine.
 Witness the streets of Sodom, and that night
 In Gibeah, when the hospitable door
 Expos'd a matron, to avoid worse rape. 505
 These were the prime in order and in might;
 The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,
 Th' Ionian gods, of Javan's issue held
 Gods, yet confess'd later than heav'n and earth,
 Their boasted parents: Titan, heav'n's first-born, 510
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seiz'd
 By younger Saturn; he from mightier Jove,

His own and Rhea's son, like measure found ;
 So Jove usurping reign'd : these first in Crete
 And Ida known, thence on the snowy top 515
 Of cold Olympus, rul'd the middle air,
 Their highest heav'n ; or on the Delphian cliff,
 Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds
 Of Doric land ; or who with Saturn old
 Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian fields, 520
 And o'er the Celtic roam'd the utmost isles.
 All these and more came flocking ; but with looks
 Downcast and damp ; yet such wherein appear'd
 Obscure some glimpse of joy, to have found their chief
 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost 525
 In loss itself, which on his count'nance cast
 Like doubtful hue : but he, his wonted pride
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore
 Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd
 Their fainting courage, and dispell'd their fears. 530
 Then straight commands, that at the warlike sound
 Of trumpets loud and clarions be uprear'd
 His mighty standard : that proud honour claim'd
 Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall ;
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurl'd 535
 Th' imperial ensign, which, full high advanc'd,
 Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
 With gems and golden lustre rich emblaz'd,
 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 545
 With orient colours waving ; with them rose
 A forest huge of spears ; and thronging helms
 Appear'd and serried shields in thick array
 Of depth immeasurable ; anon they move
 In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 550
 Of flutes and soft recorders ; such as rais'd
 To highth of noblest temper heroes old
 Arming to battle ; and instead of rage,
 Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat ; 555
 Nor wanting pow'r to mitigate and swage
 With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase
 Anguish, and doubt, and fear, and sorrow, and pain
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,
 Breathing united force, with fixed thought, 560
 Mov'd on in silence to soft pipes, that charm'd
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil : and now
 Advanc'd in view they stand ; a horrid front
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise
 Of warriors old with order'd spear and shield ; 565
 Awaiting what command their mighty chief
 Had to impose : he through the armed files

Darts his experienc'd eye, and soon traverse
 The whole battalion views, their order due,
 Their visages and stature as of gods; 570
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart
 Distends with pride, and hard'ning in his strength
 Glories: for never since created man
 Met such embodied force, as nam'd with these
 Could merit more than that small infantry 575
 Warr'd on by cranes; though all the giant brood
 Of Phlegra with th' heroic race were join'd
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side
 Mix'd with auxiliar gods; and what resounds
 In fable or romance of Uther's son 580
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;
 And all who since, baptiz'd or infidel,
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore, 585
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd
 Their dread commander: he, above the rest
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent, 590
 Stood like a tow'r; his form had yet not lost
 All her original brightness; nor appear'd
 Less than Arch-angel ruin'd, and th' excess
 Of glory obscur'd: as when the sun, new risen,
 Looks through the horizontal misty air 595
 Shorn of his beams; or from behind the moon,
 In dim eclipse, disastrous twilight sheds
 On half the nations, and with fear of change
 Perplexes monarchs. Darken'd so, yet shone
 Above them all the Arch-angel: but his face 600
 Deep scars of thunder had intrench'd; and care
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride
 Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
 Signs of remorse and passion, to behold 605
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather
 (Far other once beheld in bliss), condemn'd
 For ever now to have their lot in pain,
 Millions of spirits for his fault amerc'd
 Of heav'n, and from eternal splendours flung 610
 For his revolt, yet faithful how they stood,
 Their glory wither'd; as when heaven's fire
 Hath scath'd the forest oaks, or mountain pines,
 With singed top their stately growth, though bare,
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepar'd 615
 To speak; whereat their doubled ranks they bend
 From wing to wing, and half enclose him round
 With all his peers: attention held them mute.
 Thrice he assay'd, and thrice, in spite of scorn,
 Tears, such as angels weep, burst forth: at last 620
 Words, interwove with sighs, found out their way.
 'O Myriads of immortal Spirits! O Powers

Matchless, but with th' Almighty; and that strife
 Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,
 As this place testifies, and this dire change 625
 Hateful to utter: but what pow'r of mind,
 Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth
 Of knowledge, past or present, could have fear'd,
 How such united force of gods, how such
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile
 Hath emptied heav'n, shall fail to reascend
 Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat?
 For me, be witness all the host of heaven, 635
 If counsels different, or dangers shunn'd
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he, who reigns
 Monarch in heav'n, till then as one secure
 Sat on his throne upheld by old repute,
 Consent or custom; and his regal state 640
 Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own;
 So as not either to provoke, or dread
 New war, provok'd; our better part remains 645
 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 heav'n that he ere long
 Intended to create, and therein plant
 A generation, whom his choice regard
 Should favour equal to the sons of heaven:
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655
 Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere;
 For this infernal pit shall never hold
 Celestial spirits in bondage, nor th' abyss
 Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts
 Full counsel must mature: peace is despair'd; 660
 For who can think submission? War then, war,
 Open or understood, must be resolv'd.
 He spake; and, to confirm his words, out-flew
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs
 Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze 665
 Far round illumin'd hell; highly they rag'd
 Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped arms
 Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of heaven.
 There stood a hill not far, whose grisly top 670
 Belch'd fire and rolling smoke; the rest entire
 Shone with a glossy scurf; undoubted sign
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,
 The work of sulphur. Thither, wing'd with speed,
 A numerous brigade hasten'd: as when bands 675
 Of pioneers, with spade and pickax arm'd,
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,

Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on:
 Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
 From heav'n; for e'en in heav'n his looks and thoughts 680
 Were always downward bent, admiring more
 The riches of heav'n's pavement, trodden gold,
 Than aught, divine or holy, else enjoy'd
 In vision beatific: by him first
 Men also, and by his suggestion taught, 685
 Ransack'd the center, and with impious hands
 Rifled the bowels of their mother earth
 For treasures, better hid. Soon had his crew
 Open'd into the hill a spacious wound,
 And digg'd out ribs of gold. Let none admire 690
 That riches grow in hell; that soil may best
 Deserve the precious bane. And here let those,
 Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell
 Of Babel, and the works of Memphian kings,
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame, 695
 And strength and art, are easily outdone
 By spirits reprobate, and in an hour
 What in an age they with incessant toil
 And hands innumerable scarce perform.
 Nigh on the plain, in many cells prepar'd, 700
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire
 Sluic'd from the lake, a second multitude
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,
 Severing each kind, and scumm'd the bullion dross:
 A third as soon had for'm'd within the ground 705
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells,
 By strange conveyance, fill'd each hollow nook;
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.
 Anon, out of the earth a fabric huge 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 715
 Cornice or freeze, with bossy sculptures graven:
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babylon,
 Nor great Alcairo, such magnificence
 Equall'd 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. Th' ascending pile
 Stood fix'd her stately highth: and straight the doors
 Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide
 Within, her ample spaces, o'er the smooth 725
 And level pavement; from the arched roof
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
 With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730
 Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise,
 And some the architect: his hand was known

In heav'n by many a tower'd structure high,
 Where scepter'd angels held their residence,
 And sat as princes; whom the súpreme King 735
 Exalted to such pow'r, and gave to rule,
 Each in his hierarchy, the orders bright.
 Nor was his name unheard or unador'd
 In ancient Greecc; and in Ausonian land
 Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell 740
 From heav'n, they fabled, thrown by angry Jove
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
 A summer's day; and with the setting sun
 Dropt from the zenith like a falling star, 745
 On Lemnos th' Aegean isle: thus they relate,
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
 Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now
 To have built in heav'n high tow'rs; nor did he 'scape
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent 750
 With his industrious crew to build in hell.

Meanwhile, the winged heralds, by command
 Of sovran pow'r, with awful ceremony
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim
 A solemn council, forthwith to be held 755
 At Pandemonium, the high capital
 Of Satan and his peers: their summons call'd
 From every hand and squared regiment
 By place or choice the worthiest; they anon,
 With hundreds and with thousands, trooping came, 760
 Attended: all access was throng'd: the gates
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall
 (Though like a cover'd field, where champions bold
 Wont ride in arm'd, and at the soldan's chair
 Defied the best of panim chivalry 765
 To mortal combat, or career with lance),
 Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air
 Brush'd with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees
 In spring-tine, when the sun with Taurus rides,
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770
 In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,
 New rubb'd with balm, expatiate and confer
 Their state affairs: so thick the aery crowd 775
 Swarm'd and were straiten'd; till, the signal given,
 Behold a wonder! They but now who seem'd
 In bigness to surpass earth's giant sons,
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room
 Throng numberless, like that pygmean race 780
 Beyond the Indian mount; or faery elves,
 Whose midnight revels, by a forest-side
 Or fountain, some belated peasant sees,
 Or dreams he sees, while over head the moon
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the earth 785
 Wheels her pale coursé; they, on their mirth and dance
 Intent, with jocund music charm his ear;

At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.
 Thus incorporeal spirits to smallest forms
 Reduc'd their shapes immense, and were at large, 790
 Though without number still, amidst the hall
 Of that infernal court. But far within,
 And in their own dimensions, like themselves,
 The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim
 In close recess and secret conclave sat, 795
 A thousand demigods on golden seats,
 Frequent and full. After short silence then,
 And summons read, the great consult began.

B O O K I I.

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

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

High on a throne of royal state, which far
 Outshone the wealth of Ormus and of Ind,
 Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
 Show'rs on her kings barbaric pearl and gold,
 Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd 5
 To that bad eminence: and, from despair
 Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires
 Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue
 Vain war with heav'n; and, by success untaught,
 His proud imaginations thus display'd: 10
 'Pow'rs and dominions, deities of heaven;
 For since no deep within her gulf can hold
 Immortal vigour, though oppress'd and fall'n,
 I give not heav'n for lost. From this descent
 Celestial virtues rising, will appear 15
 More glorious and more dread than from no fall,
 And trust themselves to fear no second fate.
 Me though just right, and the fix'd laws of heaven,
 Did first create your leader; next, free choice,

With what besides, in council or in fight, 20
 Hath been achiev'd of merit; yet this loss,
 Thus far at least recover'd, hath much more
 Establish'd in a safe unenvied throne,
 Yielded with full consent. The happier state
 In heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw 25
 Envy from each inferior; but who here
 Will envy whom the highest place exposes
 Foremost to stand against the Thund'rer's aim,
 Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share
 Of endless pain? Where there is then no good 30
 For which to strive, no strife can grow up there
 From faction; for none sure will claim in hell
 Precédence, none whose portion is so small
 Of present pain, that with ambitious mind
 Will covet more. With this advantage then 35
 To union, and firm faith, and firm accord,
 More than can be in heav'n, we now return
 To claim our just inheritance of old,
 Surer to prosper than prosperity
 Could have assur'd us; and, by what best way, 40
 Whether of open war, or covert guile,
 We now debate: who can advise, may speak?
 He ceas'd; and next him Moloch, scepter'd king,
 Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest spirit
 That fought in heav'n, now fiercer by despair: 45
 His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd
 Equal in strength; and rather than be less
 Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost
 Went all his fear; of God, or hell, or worse,
 He reck'd not; and these words thereafter spake: 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 55
 The signal to ascend, sit ling'ring here
 Heav'n's fugitives, and for their dwelling-place
 Accept this dark, opprobrious den of shame,
 The prison of his tyranny who reigns
 By our delay? No, let us rather choose, 60
 Arm'd with hell flames and fury, all at once,
 O'er heav'n's high tow'rs to force resistless way,
 Turning our tortures into horrid arms
 Against the torturer; when to meet the noise
 Of his almighty engine he shall hear 65
 Infernal thunder; and, for lightning, see
 Black fire and horror shot with equal rage
 Among his angels; and his throne itself
 Mix'd with Tartarean sulphur, and strange fire,
 His own invented torments. But perhaps 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 75
 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? Th' ascent is easy then;
 Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke
 Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find
 To our destruction; if there be in hell
 Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse 85
 Than to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss, condemn'd
 In this abhorred deep to utter woe;
 Where pain of unextinguishable fire
 Must exercise us without hope of end,
 The vassals of his anger, when the scourge 90
 Inexorable, and the torturing hour,
 Calls us to penance? More destroy'd than thus,
 We should be quite abolish'd, and expire.
 What fear we then? what doubt we to incense
 His utmost ire? which, to the highth enrag'd, 95
 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 pow'r sufficient to disturb his heaven,
 And with perpetual inroads to alarm,
 Though inaccessible, his fatal throne:
 Which, if not victory, is yet revenge.' 105
 He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd
 Desp'rate revenge, and battle dangerous
 To less than gods. On th' other side up rose
 Belial, in act more graceful and humane:
 A fairer person lost not heav'n; he seem'd 110
 For dignity compos'd, and high exploit:
 But all was false and hollow; though his tongue
 Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear
 The better reason, to perplex and dash
 Maturest counsels: for his thoughts were low: 115
 To vice industrious, but to nobler deeds
 Timorous and slothful; yet he pleas'd the ear,
 And with persuasive accent thus began:
 'I should be much for open war, O peers,
 As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd 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, 125
 Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair
 And utter dissolution, as the scope
 Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.
 First, what revenge? The tow'rs of heav'n are fill'd

With armed watch, that render all access 130
 Impregnable: oft on the bord'ring deep
 Encamp their legions; or, with obscure wing,
 Scout far and wide into the realm of night,
 Scorning surprise. Or could we break our way
 By force, and at our heels all hell should rise 135
 With blackest insurrection, to confound
 Heav'n's purest light; yet our great enemy,
 All incorruptible, would on his throne
 Sit unpolluted; and th' ethereal mould,
 Incapable of stain, would soon expel 140
 Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire,
 Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope
 Is flat despair: we must exasperate
 Th' almighty Victor to spend all his rage,
 And that must end us, that must be our cure, 145
 To be no more. Sad cure! for who would lose,
 Though full of pain, this intellectual being,
 Those thoughts that wander through eternity,
 To perish rather, swallow'd up and lost
 In the wide womb of uncreated night, 150
 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 surc.
 Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire, 155
 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
 Reserv'd, and destin'd, to eternal woe;
 Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,
 What can we suffer worse? Is this then worst,
 Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in arms?
 What, when we fled amain, pursued, and struck 165
 With heav'n's afflicting thunder, and besought
 The deep to shelter us? this hell then seem'd
 A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay
 Chain'd on the burning lake? that sure was worse.
 What if the breath, that kindled those grim fires, 170
 Awak'd, should blow them into sev'nfold rage,
 And plunge us in the flames? or, from above,
 Should intermitted vengeance arm again
 His red right hand to plague us? What if all
 Her stores were open'd, and this firmament 175
 Of hell should spout her cataracts of fire,
 Impendent horrors, threat'ning hideous fall
 One day upon our heads; while we perhaps,
 Designing or exhorting glorious war,
 Caught in a fiery tempest shall be hurl'd 180
 Each on his rock transfix'd, the sport and prey
 Of wracking whirlwinds; or for ever sunk
 Under yon boiling ocean, wrapt in chains;
 There to converse with everlasting groans,

Unrespited, unpitied, unrepriev'd, 185
 Ages of hopeless end? This would be worse.
 War therefore, open or conceal'd, alike
 My voice dissuades; for what can force or guile
 With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye
 Views all things at one view? He from heav'n's highth 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 expell'd to suffer here 195
 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 resolv'd,
 If we were wise, against so great a foe
 Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.
 I laugh, when those who at the spear are bold
 And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear 205
 What yet they know must follow, to endure
 Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,
 The sentence of their conqu'ror: this is now
 Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,
 Our súpreme foe in time may much remit 210
 His anger: and perhaps, thus far remov'd,
 Not mind us not offending, satisfied
 With what is punish'd; whence these raging fires
 Will slacken, if his breath stir not their flames.
 Our purer essence then will overcome 215
 Their noxious vapour: or, inur'd, not feel;
 Or, chang'd at length, and to the place conform'd
 In temper and in nature, will receive
 Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;
 This horror will grow mild, this darkness light; 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.' 225
 Thus Belial, with words cloth'd in reason's garb,
 Counsell'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloth,
 Not peace; and after him thus Mammon spake:
 'Either to disenthroné the King of heaven
 We war, if war be best, or to regain 230
 Our own right lost: him to unthroné 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 235
 Within heav'n's bound, unless heav'n's Lord súpreme
 We overpow'r? 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 impos'd, to celebrate his throne
 With warbled hymns, and to his Godhead sing
 Forc'd hallelujahs; while he lordly sits
 Our envied sovrán, and his altar breathes
 Ambrosial odours and ambrosial flowers, 245
 Our servile offerings? This must be our task
 In heav'n, 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 obtain'd 250
 Unacceptable, though in heav'n, our state
 Of splendid vassulage; 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 255
 Hard liberty before the easy yoke
 Of servile pomp. Our greatness will appear
 Then most conspicuous, when great things of small,
 Useful of hurtful, prosp'rous of advérse,
 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 heav'n's all-ruling Sire
 Choose to reside, his glory unobscur'd, 265
 And with the majesty of darkness round
 Covers his throne; from whence deep thunders roar
 Must'ring their rage, and heav'n resembles hell.
 As he our darkness, cannot we his light
 Imitate when we please? This désert soil 270
 Wants not her hidden lustre, gems and gold;
 Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise
 Magnificence; and what can heav'n show more?
 Our torments also may in length of time
 Become our elements; these piercing fires 275
 As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd
 Into their temper; which must needs remove
 The sensible of pain. All things invite
 To peaceful counsels, and the settled state
 Of order, how in safety best we may 280
 Compose our present evils, with regard
 Of what we are, and where: dismissing quite
 All thoughts of war. Ye have what I advise.'

He scarce had finish'd, when such murmur fill'd
 Th' assembly, as when hollow rocks retain 285
 The sound of blust'ring winds, which all night long
 Had rous'd the sea, now with hoarse cadence lull
 Seafaring men o'er-watch'd, whose bark by chance
 Or pinnace anchors in a craggy bay
 After the tempest: such applause was heard 290
 As Mammon ended, and his sentence pleas'd
 Advising peace: for such another field
 They dreaded worse than hell: so much the fear
 Of thunder and the sword of Michaël

Wrought still within them, and no less desire 295
 To found this nether empire, which might rise
 By policy, and long process of time,
 In emulation opposite to heaven.
 Which when Beëlzebub perceiv'd, than whom,
 Satan except, none higher sat, with grave 300
 Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd
 A pillar of state; deep on his front engraven
 Deliberation sat, and public care;
 And princely counsel in his face yet shone,
 Majestic, though in ruin: sage he stood 305
 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 Pow'rs, Offspring of Heaven, 310
 Ethereal Virtues; or these titles now
 Must we renounce, and, changing style, be call'd
 Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote
 Inclines here to continue, and build up here
 A growing empire: doubtless, while we dream, 315
 And know not that the King of heav'n hath doom'd
 This place our dungeon; not our safe retreat
 Beyond his potent arm, to live exempt
 From heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new league
 Banded against his throne, but to remain 320
 In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd
 Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd
 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 325
 By our revolt; but over hell extend
 His empire, and with iron scepter rule
 Us here, as with his golden those in heaven.
 What sit we then projecting peace and war?
 War hath determin'd us, and foil'd with loss 330
 Irreparable; terms of peace yet none
 Vouchsaf'd or sought; for what peace will be given
 To us enslav'd, but custody severe
 And stripes, and arbitrary punishment
 Inflicted? and what peace can we return, 335
 But to our pow'r hostility and hate,
 Untam'd reluctance, and revenge, though slow,
 Yet ever plotting how the conqueror least
 May reap his conquest, and may least rejoice
 In doing what we most in suffering feel? 340
 Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need
 With dang'rous expedition to invade
 Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or siege,
 Or ambush from the deep. What if we find
 Some easier enterprise? There is a place 345
 (If ancient and prophetic fame in heaven
 Err not), another world, the happy seat
 Of some new race, call'd Man, about this time
 To be created like to us, though less

In pow'r and excellence, but favour'd more 350
 Of him who rules above; so was his will
 Pronounc'd among the gods; and by an oath,
 That shook heav'n's whole circumference, confirm'd.
 Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn
 What creatures there inhabit, of what mould 355
 Or substance, how endued, and what their power,
 And where their weakness, how attempted best,
 By force or subtlety. Though heav'n be shut,
 And heav'n's high Arbitrator sit secure
 In his own strength, this place may lie expos'd, 360
 The utmost border of his kingdom, left
 To their defence who hold it: here perhaps
 Some advantageous act may be achiev'd
 By sudden onset; either with hell fire
 To waste his whole creation, or possess 365
 All as our own, and drive, as we were driven,
 The puny habitants, or, if not drive,
 Seduce them to our party, that their God
 May prove their foe, and with repenting hand
 Abolish his own works. This would surpass 370
 Common revenge, and interrupt his joy
 In our confusion, and our joy upraise
 In his disturbance; when his darling sons,
 Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse
 Their frail original, and faded bliss, 375
 Faded so soon. Advise, if this be worth
 Attempting, or to sit in darkness here
 Hatching vain empires.' Thus Beëlzebul
 Pleaded his devilish counsel, first devis'd
 By Satan, and in part propos'd: 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 385
 His glory to augment. The bold design
 Pleas'd highly those infernal states, and joy
 Sparkled in all their eyes: with full assent
 They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews:
 'Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate, 390
 Synod of gods, and like to what ye are,
 Great things resolv'd, which, from the lowest deep,
 Will once more lift us up, in spite of fate,
 Nearer our ancient seat; perhaps in view
 Of those bright confines, whence, with neigh'ring arms
 And opportune excursion, we may chance
 Re-enter heav'n; or else in some mild zone
 Dwell, not unvisited of heav'n's fair light,
 Secure; and at the bright'ning orient beam
 Purge off this gloom: the soft delicious air, 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 wand'ring feet

'The dark, unbottom'd, infinite abyss, 405
 And through the palpable obscure find out
 His uncoutch way, or spread his acry flight
 Upborne with indefatigable wings,
 Over the vast abrupt, 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, 415
 'The weight of all and our last hope relies.'
 This said, he sat; and expectation held
 His look suspense, awaiting who appear'd
 'To second, or oppose, or undertake
 'The perilous attempt: but all sat mute, 420
 Pond'ring the danger with deep thoughts; and each
 In other's count'nance read his own dismay,
 Astonish'd: none among the choice and prime
 Of those heav'n-warring champions could be found
 So hardy, as to proffer or accept 425
 Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last
 Satan, whom now transcendent glory rais'd
 Above his fellows, with monarchal pride,
 Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake:
 'O Progeny of heav'n, empyreal Thrones, 430
 With reason hath deep silence and demur
 Seiz'd us, though undismay'd. Long is the way
 And hard, that out of hell leads up to light;
 Our prison strong; this huge convex of fire,
 Outrageous to devour, immures us round 435
 Ninefold, and gates of burning adamant,
 Barr'd over us, prohibit all egress.
 'These pass'd, if any pass, the void profound
 Of unessential night receives him next
 Wide-gaping, and with utter loss of being 440
 'Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.
 If thence he 'scape into whatever world,
 Or unknown region, what remains him less
 'Than unknown dangers, and as hard escape?
 But I should ill become this throne, O peers, 445
 And this imperial sovranity, adorn'd
 With splendour, arm'd with pow'r, if aught propos'd
 And judg'd of public moment, in the shape
 Of difficulty or danger, could deter
 Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume 450
 'These royalties, and not refuse to reign,
 Refusing to accept as great a share
 Of hazard as of honour, due alike
 'To him who reigns, and so much to him due
 Of hazard more, as he above the rest 455
 High honour'd sits? Go, therefore, mighty powers,
 'Terror of heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,
 While here shall be our home, what best may ease
 'The present misery, and render hell

More tolerable; if there be cure or charm 460
 To respite, or deceive, or slack the pain
 Of this ill mansion: intermit no watch
 Against a wakeful foe, while I abroad
 Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek
 Deliverance for us all: this enterprise 465
 None shall partake with me.' Thus saying rose
 The monarch, and prevented all reply;
 Prudent, lest, from his resolution rais'd,
 Others among the chief might offer now
 (Certain to be refus'd) what erst they fear'd; 470
 And, so refus'd, might in opinion stand
 His rivals; winning cheap the high repute,
 Which he through hazard huge must earn. But they
 Dreaded not more th' adventure, than his voice
 Forbidding; and at once with him they rose: 475
 Their rising all at once, was as the sound
 Of thunder heard remote. Towards him they bend
 With awful reverence prone; and as a god
 Extol him equal to the High'st in heav'n:
 Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd, 480
 That for the general safety he despis'd
 His own: for neither do the spirits damn'd
 Lose all their virtue; lest bad men should boast
 Their specious deeds on earth which glory excites,
 Or close ambition, varnish'd o'er with zeal. 485
 Thus they their doubtful consultations dark
 Ended, rejoicing in their matchless chief:
 As when from mountain-tops the dusky clouds
 Ascending, while the north wind sleeps, o'erspread
 Heav'n's cheerful face, the louring element 490
 Scowls o'er the darken'd landskip snow, or shower;
 If chance the radiant sun with farewell sweet
 Extend his evening beam, the fields revive,
 The birds their notes renew, and bleating herds
 Attest their joy, that hill and valley rings. 495
 O shame to men! devil with devil damn'd
 Firm concord holds, men only disagree
 Of creatures rational, though under hope
 Of heav'nly grace; and, God proclaiming peace,
 Yet live in hatred, enmity, and strife, 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. 505

The Stygian council thus dissolv'd; and forth
 In order came the grand infernal peers:
 Midst came their mighty paramount, and seem'd
 Alone th' antagonist of heav'n, nor less
 Than hell's dread emperor, with pomp supreme, 510
 And God-like imitated state: him round
 A globe of fiery Seraphim enclos'd
 With bright imblazonry, and horrent arms.
 Then of their session ended they bid cry

With trumpets' regal sound the great result : 515
 Towards the four winds four speedy Cherubim
 Put to their mouths the sounding alchymy,
 By herald's voice explain'd; the hollow abyss
 Heard far and wide, and all the host of hell
 With deafning shout return'd them loud acclaim. 520
 Thence more at ease their minds, and somewhat rais'd
 By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers
 Disband, and, wand'ring, each his several way
 Pursues, as inclination or sad choice
 Leads him, perplex'd where he may likeliest find 525
 Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain
 The irksome hours, till his great chief return.
 Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,
 Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,
 As at th' Olympian games or Pythian fields; 530
 Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal
 With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.
 As when, to warn proud cities, war appears
 Wag'd in the troubled sky, and armies rush
 To battle in the clouds, before each van 535
 Prick forth the aery knights, and couch their spears,
 Till thickest legions close; with feats of arms
 From either end of heav'n the welkin burns.
 Others with vast Typhoean rage more fell,
 Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air 540
 In whirlwind; hell scarce holds the wild uproar.
 As when Alcides, from Oechalia crown'd
 With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore
 Through pain up by the roots Thessalian pines,
 And Lichas from the top of Oeta threw 545
 Into th' Euboic sea. Others more mild,
 Retreated in a silent valley, sing
 With notes angelical to many a harp
 Their own heroic deeds, and hapless fall
 By doom of battle; and complain that fate 550
 Free virtue should enthrall 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 555
 (For eloquence the soul, song charms the sense),
 Others apart sat on a hill retir'd,
 In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high
 Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
 Fix'd fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute, 560
 And found no end, in wand'ring mazes lost.
 Of good and evil much they argued then,
 Of happiness and final misery,
 Passion and apathy, and glory and shame,
 Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy: 565
 Yet, with a pleasing sorcery, could charm
 Pain for a while, or anguish, and excite
 Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured breast
 With stubborn patience, as with triple steel.

Another part, in squadrons and gross bands, 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 575
 Into the burning lake their baleful streams:
 Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate;
 Sad Acheron of sorrow, black and deep;
 Cocytus, nam'd of lamentation loud
 Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon, 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 wat'ry labyrinth, whereof who drinks,
 Forthwith his former state and being forgets, 585
 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: or else deep snow and ice,
 A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog
 Betwixt Damiaata and mount Casius old,
 Where armies whole have sunk: the parching air
 Burns frore, and cold performs th' effect of fire. 595
 Thither by harpy-footed furies hal'd,
 At certain revolutions, all the damn'd
 Are brought; and feel by turns the bitter change
 Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce,
 From beds of raging fire, to starve in ice 600
 Their soft ethereal warmth, and there to pine
 Immoveable, infix'd, and frozen round,
 Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.
 They ferry over this Lethean sound
 Both to and fro, their sorrow to augment, 605
 And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach
 The tempting stream, with one small drop to lose
 In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,
 All in one moment, and so near the brink;
 But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt 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 confus'd march forlorn, th' advent'rous bands 615
 With shudd'ring horror pale, and eyes aghast,
 View'd first their lamentable lot, and found
 No rest: through many a dark and dreary vale
 They pass'd, and many a region dolorous,
 O'er many a frozen, many a fiery Alp, 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, 625
 Abominable, inutterable, and worse
 Than fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chimeras dire.
 - Meanwhile, the adversary of God and man,
 Satan, with thoughts inflam'd of highest design, 630
 Puts on swift wings, and towards the gates of hell
 Explores his solitary flight: sometimes
 He scours the right hand coast, sometimes the left;
 Now shaves with level wing the deep; then soars
 Up to the fiery concave tow'ring high. 635
 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 seem'd
 Far off the flying fiend. At last appear
 Hell-bounds, high reaching to the horrid roof,
 And thrice threefold the gates: three folds were brass, 645
 Three iron, three of adamant rock
 Impenetrable, impal'd with circling fire,
 Yet unconsum'd. Before the gates there sat
 On either side a formidable shape;
 The one seem'd woman to the waist, and fair; 650
 But ended foul in many a scaly fold
 Voluminous and vast; a serpent arm'd
 With mortal sting: about her middle round
 A cry of hell-hounds never-ceasing bark'd
 With wide Cerberean mouths full loud, and rung 655
 A hideous peal; yet, when they list, would creep,
 If aught disturb'd their noise, into her womb,
 And kennel there; yet there still bark'd and howl'd,
 Within unseen. Far less abhorr'd than these 660
 Vex'd Scylla, bathing in the sea that parts
 Calabria from the hoarse Trinacrian shore:
 Nor uglier follow the night-hag, when, call'd
 In secret, riding through the air she comes,
 Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance 665
 With Lapland witches, while the lab'ring moon
 Eclipses at their charms. The other shape,
 If shape it might be call'd that shape had none
 Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
 Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,
 For each seem'd either: black it stood as night, 670
 Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as hell,
 And shook a dreadful dart; what seem'd his head,
 The likeness of a kingly crown had on.
 Satan was now at hand, and from his seat
 The monster moving onward came as fast 675
 With horrid strides; hell trembled as he strode.
 Th' undaunted fiend what this might be admir'd,
 Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,
 Created thing naught valued he, nor shunn'd;

And with disdainful look thus first began: 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 assur'd, without leave ask'd of thee: 685
 Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,
 Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of heaven.'
 To whom the goblin full of wrath replied:
 'Art thou that traitor angel, art thou he,
 Who first broke peace in heav'n, and faith, till then 690
 Unbroken; and in proud rebellious arms,
 Drew after him the third part of heav'n's sons
 Conjur'd against the Highest; for which both thou
 And they, outcast from God, are here condemn'd
 To waste eternal days in woe and pain? 695
 And reckon'st thou thyself with Spirits of heaven,
 Hell-doom'd, and breath'st defiance here and scorn,
 Where I reign king, and, to enrage thee more,
 Thy king and lord? Back to thy punishment,
 False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings, 700
 Lest with a whip of scorpions I pursue
 Thy ling'ring, or with one stroke of this dart
 Strange horror seize thee, and pangs unfelt before.'
 So spake the grisly terror, and in shape,
 So speaking and so threat'ning, grew tenfold 705
 More dreadful and deform. On th' other side,
 Incens'd with indignation, Satan stood
 Unterrified, and like a comet burn'd,
 That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
 In th' arctic sky, and from his horrid hair 710
 Shakes pestilence and war. Each at the head
 Levell'd his deadly aim; their fatal hands
 No second stroke intend, and such a frown
 Each cast at th' other, as when two black clouds,
 With heav'n's artillery fraught, come rattling on 715
 Over the Caspian, then stand front to front,
 Hovering a space, till winds the signal blow
 To join their dark encounter in mid air:
 So frown'd the mighty combatants, that hell
 Grew darker at their frown; so match'd they stood; 720
 For never but once more was either like
 To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds
 Had been achiev'd, whereof all hell had rung,
 Had not the snaky sorceress, that sat
 Fast by hell-gate, and kept the fatal key, 725
 Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.
 'O father, what intends thy hand', she cried,
 'Against thy only son? What fury, O son,
 Possesses thee to bend that mortal dart
 Against thy father's head? and know'st for whom; 730
 For him who sits above and laughs the while
 At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute
 Whate'er his wrath, which he calls justice, bids;
 His wrath, which one day will destroy ye both.'

She spake, and at her words the hellish pest 735
 Forbore; then these to her Satan return'd:
 'So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange
 Thou interposest, that my sudden hand,
 Prevented, spares to tell thee yet by deeds
 What it intends; till first I know of thee, 740
 What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why,
 In this infernal vale first met, thou call'st
 Me father, and that phantasm call'st my son:
 I know thee not, nor ever saw till now
 Sight more detestable than him and thee.' 745
 'T' whom thus the portress of hell-gate replied:
 'Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem
 Now in thine eye so foul? once deem'd so fair
 In heav'n, when at th' assembly, and in sight
 Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd 750
 In bold conspiracy against heav'n's King,
 All on a sudden miserable pain
 Surpris'd 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, 755
 Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,
 Then shining heav'nly fair, a goddess arm'd,
 Out of thy head I sprung; amazement seiz'd
 All th' host of heav'n; back they recoil'd afraid
 At first, and call'd me Sin, and for a sign 760
 Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
 I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won
 The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft
 Thyself in me thy perfect image viewing,
 Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st 765
 With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd
 A growing burden. Meanwhile war arose,
 And fields were fought in heav'n; wherein remain'd
 (For what could else?) to our Almighty Foe
 Clear victory; to our part loss and rout, 770
 Through all the empyréan: down they fell
 Driv'n headlong from the pitch of heaven, down
 Into this deep; and in the general fall
 I also; at which time this pow'rful key
 Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep 775
 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
 Transform'd: but he my inbred enemy 785
 Forth issued, brandishing his fatal dart
 Made to destroy. I fled, and cried out Death!
 Hell trembled at the hideous name, and sigh'd
 From all her caves, and back resounded, Death!

I fled: but he pursued (though more, it seems, 790
 Inflam'd with lust than rage), and, swifter far,
 Me overtook his mother all dismay'd,
 And in embraces forcible and foul
 Ingend'ring with me, of that rape begot
 These yelling monsters, that with ceaseless cry 795
 Surround me, as thou saw'st, hourly conceiv'd
 And hourly born, with sorrow infinite
 To me; for, when they list, into the womb
 That bred them they return, and howl and gnaw
 My bowels, their repast; then bursting forth 800
 Afresh with conscious terrors vex me round,
 That rest or intermission none I find.
 Before mine eyes in opposition sits
 Grim Death, my son and foe; who sets them on,
 And me his parent would full soon devour 805
 For want of other prey, but that he knows
 His end with mine involv'd; and knows that I
 Should prove a bitter morsel, and his bane,
 Whenever that shall be; so fate pronounc'd.
 But thou, O father, I forewarn thee, shun 810
 His deadly arrow: neither vainly hope
 To be invulnerable in those bright arms,
 Though temper'd heav'nly; for that mortal dint,
 Save he who reigns above, none can resist.
 She finish'd; and the subtle fiend his lore 815
 Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd smooth:
 'Dear daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy sire,
 And my fair son here show'st me, the dear pledge
 Of dalliance had with thee in heav'n, and joys
 Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire change 820
 Befall'n us, unforeseen, unthought of; know,
 I come no enemy, but to set free
 From out this dark and dismal house of pain
 Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly host
 Of spirits, that, in our just pretences arm'd, 825
 Fell with us from on high: from them I go
 This uncouth errand sole; and one for all
 Myself expose, with lonely steps to tread
 Th' unfounded deep, and through the void immense
 To search with wand'ring quest a place foretold 830
 Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now
 Created vast and round, a place of bliss
 In the purlieus of heav'n, and therein plac'd
 A race of upstart creatures, to supply
 Perhaps our vacant room: though more remov'd 835
 Lest heav'n, surcharg'd with potent multitude,
 Might hap to move new broils. Be this or aught
 Than this more secret now design'd, I haste
 To know; and, this once known, shall soon return,
 And bring ye to the place where thou and Death 840
 Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen
 Wing silently the buxom air, imbalm'd
 With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd
 Immeasurably; all things shall be your prey.'

He ceas'd, for both seem'd highly pleas'd, and Death
Grinn'd horrible a ghastly smile, to hear
His famine should be fill'd; and blest his maw
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoic'd
His mother bad, and thus bespake her sire:

'The key of this infernal pit by due, 850
And by command of heav'n's all-pow'rful King,
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock
These adamantine gates; against all force
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,
Fearless to be o'ermatch'd by living might. 855
But what owe I to his commands above
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down
Into this gloom of Tartarus profound,
To sit in hateful office here confin'd,
Inhabitant of heav'n, and heav'nly-born, 860
Here in perpetual agony and pain,
With terrors and with clamours compass'd round
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed?
Thou art my father, thou my author, thou
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey 865
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 875
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole turns
Th' intricate wards, and every bolt and bar
Of massy iron or solid rock with ease
Unfastens. On a sudden open fly
With impetuous recoil and jarring sound 880
Th' infernal doors, and on their hinges grate
Harsh thunder, that the lowest bottom shook
Of Erebus. She open'd, but to shut
Excell'd her pow'r; the gates wide open stood,
That with extended wings a banner'd host, 885
Under spread ensigns marching, might pass through
With horse and chariots rank'd in loose array;
So wide they stood, and like a furnace-mouth
Cast forth redounding smoke and ruddy flame.
Before their eyes in sudden view appear 890
The secrets of the hoary deep; a dark
Illimitable ocean, without bound,
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and height,
And time, and place, are lost; where eldest Night
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold 895
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand.
For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four champions fierce,
Strive here for mast'ry, and to battle bring

Their embryon atoms; they around the flag 900
 Of each his faction, in their several clans,
 Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift, or slow,
 Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the sands
 Of Barca or Cyrene's torrid soil,
 Levied to side with warring winds, and poise 905
 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 mix'd
 Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,
 Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain 915
 His dark materials to create more worlds;
 Into this wild abyss the wary fiend
 Stood on the brink of hell, and look'd a while,
 Pond'ring his voyage; for no narrow frith
 He had to cross. Nor was his ear less peal'd 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 heav'n were falling, and these elements 925
 In mutiny had from her axle torn
 The stedfast earth. At last his sail-broad vans
 He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoke
 Uplifted spurns the ground; thence many a league,
 As in a cloudy chair, ascending rides 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 935
 The strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud,
 Instinct with fire and nitre, hurried him
 As many miles aloft: that fury staid,
 Quench'd in a boggy syrtis, neither sea,
 Nor good dry land: nigh founder'd on he fares, 940
 Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,
 Half flying; behoves him now both oar and sail.
 As when a gryphon through the wilderness
 With winged course, o'er hill or moory dale,
 Pursues the Arimaspan, who by stealth 945
 Had from his wakeful custody purloin'd
 The guarded gold: so eagerly the fiend
 O'er bog, or steep, through straight, rough, dense, or rare,
 With head, hands, wings, or feet, pursues his way,
 And swims, or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies: 950
 At length, a universal hubbub wild
 Of stunning sounds, and voices all confus'd,
 Borne through the hollow dark, assaults his ear
 With loudest vehemence; thither he plies,

Undaunted, to meet there whatever power 955
 Or spirit of the nethermost abyss
 Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask
 Which way the nearest coast of darkness lies
 Bord'ring on light; when straight behold the throne
 Of Chaos, and his dark pavilion spread 960
 Wide on the wasteful deep; with him enthron'd
 Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
 The consort of his reign; and by them stood
 Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
 Of Demogorgon! Rumour next and Chance, 965
 And Tumult and Confusion all embroil'd,
 And Discord with a thousand various mouths.
 'T' whom Satan turning boldly, thus: 'Ye powers
 And spirits of this nethermost abyss,
 Chaos and ancient Night, I come no spy, 970
 With purpose to explore or to disturb
 The secrets of your realm; but, by constraint
 Wand'ring this darksome desert, as my way
 Lies through your spacious empire up to light,
 Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek 975
 What readiest path leads where your gloomy bounds
 Confine with heav'n; or if some other place,
 From your dominion won, th' ethereal King
 Possesses lately, thither to arrive
 I travel this profound; direct my course; 980
 Directed, no mean recompense it brings
 To your behoof, if I that region lost,
 All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce
 To her original darkness, and your sway
 (Which is my present journey), and once more 985
 Erect the standard there of ancient Night:
 Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.'
 Thus Satan; and him thus the Anarch old,
 With falt'ring speech and visage incompos'd,
 Answer'd: 'I know thee, stranger, who thou art, 990
 'That mighty leading angel, who of late
 Made head against heav'n's King, though overthrown.
 I saw and heard; for such a numerous host
 Fled not in silence through the frighted deep,
 With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout, 995
 Confusion worse confounded; and heav'n-gates
 Pour'd out by millions her victorious bands
 Pursuing. I upon my frontiers here
 Keep residence; if all I can will serve
 'That little which is left so to defend, 1000
 Encroach'd on still through your intestine broils
 Weak'ning the scepter of old Night: first hell,
 Your dungeon, stretching far and wide beneath;
 Now lately heav'n and earth, another world,
 Hung o'er my realm, link'd in a golden chain 1005
 To that side heav'n from whence your legions fell:
 If that way be your walk, you have not far;
 So much the nearer danger; go, and speed;
 Havoc, and spoil, and ruin, are my gain.'

He ceas'd; and Satan staid not to reply, 1010
 But, glad that now his sea should find a shore,
 With fresh alacrity, and force renew'd,
 Springs upward, like a pyramid of fire,
 Into the wild expanse, and, through the shock
 Of fighting elements, on all sides round 1015
 Environ'd, wins his way; harder beset
 And more endanger'd, than when Argo pass'd
 Through Bosphorus, betwixt the justling rocks:
 Or when Ulysses on the larboard shunn'd
 Charybdis, and by th' other whirlpool steer'd. 1020
 So he with difficulty and labour hard
 Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour he;
 But, he once past, soon after, when man fell,
 Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain
 Following his track, such was the will of Heaven, 1025
 Pav'd after him a broad and beaten way
 Over the dark abyss, whose boiling gulf
 Tamely endur'd a bridge of wondrous length,
 From hell continued reaching th' utmost orb
 Of this frail world; by which the spirits perverse 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 1035
 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, 1045
 Weighs his spread wings, at leisure to behold
 Far off th' empyreal heav'n, extended wide
 In circuit, undetermin'd square or round,
 With opal tow'rs and battlements adorn'd
 Of living sapphire, once his native seat; 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,
 Accurs'd, and in a cursed hour, he hies. 1055

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; foretels 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. Mean while Satan alights upon the bare convex of this world's outermost orb; where wandering he first finds a place, since called the Limbo of Vanity: what persons and things fly up thither: thence comes to the gate of heaven, described ascending by stairs, and the waters above the firmament that flow about it: his passage thence to the orb of the sun; he finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner angel; and, pretending a zealous desire to behold the new creation, and man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: alights first on mount Niphates.

HAIL, holy Light! offspring of heav'n first-born,
 Or of th' Eternal coeternal beam,
 May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,
 And never but in unapproach'd light
 Dwelt from eternity, dwelt then in thee, 5
 Bright effluence of bright essence increate.
 Or hear'st thou rather, pure ethereal stream,
 Whose fountain who shall tell? Before the sun,
 Before the heav'ns thou wert, and at the voice
 Of God, as with a mantle, didst invest 10
 The rising world of waters dark and deep,
 Won from the void and formless infinite.
 Thee I revisit now with bolder wing,
 Escap'd the Stygian pool, though long detain'd
 In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight 15
 Through utter and through middle darkness borne,
 With other notes than to th' Orphéan lyre,
 I sung of Chaos and eternal Night;
 Taught by the heav'nly muse to venture down
 The dark descent, and up to re-ascend, 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 quench'd their orbs, 25
 Or dim suffusion veil'd. Yet not the more
 Cease I to wander, where the muses haunt
 Clear spring, or shady grove, or sunny hill,
 Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief
 Thee, Sion, and the flow'ry brooks beneath, 30
 That wash thy hallow'd feet: and warbling flow,
 Nightly I visit; nor sometimes forget
 Those other two equall'd with me in fate,
 So were I equall'd with them in renown,
 Blind Thamyris and blind Maeonides, 35
 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 ev'n or morn,
 Or sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
 Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;
 But cloud instead, and ever-during dark 45
 Surrounds me, from the cheerful ways of men
 Cut off, and for the book of knowledge fair,
 Presented with a universal blank
 Of nature's works to me expung'd and ras'd,
 And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out. 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 th' Almighty Father from above,
 From the pure empyrean where he sits
 High thron'd above all highth, bent down his eye,
 His own works, and their works, at once to view;
 About him all the sanctities of heaven 60
 Stood thick as stars, and from his sight receiv'd
 Beatitude past utterance; on his right
 The radiant image of his glory sat,
 His only Son; on earth he first beheld
 Our two first parents, yet the only two 65
 Of mankind, in the happy garden plac'd,
 Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
 Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
 In blissful solitude; he then survey'd
 Hell and the gulf between, and Satan there 70
 Coasting the wall of heav'n on this side night
 In the dun air sublime, and ready now
 To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet,
 On the bare outside of this world; that seem'd
 Firm land imbosom'd without firmament, 75
 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
 Prescrib'd, no bars of hell, nor all the chains
 Heap'd on him there, nor yet the main abyss
 Wide interrupt, can hold; so bent he seems
 On desperate revenge, that shall redound 85
 Upon his own rebellious head. And now,
 Through all restraint broke loose, he wings his way
 Not far off heav'n, in the precincts of light,
 Directly towards the new-created world
 And man there plac'd, with purpose to assay 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 95
 He and his faithless progeny. Whose fault?
 Whose but his own? Ingrate, he had of me
 All he could have; I made him just and right,
 Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall;
 Such I created all th' ethereal powers 100
 And spirits, both them who stood, and them who fail'd;
 Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.
 Not free, what proof could they have giv'n sincere
 Of true allegiance, constant faith or love,
 Where only what they needs must do appear'd, 105
 Not what they would? what praise could they receive,
 What pleasure I from such obedience paid,
 When will and reason (reason also is choice)
 Useless and vain, of freedom both despoil'd,
 Made passive both, had serv'd necessity, 110
 Not me? They therefore, as to right belong'd,
 So were created, nor can justly accuse
 Their Maker, or their making, or their fate,
 As if predestination over-rul'd
 Their will, dispos'd by absolute decree 115
 Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed
 Their own revolt, not I; if I foreknew,
 Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,
 Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.
 So without least impulse or shadow of fate, 120
 Or aught by me immutably foreseen,
 They trespass, authors to themselves in all
 Both what they judge, and what they choose; for so
 I form'd them free: and free they must remain,
 Till they enthrall themselves; I else must change 125
 Their nature, and revoke the high decree
 Unchangeable, eternal, which ordain'd
 Their freedom, they themselves ordain'd their fall.
 The first sort by their own suggestion fell,
 Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: man falls, deceiv'd 130
 By th' other first: man therefore shall find grace,
 The other none: in mercy and justice both,
 Through heav'n and earth, so shall my glory excel:
 But mercy, first and last, shall brightest shine.'

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd 135
 All heav'n, and in the blessed spirits elect
 Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd.
 Beyond compare the Son of God was seen
 Most glorious: in him all his Father shone
 Substantially express'd; and in his face 140
 Divine compassion visibly appear'd,
 Love without end, and without measure grace,
 Which uttering, thus he to his Father spake:
 'O Father, gracious was that word which clos'd
 Thy sovran sentence, that man should find grace; 145
 For which both heav'n and earth shall high extol
 Thy praises, with th' innumerable sound
 Of hymns and sacred songs, wherewith thy throne
 Encompass'd shall resound thee ever blest.
 For should man finally be lost, should man, 150
 Thy creature late so lov'd, thy youngest son,
 Fall circumvented thus by fraud, though join'd
 With his own folly? That be from thee far,
 That far be from thee, Father, who art Judge
 Of all things made, and judgest only right. 155
 Or shall the adversary thus obtain
 His end, and frustrate thine? shall he fulfil
 His malice, and thy goodness bring to naught,
 Or proud return, though to his heavier doom,
 Yet with revenge accomplish'd, and to hell 160
 Draw after him the whole race of mankind,
 By him corrupted? or wilt thou thyself
 Abolish thy creation, and unmake
 For him, what for thy glory thou hast made?
 So should thy goodness and thy greatness both 165
 Be question'd and blasphem'd without defence.'
 To whom the great Creator thus replied:
 'O Son, in whom my soul hath chief delight,
 Son of my bosom, Son who art alone
 My word, my wisdom, and effectual might, 170
 All hast thou spoken as my thoughts are, all
 As my eternal purpose hath decreed:
 Man shall not quite be lost, but sav'd who will,
 Yet not of will in him, but grace in me
 Freely vouchsaf'd; once more I will renew 175
 His lapsed pow'rs, though forfeit, and enthrall'd
 By sin to foul exorbitant desires;
 Upheld by me, yet once more he shall stand
 On even ground against his mortal foe;
 By me upheld, that he may know how frail 180
 His fall'n condition is, and to me owe
 All his deliverance, and to none but me.
 Some I have chosen of peculiar grace,
 Elect above the rest; so is my will:
 The rest shall hear me call, and oft be warn'd 185
 Their sinful state, and to appease betimes
 Th' incens'd Deity, while offer'd grace
 Invites; for I will clear their senses dark,
 What may suffice, and soften stony hearts

- To pray, repent, and bring obedience due. 190
 To pray'r, repentance, and obedience due,
 Though but endeavour'd with sincere intent,
 Mine ear shall not be slow, mine eye not shut.
 And I will place within them as a guide,
 My umpire, conscience; whom if they will hear, 195
 Light after light, well us'd they shall attain,
 And to the end persisting, safe arrive.
 This my long sufferance, and my day of grace,
 'They who neglect and scorn, shall never taste;
 But hard be harden'd; blind be blinded more, 200
 That they may stumble on, and deeper fall;
 And none but such from mercy I exclude.
 But yet all is not done; man disobeying,
 Disloyal, breaks his fealty, and sins
 Against the high supremacy of Heaven, 205
 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 210
 Some other able, and as willing, pay
 The rigid satisfaction, death for death.
 Say, heav'nly Pow'rs, where shall we find such love?
 Which of ye will be mortal, to redeem
 Man's mortal crime, and just th' unjust to save? 215
 Dwells in all heaven charity so dear?'
 He ask'd, but all the heav'nly quire stood mute,
 And silence was in heav'n: on man's behalf
 Patron or intercessor none appear'd,
 Much less that durst upon his own head draw 220
 The deadly forfeiture, and ransom set.
 And now without redemption all mankind
 Must have been lost, adjudg'd to death and hell
 By doom severe, had not the Son of God,
 In whom the fulness dwells of love divine, 225
 His dearest mediation thus renew'd:
 'Father, thy word is past, man shall find grace;
 And shall grace not find means, that finds her way,
 The speediest of thy winged messengers,
 To visit all thy creatures, and to all 230
 Comes unprevented, unimplor'd, unsought?
 Happy for man, so coming; he her aid
 Can never seek, once dead in sins and lost;
 Atonement for himself, or offering meet,
 Indebted and undone, hath none to bring: 235
 Behold me then; me for him, life for life
 I offer; on me let thine anger fall;
 Account me man; I for his sake will leave
 Thy bosom, and this glory next to thee
 Freely put off; and for him lastly die 240
 Well pleas'd; on me let Death wreak all his rage;
 Under his gloomy pow'r I shall not long
 Lie vanquish'd; thou hast giv'n me to possess
 Life in myself for ev'r; by thee I live,

Though now to Death I yield, and am his due 245
 All that of me can die: yet, that debt paid,
 Thou wilt not leave me in the loathsome grave
 His prey, nor suffer my unspotted soul
 For ever with corruption there to dwell:
 But I shall rise victorious, and subdue 250
 My vanquisher, spoil'd of his vaunted spoil;
 Death his death's wound shall then receive, and stoop
 Inglorious, of his mortal sting disarm'd.
 I through the ample air in triumph high
 Shall lead hell captive, maugre hell, and show 255
 The pow'rs of darkness bound. Thou, at the sight
 Pleas'd, out of heaven shalt look down and smile,
 While, by thee rais'd, I ruin all my foes,
 Death last, and with his carcase glut the grave:
 Then, with the multitude of my redcem'd, 260
 Shall enter heav'n, long absent, and return,
 Father, to see thy face, wherein no cloud
 Of anger shall remain, but peace assur'd
 And reconcilment; wrath shall be no more
 Thenceforth, but in thy presence joy entire.' 265
 His words here ended, but his meek aspect
 Silent yet spake, and breath'd immortal love
 To mortal men, above which only shone
 Filial obedience: as a sacrifice
 Glad to be offer'd, he attends the will 270
 Of his great Father. Admiration seiz'd
 All heav'n, what this might mean, and whither tend,
 Wond'ring; but soon th' Almighty thus replied:
 'O thou in heav'n and earth the only peace
 Found out for mankind under wrath! O thou 275
 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;
 Aud 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 285
 The head of all mankind, though Adam's son.
 As in him perish all men, so in thee,
 As from a second root, shall be restor'd
 As many as are restor'd, without thee none.
 His crime makes guilty all his sons; thy merit, 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 judg'd and die, 295
 And dying rise, and rising with him raise
 His brethren, ransom'd with his own dear life.
 So heav'nly love shall outdo hellish hate,
 Giving to death, and dying to redcem,

So dearly to redeem, what hellish hate 300
 So easily destroy'd, and still destroys
 In those who, when they may, accept not grace.
 Nor shalt thou, by descending to assume
 Man's nature, lessen or degrade thine own.
 Because thou hast, though thron'd in highest bliss 305
 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 315
 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, principdoms, pow'rs, dominions, I reduce: 320
 All knees to thee shall bow, of them that bide
 In heav'n, or earth, or under earth in hell.
 When thou, attended gloriously from heaven,
 Shalt in the sky appear, and from thee send
 The summoning Archangels to proclaim 325
 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 arraign'd, shall sink
 Beneath thy sentence: hell, her numbers full,
 Thenceforth shall be for ever shut. Meanwhile
 The world shall burn, and from her ashes spring
 New heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell, 335
 And, after all their tribulations long,
 See golden days, fruitful of golden deeds,
 With joy and love triumphing, and fair truth.
 Then thou thy regal scepter shalt lay by,
 For regal scepter then no more shall need, 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 th' Almighty ceas'd, but all
 The multitude of angels, with a shont 345
 Loud as from numbers without number, sweet
 As from blest voices, uttering joy, heav'n rung
 With jubilee, and loud hosannas fill'd
 Th' eternal regions: lowly reverent
 Towards either throne they bow, and to the ground 350
 With solemn adoration down they cast
 Their crowns inwove with amarant and gold
 Immortal amarant, a flow'r which once
 In Paradise, fast by the tree of life.

Began to bloom; but soon for man's offence 355
 To heav'n remov'd, where first, it grew; there grows,
 And flow'rs aloft shading the fount of life,
 And where the river of bliss through midst of heaven
 Rolls o'er Elysian flow'rs her amber stream;
 With these that never fade the spirits elect 360
 Bind their resplendent locks inwreath'd with beams;
 Now in loose garlands thick thrown off, the bright
 Pavement, that like a sea of jasper shone,
 Impurpled with celestial roses smil'd.
 Then, crown'd again, their golden harps they took, 365
 Harps ever tun'd, that glittering by their side
 Like quivers hung, and with preamble sweet
 Of charming symphony they introduce
 Their sacred song, and waken raptures high:
 No voice exempt, no voice but well could join 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 375
 Amidst the glorious brightness where thou sitt'st
 Thron'd inaccessible, but when thou shad'st
 The full blaze of thy beams, and through a cloud
 Drawn round about thee like a radiant shrine,
 Dark with excessive bright thy skirts appear, 380
 Yet dazzle heav'n, that brightest Seraphim
 Approach not, but with both wings veil their eyes.
 Thee next they sang of all creation first,
 Begotten Son, Divine Similitude,
 In whose conspicuous count'nance, without cloud 385
 Made visible, th' Almighty Father shines,
 Whom else no creature can behold; on thee
 Impress'd th' effulgence of his glory abides,
 Transfus'd on thee his ample Spirit rests.
 He heav'n of heav'ns and all the pow'rs therein 390
 By thee created; and by thee threw down
 Th' aspiring dominations: thou that day
 Thy Father's dreadful thunder didst not spare,
 Nor stop thy flaming chariot wheels, that shook
 Heav'n's everlasting frame, while o'er the necks 395
 Thou drov'st of warring angels disarray'd.
 Back from pursuit thy pow'rs with loud acclaim
 Thee only extoll'd, Son of thy Father's might,
 To execute fierce vengeance on his foes;
 Not so on man; him, through their malice fall'n, 400
 Father of mercy and grace, thou didst not doom,
 So strictly, but much more to pity incline:
 No sooner did thy dear and only Son
 Perceive thee purpos'd not to doom frail man
 So strictly, but much more to pity inclin'd; 405
 He, to appease thy wrath, and end the strife
 Of mercy and justice in thy face discern'd,
 Regardless of the bliss wherein he sat
 Second to thee, offer'd himself to die

For man's offence. O unexampled love, 410
 Love no where to be found less than divine!
 Hail, Son of God, Saviour of men! Thy name
 Shall be the copious matter of my song
 Henceforth, and never shall my harp thy praise
 Forget, nor from thy Father's praise disjoin.' 415
 Thus they in heav'n, 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, enclos'd 420
 From Chaos, and th' inroad of darkness old,
 Satan alighted walks; a globe far off
 It seem'd, now seems a boundless continent
 Dark, waste, and wild, under the frown of night
 Starless expos'd, and ever-threat'ning storms 425
 Of Chaos blust'ring round, inclement sky;
 Save on that side which from the wall of heaven,
 Though distant far, some small reflection gains
 Of glimmering air, less vex'd with tempest loud:
 Here walk'd the fiend at large in spacious field. 430
 As when a vulture on Imaüs bred,
 Whose snowy ridge the roving Tartar bounds,
 Dislodging from a region scarce of prey,
 To gorge the flesh of lambs or yeanning kids,
 On hills where flocks are fed, flies toward the springs 435
 Of Ganges or Hydaspes, Indian streams:
 But in his way lights on the barren plains
 Of Sericana, where Chineses drive
 With sails and wind their cany waggons light:
 So, on this windy sea of land, the fiend 440
 Walk'd up and down alone, bent on his prey;
 Alone, for other creature in this place,
 Living or lifeless, to be found as none,
 None yet, but store hereafter from the earth
 Up hither, like aëreal vapours, flew 445
 Of all things transitory and vain, when sin
 With vanity had fill'd the works of men;
 Both all things vain, and all who in vain things
 Built their fond hopes of glory or lasting fame,
 Or happiness in this or th' other life; 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 th' unaccomplish'd works of Nature's hand, 455
 Abortive, monstrous, or unkindly mix'd,
 Dissolv'd on earth, fleet hither, and in vain,
 Till final dissolution, wander here:
 Not in the neighb'ring moon, as some have dream'd;
 Those argent fields more likely habitants, 460
 Translated saints, or middle spirits hold
 Betwixt th' angelical and human kind.
 Hither of ill-join'd sons and daughters born
 First from the ancient world those giants came

With many a vain exploit, though then renown'd: 465
 The builders next of Babel on the plain
 Of Sennaar, and still with vain design
 New Babels, had they wherewithal, would build:
 Others came single; he, who to be deem'd
 A god, leap'd fondly into Aetna flames, 470
 Empedocles; and he, who, to enjoy
 Plato's Elysium, leap'd into the sea,
 Cleombrotus; and many more too long,
 Embryos and idiots, eremites and friars
 White, black, and gray, with all their trumpery. 475
 Here pilgrims roam, that stray'd so far to seek
 In Golgotha him dead, who lives in heaven;
 And they, who, to be sure of Paradise,
 Dying put on the weeds of Dominic,
 Or in Franciscan think to pass disguis'd; 480
 They pass the planets sev'n, and pass the fix'd,
 And that crystalline sphere whose balance weighs
 The trepidation talk'd, and that first mov'd;
 And now Saint Peter at heav'n's wicket seems
 To wait them with his keys, and now at foot 485
 Of heav'n's ascent they lift their feet, when lo
 A violent cross wind from either coast
 Blows them transverse, ten thousand leagues awry
 Into the devious air: then might ye see
 Cows, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost 490
 And flutter'd into rags; then reliques, beads,
 Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
 The sport of winds: all these, upwhirl'd aloft,
 Fly o'er the backside of the world far off,
 Into a limbo large and broad, since call'd 495
 The Paradise of Fools, to few unknown
 Long after, now unpeopled, and untrod.
 All this dark globe the fiend found as he pass'd,
 And long he wander'd, till at last a gleam
 Of dawning light turn'd thitherward in haste 500
 His travell'd steps: far distant he descries
 Ascending by degrees magnificent
 Up to the wall of heav'n a structure high;
 At top whereof, but far more rich, appear'd
 The work as of a kingly palace-gate, 505
 With frontispiece of diamond and gold
 Embellish'd; thick with sparkling orient gems
 The portal shone, inimitable on earth
 By model, or by shading pencil, drawn.
 The stairs were such as whereon Jacob saw 510
 Angels ascending and descending, bands
 Of guardians bright, when he from Esau fled
 To Padan-Aram, in the field of Luz,
 Dreaming by night under the open sky,
 And waking cried; 'This is the gate of heaven.' 515
 Each stair mysteriously was meant, nor stood
 There always, but drawn up to heav'n sometimes
 Viewless; and underneath a bright sea flow'd
 Of jasper, or of liquid pearl, whereon

Who after came from earth, sailing arriv'd, 520
 Wafted by angels, or flew o'er the lake
 Rapt in a chariot drawn by fiery steeds.
 The stairs were then let down, whether to dare
 The fiend by easy ascent, or aggravate
 His sad exclusion from the doors of bliss; 525
 Direct against which open'd from beneath,
 Just o'er the blissful seat of Paradise,
 A passage down to th' earth, a passage wide,
 Wider by far than that of after-times
 Over mount Sion, and, though that were large, 530
 Over the Promis'd Land, to God so dear;
 By which, to visit oft those happy tribes,
 On high behests his angels to and fro
 Pass'd frequent, and his eye with choice regard
 From Pancas, the fount of Jordan's flood, 535
 To Beërsaba, where the Holy Land
 Borders on Egypt and th' Arabian shore;
 So wide the opening seem'd, where bounds were set
 To darkness, such as bound the ocean wave.
 Satan from hence, now on the lower stair, 540
 That scal'd by steps of gold to heaven-gate,
 Looks down with wonder at the sudden view
 Of all this world at once. As when a scout,
 Through dark and desert ways with peril gone
 All night, at last by break of cheerful dawn 545
 Obtains the brow of some high-climbing hill,
 Which to his eye discovers unaware
 The goodly prospect of some foreign land
 First seen, or some renown'd metropolis
 With glist'ring spires and pinnacles adorn'd, 550
 Which now the rising sun gilds with his beams:
 Such wonder seiz'd, though after heaven seen,
 The spirit malign, but much more envy seiz'd,
 At sight of all this world beheld so fair.
 Round he surveys (and well might, where he stood 555
 So high above the circling canopy
 Of night's extended shade), from eastern point
 Of Libra to the fleecy star that bears
 Andromeda far off Atlantic seas,
 Beyond th' horizon; then from pole to pole 560
 He views in breadth, and without longer pause
 Downright into the world's first region throws
 His slight precipitant, and winds with ease
 Through the pure marble air his oblique way
 Amongst innumerable stars, that shone 565
 Stars distant, but nigh hand seem'd other worlds;
 Or other worlds they seem'd, or happy isles,
 Like those Hesperian gardens fam'd of old,
 Fortunate fields, and groves, and flow'ry vales,
 Thrice-happy isles; but who dwelt happy there 570
 He staid not to inquire: above them all
 The golden sun, in splendour likest heaven,
 Allur'd his eye; thither his course he bends
 Through the calm firmament (but up or down,

By center or eccentric, hard to tell, 575
 Or longitude), where the great luminary
 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 turn'd
 By his magnetic beam, that gently warms
 The universe, and to each inward part
 With gentle penetration, though unseen, 585
 Shoets invisible virtue ev'n to the deep:
 So wondrously was set his station bright.
 There lands the fiend, a spot like which perhaps
 Astronomer in the sun's lucent orb
 Through his glaz'd optic tube yet never saw. 590
 The place he found beyond expression bright,
 Compar'd with aught on earth, metal or stone;
 Not all parts like, but all alike inform'd
 With radiant light, as glowing iron with fire;
 If metal, part seem'd gold, part silver clear; 595
 If stone, carbuncle most or chrysolite,
 Ruby or topaz, to the twelve that shone
 In Aaron's breast-plate, and a stone besides
 Imagin'd rather oft than elsewhere seen,
 That stone, or like to that, which here below 600
 Philosophers in vain so long have sought,
 In vain, though by their pow'ful art they bind
 Volatile Hermes, and call up unbound
 In various shapes old Proteus from the sea,
 Drain'd through a limbec to his native form. 605
 What wonder then if fields and regions here
 Breathe forth elixir pure, and rivers run
 Potable gold, when with one virtuous touch
 Th' arch-chymic sun, so far from us remote,
 Produces, with terrestrial humour mix'd, 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, 615
 But all sun-shine, as when his beams at noon
 Culminate from th' equator, as they now
 Shot upward still direct, whence no way round
 Shadow from body opaque can fall; and th' air,
 No where so clear, sharpen'd his visual ray 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 turn'd, but not his brightness hid;
 Of beaming sunny rays a golden tiar 625
 Circled his head, nor less his locks behind
 Illustrious on his shoulders, fledge with wings,
 Lay waving round; on some great charge employ'd
 He seem'd, or fix'd in cogitation deep.

Glad was the spirit impure, as now in hope 630
 To find who might direct his wand'ring flight
 To Paradise, the happy seat of man,
 His journey's end, and our beginning woe.
 But first he casts to change his proper shape,
 Which else might work him danger or delay: 635
 And now a stripling Cherub he appears,
 Not of the prime, yet such as in his face
 Youth smil'd celestial, and to every limb
 Suitable grace diffus'd, so well he feign'd:
 Under a coronet his flowing hair 640
 In curls on either cheek play'd; wings he wore,
 Of many a colour'd plume, sprinkled with gold;
 His habit fit for speed succinct, and held
 Before his decent steps a silver wand.
 He drew not nigh unheard; the angel bright, 645
 Ere he drew nigh, his radiant visage turn'd,
 Admonish'd by his ear, and straight was known
 Th' Archangel Uriel, one of the seven
 Who in God's presence, nearest to his throne,
 Stand ready at command, and are his eyes 650
 That run through all the heav'ns, or down to th' earth
 Bear his swift errands over moist and dry,
 O'er sea and land: him Satan thus accosts:
 'Uriel, for thou of those seven spirits that stand
 In sight of God's high throne, gloriously bright, 655
 The first art wont his great authentic will
 Interpreter through highest heav'n to bring,
 Where all his sons thy embassy attend;
 And here art likeliest by supreme decree
 Like honour to obtain, and as his eye 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 ordain'd, 665
 Hath brought me from the quires of Cherubim
 Alone thus wand'ring. Brightest Seraph, tell
 In which of all these shining orbs hath man
 His fixed seat, or fixed seat hath none,
 But all these shining orbs his choice to dwell; 670
 That I may find him, and with secret gaze,
 Or open admiration, him behold,
 On whom the great Creator hath bestow'd
 Worlds, and on whom hath all these graces pour'd;
 That both in him and all things, as is meet, 675
 The universal Maker we may praise,
 Who justly hath driv'n out his rebel foes
 To deepest hell, and, to repair that loss,
 Created this new happy race of men
 'To serve him better: wise are all his ways.' 680
 So spake the false dissembler unperceiv'd;
 For neither man nor angel can discern
 Hypocrisy, the only evil that walks
 Invisible, except to God alone,

By his permissive will, through heav'n and earth: 685
 And oft, though wisdom wake, suspicion sleeps
 At wisdom's gate, and to simplicity
 Resigns her charge, while goodness thinks no ill
 Where no ill seems: which now for once beguil'd
 Uriel, though regent of the sun, and held 690
 The sharpest sighted spirit of all in heaven;
 Who to the fraudulent impostor foul,
 In his uprightness, answer thus return'd:
 'Fair angel, thy desire, which tends to know
 The works of God, thereby to glorify 695
 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 705
 Their number, or the wisdom infinite
 That brought them forth, but hid their causes deep?
 I saw when at his word the formless mass,
 The world's material mould, came to a heap:
 Confusion heard his voice, and wild uproar 710
 Stood rul'd, stood vast infinitude confin'd;
 Till at his second bidding darkness fled,
 Light shone, and order from disorder sprung:
 Swift to their several quarters hasted then
 The cumbrous elements, earth, flood, air, fire; 715
 And this ethereal quintessence of heaven
 Flew upward, spirited with various forms,
 That roll'd orbicular, and turn'd to stars
 Numberless, as thou seest, and how they move;
 Each had his place appointed, each his course; 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 th' other hemisphere, 725
 Night would invade; but there the neighb'ring moon
 (So call that opposite fair star) her aid
 Timely interposes, and her monthly round
 Still ending, still renewing, through mid heaven,
 With borrow'd light her countenance triform 730
 Hence fills and empties to enlighten th' earth,
 And in her pale dominion checks the night.
 That spot to which I point is Paradise,
 Adam's abode; those lofty shades, his bower.
 Thy way thou canst not miss, me mine requires. 735
 Thus said, he turn'd; and Satan, bowing low,
 As to superior spirits is wont in heaven,
 Where honour due and reverence none neglects,
 Took leave, and toward the coast of earth beneath,

Down from th' ecliptic, sped with hop'd success, 740
 Throws his steep flight in many an aery wheel,
 Nor staid, till on Niphates' top he lights.

B O O K I V.

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

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

O, For that warning voice, which he, who saw
 Th' Apocalypse, heard cry in heav'n aloud,
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,
 Came furious down to be reveng'd on men,
 'Woe to th' inhabitants on earth!' that now, 5
 While time was, our first parents had been warn'd
 The coming of their secret foe, and 'scap'd,
 Haply so 'scap'd his mortal snare: for now
 Satan, now first inflam'd with rage, came down,
 The tempter ere th' accuser of mankind, 10
 To wreak on innocent frail man his loss
 Of that first battle, and his flight to hell:
 Yet, not rejoicing in his speed, though bold
 Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,
 Begins his dire attempt; which nigh the birth 15
 Now rolling boils in his tumultuous breast,
 And like a devilish engine back recoils
 Upon himself; horror and doubt distract
 His troubled thoughts, and from the bottom stir

The hell within him; for within him hell 20
 He brings, and round about him, nor from hell
 One step, no more than from himself, can fly,
 By change of place: now conscience wakes despair,
 That slumber'd; wakes the bitter memory
 Of what he was, what is, and what must be 25
 Worse; of worse deeds worse sufferings must ensue.
 Sometimes towards Eden, which now in his view
 Lay pleasant, his griev'd look he fixes sad;
 Sometimes towards heav'n, and the full-blazing sun,
 Which now sat high in his meridian tower: 30
 Then, much revolving, thus in sighs began:
 'O thou, that, with surpassing glory crown'd,
 Look'st from thy sole dominion like the God
 Of this new world; at whose sight all the stars
 Hide their diminish'd heads; to thee I call, 35
 But with no friendly voice, and add thy name,
 O sun! to tell thee how I hate thy beams,
 That bring to my remembrance from what state
 I fell, how glorious once above thy sphere;
 Till pride and worse ambition threw me down, 40
 Warring in heav'n against heav'n's matchless King:
 Ah, wherefore! he deserv'd no such return
 From me, whom he created what I was
 In that bright eminence, and with his good
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. 45
 What could be less than to afford him praise,
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,
 How due! yet all his good prov'd ill in me,
 And wrought but malice; lifted up so high
 I sdein'd subjection, and thought one step higher 50
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,
 So burdensome still paying, still to owe,
 Forgetful what from him I still receiv'd,
 And understood not that a grateful mind 55
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once
 Indebted and discharg'd; what burden then?
 O had his pow'ful destiny ordain'd
 Me some inferior angel, I had stood
 Then happy; no unbounded hope had rais'd 60
 Ambition. Yet why not? some other power
 As great might have aspir'd, and me, though mean,
 Drawn to his part; but other pow'rs as great
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within
 Or from without, to all temptations arm'd. 65
 Hadst thou the same free will and pow'r to stand?
 Thou hadst: whom hast thou then or what to accuse,
 But heav'n's free love dealt equally to all?
 Be then his love accurs'd, since love or hate,
 To me alike, it deals eternal woe. 70
 Nay, curs'd be thou; since against his thy will
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.
 Me miserable! which way shall I fly
 Infinite wrath, and infinite despair?

Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell; 75
 And in the lowest deep a lower deep
 Still threat'ning to devour me opens wide,
 To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven.
 O, then, at last relent: is there no place
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80
 None left but by submission; and that word
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame
 Among the spirits beneath, whom I seduc'd
 With other promises and other vaunts
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85
 Th' Omnipotent. Ay me! they little know
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,
 Under what torments inwardly I groan,
 While they adore me on the throne of hell.
 With diadem and scepter high advanc'd, 90
 The lower still I fall, only supreme
 In misery: such joy ambition finds.
 But say I could repent, and could obtain,
 By act of grace, my former state; how soon
 Would highth recall high thoughts, how soon unsay 95
 What feign'd submission swore! Ease would recant
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void.
 For never can true reconcilment grow,
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierc'd so deep:
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 100
 And heavier fall: so should I purchase dear
 Short intermission bought with double smart.
 This knows my punisher; therefore as far
 From granting he, as I from begging peace:
 All hope excluded thus, behold, instead 105
 Of us out-cast, exil'd, his new delight,
 Mankind created, and for him this world.
 So farewell hope, and with hope farewell fear,
 Farewell remorse: all good to me is lost;
 Evil, be thou my good: by thee at least 110
 Divided empire with heav'n's King I hold,
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;
 As man ere long, and this new world shall know.'

Thus while he spake, each passion dimm'd his face
 Thrice chang'd with pale, ire, envy, and despair; 115
 Which marr'd his borrow'd visage, and betray'd
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:
 For heav'nly minds from such distempers foul
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware,
 Each perturbation smooth'd with outward calm, 120
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first
 That practis'd falsehood under saintly show,
 Deep malice to conceal, couch'd with revenge:
 Yet not enough had practis'd to deceive
 Uriel once warn'd: whose eye pursued him down 125
 The way he went, and on th' Assyrian mount
 Saw him disfigur'd, more than could befall
 Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce
 He mark'd, and mad demcanour, then alone,

As he suppos'd, all unobserv'd, unseen. 130
 So on he fares, and to the border comes
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,
 As with a rural mound, the champain head
 Of a steep wilderness, whose hairy sides 135
 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 140
 Shade above shade, a woody theatre
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops
 The verd'rous wall of Paradise up sprung:
 Which to our general sire gave prospect large
 Into his nether empire neighb'ring round: 145
 And higher than that wall a circling row
 Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,
 Appear'd, with gay enamell'd colours mix'd:
 On which the sun more glad impress'd his beams 150
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,
 When God hath show'r'd the earth; so lovely seem'd
 That landscape: and of pure, now purer air
 Meets his approach, and to the heart inspires
 Vernal delight and joy, able to drive 155
 All sadness but despair: now gentle gales,
 Fanning their odoriferous wings, dispense
 Native perfumes, and whisper whence they stole
 Those balmy spoils. As when to them who sail
 Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past 160
 Mozambic, off at sea north-east winds blow
 Sabean odours from the spicy shore
 Of Araby the blest; with such delay
 Well pleas'd they slack their course, and many a league
 Cheer'd with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles: 165
 So entertain'd those odorous sweets the fiend,
 Who came their bane: though with them better pleas'd
 Than Asmodæus with the fishy fume
 That drove him, though enamour'd, from the spouse
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170
 From Media post to Egypt, there fast bound.
 Now to th' ascent of that steep savage hill
 Satan had journey'd on, pensive and slow;
 But further way found none, so thick entwin'd,
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth 175
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplex'd
 All path of man or beast that pass'd that way.
 One gate there only was, and that look'd east
 On th' other side: which when th' arch-felon saw,
 Due entrance he disdain'd; and, in contempt, 180
 At one slight bound high overleap'd all bound
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,

Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve 185
 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-barr'd 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, 195
 Sat like a cormorant; yet not true life
 Thereby regain'd, but sat devising death
 To them who liv'd; nor on the virtue thought
 Of that life-giving plant, but only us'd
 For prospect, what well us'd had been the pledge 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, 205
 To all delight of human sense expos'd,
 In narrow room, nature's whole wealth, yea more,
 A heav'n on earth: for blissful Paradise
 Of God the garden was, by him in th' east
 Of Eden planted; Eden stretch'd her line 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 T'elassar: in this pleasant soil
 His far more pleasant garden God ordain'd; 215
 Out of the fertile ground he caus'd to grow
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;
 And all amid them stood the tree of life,
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit
 Of vegetable gold; and next to life, 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 chang'd his course, but through the shaggy hill
 Pass'd underneath ingulf'd; for God had thrown 225
 That mountain as his garden-mould high rais'd
 Upon the rapid current, which through veins
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst up drawn,
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill
 Water'd the garden; thence united fell 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, wand'ring many a famous realm
 And country, whereof here needs no account; 235
 But rather to tell how, if art could tell,
 How from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,
 Rolling on orient pearl and sands of gold,
 With mazy error under pendent shades

Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240
 Flow'rs worthy of Paradise, which not nice art
 In beds and curious knots, but nature boon
 Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,
 Both where the morning sun first warmly smote
 The open field, and where the unpierc'd shade 245
 Imbrown'd the noontide bow'rs: thus was this place
 A happy rural seat of various view;
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,
 Others whose fruit, burnish'd with golden rind,
 Hung amiable, Hesperian fables true, 250
 If true, here only, and of delicious taste:
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks
 Grazing the tender herb, were interpos'd;
 Or palmy hillock; or the flow'ry lap
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store, 255
 Flow'rs 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 murm'ring waters fall 260
 Down the slope hills, dispers'd, or in a lake,
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crown'd
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.
 The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,
 Led on th' eternal Spring. Not that fair field
 Of Enna, where Proserpine gathering flowers,
 Herself a fairer flow'r, by gloomy Dis 270
 Was gather'd, which cost Ceres all that pain
 To seek her through the world; nor that sweet grove
 Of Daphne by Orontes, and th' inspir'd
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise
 Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle 275
 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 suppos'd
 True Paradise, under the Ethiop line
 By Nilus' head, enclos'd with shining rock,
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote
 From this Assyrian garden, where the fiend 285
 Saw, undelighted, all delight, all kind
 Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.
 Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,
 Godlike erect, with native honour clad,
 In naked majesty seem'd lords of all; 290
 And worthy seem'd; for in their looks divine
 The image of their glorious Maker shone,
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure
 (Severe, but in true filial freedom plac'd),

Whence true authority in men; though both 295
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seem'd;
 For contemplation he and valour form'd;
 For softness she and sweet attractive grace;
 He for God only, she for God in him:
 His fair large front and eye sublime declar'd 300
 Absolute rule; and hyaciathine locks
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung
 Clust'ring, but not beneath his shoulders broad:
 She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
 Her unadorned golden tresses wore 305
 Dishevell'd, but in wanton ringlets wav'd
 As the vine curls her tendrils, which implied
 Subjection, but requir'd with gentle sway,
 And by her yielded, by him best receiv'd,
 Yielded with coy submission, modest pride, 310
 And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.
 Nor those mysterious parts were then conceal'd;
 Then was not guilty shame, dishonest shame
 Of nature's works, honour dishonourable,
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind 315
 With shows instead, mere shows of seeming pure,
 And banish'd from man's life his happiest life,
 Simplicity and spotless innocence!
 So pass'd they naked on, nor shunn'd the sight
 Of God or angel; for they thought no ill: 320
 So hand in hand they pass'd, the loveliest pair
 That ever since in love's embraces met;
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born
 His sons, the fairest of her daughters Eve.
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green 325
 Stood whisp'ring soft, by a fresh fountain-side
 They sat them down; and, after no more toil
 Of their sweet gard'ning labour than suffic'd
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and made 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 damask'd with flowers:
 The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind, 335
 Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream;
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as besecms
 Fair couple, link'd in happy nuptial league,
 Alone as they. About them frisking play'd 340
 All beasts of th' earth, since wild, and of all chase
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den;
 Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,
 Gamboll'd before them; th' unwieldy elephant, 345
 To make them mirth, us'd all his might, and wreath'd
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine
 His braided train, and of his fatal guile

Gave proof unheeded; others on the grass 350
 Couch'd, and now fill'd with pasture gazing sat,
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,
 Declin'd, was hasting now with prone career
 To th' ocean isles, and in th' ascending scale
 Of heav'n the stars that usher evening rose: 355
 When Satan still in gaze, as first he stood,
 Scarce thus at length fall'd speech recover'd sad:
 'O hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold!
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanc'd
 Creatures of other mould, earth-born perhaps, 360
 Not spirits, yet to heav'nly spirits bright
 Little inferior; whom my thoughts pursue
 With wonder, and could love, so lively shines
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace
 The hand that form'd them on their shape hath pour'd 365
 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 secur'd 370
 Long to continue, and this high seat your heaven
 Ill fenc'd for heav'n to keep out such a foe
 As now is enter'd; yet no purpos'd foe
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,
 Though I unpitied: league with you I seek, 375
 And mutual amity, so strait, so close,
 That I with you must dwell, or you with me
 Henceforth; my dwelling haply may not please,
 Like this fair Paradise, your sense; yet such
 Accept your Maker's work; he gave it me, 380
 Which I as freely give; hell shall unfold,
 To entertain you two, her widest gates,
 And send forth all her kings; there will be room,
 Not like these narrow limits, to receive
 Your numerous offspring; if no better place, 385
 Thank him who puts me loth to this revenge
 On you, who wrong me not, for him who wrong'd.
 And should I at your harmless innocence
 Melt, as I do, yet public reason just,
 Honour and empire with revenge enlarg'd, 390
 By conqu'ring this new world, compels me now
 To do what else, though damn'd, I should abhor.'
 So spake the fiend, and with necessity,
 The tyrant's plea, excus'd his devilish deeds.
 Then from his lofty stand on that high tree 395
 Down he alights among the sportful herd
 Of those four-footed kinds, himself now one,
 Now other, as their shape serv'd best his end
 Nearer to view his prey, and unespied,
 To mark what of their state he more might learn, 400
 By word or action mark'd: about them round
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,

Straight couches close, then rising, changes oft 405
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both,
 Grip'd in each paw: when Adam, first of men,
 To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,
 Turn'd him, all ear to hear new utterance flow: 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; 415
 That rais'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here
 In all this happiness, who at his hand
 Have nothing merited, nor can perform
 Aught whereof he hath need; he who requires
 From us no other service than to keep 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, 425
 Some dreadful thing no doubt; for well thou know'st
 God hath pronounc'd it death to taste that tree,
 The only sign of our obedience left
 Among so many signs of pow'r and rule
 Conferr'd upon us, and dominion given 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: 435
 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 440
 And from whom I was form'd, flesh of thy flesh,
 And without whom am to no end, my guide
 And head! what thou hast said is just and right.
 For we to him indeed all praises owe,
 And daily thanks; I chiefly, who enjoy 445
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee
 Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou
 Like consort to thyself canst no where find.
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep
 I first awak'd, and found myself repos'd 450
 Under a shade on flow'rs, much wond'ring where
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.
 Not distant far from thence a murm'ring sound
 Of waters issued from a cave, and spread
 Into a liquid plain, then stood unmov'd 455
 Pure as th' expanse of heav'n; I thither went
 With unexperienc'd thought, and laid me down
 On the green bank, to look into the clear
 Smooth lake, that to me seem'd another sky.

As I bent down to look, just opposite 460
 A shape within the watry gleam appear'd,
 Bending to look on me: I started back,
 It started back; but pleas'd I soon return'd,
 Pleas'd it return'd as soon with answ'ring looks
 Of sympathy and love: there I had fix'd 465
 Mine eyes till now, and pin'd with vain desire,
 Had not a voice thus warn'd me: What thou seest,
 What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;
 With thee it came and goes; but follow me,
 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 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 call'd
 Mother of human race. What could I do, 475
 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 watry image: back I turn'd; 480
 Thou following cry'dst aloud, Return, fair Eve;
 Whom fly'st thou? whom thou fly'st, of him thou art,
 His flesh, his bone; to give thee being I lent
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485
 Henceforth an individual solace dear;
 Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim
 My other half. With that thy gentle hand
 Seiz'd mine: I yielded; and from that time see
 How beauty is excell'd by manly grace, 490
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair.'

So spake our general mother, and with eyes
 Of conjugal attraction unprov'd,
 And meek surrender, half-embracing lean'd 495
 On our first father; half her swelling breast
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold
 Of her loose tresses hid: he in delight
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms,
 Smil'd with superior love, as Jupiter
 On Juno smiles, when he impregns the clouds 500
 That shed May flow'rs; and press'd her matron lip
 With kisses pure: aside the Devil turn'd
 For envy; yet with jealous leer malign
 Ey'd them askance, and to himself thus plain'd:
 'Sight hateful, sight tormenting! thus these two, 505
 Imparadis'd in one another's arms,
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill
 Of bliss on bliss; while I to hell am thrust,
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,
 Among our other torments not the least, 510
 Still unfulfill'd, with pain of longing pines.
 Yet let me not forget what I have gain'd
 From their own mouths; all is not theirs, it seems;
 One fatal tree there stands, of knowledge call'd,

Forbidden them to taste: knowledge forbidden? 515
 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 525
 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 wand'ring spirit of heav'n by fountain-side,
 Or in thick shade retir'd, from him to draw
 What further would be learn'd. Live while ye may,
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,
 Short pleasures, for long woes are to succeed.' 535
 So saying, his proud step he scornful turn'd,
 But with sly circumspection, and began
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.
 Meanwhile, in utmost longitude, where heaven
 With earth and ocean meets, the setting sun 540
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise
 Levell'd his evening rays: it was a rock
 Of alabaster, pil'd up to the clouds,
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 545
 Accessible from earth, one entrance high;
 The rest was craggy cliff, that overhung
 Still as it rose, impossible to climb.
 Betwixt these rocky pillars Gabriel sat,
 Chief of th' angelic guards, awaiting night; 550
 About him exercis'd heroic games
 Th' unarmed youth of heav'n, but nigh at hand
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,
 Hung high, with diamond flaming, and with gold.
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even 555
 On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fir'd
 Impress the air, and shows the mariner
 From what point of his compass to beware
 Impetuous winds: he thus began in haste: 560
 'Gabriel, to thee thy course by lot hath given
 Charge and strict watch, that to this happy place
 No evil thing approach or enter in.
 This day at highth of noon came to my sphere
 A spirit, zealous, as he seem'd, to know 565
 More of th' Almighty's works and chiefly man,
 God's latest image: I describ'd his way
 Bent all on speed, and mark'd his aery gait;
 But in the mount, that lies from Eden north,

Where he first lighted, soon discern'd his looks 570
 Alien from heav'n, with passions foul obscur'd:
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade
 Lost sight of him: one of the banish'd crew,
 I fear, hath ventur'd from the deep, to raise
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find.' 575

To whom the winged warrior thus return'd:
 'Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,
 Amid the sun's bright circle where thou sit'st,
 See far and wide: in at this gate none pass
 The vigilance here plac'd, but such as come 580
 Well known from heav'n; and since meridian hour
 No creature thence: if spirit of other sort,
 So minded, have o'er-leap'd these earthy bounds
 On purpose, hard thou know'st it to exclude
 Spiritual substance with corporeal bar. 585
 But if within the circuit of these walks,
 In whatsoever shape he lurk, of whom
 Thou tell'st, by morrow dawning I shall know.'

So promis'd he; and Uriel to his charge
 Return'd on that bright beam, whose point now rais'd 590
 Bore him slope downward to the sun, now fall'n
 Beneath th' Azores; whether the prime orb,
 Incredible how swift, had thither roll'd
 Diurnal, or this less volúbil earth,
 By shorter flight to th' east, had left him there 595
 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 pleas'd: now glow'd the firmament
 With living sapphires: Hesperus, that led 605
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the moon,
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length
 Apparent queen unveil'd her peerless light,
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw.

When Adam thus to Eve: 'Fair consort, th' hour 610
 Of night, and all things now retir'd to rest,
 Mind us of like repose; since God hath set
 Labour and rest, as day and night to men
 Successive; and the timely dew of sleep,
 Now falling with soft slumbrous weight, inclines 615
 Our eye-lids: other creatures all day long
 Rove idle, unemploy'd, and less need rest;
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,
 And the regard of heav'n on all his ways; 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 625
 Yon flow'ry arbours, yonder alleys green,
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
 That mock our scant manuring, and require
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth:
 Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, 630
 That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,
 Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease;
 Mean while, as nature wills, night bids us rest.
 To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorn'd:
 'My author and disposer, what thou bidd'st 635
 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,
 Glist'ring with dew; fragrant the fertile earth 645
 After soft show'rs; and sweet the coming on
 Of grateful evening mild; then silent night,
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
 And these the gems of heav'n, her starry train:
 But neither breath of morn, when she ascends 650
 With charm of earliest birds; nor rising sun
 On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,
 Glist'ring with dew; nor fragrance after showers;
 Nor grateful evening mild; nor silent night,
 With this her solemn bird; nor walk by moon, 655
 Or glitt'ring star-light; without thee is sweet.
 But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom
 This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?
 To whom our general ancestor replied:
 'Daughter of God and man, accomplish'd Eve, 660
 These have their course to finish round the earth
 By morrow evening, and from land to land
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,
 Minist'ring light prepar'd, they set and rise;
 Lest total darkness should by night regain 665
 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, 675
 That heav'n would want spectators, God want praise:
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth
 Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep:
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold

Both day and night. How often from the steep 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, 685
 With heav'nly touch of instrumental sounds
 In full harmonic number join'd, their songs
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven.
 Thus talking, hand in hand alone they pass'd
 On to their blissful bow'r; it was a place 690
 Chos'n by the sovran Planter, when he fram'd
 All things to man's delightful use; the roof
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side 695
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,
 Fenc'd up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,
 Iris all hues, roses, and jessamin,
 Rear'd high their flourish'd heads between, and wrought
 Mosaic; underfoot the violet, 700
 Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay
 Broider'd the ground, more colour'd than with stone
 Of costliest emblem: other creature here,
 Bird, beast, insect, or worm, durst enter none,
 Such was their awe of man. In shadier bower 705
 More sacred and sequester'd, though but feign'd,
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor nymph
 Nor Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet-smelling herbs,
 Espoused Eve deck'd first her nuptial bed; 710
 And heav'nly quires the hymenean sung,
 What day the genial angel to our sire
 Brought her, in naked beauty more adorn'd,
 More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods
 Endow'd with all their gifts: and O too like 715
 In sad event, when to th' unwiser son
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnar'd
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be aveng'd
 On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.
 Thus, at their shady lodge arriv'd, both stood, 720
 Both turn'd, and under open sky ador'd
 The God that made both sky, air, earth, and heaven
 Which they beheld, the moon's resplendent globe,
 And starry pole: 'Thou also mad'st the night,
 Maker Omnipotent, and thou the day 725
 Which we, in our appointed work employ'd,
 Have finish'd, happy in our mutual help
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss
 Ordain'd by thee; and this delicious place
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.
 But thou hast promis'd from us two a race
 To fill the earth, who shall with us extol
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,

And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep.' 735
 This said unanimous, and other rites
 Observing none, but adoration pure
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower
 Handed they went; and, eas'd the putting off
 These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740
 Straight side by side were laid; nor turn'd, I ween,
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites
 Mysterious of connubial love refus'd:
 Whatever hypocrites austere talk
 Of purity, and place, and innocence, 745
 Defaming as impure what God declares
 Pure, and commands to some, leaves free to all.
 Our Maker bids increase; who bids abstain
 But our destroyer, foe to God and man?
 Hail, wedded love, mysterious law, true source 750
 Of human offspring, sole propriety
 In Paradise, of all things common else.
 By thee adult'rous lust was driv'n from men
 Among the bestial herds to range; by thee
 Founded in reason, loyal, just, and pure, 755
 Relations dear, and all the charities
 Of father, son, and brother, first were known.
 Far be it, that I should write thee sin or blame,
 Or think thee unbefitting holiest place,
 Perpetual fountain of domestic sweets, 760
 Whose bed is undefil'd and chaste pronounc'd,
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs us'd.
 Here Love his golden shafts employs, here lights
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile 765
 Of harlots, loveless, joyless, unendear'd,
 Casual fruition; nor in court-amours,
 Mix'd dance, or wanton mask, or midnight ball,
 Or serenate, which the starv'd lover sings
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770
 These, lull'd by nightingales, embracing slept,
 And on their naked limbs the flow'ry roof
 Show'r'd roses, which the morn repair'd. Sleep on,
 Blest pair; and O yet happiest, if ye seek
 No happier state, and know to know no more. 775
 Now had night measur'd with her shadowy cone
 Half way up hill this vast sublunar vault,
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim,
 Forth issuing at th' accustom'd hour, stood arm'd
 To their night-watches in warlike parade, 780
 When Gabriel to his next in pow'r thus spake:
 'Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the north;
 Our circuit meets full west.' As flame they part,
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785
 From these, two strong and subtle spirits he call'd
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:
 'Ithuriel and Zephon, with wing'd speed
 Search through this garden, leave unsearch'd no nook;

But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.
 This evening from the sun's decline arriv'd,
 Who tells of some infernal spirit seen
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?) escap'd
 The bars of hell, on errand bad no doubt: 795
 Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.'

So saying, on he led his radiant files,
 Dazzling the moon; these to the bow'r direct
 In search of whom they sought: him there they found
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 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
 Th' animal spirits, that from pure blood arise 805
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise
 At least distemper'd, discontented thoughts,
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,
 Blown up with high conceits engend'ring pride.
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810
 Touch'd lightly; for no falsehood can endure
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns
 Of force to its own likeness: up he starts
 Discover'd and surpris'd. As when a spark
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815
 Fit for the tun, some magazine to store
 Against a rumour'd war, the smutty grain,
 With sudden blaze diffus'd, inflames the air;
 So started up in his own shape the fiend.
 Back stept those two fair angels, half amaz'd 820
 So sudden to behold the grisly king;
 Yet thus, unmov'd with fear, accost him soon:
 'Which of those rebel spirits adjudg'd to hell
 Com'st thou, escap'd thy prison? and transform'd,
 Why sat'st thou like an enemy in wait, 825
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?'

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

To whom thus Zephon, answ'ring scorn with scorn:
 'Think not, revolted spirit, thy shape the same, 835
 Or undiminish'd brightness to be known,
 As when thou stood'st in heav'n upright and pure;
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,
 Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 840
 But come, for thou, be sure, shalt give account
 To him who sent us, whose charge is to keep
 This place inviolable, and these from harm.'

So spake the Cherub; and his grave rebuke

Severe in youthful beauty, added grace 845
 Invincible: abash'd the devil stood,
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw
 Virtue in her shape how lovely; saw, and pin'd
 His loss; but chiefly to find here observ'd
 His lustre visibly impair'd; yet seem'd 850
 Undaunted. 'If I must contend,' said he,
 'Best with the best, the sender not the sent,
 Or all at once; more glory will be won,
 Or less be lost.' 'Thy fear,' said Zephon bold,
 'Will save us trial what the least can do 855
 Single against thee wicked, and thence weak.'
 The fiend replied not, overcome with rage;
 But, like a proud steed rein'd, went haughty on,
 Champing his iron curb: to strive or fly
 He held it vain; awe from above had quell'd 860
 His heart, not else dismay'd. Now drew they nigh
 The western point, where those half-rounding guards
 Just met, and closing stood in squadron join'd,
 Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,
 Gabriel, from the front thus call'd aloud: 865
 '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 870
 And fierce demeanour seems the prince of hell,
 Not likely to part hence without contést;
 Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.'
 He scarce had ended, when those two approach'd,
 And brief related whom they brought, where found, 875
 How busied, in what form and posture couch'd.
 To whom with stern regard thus Gabriel spake:
 'Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescrib'd
 To thy transgressions, and disturb'd the charge
 Of others, who approve not to transgress 880
 By thy example, but have pow'r and right
 To question thy bold entrance on this place;
 Employ'd, it seems, to violate sleep, and those
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?'
 To whom thus Satan with contemptuous brow: 885
 'Gabriel, thou hadst in heav'n th' esteem of wise,
 And such I held thee; but this question ask'd
 Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from hell,
 Though thither doom'd? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt, 890
 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, 895
 But evil hast not tried: and wilt object
 His will who bounds us? Let him surer bar
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay
 In that dark durance: thus much what was ask'd.

The rest is true, they found me where they say; 900
But that implies not violence or harm.'

Thus he in scorn. The warlike angel mov'd,
Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied:

'O loss of one in heav'n to judge of wise,
Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew, 905

And now returns him from his prison 'scap'd,
Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise

Or not, who ask what boldness brought him hither
Unlicens'd from his bounds in hell prescrib'd;

So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910
However, and to 'scape his punishment!

So judge thou still, presumptuous! till the wrath,
Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight

Sev'nfold, and scourge that wisdom back to hell,
Which taught thee yet no better, that no pain 915

Can equal anger infinite provok'd.
But wherefore thou alone? wherefore with thee

Came not all hell broke loose? is pain to them
Less pain, less to be fled; or thou than they

Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief! 920
The first in flight from pain! hadst thou alleg'd

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

To which the fiend thus answer'd, frowning stern:
'Not that I less endure or shrink from pain, 925

Insulting angel! well thou know'st I stood
Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid

The blasting vollied thunder made all speed,
And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.

But still thy words at random, as before, 930
Argue thy inexperience what behoves

From hard assays and ill successes past
A faithful leader, not to hazard all

Through ways of danger by himself untried:
I therefore, I alone first undertook 935

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 heav'n, with songs to hymn his throne,
And practis'd distances to cringe, not fight.' 945

To whom the warrior-angel soon replied:
'To say and straight unsay, pretending first

Wise to fly pain, professing next the spy,
Argues no leader, but a liar trac'd,

Satan, and couldst thou faithful add? O name, 950
O sacred name of faithfulness profan'd!

Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?
Army of fiends, fit body to fit head.

Was this your discipline and faith engag'd,

Your military obedience, to dissolve 955
 Allegiance to th' acknowledg'd Power Supreme?
 And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou
 Once fawn'd, and cring'd, and servilely ador'd
 Heav'n's awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope 960
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?
 But mark what I areed thee now, Avant;
 Fly thither whence thou fled'st. If from this hour
 Within these hallow'd limits thou appear,
 Back to th' infernal pit I drag thee chain'd, 965
 And seal thee so, as henceforth not to scorn
 The facile gates of hell too slightly barr'd.
 So threaten'd he; but Satan to no threats
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage replied:
 'Then when I am thy captive talk of chains, 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,
 Us'd to the yoke, draw'st his triumphant wheels 975
 In progress through the road of heav'n star-pav'd.'
 While thus he spake, th' angelic squadron bright
 Turn'd fiery red, sharp'ning in mooned horns
 Their phalanx, and began to hem him round
 With ported spears, as thick as when a field 980
 Of Ceres ripe for harvest waving bends
 Her bearded grove of ears, which way the wind
 Sways them; the careful ploughman doubting stands,
 Lest on the threshing floor his hopeful sheaves
 Prove chaff. On th' other side, Satan, alarm'd, 985
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,
 Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremov'd:
 His stature reach'd the sky, and on his crest
 Sat horror plum'd; nor wanted in his grasp
 What seem'd both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds 990
 Might have ensued, nor only Paradise,
 In this commotion, but the starry cope
 Of heav'n perhaps, or all the elements
 At least had gone to wrack, disturb'd and torn
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995
 Th' Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
 Hung forth in heav'n his golden scales, yet seen
 Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
 Wherein all things created first he weigh'd,
 The pendulous round earth with balanc'd 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 kick'd the beam;
 Which Gabriel spying, thus bespake the fiend: 1005
 'Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know'st mine;
 Neither our own, but giv'n: what folly then
 To boast what arms can do? since thine no more
 Than Heav'n permits, nor mine, though doubled now

To trample thee as mire: for proof look up, 1010
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,
 Where thou art weigh'd, and shown how light, how weak,
 If thou resist.' The fiend look'd up, and knew
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
 Murm'ring, and with him fled the shades of night. 1015

B O O K V.

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

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 th' eastern clime
 Advancing, sow'd the earth with orient pearl,
 When Adam wak'd, so custom'd; for his sleep
 Was aery-light, from pure digestion bred,
 And temp'rate vapours bland, which th' only sound 5
 Of leaves and fuming rills, Aurora's fan,
 Lightly dispers'd, and the shrill matin song
 Of birds on every bough; so much the more
 His wonder was to find unwaken'd Eve
 With tresses discompos'd, and glowing cheek, 10
 As through unquiet rest; he, on his side
 Leaning half-rais'd, with looks of cordial love
 Hung over her enamour'd, and beheld
 Beauty, which, whether waking or asleep,
 Shot forth peculiar graces; then with voice 15
 Mild, as when Zephyrus on Flora breathes,
 Her hand soft touching, whisper'd thus: 'Awake,
 My fairest, my espous'd, my latest found,
 Heav'n's last best gift, my ever-new delight!
 Awake: the morning shines, and the fresh field 20
 Calls us; we lose the prime to mark how spring

Our tender plants, how blows the citron grove,
 What drops the myrrh, and what the balmy reed,
 How nature paints her colours, how the bee
 Sits on the bloom extracting liquid sweet.' 25
 Such whisp'ring wak'd her, but with startled eye
 On Adam, whom embracing, thus she spake:
 'O sole in whom my thoughts find all repose,
 My glory, my perfection! glad I see
 Thy face, and morn return'd; for I this night 30
 (Such night till this I never pass'd) have dream'd,
 If dream'd, not, as I oft am wont, of thee,
 Works of day past, or morrow's next design,
 But of offence and trouble, which my mind
 Knew never till this irksome night: Methought 35
 Close at mine ear one call'd me forth to walk
 With gentle voice; I thought it thine: it said,
 Why sleep'st thou, Eve? now is the pleasant time,
 The cool, the silent, save where silence yields 40
 'To the night-warbling bird, that now awake
 'Tunes sweetest his love-labour'd song; now reigns
 Full-orb'd the moon, and with more pleasing light
 Shadowy sets off the face of things; in vain,
 If none regard; heav'n wakes with all his eyes,
 Whom to behold but thee, nature's desire? 45
 In whose sight all things joy, with ravishment
 Attracted by thy beauty still to gaze.
 I rose as at thy call, but found thee not;
 'To find thee I directed then my walk;
 And on, methought, alone I pass'd through ways 50
 That brought me on a sudden to the tree
 Of interdicted knowledge: fair it seem'd,
 Much fairer to my fancy than by day:
 And, as I wond'ring look'd, beside it stood
 One shap'd and wing'd like one of those from heaven 55
 By us oft seen: his dewy locks distill'd
 Ambrosia; on that tree he also gaz'd;
 And, O fair plant, said he, with fruit surcharg'd,
 Deigns none to ease thy load, and taste thy sweet,
 Nor God, nor man? Is knowledge so despis'd? 60
 Or envy, or what reserve forbids to taste?
 Forbid who will, none shall from me withhold
 Longer thy offer'd good; why else set here?
 This said, he paus'd not, but with vent'rous arm
 He pluck'd, he tasted; me damp horror chill'd 65
 At such bold words vouch'd with a deed so bold:
 But he thus, overjoy'd: O fruit divine,
 Sweet of thyself, but much more sweet thus cropt,
 Forbidden here, it seems, as only fit
 For gods, yet able to make gods of men: 70
 And why not gods of men; since good, the more
 Communicated, more abundant grows,
 The author not impair'd, but honour'd more?
 Here, happy creature, fair angelic Eve!
 Partake thou also: happy though thou art, 75
 Happier thou mayst be, worthier canst not be:

Taste this, and be henceforth among the gods
 Thyself a goddess, not to earth confin'd,
 But sometimes in the air, as we; sometimes
 Ascend to heav'n, by merit thine, and see 80
 What life the gods live there, and such live thou.
 So saying, he drew nigh, and to me held,
 Ev'n to my mouth of that same fruit held part
 Which he had pluck'd; the pleasant savoury smell
 So quicken'd appetite, that I, methought, 85
 Could not but taste. Forthwith up to the clouds
 With him I flew, and underneath beheld
 The earth outstretch'd immense, a prospect wide
 And various: wond'ring at my flight and change
 To this high exaltation; suddenly 90
 My guide was gone, and I, methought, sunk down,
 And fell asleep; but O, how glad I wak'd
 To find this but a dream! Thus Eve her night
 Related, and thus Adam answer'd sad:
 'Best image of myself, and dearer half, 95
 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; off all external things,
 Which the five watchful senses represent,
 She forms imaginations, aery shapes, 105
 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, 115
 But with addition strange; yet be not sad.
 Evil into the mind of God or man
 May come and go, so un approv'd, 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 dishearten'd then, nor cloud those looks,
 That wont to be more cheerful and serene,
 Than when fair morning first smiles on the world;
 And let us to our fresh employments rise 125
 Among the groves, the fountains, and the flowers
 That open now their choicest bosom'd smells,
 Reserv'd from night, and kept for thee in store.'
 So cheer'd he his fair spouse, and she was cheer'd;
 But silently a gentle tear let fall 130
 From either eye, and wip'd them with her hair;

Two other precious drops that ready stood,
 Each in their crystal sluice, he ere they fell
 Kiss'd, as the gracious signs of sweet remorse
 And pious awe, that fear'd to have offended. 135
 So all was clear'd, and to the field they haste.
 But first, from under shady arborous roof
 Soon as they forth were come to open sight
 Of day-spring, and the sun, who, scarce up-risen,
 With wheels yet hovering o'er the ocean-brim, 140
 Shot parallel to th' earth his dewy ray,
 Discovering in wide landscape all the east
 Of Paradise and Eden's happy plains,
 Lowly they bow'd adoring, and began
 Their orisons, each morning duly paid 145
 In various style: for neither various style
 Nor holy rapture wanted they to praise
 Their Maker, in fit strains pronounc'd, or sung
 Unmeditated; such prompt eloquence
 Flow'd from their lips, in prose or numerous verse, 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! 155
 Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heavens
 To us invisible, or dimly seen
 In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
 Thy goodness beyond thought, and pow'r divine.
 Speak, ye who best can tell, ye sons of light, 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. 165
 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 gain'd, and when thou fall'st.
 Moon, that now meet'st the orient sun, now fly'st, 175
 With the fix'd stars, fix'd in their orb that flies;
 And ye five other wand'ring fires, that move
 In mystic dance not without song, resound
 His praise, who out of darkness call'd up light.
 Air, and ye Elements, the eldest birth 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 185
 From hill or steaming lake, dusky or gray,

Till the sun paint your fleecy skirts with gold,
 In honour to the world's great Author rise;
 Whether to deck with clouds th' uncolour'd sky,
 Or wet the thirsty earth with falling showers, 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, 195
 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 205
 To give us only good; and if the night
 Have gather'd aught of evil or conceal'd,
 Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark'
 So pray'd they innocent, and to their thoughts
 Firm peace recover'd soon, and wonted calm. 210
 On to their morning's rural work they haste
 Among sweet dews and flow'rs; where any row
 Of fruit-trees over-woody reach'd too far
 Their pamper'd boughs, and needed hands to check,
 Fruitless embraces: or they led the vine 215
 To wed her elm; she, spous'd about him twines
 Her marriageable arms, and with her brings
 Her dow'r, th' adopted clusters, to adorn
 His barren leaves. Them thus employ'd beheld
 With pity Heav'n's high King, and to him call'd 220
 Raphael, the sociable spirit, that deign'd
 To travel with Tobias, and secur'd
 His marriage with the sev'ntimes-wedded maid.
 'Raphael,' said he, 'thou hear'st what stir on earth
 Satan, from hell scap'd through the darksome gulf, 225
 Hath rais'd in Paradise; and how disturb'd
 This night the human pair; how he designs
 In them at once to ruin all mankind.
 Go therefore, half this day as friend with friend
 Converse with Adam, in what bow'r or shade 230
 Thou find'st him from the heat of noon retir'd,
 To respite his day-labour with repast,
 Or with repose; and such discourse bring on,
 As may advise him of his happy state,
 Happiness in his pow'r left free to will, 235
 Left to his own free will, his will though free
 Yet mutable; whence warn him to beware
 He swerve not, too secure: tell him withal
 His danger, and from whom; what enemy,
 Late fall'n himself from heav'n, is plotting now 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, unadmonish'd, unforewarn'd. 245

So spake th' Eternal Father, and fulfill'd
 All justice: nor delay'd the winged saint
 After his charge receiv'd; but from among
 Thousand celestial ardours, where he stood
 Veil'd with his gorgeous wings, up-springing light 250
 Flew through the midst of heav'n; th' angelic quires,
 On each hand parting, to his speed gave way
 Through all th' empyreal road: till, at the gate
 Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide
 On golden hinges turning, as by work 255
 Divine the sovran Architect had fram'd.
 From hence no cloud, or, to obstruct his sight,
 Star interpos'd, however small, he sees,
 Not unconform to other shining globes,
 Earth, and the gard'n of God, with cedars crown'd 260
 Above all hills. As when by night the glass
 Of Galileo, less assur'd, observes
 Imagin'd lands and regions in the moon:
 Or pilot, from amidst the Cyclades
 Delos or Samos first appearing, kens 265
 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 tow'ring eagles, to all the fowls he seems
 A phoenix, gaz'd by all, as that sole bird,
 When, to enshrine his reliques in the sun's
 Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies.
 At once on th' eastern cliff of Paradise 275
 He lights, and to his proper shape returns
 A Seraph wing'd: six wings he wore to shade
 His lineaments divine; the pair that clad
 Each shoulder broad, came mantling o'er his breast
 With regal ornament; the middle pair 280
 Girt like a starry zone his waist, and round
 Skirted his loins and thighs with downy gold,
 And colours dipt in heav'n; the third his feet
 Shadow'd from either heel with feather'd mail,
 Sky-tinctur'd grain. Like Maia's son he stood, 285
 And shook his plumes, that heav'nly fragrance fill'd
 The circuit wide. Straight knew him all the bands
 Of angels under watch; and to his state,
 And to his message high, in honour rise;
 For on some message high they guess'd him bound. 290
 Their glittering tents he pass'd, and now is come
 Into the blissful field, through groves of myrrh,
 And flow'ring odours, cassia, nard, and balm;
 A wilderness of sweets; for Nature here
 Wanton'd as in her prime, and play'd at will 295
 Her virgin fancies, pouring forth more sweet,

Wild above rule or art, enormous bliss.
 Him through the spicy forest onward come
 Adam discern'd, as in the door he sat
 Of his cool bow'r, while now the mounted sun 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 prepar'd
 For dinner savoury fruits, of taste to please
 True appetite, and not disrelish thirst 305
 Of nectarous draughts between, from milky stream,
 Berry or grape: to whom thus Adam call'd:
 'Haste hither, Eve, and worth thy sight behold
 Eastward among those trees, what glorious shape
 Comes this way moving; seems another morn 310
 Ris'n on mid-noon; some great behest from heaven
 To us perhaps he brings, and will vouchsafe
 This day to be our guest. But go with speed,
 And, what thy stores contain, bring forth and pour
 Abundance, fit to honour and receive 315
 Our heav'nly stranger: well we may afford
 Our givers their own gifts, and large bestow
 From large bestow'd, where Nature multiplies
 Her fertile growth, and by disbur'd'ning grows
 More fruitful, which instructs us not to spare.' 320
 To whom thus Eve: 'Adam, earth's hallow'd mould,
 Of God inspir'd! small store will serve, where store,
 All seasons, ripe for use hangs on the stalk;
 Save what by frugal storing firmness gains
 To nourish, and superfluous moist consumes: 325
 But I will haste, and from each bough and brake,
 Each plant and juiciest gourd, will pluck such choice
 To entertain our Angel-guest, as he
 Beholding shall confess, that here on earth
 God hath dispens'd his bounties as in heaven.' 330
 So saying, with dispatchful looks in haste
 She turns, on hospitable thoughts intent
 What choice to choose for delicacy best,
 What order, so contriv'd as not to mix
 Tastes, not well join'd, inelegant, but bring 335
 Taste after taste upheld with kindest change;
 Bestirs her then, and from each tender stalk
 Whatever earth, all-bearing mother, yields
 In India East or West, or middle shore
 In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where 340
 Alcinoüs reign'd, fruit of all kinds, in coat
 Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell,
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board
 Heaps with unsparing hand; for drink the grape
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths 345
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels press'd
 She tempers dulcet creams; nor these to hold
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strows the ground
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.
 Meanwhile our primitive great sire, to meet 350
 His God-like guest, walks forth, without more train

Accompanied than with his own complete
 Perfections; in himself was all his state,
 More solemn than the tedious pomp that waits
 On princes, when their rich retinue long 355
 Of horses led, and grooms besmear'd with gold,
 Dazzles the crowd, and sets them all agape.
 Nearer his presence Adam, though not aw'd,
 Yet with submissive approach and reverence meek,
 As to a superior nature, bowing low, 360
 Thus said: 'Native of heav'n, for other place
 None can than heav'n such glorious shape contain;
 Since by descending from the thrones above,
 Those happy places thou hast deign'd a while
 To want, and honour these, vouchsafe with us 365
 Two only, who yet by 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 th' angelic Virtue answer'd mild:
 'Adam, I therefore came; nor art thou such
 Created, or such place hast here to dwell,
 As may not oft invite, though spirits of heaven,
 To visit thee; lead on then where thy bower 375
 O'ershades; for these mid-hours, till evening rise,
 I have at will.' So to the sylvan lodge
 They came, that like Pomona's arbour smil'd
 With flow'rets deck'd, and fragrant smells; but Eve
 Undeck'd save with herself, more lovely fair 380
 Than wood-nymph, or the fairest goddess feign'd
 Of three that in mount Ida naked strove,
 Stood to entertain her guest from heav'n; no veil
 She needed, virtue-proof; no thought infirm
 Alter'd her cheek. On whom the angel 'Hail!' 385
 Bestow'd, the holy salutation us'd
 Long after to blest Mary, second Eve:

'Hail, mother of mankind, whose fruitful womb
 Shall fill the world more numerous with thy sons,
 Than with these various fruits the trees of God 390
 Have heap'd this table.' Rais'd of grassy turf
 Their table was, and mossy seats had round,
 And on her ample square from side to side
 All autumn pil'd, though spring and autumn here
 Danc'd hand in hand. A while discourse they hold, 395
 No fear lest dinner cool; when thus began
 Our author: 'Heav'nly stranger, please to taste
 These bounties, which our Nourisher, from whom
 All perfect good, unmeasur'd o'rt, descends,
 To us for food and for delight hath caus'd 400
 The earth to yield; unsavoury food perhaps
 To spiritual natures; only this I know,
 That one celestial Father gives to all.'

To whom the angel: 'Therefore what he gives
 (Whose praise be ever sung) to man in part 405
 Spiritual, may of purest spirits be found

No ingrateful food: and food alike those pure
 Intelligent substances require,
 As doth your rational; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty 410
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created needs
 To be sustain'd and fed: of elements 415
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
 Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
 Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon;
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurg'd
 Vapours not yet into her substance turn'd. 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 425
 Sups with the ocean. Though in heav'n the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines
 Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
 We brush mellifluous dew, and find the ground
 Cover'd with pearly grain; yet God hath here 430
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with heav'n; and to taste
 Think not I shall be nice. So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
 The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss 435
 Of theologians; but with keen dispatch
 Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
 To transubstantiate; what redounds, transpires
 Through spirits with ease; nor wonder; if by fire
 Of sooty coal th' empiric alchymist 440
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
 As from the mine. Meanwhile at table Eve
 Minister'd naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquors crown'd: O innocence 445
 Deserving Paradise! if ever, then,
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
 Enamour'd at that sight; but in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous reign'd, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injur'd lover's hell. 450
 Thus when with meats and drinks they had suffic'd,
 Not burden'd nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam, not to let th' occasion pass
 Giv'n him by this great conference, to know
 Of things above his world, and of their being 455
 Who dwell in heav'n, whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far; whose radiant forms,
 Divine effulgence, whose high pow'r so far
 Exceeded human: and his wary speech
 Thus to th' empyreal minister he fram'd: 460
 'Inhabitant with God, now know I well

Thy favour, in this honour done to man;
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsaf'd
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of angels, yet accepted so, 465
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seem
 At heav'n's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?"
 To whom the winged hierarch replied:
 'O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return, 470
 If not deprav'd from good; created all
 Such to perfection, one first matter all,
 Endued with various forms, various degrees
 Of substance, and, in things that live, of life;
 But more refin'd, more spirituous, and pure, 475
 As nearer to him plac'd, or nearer tending
 Each in their several active spheres assign'd,
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
 Proportion'd to each kind. So from the root
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves 480
 More aery, last the bright consummate flower
 Spirits odórous breathes: flow'rs and their fruit,
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublim'd,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense, 485
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,
 Discursive, or intuitive, discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same. 490
 Wonder not then, what God for you saw good
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance. Time may come, when men
 With angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare; 495
 And from these corporal nutriments perhaps
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improv'd by tract of time, and, wing'd, ascend
 Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice,
 Here or in heav'nly Paradises dwell; 500
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire,
 Whose progeny you are. Meanwhile enjoy
 Your fill what happiness this happy state
 Can comprehend, incapable of more.' 505
 To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:
 'O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
 From center to circumference; whereon, 510
 In contemplation of created things,
 By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
 What meant that caution join'd, "If ye be found
 Obedient?" Can we want obedience then
 To him, or possibly his love desert, 515
 Who form'd us from the dust, and plac'd us here

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

To whom the angel: 'Son of heav'n and earth,
Attend: that thou art happy, owe to God; 520
That thou continuest such, owe to thyself,
That is, to thy obedience; therein stand.

This was that caution giv'n thee; be advis'd.
God made thee perfect, not immutable; 525
And good he made thee; but to persevere
He left it in thy pow'r; ordain'd thy will

By nature free, not over-rul'd by fate
Inextricable, or strict necessity;
Our voluntary service he requires,

Not our necessitated; such with him 530
Finds no acceptance, nor can find; for how
Can hearts, not free, be tried whether they serve

Willing or no, who will but what they must
By destiny, and can no other choose?
Myself, and all th' angelic host, that stand 535

In sight of God, enthron'd, our happy state
Hold, as you yours, while our obedience holds;
On other surety none: freely we serve,

Because we freely love, as in our will
To love or not; in this we stand or fall: 540
And some are fall'n, to disobedience fall'n,
And so from heav'n to deepest hell; O fall

From what high state of bliss, into what woe!
To whom our great Progenitor: 'Thy words
Attentive, and with more delighted ear, 545

Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
Cherubic songs by night from neighb'ring hills
Aerial music send: nor knew I not

To be both will and deed created free;
Yet that we never shall forget to love 550
Our Maker, and obey him whose command
Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts

Assur'd me, and still assure: though what thou tell'st
Hath pass'd in heav'n, some doubt within me move,
But more desire to hear, if thou consent, 555

The full relation, which must needs be strange,
Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun

Hath finish'd half his journey, and scarce begins
His other half in the great zone of heav'n.' 560

Thus Adam made request; and Raphaël,
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 565
To human sense th' invisible exploits
Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,

The ruin of so many glorious once
And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
The secrets of another world, perhaps

Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good 570
This is dispens'd; and what surmounts the reach

Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best; though what if earth
 Be but the shadow of heav'n, and things therein 575
 Each to other like; more than on earth is thought?
 'As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild
 Reign'd where these heav'ns now roll, where earth now rests
 Upon her center pois'd; when on a day
 (For time, though in eternity, applied 580
 'To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future), on such day
 As heav'n's great year brings forth, th' empyreal host
 Of angels by imperial summons call'd,
 Innumerable before th' Almighty's throne 585
 Forthwith, from all the ends of heav'n, appear'd
 Under their hierarchs in orders bright:
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanc'd,
 Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve 590
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;
 Or in their glittering tissues bear imblaz'd
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood, 595
 Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
 By whom in bliss imbosom'd sat the Son,
 Amidst as from a flaming mount whose top
 Brightness had made invisible, thus spake:
 "Hear, all ye Angels, progeny of light, 600
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers,
 Hear my decree, which uorevok'd shall stand.
 This day I have begot whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold 605
 At my right hand; your head I him appoint;
 And by myself have sworn, to him shall bow
 All knees in heav'n, and shall confess him Lord:
 Under his great vicegerent reign abide
 United, as one individual soul, 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 ingulf'd, his place
 Ordain'd without redemption, without end." 615
 'So spake th' Omnipotent, and with his words
 All seem'd well pleas'd; all seem'd, but were not all.
 That day, as other solemn days, they spent
 In song and dance about the sacred hill;
 Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere 620
 Of planets, and of fix'd, in all her wheels
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
 Eccentric, intervolv'd, yet regular
 Then most, when most irregular they seem;
 And in their motions harmony divine 625
 So smooths her charming tones, that God's own ear

Listens delighted. Evening now approach'd
 (For we have also evening and our morn,
 We ours for change delectable, not need);
 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn 630
 Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
 Tables are set, and on a sudden pil'd
 With angel's food, and rubied nectar flows
 In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of heaven. 635
 On flow'rs repos'd, and with fresh flow'rets crown'd,
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure
 Of surfeit, where full measure only bounds
 Excess, before th' all-bounteous King, who show'r'd 640
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
 Now when ambrosial night with clouds exhal'd
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest heav'n had chang'd
 To grateful twilight (for night comes not there 645
 In darker veil), and roseate dews dispos'd
 All but th' unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread
 (Such are the courts of God), th' angelic throng, 650
 Dispers'd in bounds and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden rear'd,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept
 Fann'd with cool winds; save those, who, in their course, 655
 Melodious hymns about the sovran throne
 Alternate all night long: but not so wak'd
 Satan; so call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in heav'n; he of the first,
 If not the first Archangel, great in power, 660
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honour'd by his great Father, and proclaim'd
 Messiah King anointed, could not bear
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impair'd. 665
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolv'd
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipp'd, unobey'd, the throne supreme, 670
 Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
 Awak'ning, thus to him in secret spake:
 "Sleep'st thou, companion dear? What sleep can close
 Thy eye-lids? and remember'st what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath pass'd the lips 675
 Of heav'n'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 impos'd;
 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 685
 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 infus'd
 Bad influence into th' unwary breast 695
 Of his associate: he together calls,
 Or several one by one, the regent powers,
 Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
 That the Most High commanding, now ere night,
 Now ere dim night had disencumber'd heaven, 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 obey'd
 The wonted signal, and superior voice 705
 Of their great potentate; for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in heaven;
 His count'nance, as the morning star that guides
 The starry flock, allur'd them, and with lies
 Drew after him the third part of heav'n's host. 710
 Meanwhile th' Eternal eye, whose sight discerns
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him, saw without their light
 Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread 715
 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 725
 Equal to ours throughout the spacious north;
 Nor so content; hath in his thought to try
 In battle, what our pow'r is, or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ 730
 In our defence, lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill."
 'To whom the Son with calm aspect and clear,
 Lightning divine, ineffable, serene,
 Made answer: "Mighty Father, thou thy foes 735
 Justly hast in derision, and secure

Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal power
 Giv'n me to quell their pride, and in event 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 advanc'd on winged speed; an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night, 745
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
 Regions they pass'd, the mighty regencies
 Of Seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
 In their triple degrees; regions to which 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
 Stretch'd into longitude; which having pass'd,
 At length into the limits of the north 755
 They came; and Satan to his royal seat
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Rais'd on a mount, with pyramids and towers
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
 The palace of great Lucifer (so call 760
 That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted), which not long after, he,
 Affecting all equality with God,
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declar'd in sight of heaven, 765
 The mountain of the Congregation call'd;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending, so commanded, to consult
 About the great reception of their king,
 Thither to come; and with calumnious art 770
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:
 "Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;
 If these magnificent titles yet remain
 Not merely titular, since by decree
 Another now hath to himself engross'd 775
 All pow'r, and us eclips'd under the name
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
 Of midnight-march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult; how we may best,
 With what may be devis'd of honours new, 780
 Receive him coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile!
 Too much to one! but double how endur'd,
 To one, and to his image now proclaim'd?
 But what if better counsels might erect 785
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves
 Natives and sons of heav'n possess'd before 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 795
 His equals, if in pow'r and splendour less,
 In freedom equal? or can introduce
 Law and edict on us, who without law
 Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
 And look for adoration, to th' abuse 800
 Of those imperial titles, which assert
 Our being ordain'd to govern, not to serve."
 Thus far his bold discourse without control
 Had audience; when among the Seraphim
 Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal ador'd 805
 The Deity, and divine commands obey'd,
 Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe
 The current of his fury thus oppos'd:
 "O argument blasphemous, false, and proud!
 Words which no ear ever to hear in heav'n 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, pronounc'd and sworn,
 That to his only Son, by right endued 815
 With regal scepter, every soul in heaven
 Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
 Confess him rightful king? Unjust, thou say'st,
 Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
 And equal over equals to let reign, 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 form'd the pow'rs of heaven
 Such as he pleas'd, and circumscrib'd their being? 825
 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 join'd in one,
 Equal to him begotten Son? by whom, 835
 As by his word, the Mighty Father made
 All things, ev'n thee; and all the spirits of heaven
 By him created in their bright degrees,
 Crown'd them with glory, and to their glory nam'd
 Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers, 840
 Essential Pow'rs; nor by his reign obscur'd,
 But more illustrious made; since he the head,
 One of our number thus reduc'd becomes;
 His laws our laws: all honour to him done
 Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage, 845
 And tempt not these; but hasten to appease

Th' incens'd Father, and th' incens'd Son,
While pardon may be found in time besought."

'So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
None seconded, as out of season judg'd, 850
Or singular and rash: whereat rejoic'd

Th' apostate, and, more haughty, thus replied:

'That we were form'd then, say'st thou? and the work
Of secondary hands, by task transferr'd

From Father to his Son? strange point and new! 855

Doctrine which we would know whence learn'd: who saw

When this creation was? remember'st thou

Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?

We know no time when we were not as now;

Know none before us, self-begot, self-rais'd 860

By our own quick'ning pow'r, when fatal course

Had circled his full orb, the birth mature

Of this our native heav'n, ethereal sons.

Our puissance is our own; our own right hand

Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try 865

Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold

Whether by supplication we intend

Address, and to begirt th' almighty throne

Beseeching or besieging. This report,

These tidings carry to th' anointed King; 870

And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight."

'He said; and, as the sound of waters deep,

Hoarse murmur echo'd to his words applause

Through the infinite host: nor less for that

The flaming Seraph fearless, though alone 875

Encompass'd round with foes, thus answer'd bold:

"O alienate from God, O spirit accurs'd,

Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall

Determin'd, and thy hapless crew involv'd

In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread 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 vouchsaf'd; other decrees

Against thee are gone forth without recall; 885

That golden scepter, which thou didst reject,

Is now an iron rod to bruise and break

Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;

Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly

These wicked tents devoted, lest the wrath 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." 895

'So spake the Seraph Abdiel, faithful found

Among the faithless, faithful only he;

Among innumerable false, unmov'd,

Unshaken, uneduc'd, unterrified,

His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal; 900

Nor number, nor example, with him wrought

To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
 Though single. From amidst them forth he pass'd,
 Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustain'd
 Superior, nor of violence fear'd aught; 905
 And, with retorted scorn, his back he turn'd
 On those proud tow'rs to swift destruction doom'd.

B O O K VI.

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

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, overwhelm both the force and machines of Satan: yet, the tumult not so ending, God, on the third day, sends Messiah his Son, for whom he had reserved the glory of that victory: he, in the power of his Father, coming to the place, and causing all his legions to stand still on either side, with his chariot and thunder driving into the midst of his enemies, 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 heav'n's wide champain held his way; till Morn,
 Wak'd by the circling Hours, with rosy hand
 Unbarr'd the gates of light. There is a cave
 Within the mount of God, fast by his throne, 5
 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 10
 To veil the heav'n, though darkness there might well
 Seem twilight here: and now went forth the morn,
 Such as in highest heav'n, array'd in gold
 Empyrean; from before her vanish'd night,
 Shot through with orient beams, when all the plain 15
 Cover'd with thick embattled squadrons bright,
 Chariots, and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
 War he perceiv'd, war in procinct; and found
 Already known what he for news had thought 20
 To have reported; gladly then he mix'd
 Among those friendly pow'rs, who him receiv'd
 With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
 That of so many myriads fall'n, yet one

Return'd not lost. On to the sacred hill 25
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
 From midst a golden cloud, thus mild was heard:
 "Servant of God, well done; well hast thou fought
 The better fight, who single hast maintain'd 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, 35
 To stand approv'd in sight of God, though worlds
 Judg'd thee perverse: the easier conquest now
 Remains thee: aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return,
 Than scorn'd thou didst depart; and to subdue 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, Michaël, of celestial armies prince;
 And thou, in military prowess next, 45
 Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
 Invincible; lead forth my armed saints,
 By thousands and by millions, rang'd for fight,
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious: them with fire and hostile arms 50
 Fearless assault: and to the brow of heaven
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss,
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf
 Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
 His fiery chaos to receive their fall," 55
 'So spake the Sovran Voice, and clouds began
 To darken all the hill, and smoke to roll
 In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
 Of wrath awak'd; nor with less dread the loud
 Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow: 60
 At which command the powers militant
 That stood for heav'n, in mighty quadrate join'd
 Of union irresistible, mov'd on
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound
 Of instrumental harmony, that breath'd 65
 Heroic ardour to advent'rous deeds
 Under their God-like leaders, in the cause
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
 Nor strait'ning vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides 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 summon'd over Eden to receive 75
 Their names of thee; so over many a tract
 Of heav'n they march'd, and many a province wide,
 Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last,
 Far in th' horizon to the north app ear'd

From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretch'd 80
 In battailous aspect, and nearer view
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable
 Of rigid spears, and helmets throng'd, and shields
 Various, with boastful argument portray'd,
 The banded pow'rs of Satan hasting on 85
 With furious expedition; for they ween'd
 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 prov'd fond and vain 90
 In the mid way: though strange to us it seem'd
 At first, that angel should with angel war,
 And in fierce hosting meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire, 95
 Hymning th' Eternal Father. But the shout
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset ended soon each milder thought.
 High in the midst, exalted as a god,
 Th' apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat, 100
 Idol of majesty divine, enclos'd
 With flaming cherubim, and golden shields;
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne, for now
 'Twixt host and host but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval, and front to front 105
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge of battle ere it join'd,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanc'd,
 Came tow'ring, arm'd in adamant and gold; 110
 Abdiel that sight endur'd not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores:
 "O heav'n! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and reälty 115
 Remain not! wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
 His puissance, trusting in th' Almighty's aid,
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried 120
 Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just,
 That he, who in debate of truth hath won,
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so 125
 Most reason is that reason overcome."
 'So pondering, and from his armed peers
 Forth stepping opposite, half-way he met
 His daring foe, at this prevention more
 Incens'd, and thus securely him defied: 130
 "Proud, art thou met? thy hope was to have reach'd
 The highth of thy aspiring unoppos'd,
 The throne of God unguarded, and his side
 Abandon'd, at the terror of thy power

Or potent tongue: fool! not to think how vain 135
 Against th' Omnipotent to rise in arms;
 Who out of smallest things could, without end,
 Have rais'd incessant armies to defeat
 Thy folly; or with solitary hand
 Reaching beyond all limit, at one blow, 140
 Unaided, could have finish'd thee, and whelm'd
 Thy legions under darkness: but thou seest
 All are not of thy train: there be, who faith
 Prefer, and piety to God, though then
 To thee not visible, when I alone 145
 Seem'd in thy world erroneous to dissent
 From all: my sect thou seest; now learn too late
 How few sometimes may know, when thousands err."
 'Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
 Thus answer'd: "Ill for thee, but in wish'd hour 150
 Of my revenge, first sought for, thou return'st
 From flight, scditions angel! to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right hand provok'd, since first that tongue,
 Inspir'd with contradiction, durst oppose 155
 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 160
 From me some plume, that thy success may show
 Destruction to the rest: this pause between
 (Unanswer'd lest thou boast), to let thee know;
 At first I thought that liberty and heaven
 To heav'nly souls had been all one; but now 165
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Minist'ring spirits, train'd up in feast and song!
 Such hast thou arm'd, the minstrelsy of heaven,
 Servility with freedom to contend,
 As both their deeds compar'd 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 deprav'st it with the name
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains, 175
 Or nature: God and nature aid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude:
 To serve th' unwise, or him who hath rebell'd
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee, 180
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthral'd;
 Yet lewdly dar'st our minist'ring upbraid.
 Reign thou in hell, thy kingdom; let me serve
 In heav'n God ever-blest, and his divine
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obey'd; 185
 Yet chains in hell, not realms, expect: meanwhile
 From me return'd, as erst thou said'st, from flight,
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive."
 'So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,

Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell 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 recoil'd; the tenth on bended knee
 His massy spear upstaid; as if on earth 195
 Winds under ground, or waters, forcing way,
 Sidelong had push'd a mountain from his seat,
 Half-sunk with all his pines. Amazement seiz'd
 The rebel thrones but greater rage, to see
 Thus foil'd their mightiest; ours joy fill'd, and shout, 200
 Presage of victory, and fierce desire
 Of battle: whereat Michaël bid sound
 Th' archangel trumpet; through the vast of heaven
 It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
 Hosanna to the Highest: nor stood at gaze 205
 The adverse legions, nor less hideous join'd
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
 And clamour, such as heard in heav'n till now
 Was never; arms on armour clashing bray'd
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels 210
 Of brazen chariots rag'd; dire was the noise
 Of conflict; over head the dismal hiss
 Of fiery darts in flaming volleys flew,
 And flying vaulted either host with fire.
 So under fiery cope together rush'd 215
 Both battles main, with ruinous assault
 And inextinguishable rage. All heaven
 Resounded; and had earth been then, all earth
 Had to her center shook. What wonder? when
 Millions of fierce encount'ring 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, 225
 Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
 Had not th' Eternal King Omnipotent,
 From his strong hold of heav'n, high over-rul'd
 And limited their might; though number'd such
 As each divided legion might have seem'd 230
 A numerous host; in strength each armed hand
 A legion; led in fight, yet leader, seem'd
 Each warrior single as in chief, expert
 When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway,
 Of battle, open when, and when to close 235
 The ridges of grim war: no thought of flight,
 None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
 Thus 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 seem'd then

Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale 245
 The battle hung; till Satan, who that day
 Prodigious pow'r had shown, and met in arms
 No equal, ranging through the dire attack
 Of fighting Seraphim confus'd, at length
 Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and fell'd 250
 Squadrons at once; with huge two-handed sway
 Brandish'd aloft, the horrid edge came down
 Wide-wasting; such destruction to withstand
 He hasted, and oppos'd the rocky orb
 Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield, 255
 A vast circumference. At his approach,
 The great Archangel from his warlike toil
 Surceas'd, and glad, as hoping here to end
 Intestine war in heav'n, the arch-foe subdued,
 Or captive dragg'd in chains, with hostile frown 260
 And visage all inflam'd first thus began:
 "Author of evil, unknown till thy revolt,
 Unnam'd in heav'n, now plenteous, as thou seest,
 These acts of hateful strife, hateful to all,
 Though heaviest by just measure on thyself 265
 And thy adherents: how hast thou disturb'd
 Heav'n's blessed peace, and into nature brought
 Misery, uncreated till the crime
 Of thy rebellion! how hast thou instill'd
 Thy malice into thousands, once upright 270
 And faithful, now prov'd false! But think not here
 To trouble holy rest; heav'n casts thee out
 From all her confines. Heav'n, the seat of bliss,
 Brooks not the works of violence and war.
 Hence then, and evil go with thee along, 275
 Thy offspring, to the place of evil, hell;
 Thou and thy wicked crew! there mingle broils,
 Ere this avenging sword begin thy doom,
 Or some more sudden vengeance, win'gd from God,
 Precipitate thee with augmented pain" 280
 'So spake the prince of angels, to whom thus
 The adversary: "Nor think thou with wind
 Of aery threats to awe whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turn'd the least of these
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise 285
 Unvanquish'd; easier to transact with me
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
 To chase me hence? err not, that so shall end
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win, 290
 Or turn this heav'n itself into the hell
 Thou fablest; here, however, to dwell free,
 If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
 And join him nam'd Almighty to thy aid,
 I fly not, but have sought thee far and nigh." 295
 'They ended parle, and both address'd for fight
 Unspeakable; for who, though with the tongue
 Of angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift

Human imagination to such highth 300
 Of Godlike pow'r? for likest gods they seem'd,
 Stood they or mov'd, in stature, motion, arms,
 Fit to decide the empire of great heaven.
 Now wav'd their fiery swords, and in the air
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields 305
 Blaz'd opposite, while expectation stood
 In horror: from each hand with speed retir'd,
 Where erst was thickest fight, th' angelic throng,
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind
 Of such commotion; such as, to set forth 310
 Great things by small, if, nature's concord broke,
 Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound. 315
 Together both with next to almighty arm
 Up-lifted imminent, one stroke they aim'd
 That might determine, and not need repeat,
 As not of pow'r at once; nor odds appear'd
 In might or swift prevention: but the sword 320
 Of Michaël from the armoury of God
 Was given him temper'd so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met
 The sword of Satan, with steep force to smite
 Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor staid, 325
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep ent'ring, shar'd
 All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
 And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd; so sore
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound
 Pass'd through him: but th' ethereal substance clos'd, 330
 Not long divisible; and from the gash
 A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd
 Sanguine, such as celestial spirits may bleed,
 And all his armour stain'd, erewhile so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run 335
 By angels many and strong, who interpos'd
 Defence, while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retir'd
 From off the files of war: there they him laid
 Gnashing for anguish, and despite, and shame, 340
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
 His confidence to equal God in power.
 Yet soon he heal'd; for spirits that live throughout
 Vital in every part, not as frail man 345
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
 Cannot but by annihilating die;
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air:
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear, 350
 All intellect, all sense; and, as they please,
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape, or size,
 Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.
 'Meanwhile in other parts like deeds deserv'd

Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought, 355
 And with fierce ensigns pierc'd the deep array
 Of Moloch, furious king; who him defied,
 And at his chariot-weels to drag him bound,
 Threaten'd, nor from the Holy One of heaven
 Refrain'd his tongue blasphemous; but anon 360
 Down cloven to the waist, with shatter'd arms
 And uncouth pain fled bellowing. On each wing
 Uriel and Raphaël, his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond arm'd,
 Vanquish'd Adramelech and Asmadai, 365
 Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdain'd, but meaner thoughts learn'd in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail.
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow 370
 Ariel, and Arioch, and the violence
 Of Ramiel scorch'd and blasted, overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in heaven, 375
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
 In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancell'd from heav'n and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell. 380
 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. 385
 'And now, their mightiest quell'd, the battle swerv'd,
 With many an inroad gor'd; deformed rout
 Enter'd, and foul disorder; all the ground
 With shiver'd armour strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturn'd, 390
 And fiery-foaming steeds; what stood, recoil'd
 O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surpris'd,
 Then first with fear surpris'd, and sense of pain,
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought 395
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far otherwise th' inviolable saints,
 In cubic phalanx firm, advanc'd entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably arm'd; 400
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes; not to have sinn'd,
 Not to have disobey'd; in fight they stood
 Unwearied; unobnoxious to be pain'd
 By wound, though from their place by violence mov'd. 405
 'Now night her course began, and over heaven
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce impos'd,
 And silence on the odious din of war:
 Under her cloudy covert both retir'd,

Victor and vanquish'd: on the foughthen field 410
 Michaël and his angels prevalent
 Encamping; plac'd in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on th' other part,
 Satan with his rebellious disappear'd,
 Far in the dark dislodg'd; and, void of rest, 415
 His potentates to council call'd by night;
 And in the midst thus undismay'd began:
 "O now in danger tried, now known in arms
 Not to be overpow'r'd, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone, 420
 Too mean pretence! but what we more affect,
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
 Who have sustain'd one day in doubtful fight
 (And if one day, why not eternal days?)
 What heaven's Lord had pow'rfullest to send 425
 Against us from about his throne, and judg'd
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is, less firmly arm'd, 430
 Some disadvantage we endur'd and pain,
 Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemn'd;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable, and though pierc'd with wound, 435
 Soon closing, and by native vigour heal'd.
 Of evil then so small, as easy think
 The remedy; perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes, 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." 445
 'He sat; and in th' assembly next upstood
 Nisroch, of principalities the prime;
 As one he stood escap'd from cruel fight,
 Sore toil'd, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
 And cloudy in aspéct thus ans'ring 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 unpain'd, impassive; from which evil 455
 Ruin must needs ensue; for what avails
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quell'd with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of mightiest? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life perhaps, and not repine, 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 465
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe?
 'Whereto with look compos'd Satan replied:
 "Not uninvented that, which thou aright 470
 Believ'st so main to our success, I bring.
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious heav'n adorn'd
 With plant, fruit, flow'r ambrosial, gems, and gold; 475
 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, touch'd
 With heaven's ray, and temper'd, they shoot forth 480
 So beauteous, opening to the ambient light?
 These in their dark nativity the deep
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame;
 Which, into hollow engines, long and round,
 Thick-ramm'd, at th' other bore with touch of fire 485
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
 From far, with thund'ring noise, among our foes
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
 To pieces, and o'erwhelm, whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarm'd 490
 The Thund'rer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long shall be our labour; yet ere dawn,
 Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive;
 Abandon fear; to strength and counsel join'd
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despair'd." 495
 'He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
 Enlighten'd, and their languish'd hope reviv'd.
 Th' invention all admir'd, and each, how he
 To be th' inventor miss'd; so easy it seem'd
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought 500
 Impossible: yet, haply, of thy race
 In future days, if malice should abound,
 Some one intent on mischief, or inspir'd
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men 505
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew;
 None arguing stood; innumerable hands
 Were ready; in a moment up they turn'd
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath 510
 Th' originals of nature in their crude
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam
 They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art,
 Concocted and adusted they reduc'd
 To blackest grain, and into store convey'd: 515
 Part hidden veins digg'd up (nor hath this earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed

Provide, pernicious with one touch to fire. 520
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
 Secret they finish'd, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection, unespied.
 'Now when fair morn orient in heav'n appear'd,
 Up rose the victor-angels, and to arms 525
 'The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
 Look'd round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe, 530
 Where lodg'd, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt; him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
 But firm battalion: back with speediest sail
 Zophiel, of Cherubim the swiftest wing, 535
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried:
 "Arm, warriors, arm for fight; the foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day; fear not his fight; so thick a cloud
 He comes, and settled in his face I see 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 ev'n or high; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower, 545
 But rattling storm of arrows barb'd with fire."
 'So warn'd he them, aware themselves, and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment;
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,
 And onward mov'd embattled: when behold! 550
 Not distant far with heavy pace the foe
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
 'Training his devilish enginery, impal'd
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood 555
 A while; but suddenly at head appear'd
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud:
 "Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek
 Peace and composure, and with open breast 560
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like
 Our overture, and turn not back perverse:
 But that I doubt; however, witness heaven,
 Heav'n witness thou anon, while we discharge
 Freely our part: ye, who appointed stand, 565
 Do as you have in charge, and briefly touch
 What we propound, and loud that all may hear."
 'So scoffing in ambiguous words, he scarce
 Had ended; when to right and left the front
 Divided, and to either flank retir'd: 570
 Which to our eyes discover'd, new and strange,
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid
 On wheels (for like to pillars most they seem'd,
 Of hollow'd bodies made of oak or fir,

With branches lopt, in wood or mountain fell'd), 575
 Brass, iron, stony mould, had not their mouths
 With hideous orifice gap'd on us wide,
 Portending hollow truce: at each behind
 A Seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
 Stood waving tipp'd with fire; while we, suspense, 580
 Collected stood within our thoughts amus'd,
 Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
 But soon obscur'd with smoke, all heav'n appear'd, 585
 From those deep-throated engines belch'd, whose roar
 Embowell'd with outrageous noise the air,
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chain'd thunderbolts and hail
 Of iron globes; which, on the victor host 590
 Levell'd, with such impetuous fury smote,
 That, whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
 Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
 By thousands, angel on archangel roll'd,
 The sooner for their arms; unarm'd, they might 595
 Have easily, as spirits, evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove; but now
 Foul dissipation follow'd, and forc'd rout;
 Nor serv'd it to relax their serried files.
 What should they do? if on they rush'd, repulse 600
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow
 Doubled, would render them yet more despis'd,
 And to their foes a laughter; for in view
 Stood rank'd of Seraphim another row,
 In posture to displode their second tire 605
 Of thunder: back defeated to return
 They worse abhorr'd. Satan beheld their plight,
 And to his mates thus in derision call'd:
 "O friends! why come not on these victors proud?
 Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we, 610
 To entertain them fair with open front
 And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
 Of composition, straight they chang'd their minds,
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
 As they would dance; yet for a dance they seem'd 615
 Somewhat extravagant and wild; perhaps
 For joy of offer'd peace: but I suppose,
 If our proposals once again were heard,
 We should compel them to a quick result."
 'To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood: 620
 "Leader! the terms we sent were terms of weight,
 Of hard contents, and full of force urg'd home;
 Such as we might perceive amus'd them all,
 And stumbled many: who receives them right,
 Had need from head to foot well understand; 625
 Not understood, this gift they have besides,
 They show us when our foes walk not upright."
 'So they among themselves in pleasant vein
 Stood scoffing, heighten'd in their thoughts beyond

All doubt of victory: Eternal Might 630
 To match with their inventions they presum'd
 So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
 And all his host derided, while they stood
 A while in trouble: but they stood not long;
 Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms 635
 Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
 Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power
 Which God hath in his mighty angels plac'd!)
 Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
 (For earth hath this variety from heaven, 640
 Of pleasure situate in hill and dale),
 Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew;
 From their foundations loos'ning to and fro,
 They pluck'd the seated hills, with all their load,
 Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops 645
 Uplifting bore them in their hands: amaze,
 Be sure, and terror, seiz'd the rebel host,
 When coming towards them so dread they saw
 The bottom of the mountains upward turn'd;
 Till on those cursed engines' triple row 650
 They saw them whelm'd, and all their confidence
 Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
 Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
 Main promontories flung, which in the air
 Came shadowing, and oppress'd whole legions arm'd; 655
 Their armour help'd their harm, crush'd in and bruis'd
 Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
 Implacable, and many a dolorous groan;
 Long struggling underneath, 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 neighb'ring hills uptore:
 So hills amid the air encounter'd hills,
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire, 665
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade;
 Infernal noise! war seem'd a civil game
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heap'd
 Upon confusion rose. And now all heaven 670
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread;
 Had not th' Almighty Father, where he sits
 Shrin'd in his sanctuary of heav'n secure,
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advis'd:
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil, 675
 To honour his anointed Son aveng'd
 Upon his enemies, and to declare
 All pow'r on him transferr'd: whence to his Son,
 Th' assessor of his throne, he thus began:
 "Efulgence of my glory, Son belov'd, 680
 Son, in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by Deity I am,
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second omnipotence! two days are past,

Two days, as we compute the days of heaven, 685
 Since Michael and his pow'rs went forth to tame
 These disobedient: sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met arm'd;
 For to themselves I left them; and thou know'st,
 Equal in their creation they were form'd, 690
 Save what sin hath impair'd; which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found:
 War wearied hath perform'd what war can do, 695
 And to disorder'd rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains, as with weapons, arm'd; which makes
 Wild work in heav'n, and dangerous to the main.
 Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
 For thee I have ordain'd it; and thus far 700
 Have suffer'd, that the glory may be thine
 Of ending this great war, since none but thou
 Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
 Immense I have transfus'd, that all may know
 In heav'n and hell thy pow'r above compare; 705
 And, this perverse commotion govern'd thus,
 To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
 Of all things; to be Heir, and to be King
 By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
 Go then, thou Mightiest, in thy Father's might; 710
 Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
 That shake heav'n's basis, bring forth all my war,
 My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
 Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
 Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out 715
 From all heav'n's bounds into the utter deep:
 There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
 God, and Messiah, his anointed King."

'He said, and on his Son with rays direct
 Shone full; he all his Father full express'd 720
 Ineffably into his face receiv'd;
 And thus the filial Godhead ansy'ring spake:
 "O Father, O Supreme of heav'nly thrones,
 First, Highest, Holiest, Best; thou always seek'st
 To glorify thy Son; I always thee, 725
 As is most just: this I my glory account,
 My exaltation, and my whole delight,
 That thou in me, well pleas'd, declar'st thy will
 Fulfill'd, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
 Scepter and pow'r, 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, 735
 Image of thee in all things; and shall soon,
 Arm'd with thy might, rid heav'n of these rebell'd,
 To their prepar'd ill mansion driven down,
 To chains of darkness, and th' undying worm,

That from thy just obedience could revolt, 740
 Whom to obey is happiness entire.
 Then shall thy saints unmix'd, and from th' impure
 Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
 Unfeigned hallelujahs to thee sing,
 Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.' 745
 'So said, he, o'er his scepter bowing, rose
 From the right hand of glory where he sat;
 And the third sacred morn began to shine,
 Dawning through heav'n. Forth rush'd with whirlwind sound
 The chariot of Paternal Deity, 750
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
 Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy'd
 By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
 Had wondrous; as with stars, their bodies all,
 And wings, were set with eyes; with eyes the wheels 755
 Of beryl, and careering fires between;
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colours of the show'ry arch.
 He, in celestial panoply all arm'd 760
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended; at his right hand Victory
 Sat eagle-wing'd; beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stor'd;
 And from about him fierce effusion roll'd 765
 Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:
 Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,
 He onward come; far off his coming shone;
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen: 770
 He on the wings of Cherub rode sublime
 On the crystalline sky; in sapphire thron'd,
 Illustrious far and wide; but by his own
 First seen: them unexpected joy surpris'd,
 When the great ensign of Messiah blaz'd 775
 Aloft by angels borne, his sign in heaven;
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduc'd
 His army, circumfus'd on either wing,
 Under their head imbody'd all in one.
 Before him Pow'r Divine his way prepar'd; 780
 At his command th' uprooted hills retir'd
 Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
 Obsequious; heav'n his wonted face renew'd,
 And with fresh flow'rets hill and valley smil'd.
 This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdur'd, 785
 And to rebellious fight rallied their powers,
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.
 In heav'nly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move th' obdurate to relent? 790
 They, harden'd 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 795
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last; and now
 To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake: 800
 "Stand still in bright array, ye saints; here stand,
 Ye angels arm'd; this day from battle rest:
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause:
 And as ye have receiv'd, so have ye done, 805
 Invincibly: but of this cursed crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs;
 Vengeance is his, or whose he sole appoints:
 Number to this day's work is not ordain'd,
 Nor multitude; stand only, and behold 810
 God's indignation on these godless pour'd
 By me; not you, but me, they have despis'd,
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, t' whom in heav'n supreme
 Kingdom, and pow'r, and glory appertains, 815
 Hath honour'd me, according to his will.
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assign'd:
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves; they all,
 Or I alone against them; since by strength 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 chang'd
 His count'nance too severe to be beheld, 825
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
 At once the four spread out their starry wings
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
 Of his fierce chariot roll'd, as with the sound
 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host. 830
 He on his impious foes right onward drove,
 Gloomy as night: under his burning wheels
 The steadfast empyréan shook throughout,
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
 Among them he arriv'd; in his right hand 835
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in their souls infix'd
 Plagues: they, astonish'd, all resistance lost,
 All courage; down their idle weapons dropt;
 O'er shields, and helms, and helmed heads he rode 840
 Of thrones and mighty Seraphim prostrate,
 That wish'd the mountains now might be again
 Thrown on them, as a shelter from his ire.
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visag'd four 845
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
 One spirit in them rul'd; and every eye
 Glar'd lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire

Among th' accurs'd, that wither'd all their strength, 850
 And of their wonted vigour left them drain'd,
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fall'n.

Yet half his strength he put not forth, but check'd
 His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
 Not to destroy, but root them out of heaven: 855

The overthrown he rais'd, and as a herd
 Of goats or timorous flock together throng'd,
 Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
 With terrors and with furies, to the bounds
 And crystal wall of heav'n; which, opening wide, 860

Roll'd inward, and a spacious gap disclos'd
 Into the wasteful deep; the monstrous sight
 Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
 Urg'd them behind: headlong themselves they threw
 Down from the verge of heav'n; eternal wrath 865
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

'Hell heard th' unsufferable noise, hell saw
 Heav'n ruining from heav'n, and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
 Her dark foundations; and too fast had bound. 870

Nine days they fell: confounded Chaos roar'd,
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
 Encumber'd him with ruin: hell at last

Yawning receiv'd them whole, and on them clos'd; 875
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.

Disburden'd heav'n rejoic'd, and soon repair'd
 Her mural breach, returning whence it roll'd.
 Sole Victor, from th' expulsion of his foes, 880
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turn'd:

To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,

With jubilee advanc'd; and, as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright, 885

Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
 Worthiest to reign: He, celebrated, rode

Triumphant through mid heav'n, into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father thron'd 890

On high; who into glory him receiv'd,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

'Thus measuring things in heav'n by things on earth,
 At thy request, and that thou may'st beware
 By what is past, to thee I have reveal'd 895

What might have else to human race been hid;
 The discord which befel, and war in heaven

Among th' angelic pow'rs, and the deep fall
 Of those too high aspiring, who rebell'd
 With Satan; he who envies now thy state, 900

Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that with him
 Bereav'd of happiness, thou may'st partake
 His punishment, eternal misery;

Which would be all his solace and revenge, 905
 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.'

B O O K V I I .

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

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 heav'n, Urania, by that name
 If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
 Following, above th' Olympian hill I soar,
 Above the flight of Pegaséan wing.
 The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou 5
 Nor of the muses nine, nor on the top
 Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heav'nly-born,
 Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
 Thou with Eternal Wisdom didst converse,
 Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play 10
 In presence of th' Almighty Father. pleas'd
 With thy celestial song Up led by thee,
 Into the heav'n of heav'ns I have presum'd,
 An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
 Thy temp'ring: with like safety guided down, 15
 Return me to my native element:
 Lest from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
 Bellerophon, though from a lower clime),
 Dismounted, on th' Aleian field I fall,
 Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn. 20
 Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
 Within the visible diurnal sphere:
 Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
 More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
 To hoarse or mute, though fall'n on evil days, 25
 On evil days though fall'n, and evil tongues;
 In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,

And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east: still govern thou my song, 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 35
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
 Both harp and voice; nor could the muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
 For thou art heav'nly, she an empty dream.
 Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphaël, 40
 The affable Archangel, had forewarn'd
 Adam, by dire example, to beware
 Apostasy, by what befell in heaven
 To those apostates; lest the like befall
 In Paradise to Adam or his race, 45
 Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command,
 So easily obey'd amid the choice
 Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
 Though wand'ring. He, with his consorted Eve, 50
 The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
 With admiration and deep muse, to hear
 Of things so high and strange; things, to their thought
 So unimaginable, as hate in heaven,
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss, 55
 With such confusion: but the evil, soon
 Driv'n back, redounded as a flood on those
 From whom it sprung; impossible to mix
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repeal'd
 The doubts that in his heart arose: and now 60
 Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know
 What nearer might concern him, how this world
 Of heav'n and earth conspicuous first began;
 When, and whereof created; for what cause;
 What within Eden, or without, was done 65
 Before his memory: as one whose drought
 Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current stream,
 Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,
 Proceeded thus to ask his heav'nly guest:
 'Great things and full of wonder in our ears, 70
 Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,
 Divine interpreter! by favour sent
 Down from the empyréan, to forewarn
 Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach; 75
 For which to th' infinitely Good we owe
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
 Receive with solemn purpose to observe
 Immutably his sovran will, the end
 Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd 80
 Gently, for our instruction, to impart
 Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd

Our knowing, as to highest Wisdom seem'd,
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate
 What may no less perhaps avail us known, 85
 How first began this heav'n which we behold
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
 Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
 All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd
 Embracing round this florid earth: what cause 90
 Mov'd the Creator, in his holy rest
 Through all eternity, so late to build
 In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon
 Absolv'd; if unforbid thou may'st unfold
 What we, not to explore the secrets ask 95
 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 105
 Silence; and sleep, list'ning to thee, will watch;
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.'

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
 And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild: 110
 'This also thy request, with caution ask'd,
 Obtain; though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve 115
 To glorify the Maker, and infer
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
 Thy hearing; such commission from above
 I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond abstain 120
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions hope
 Things not reveal'd, which th' invisible King,
 Only Omniscient, hath suppress'd in night,
 To none communicable in earth or heaven:
 Enough is left besides to search and know; 125
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temp'rance 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 return'd 135
 Victorious with his saints, th' Omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld

Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake:
 "At least our envious foe hath fail'd, who thought
 All like himself rebellious, by whose aid 140
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
 He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;
 Yet far the greater part have kept, I see, 145
 Their station; heav'n, yet populous, retains
 Number sufficient to possess her realms
 Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
 With ministeries due, and solemn rites:
 But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm 150
 Already done, to have dispeopled heaven,
 My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost; and in a moment will create
 Another world, out of one man a race 155
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here; till by degrees of merit rais'd,
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried;
 And earth be chang'd to heav'n, and heav'n to earth, 160
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 Meanwhile inhabit lax, ye pow'rs 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 165
 I send along; ride forth, and bid the deep
 Within appointed bounds be heav'n and earth;
 Boundless the deep, because I am who fill
 Infinitude; nor vacuous the space,
 Though I, uncircumscrib'd myself, retire, 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 th' Almighty, and to what he spake
 His Word, the filial Godhead, gave effect. 175
 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 declar'd th' Almighty's will;
 Glory they sung to the Most High, good will
 To future men, and in their dwellings peace:
 Glory to him, whose just avenging ire
 Had driven out th' ungodly from his sight 185
 And th' habitations of the just; to him
 Glory and praise, whose wisdom had ordain'd
 Good out of evil to create; instead
 Of spirits malign, a better race to bring
 Into their vacant room, and thence diffuse 190
 His good to worlds and ages infinite.
 'So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son

On his great expedition now appear'd,
 Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
 Of majesty divine: sapience and love 195
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone.
 About his chariot numberless were pour'd
 Cherub and Seraph, potentates and thrones,
 And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots wing'd
 From th' armoury of God; where stand of old 200
 Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodg'd
 Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
 Celestial equipage; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them spirit liv'd,
 Attendant on their Lord: heav'n open'd wide 205
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory, in his pow'rful Word
 And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.
 On heav'nly ground they stood; and from the shore 210
 They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
 Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
 Heav'n's highth, and with the center mix the pole. 215
 "Silence, ye troubled waves, and thou deep, peace,"
 Said then th' omnific Word, "your discord end!"
 Nor stay'd; but, on the wings of Cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn; 220
 For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
 Follow'd in bright procession, to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then stay'd the fervid wheels, and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses, prepar'd 225
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things:
 One foot be center'd, and the other turn'd
 Round through the vast profundity obscure,
 And said, "Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds, 230
 This by thy just circumference, O world!"
 Thus God the heav'n created, thus the earth,
 Matter unform'd and void: darkness profound
 Cover'd th' abyss; but on the watry calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread, 235
 And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth,
 Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purg'd
 The black, tartareous, cold, infernal dregs,
 Adverse to life: then founded, then conglob'd
 Like things to like; the rest to several place 240
 Disparted, and between spun out the air:
 And earth, self-balan'd, on her center hung.
 "Let there be light," said God; and forthwith light
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
 Sprung from the deep; and from her native east 245
 To journey through the aery gloom began,
 Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun

Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good;
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere 250
 Divided: light the day, and darkness night,
 He nam'd. Thus was the first day ev'n and morn:
 Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial quires, when orient light
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld; 255
 Birth-day of heav'n and earth; with joy and shout
 The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
 And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
 God and his works; Creator him they sung,
 Both when first 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, diffus'd 265
 In circuit to the uttermost convex
 Of this great round; partition firm and sure,
 The waters underneath from those above
 Dividing: for as earth, so he the world
 Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide 270
 Crystalline ocean, and the loud misrule
 Of Chaos far remov'd; lest fierce extremes
 Contiguous might distemper the whole frame:
 And heav'n he nam'd the firmament: so even
 And morning chorus sung the second day. 275
 'The earth was form'd, but in the womb as yet
 Of waters, embryo immature invol'd,
 Appear'd not: over all the face of earth
 Main ocean flow'd, not idle; but, with warm
 Prolific humour soft'ning all her globe, 280
 Fermented the great mother to conceive,
 Sate with genial moisture; when God said,
 "Be gather'd now, ye waters under heaven,
 Into one place, and let dry land appear."
 Immediately the mountains huge appear 285
 Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
 Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:
 So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
 Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
 Capacious bed of waters: thither they 290
 Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,
 As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
 For haste; such flight the great command impress'd
 On the swift floods; as armies at the call 295
 Of trumpets (for of armies thou hast heard)
 Troop to their standard; so the watry throng,
 Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
 If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
 Soft ebbing: nor withstood them rock or hill; 300
 But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
 With serpent error wand'ring, found their way,

And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
 Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
 All but within those banks, where rivers now 305
 Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
 The dry land, Earth; and the great receptacle
 Of congregated waters, he call'd Seas:
 And saw that it was good; and said, "Let th' earth
 Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed, 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, unadorn'd,
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad 315
 Her universal face with pleasant green;
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flow'r'd
 Opening their various colours, and made gay
 Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,
 Forth flourish'd thick the clust'ring vine, forth crept 320
 The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
 Embattled in her field, and th' humble shrub,
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit: last
 Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd 325
 Their blossoms: with high woods the fields were crown'd,
 With tufts the valleys, and each fountain-side;
 With borders long the rivers: that earth now
 Seem'd like to heav'n, a seat where gods might dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt 330
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
 Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
 None was; but from the earth a dewy mist
 Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each
 Plant of the field; which, ere it was in th' earth, 335
 God made, and every herb, before it grew
 On the green stem: God saw that it was good:
 So ev'n and morn recorded the third day.
 Again th' Almighty spake, "Let there be lights
 High in th' expanse of heaven, to divide 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. 345
 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 fram'd, unlightsome first, 355
 Though of ethereal mould: then form'd the moon
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,

And sow'd with stars the heav'n, thick as a field:
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd 360
 In the sun's orb, made porous to receive
 And drink the liquid light; firm to retain
 Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
 Repairing, in their golden urns draw light, 365
 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 th' horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
 His longitude through heav'ns high road; the gray
 Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him danc'd,
 Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon, 375
 But opposite in levell'd west was set,
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him; for other light she needed none
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
 Till night; then in the east her turn she shines, 380
 Revolv'd on heav'n's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appear'd
 Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorn'd
 With their bright luminaries that set and rose, 385
 Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.
 'And God said, " Let the waters generate
 Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:
 And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
 Display'd on the open firmament of heaven." 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 bless'd them, saying, 395
 "Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,
 And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill:
 And let the fowl be multiplied on th' earth."
 Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
 With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals 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, 405
 Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropt with gold;
 Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
 Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food
 In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal
 And 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
 Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
 And seems a moving land; and at his gills 415
 Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
 Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
 Their brood as numerous hatch, from th' egg that soon
 Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd
 Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge 420
 They summ'd their pens; and, soaring th' air sublime,
 With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud
 In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
 On cliffs and cedar-tops their eyries build:
 Part loosely wing the region, part more wise 425
 In common, rang'd in figure, wedge their way,
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their aery caravan, high over seas
 Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing
 Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane 430
 Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air
 Floats, as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes:
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
 Till ev'n; nor then the solemn nightingale 435
 Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays:
 Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bath'd
 Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck,
 Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit 440
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
 The mid aerial sky: others on ground
 Walk'd firm; the crested cock whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours, and th' other whose gay train
 Adorns him, colour'd with the florid hue 445
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
 With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
 Evening and morn solemniz'd the fifth day.
 'The sixth, and of creation last, arose
 With evening harps and matin; when God said, 450
 "Let th' earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
 Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of th' earth,
 Each in their kind." The earth obey'd and straight
 Opening her fertile womb, teem'd at a birth
 Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms, 455
 Limb'd and full grown: out of the ground up rose,
 As from his lair, the wild beast, where he wons
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake or den;
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd:
 The 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 calv'd; now half appear'd
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts, then springs, as broke from bonds, 465
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,
 The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole

Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks: the swift stag from under ground
 Bore up his branching head: scarce from his mould 470
 Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheav'd
 His vastness: fleec'd 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, 475
 Insect or worm: those wav'd their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
 In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride,
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
 These as a line their long dimension drew, 480
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
 Minims of nature; some of serpent-kind,
 Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
 The parsimonious enmet, provident 485
 Of future; in small room large heart enclos'd;
 Pattern of just equality perhaps
 Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty: swarming next appear'd
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone 490
 Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stor'd: the rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
 Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field, 495
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.
 'Now heav'n in all her glory shone, and roll'd
 Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand 500
 First wheel'd their course: earth in her rich attire
 Consummate lovely smil'd; air, water, earth,
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd,
 Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd:
 There wanted yet the master-work, the end 505
 Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
 And brute as other creatures, but endued
 With sanctity of reason, might erect
 His stature, and upright with front serene
 Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence 510
 Magnanimous to correspond with heaven,
 But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
 Descends; thither with heart, and voice, and eyes,
 Directed in devotion, to adore
 And worship God Supreme, who made him chief 515
 Of all his works: therefore th' Omnipotent
 Eternal Father (for where is not he
 Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake:
 "Let us make now man in our image, man
 In our similitude, and let them rule 520
 Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
 Beast of the field, and over all the earth,

And every creeping thing that creeps the ground."
 This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O man,
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd 525
 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 consórt
 Female, for race; then bless'd mankind, and said, 530
 "Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth,
 Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
 Over fish of the sea, and fowl of th' air,
 And every living thing that moves on th' earth."
 Wherever thus created, for no place 535
 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 all th' earth yields,
 Variety without end; but of the tree,
 Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,
 Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest;
 Death is the penalty impos'd; beware, 545
 And govern well thy appetite; lest sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant death."
 'Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
 View'd, and behold all was entirely good;
 So ev'n and morn accomplish'd the sixth day: 550
 Yet not till the Creator, from his work
 Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
 Up to the heav'n of heav'ns, his high abode;
 Thence to behold this new-created world,
 Th' addition of his empire, how it show'd 555
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
 Answering his great idea. Up he rode
 Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tun'd
 Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air 560
 Resounded (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st),
 The heav'ns and all the constellations rung,
 The planets in their station list'ning stood,
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
 "Open, ye everlasting gates!" they sung, 565
 "Open, ye heav'ns! your living doors; let in
 The great Creator from his work return'd
 Magnificent, his six days' work, a world;
 Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
 To visit oft the dwellings of just men, 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 open'd wide her blazing portals, led 575
 To God's eternal house direct the way;
 A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,

And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
 Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
 Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest 580
 Powder'd with stars. And now on earth the seventh
 Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
 Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
 Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
 Of heav'n's high-seated top, th' imperial throne 585
 Of Godhead fix'd for ever firm and sure,
 The Filial Pow'r arriv'd, and sat him down
 With his great Father: for he also went
 Invisible, yet stay'd (such privilege
 Hath Omnipresence), and the work ordain'd, 590
 Author and End of all things; and, from work
 Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the sev'nth day,
 As resting on that day from all his work,
 But not in silence holy kept: the harp
 Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe, 595
 And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
 All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
 Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
 Choral or unison: of incense clouds,
 Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount. 600
 Creation and the six days' acts they sung:
 "Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
 Thy pow'r! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
 Relate thee? Greater now in thy return
 Than from the giant angels: thee that day 605
 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 repell'd; while impiously they thought
 Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
 The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
 To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
 To manifest the more thy might: his evil 615
 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 destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
 Their seasons: among these the seat of men,
 Earth with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
 Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men, 625
 And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanc'd!
 Created in his image there to dwell
 And worship him; and in reward to rule
 Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
 And multiply a race of worshippers 630
 Holy and just: thrice happy, if they know
 Their happiness, and persevere upright!"

'So sung they, and the empyréan rung
 With hallelujahs: thus was sabbath kept. —
 And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd 635
 How first this world and face of things began,
 And what before thy memory was done
 From the beginning; that posterity,
 Inform'd by thee, might know: if else thou seek'st
 Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.' 640

B O O K V I I I .

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

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 his 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 fix'd to hear;
 Then, as new-wak'd, thus gratefully replied:
 'What thanks sufficient, or what recompense 5
 Equal, have I to render thee, divine
 Historian, who thus largely hast allay'd
 The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
 This friendly condescension to relate
 Things else by me unsearchable; now heard 10
 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, 15
 Of heav'n and earth consisting; and compute
 Their magnitudes; this earth a spot, a grain,
 An atom, with the firmament compar'd
 And all her number'd-stars, that seem to roll
 Spaces incomprehensible (for such 20
 Their distance argues, and their swift return
 Diurnal), merely to officiate/light
 Round this opacous earth, this punctual spot,
 One day and night; in all their vast survey
 Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire, 25
 How nature wise and frugal could commit
 Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
 So many nobler bodies to create,
 Greater so manifold, to this one use,

For aught appears, and on their orbs impose 30
 Such restless revolution day by day
 Repeated; while the sedentary earth,
 That better might with far less compass move,
 Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion, and receives, 35
 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 count'nance seem'd
 Ent'ring on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve 40
 Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
 To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom, 45
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touch'd by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd, 50
 Adam relating, she sole auditress;
 Her husband the relater she preferr'd
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute 55
 With conjugal caresses: from his lip
 Not words alone pleas'd her. O! when meet now
 Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd?
 With goddess-like demeanour forth she went,
 Not unattended; for on her, as queen, 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 propos'd,
 Benevolent and facile thus replied: 65
 'To ask or search, I blame thee not; for heaven
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
 This to attain, whether heav'n move or earth, 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 scann'd by them who ought
 Rather admire; or, if they list to try 75
 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, 85
 Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
 That bodies bright and greater should not serve
 The less not bright, nor heav'n such journeys run,
 Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
 The benefit. Consider first, that great 90
 Or bright infers not excellence: the earth
 Though, in comparison of heav'n, so small,
 Nor glist'ring, may of solid good contain
 More plenty than the sun that barren shines:
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect, 95
 But in the fruitful earth; there first receiv'd,
 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 heav'n's wide circuit, let it speak 100
 The Maker's high magnificence, who built
 So spacious, and his line stretch'd out so far,
 That man may know he dwells not in his own;
 An edifice too large for him to fill,
 Lodg'd in a small partition, and the rest 105
 Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
 The swiftness of those circles attribute,
 Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
 That to corporeal substances could add
 Speed almost spiritual: me thou think'st not slow, 110
 Who since the morning-hour set out from heaven
 Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
 In Eden; distance inexpressible
 By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
 Admitting motion in the heav'ns, to show 115
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd;
 Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
 To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
 God, to remove his ways from human sense,
 Plac'd heav'n from earth so far, that earthly sight, 120
 If it presume, might err in things too high,
 And no advantage gain. What if the sun
 Be center to the world; and other stars,
 By his attractive virtue and their own
 Incited, dance about him various rounds? 125
 Their wand'ring course now high, now low, then hid
 Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
 In six thou seest; and what if sev'nth to these
 The planet earth, so steadfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move? 130
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities;
 Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb suppos'd,
 Invisible else above all stars, the wheel 135
 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,
 Enlight'ning her by day as she by night
 This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
 Fields and inhabitants? her spots thou seest 145
 As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her soften'd soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,
 With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry,
 Communicating male and female light; 150
 Which two great sexes animate the world,
 Stor'd in each orb perhaps with some that live:
 For such vast room in nature unpossess'd
 By living soul, desert, and desolate,
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute 155
 Each orb a glimpse of light convey'd so far
 Down to this habitable, which returns
 Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
 But whether thus these things, or whether not;
 Whether the sun, predominant in heaven, 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, 165
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;
 Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
 Leave them to God above; him serve and fear!
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
 Wherever plac'd, let him dispose; joy thou 170
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve; heav'n is for thee too high
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
 Think only what concerns thee, and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there 175
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree:
 Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd
 Not of earth only, but of highest heaven.
 To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, replied;
 'How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure 180
 Intelligence of heav'n, angel serene!
 And freed from intricacies, taught to live
 The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts
 To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares, 185
 And not molest us; unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wand'ring thoughts, and notions vain.
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
 Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn, 190
 That not to know at large of thing remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom: what is more, is fume,

Or emptiness, or fond impertinence: 195
 And renders us, in things that most concern,
 Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise 200
 Of something not unseasonable to ask,
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deign'd.
 Thee I have heard relating what was done
 Ere my remembrance: now, hear me relate
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard; 205
 And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest
 How subtly to detain thee I devise;
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate;
 Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
 For, while I sit with thee, I seem in heaven, 210
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
 Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
 Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine 215
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.'

To whom thus Raphael answer'd heav'nly meek:
 'Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee 220
 Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd
 Inward and outward both, his image fair:
 Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace
 Attends thee; and each word, each motion, forms;
 Nor less think we in heav'n of thee on earth 225
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
 Gladly into the ways of God with man:
 For God, we see, hath honour'd thee, and set
 On man his equal love: say therefore on;
 For I that day was absent, as befel,
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure, 230
 Far on excursion toward the gates of hell;
 Squar'd in full legion (such command we had)
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
 Or enemy, while God was in his work;
 Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold, 235
 Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt;
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state, as Sovran King; and to inure
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut, 240
 The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong;
 But long ere our approaching heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
 Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light 245
 Ere sabbath-evening: so we had in charge.
 But thy relation now; for I attend,
 Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.'

So spake the Godlike pow'r, and thus our sire:

'For man to tell how human life began 250
 Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
 Desire with thee still longer to converse
 Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
 Soft on the flow'ry herb I found me laid,
 In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun 255
 Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
 Straight toward heav'n my wond'ring eyes I turn'd,
 And gaz'd a while the ample sky; till rais'd
 By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung,
 As thitherward endeavouring, and upright 260
 Stood on my feet: about me round I saw
 Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
 And liquid lapse of murm'ring streams: by these
 Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd or flew;
 Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd; 265
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
 Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
 Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause, 270
 Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
 My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
 Whate'er I saw. "Thou sun," said I, "fair light,
 And thou enlighten'd earth, so fresh and gay,
 Ye hills, and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains, 275
 And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
 Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here?
 Not of myself; by some great Maker then,
 In goodness and in pow'r pre-eminent:
 Tell me, how I may know him, how adore, 280
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,
 And feel that I am happier than I know."
 While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld
 This happy light; when, answer none return'd, 285
 On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
 Pensive I sat me down: there gentle sleep
 First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
 My drowsed sense, untroubled, though I thought
 I then was passing to my former state 290
 Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
 When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
 Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
 My fancy to believe I yet had being.
 And liv'd: one came, methought, of shape divine, 295
 And said, "Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
 First man, of men innumerable ordain'd
 First father! call'd by thee, I come thy guide
 To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd."
 So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd, 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, enclos'd with goodliest trees

Planted with walks and how'rs; that what I saw 305
 Of earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree,
 Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to th' eye
 Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
 To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream 310
 Had lively shadow'd: here had new begun
 My wand'ring, had not He, who was my guide
 Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
 Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
 In adoration at his feet I fell 315
 Submit: he rear'd me, and, "Whom thou sought'st I am,"
 Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest
 Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
 This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
 To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat: 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, 325
 Amid the garden by the tree of life,
 Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
 And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
 The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
 Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die, 330
 From that day mortal; and this happy state
 Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
 Of woe and sorrow." Sternly he pronounc'd
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice 335
 Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect
 Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd:
 "Not only these fair bounds, both all the earth
 To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
 Possess it, and all things that therein live, 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 345
 Of fish within their watry residence,
 Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
 Their element, to draw the thinner air."
 As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
 Approaching two and two; these cower'd low 350
 With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing.
 I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
 My sudden apprehension: but in these
 I found not what methought I wanted still; 355
 And to the heav'nly vision thus presum'd:
 "O, by what name, for thou above all these,
 Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
 Surpassest far my naming; how may I

Adore thee, Author of this universe, 360
 And all this good to man? for whose well-being
 So amply, and with hands so liberal,
 Thou hast provided all things: but with me
 I see not who partakes. In solitude
 What happiness, who can enjoy alone, 365
 Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?"
 Thus I presumptuous; and the vision bright,
 As with a smile more brighten'd, thus replied:
 "What call'st thou solitude? Is not the earth
 With various living creatures, and the air 370
 Replenish'd, 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." 375
 So spake the Universal Lord, and seem'd
 So ord'ring: I, with leave of speech implor'd,
 And humble deprecation, thus replied:
 "Let not my words offend thee, heav'nly Power,
 My Maker, be propitious while I speak. 380
 Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
 And these inferior far beneath me set?
 Among unequals what society
 Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?
 Which must be mutual, in proportion due 385
 Giv'n and receiv'd; but, in disparity
 The one intense, the other still remiss
 Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
 Tedious alike; of fellowship I speak
 Such as I seek, fit to participate 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 combin'd:
 Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl 395
 So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
 Worse then can man with beast, and least of all."
 ,Whereto th' Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd:
 "A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
 Thou to thyself propos'est, in the choice 400
 Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt taste
 No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
 What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
 Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
 Of happiness, or not? who am alone 405
 From all eternity; for none I know
 Second to me or like, equal much less.
 How have I then with whom to hold converse,
 Save with the creatures which I made, and those
 To me inferior, infinite descents 410
 Beneath what other creatures are to thee?"
 'He ceas'd; I lowly answer'd: "To attain
 The highth and depth of thy eternal ways
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!

Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee 415
 Is no deficiency found: not so is man,
 But in degree; the cause of his desire
 By conversation with his like to help,
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou
 Shouldst propagate, already infinite; 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 425
 Collateral love, and dearest amity.
 Thou in thy secrecy although alone,
 Best with thyself accompanied, seek'st not
 Social communication; yet so pleas'd,
 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 embolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
 Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd 435
 This answer from the gracious voice divine:
 "Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;
 And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
 Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself;
 Expressing well the spirit within thee free, 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; 445
 And no such company as then thou saw'st
 Intended thee; for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self, 450
 Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire."
 'He ended, or I heard no more: for now
 My earthly by his heav'nly overpower'd,
 Which it had long stood under, strain'd to th' highth
 In that celestial colloquy sublime, 455
 As with an object that excels the sense
 Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
 By nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
 Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell 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 open'd my left side, and took 465
 From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
 And life-blood streaming fresh: wide was the wound,
 But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd:
 The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands;

Under his forming hands a creature grew, 470
 Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,
 That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
 Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
 And in her looks; which from that time infus'd
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before, 475
 And into all things from her air inspir'd
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.
 She disappear'd, and left me dark; I wak'd
 To find her, or for ever to deplore
 Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure: 480
 When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
 Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
 With what all earth or heaven could bestow
 To make her amiable; on she came,
 Led by her heav'nly Maker, though unseen, 485
 And guided by his voice; nor uninform'd
 Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
 Grace was in all her steps, heav'n in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.
 I, overjoy'd, could not forbear aloud: 490
 "This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself 495
 Before me: Woman is her name; of man
 Extracted: for this cause he shall forego
 Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
 And they shall be one flesh, one heart, ore 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 woo'd, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but; retir'd,
 The more desirable; or, to say all, 505
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turn'd:
 I follow'd her; she what was honour knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approv'd
 My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower 510
 I led her blushing like the morn: all heaven,
 And happy constellations, on that hour
 Shed their selectest influence; the earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs 515
 Whisper'd 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, us'd or not, works in the mind no change, 525
 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 unmov'd; here only weak
 Against the charm of beauty's pow'rful glance.
 Or nature fail'd in me, and left some part
 Not proof enough such object to sustain; 535
 Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
 More than enough; at least on her bestow'd
 Too much of ornament, in outward show
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.
 For well I understand in the prime end 540
 Of nature her th' inferior, in the mind
 And inward faculties, which most excel;
 In outward also her resembling less
 His image who made both, and less expressing
 The character of that dominion given 545
 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 discountenanc'd, and like folly shows;
 Authority and reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made 555
 Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind, and nobleness, their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic plac'd.
 To whom the Angel with contracted brow: 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 565
 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 manag'd; of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shows: 575
 Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honour thou mayst love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind

Is propagated, seem such dear delight 580
 Beyond all other; think the same vouchsaf'd
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common and divulg'd; if aught
 Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
 The soul of man, or passion in him move. 585
 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 heav'nly love thou mayst ascend,
 Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,
 Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.
 To whom thus, half abash'd, Adam replied: 595
 'Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor aught
 In procreation common to all kinds
 (Though higher of the genial bed by far,
 And with mysterious reverence I deem),
 So much delights me, as those graceful acts, 600
 Those thousand decencies that daily flow
 From all her words and actions mix'd with love
 And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
 Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
 Harmony to behold in wedded pair 605
 More grateful than harmonious sound to th' ear.
 Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose
 What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd,
 Who meet with various objects, from the sense
 Variously representing; yet, still free, 610
 Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
 To love, thou blam'st me not; for love, thou say'st,
 Leads up to heav'n, is both the way and guide;
 Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:
 Love not the heav'nly spirits, and how their love 615
 Express they? by looks only? or do they mix
 Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?'
 To whom the Angel, with a smile that glow'd
 Celestial rosy red, love's proper hue,
 Answer'd: 'Let it suffice thee that thou know'st 620
 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; 625
 Easier than air with air, if spirits embrace,
 Total they mix, union of pure with pure
 Desiring; nor restrain'd conveyance need,
 As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
 But I can now no more; the parting sun 630
 Beyond the earth's green cape and verdant isles
 Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.
 Be strong, live happy, and love! but, first of all,
 Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep

His great command; take heed lest passion sway 635
 Thy judgement to do aught, which else free will
 Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,
 The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware!
 I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
 And all the blest: stand fast; to stand or fall 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
 Follow'd with benediction. 'Since to part, 645
 Go, heav'nly guest, ethereal messenger,
 Sent from whose sovran goodness I adore!
 Gentle to me and affable hath been
 Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
 With grateful memory: thou to mankind 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.

 B O O K IX.

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

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 us'd
 To sit indulgent, and with him partake
 Rural repast; permitting him the while

Venial discourse unblam'd. I now must change 5
 Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
 Disloyal on the part of man, revolt
 And disobedience: on the part of heaven
 Now alienated, distance and distaste,
 Anger and just rebuke, and judgement given, 10
 That thought into this world a world of woe,
 Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery
 Death's harbinger: sad task, yet argument
 Not less but more heroic than the wrath
 Of stern Achilles on his foe pursu'd 15
 Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
 Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd;
 Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
 Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son;
 If answerable style I can obtain 20
 Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
 Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
 And dictates to me slumb'ring; or inspires
 Easy my unpremeditated verse:
 Since first this subject for heroic song 25
 Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;
 Not sedulous by nature to indite
 Wars, hitherto the only argument
 Heroic deem'd; chief mast'ry to dissect
 With long and tedious havoc fabled knights 30
 In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
 Of patience and heroic martyrdom
 Unsung; or to describe races and games,
 Or tilting furniture, emblazon'd shields,
 Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds, 35
 Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
 At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast
 Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneshals;
 The skill of artifice or office mean,
 Not that which justly gives heroic name 40
 To person or to poem. Me, of these
 Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
 Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
 That name, unless an age too late, or cold
 Climate, or years, damp my intended wing 45
 Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
 Not hers who brings it nightly to my ear.
 The sun was sunk, and after him the star
 Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
 Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter 50
 'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
 Night's hemisphere had veil'd th' horizon round:
 When Satan, who late fled before the threats
 Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
 In meditated fraud and malice, bent 55
 On man's destruction, maugre what might hap
 Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
 By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
 From compassing the earth; cautious of day,

Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried 60
 His entrance, and forewarn'd the Cherubim
 That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,
 The space of sev'n continued nights he rode
 With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
 He circled; four times cross'd the ear of night 65
 From pole to pole, travérsing each colúre;
 On th' eighth return'd; and on the coast averse
 From entrance or Cherubic watch, by stealth
 Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
 Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change, 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, involv'd in rising mist; then sought 75
 Where to lie hid; sea he had search'd, and land
 From Eden over Pontus and the pool
 Mœotis, up beyond the river Ob;
 Downward as far antarctic: and in length,
 West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd 80
 At Darien; thence to the land where flows
 Ganges and Indus: thus the orb he roam'd
 With narrow search; and with inspection deep
 Consider'd every creature, which of all
 Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found 85
 The serpent subtlest beast of all the field.
 Him after long debate, irresolute
 Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
 Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
 To enter, and his dark suggestions hide 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 observ'd,
 Doubt might beget of diabolic power 95
 Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
 Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
 His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd:
 'O earth, how like to heav'n, if not preferr'd
 More justly, seat worthier of gods, as built 100
 With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
 For what God, after better, worse would build?
 Terrestrial heav'n, danc'd round by other heavens
 That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
 Light above light, for thee alone, as seems, 105
 In thee concentrating all their precious beams
 Of sacred influence! As God in heaven
 Is center, yet extends to all; so thou,
 Cent'ring, 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 gradnal life
 Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in man.
 With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,

If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange 115
 Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
 Now land, now sea, and shores with forest crown'd,
 Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
 Find place or refuge; and the more I see
 Pleasures about me, so much more I feel 120
 Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
 Of contraries: all good to me becomes
 Bane, and in heav'n much worse would be my state.
 But neither here seek I, no nor in heaven
 To dwell, unless by mast'ring heav'n's Supreme; 125
 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 link'd in weal or woe;
 In woe then, that destruction wide may range:
 To me shall be the glory sole among 135
 Th' infernal pow'rs, in one day to have marr'd
 What he, Almighty styl'd, 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
 Th' angelic name, and thinner left the throng
 Of his adorers: he, to be aveng'd,
 And to repair his numbers thus impair'd,
 Whether such virtue spent of old now fail'd 145
 More Angels to create, if they at least
 Are his created, or, to spite us more,
 Determin'd to advance into our room
 A creature form'd of earth, and him endow,
 Exalted from so base original, 150
 With heav'nly spoils, our spoils: what he decreed,
 He effected; man he made, and for him built
 Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
 Him lord pronounc'd; and, O indignity!
 Subjected to his service angel-wings, 155
 And flaming ministers to watch and tend
 Their earthly charge: of these the vigilance
 I dread, and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist
 Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
 In every bush and brake, where hap may find 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 constrain'd
 Into a beast; and, mix'd with bestial slime, 165
 This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
 That to the highth of deity aspir'd!
 But what will not ambition and revenge
 Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low

As high he soar'd; obnoxious, first or last, 170
 To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
 Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:
 Let it; I reckon not, so it light well aim'd,
 Since higher I fall short, on him who next
 Provokes my envy, this new favourite 175
 Of heav'n, this man of clay, son of despite,
 Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker rais'd
 From dust: spite then with spite is best repaid.
 So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
 Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on 180
 His midnight search, where soonest he might find
 The serpent: him fast sleeping soon he found
 In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd,
 His head the midst, well stor'd with subtle wiles:
 Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den, 185
 Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,
 Fearless unfeared he slept: in at his mouth
 The devil enter'd; and his brutal sense,
 In heart or head, possessing, soon inspir'd
 With act intelligential; but his sleep 190
 Disturb'd not, waiting close th' approach of morn.
 Now, when as sacred light began to dawn,
 In Eden on the humid flow'rs, that breath'd
 Their morning incense, when all things, that breathe,
 From th' earth's great altar send up silent praise 195
 To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
 With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
 And join'd their vocal worship to the quire
 Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
 The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs: 200
 Then commune, how that day they best may ply
 Their growing work: for much their work outgrew
 The hands' dispatch of two gard'ning so wide,
 And Eve first to her husband thus began:
 'Adam, well may we labour still to dress 205
 This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
 Our pleasant task enjoind; 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 215
 The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
 The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,
 In yonder spring of roses intermix'd
 With myrtle, find what to redress till noon:
 For, while so near each other thus all day 220
 Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
 Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
 Casual discourse draw on; which intermits
 Our day's work, brought to little, though begun

Early, and th' hour of supper comes unearn'd?' 225
 'To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd:
 'Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
 Compare above all living creatures dear!
 Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,
 How we might best fulfil the work which here 230
 God hath assign'd us; nor of me shalt pass
 Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
 In woman, than to study household good,
 And good works in her husband to promote.
 Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd 235
 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 join'd.
 These paths and bow'rs doubt not but our joint hands
 Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide 245
 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 sever'd from me; for thou know'st
 What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
 Envyng our happiness, and of his own
 Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame 255
 By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
 Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
 His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
 Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
 To other speedy aid might lend at need: 260
 Whether his first design be to withdraw
 Our fealty from God, or to disturb
 Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
 Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
 Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side 265
 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, 270
 As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
 With sweet austere composure thus replied:
 'Offspring of heav'n and earth, and all earth's lord!
 That such an enemy we have, who seeks
 Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn, 275
 And from the parting angel over-heard,
 As in a shady nook I stood behind,
 Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.
 But that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt

- To God or thee, because we have a foe 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 285
 Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
 Can by his fraud be shaken or seduc'd;
 Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
 Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?
 To whom with healing words Adam replied: 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
 Th' attempt itself, intended by our foe. 295
 For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
 The tempted with dishonour foul; suppos'd
 Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
 Against temptation: thou thyself with scorn
 And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong, 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 th' assault shall light. 305
 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 310
 More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
 Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
 Shame to be overcome or over-reach'd,
 Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
 Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel 315
 When I am present, and thy trial choose
 With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?
 So spake domestic Adam in his care
 And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
 Less attributed to her faith sincere. 320
 Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd:
 'If this be our condition, thus to dwell
 In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
 Subtle or violent, we not endued
 Single with like defence, wherever met; 325
 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 330
 Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
 By us? who rather double honour gain
 From his surmise prov'd false, find peace within,
 Favour from heav'n, our witness, from th' event.

And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd 335
 Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?
 Let us not then suspect our happy state
 Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,
 As not secure to single or combin'd.
 Frail is our happiness, if this be so, 340
 And Eden were no Eden, thus expos'd?
 To whom thus Adam fervently replied:
 'O woman, best are all things as the will
 Of God ordain'd them; his creating hand
 Nothing imperfect or deficient left 345
 Of all that he created, much less man,
 Or aught that might his happy state secure,
 Secure from outward force; within himself
 The danger lies, yet lies within his power:
 Against his will he can receive no harm. 350
 But God left free the will; for what obeys
 Reason, is free; and reason he made right,
 But bid her well he ware, and still erect;
 Lest, by some fair-appearing good surpris'd,
 She dictate false; and misinform the will 355
 To do what God expressly hath forbid.
 Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins,
 That I should mind thee oft, and mind thou me.
 Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;
 Since reason not impossibly may meet 360
 Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,
 And fall into deception unaware,
 Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.
 Seek not temptation then, which to avoid
 Were better, and most likely if from me 365
 Thou sever not: trial will come unsought.
 Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
 First thy obedience; th' other who can know,
 Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
 But, if thou think, trial unsought may find 370
 Us both securer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,
 Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
 Go in thy native innocence, rely
 On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
 For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.' 375
 So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
 Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied:
 'With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd
 Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
 Touch'd only; that our trial, when least sought, 380
 May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,
 The willinger I go, nor much expect
 A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
 So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.'
 Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand 385
 Soft she withdrew, and, like a wood-nymph light,
 Oread or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
 Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
 In gait surpass'd, and goddess-like deport,

Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd, 390
 But with such gard'ning-tools as art yet rude,
 Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or Angels brought.
 To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
 Likest she seem'd, Pomona when she fled
 Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime, 395
 Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
 Her long with ardent look his eye pursu'd
 Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
 Oft he to her his charge of quick return
 Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd 400
 To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
 And all things in best order to invite
 Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
 O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
 Of thy presum'd return! event perverse! 405
 Thou never from that hour in Paradise
 Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose;
 Such ambush, hid among sweet flow'rs and shades,
 Waited with hellish rancour imminent
 To intercept thy way, or send thee back 410
 Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss!
 For now, and since first break of dawn, the fiend,
 Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;
 And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
 The only two of mankind, but in them 415
 The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
 In bow'r and field he sought, where any tuft
 Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
 Their tendance, or plantation for delight;
 By fountain or by shady rivulet 420
 He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
 Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
 Of what so seldom chanc'd; when to his wish,
 Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
 Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood, 425
 Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
 About her glow'd, oft stooping to support
 Each flow'r of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
 Carnation, purple, azure, or speck'd with gold,
 Hung drooping unsustain'd; them she upstays 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 travérs'd
 Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm; 435
 Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
 Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
 Imborder'd on each bank, the hand of Eve:
 Spot more delicious than those gardens feign'd
 Or of reviv'd Adonis, or renown'd 440
 Alcinoüs, host of old Laërtes' son;
 Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
 Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
 Much he the place admir'd, the person more.

As one who long in populous city pent, 445
 Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
 Forth issuing on a summer's morn, to breathe
 Among the pleasant villages and farms
 Adjoin'd, from each thing met conceives delight,
 The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine, 450
 Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
 If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,
 What pleasing seem'd, for her now pleases more;
 She most, and in her look sums all delight:
 Such pleasure took the serpent to behold 455
 This flow'ry plat, the sweet recess of Eve
 Thus early, thus alone: her heav'nly form
 Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
 Her graceful innocence, her every air
 Of gesture, or least action, overaw'd 460
 His malice, and with rapine sweet bereav'd
 His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
 That space the evil one abstracted stood
 From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
 Stupidly good; of enmity disarm'd, 465
 Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:
 But the hot hell that always in him burns,
 Though in mid heav'n, soon ended his delight,
 And tortures him now more, the more he sees
 Of pleasure, not for him ordain'd; then soon 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 475
 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; 485
 Foe not formidable! exempt from wound,
 I not; so much hath hell debas'd, and pain
 Enfeebled me, to what I was in heaven.
 She fair, divinely fair, fit love for gods!
 Not terrible, though terror be in love 490
 And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
 Hate stronger, under show of love well feign'd;
 The way which to her ruin now I tend?
 So spake the enemy of mankind enclos'd
 In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve 495
 Address'd his way: not with indented wave,
 Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
 Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
 Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head

Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes; 500
 With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
 Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
 Floated redundant: pleasing was his shape
 And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
 Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd 505
 Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
 In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
 Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline was seen;
 He with Olympias; this with her who bore
 Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique 510
 At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
 To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
 As when a ship, by skilful steersman wrought
 Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
 Veers oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail: 515
 So varied he, and of his tortuous train
 Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
 To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound
 Of rustling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
 To such disport before her through the field, 520
 From every beast; more duteous at her call,
 Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
 He, bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
 But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
 His turret crest, and sleek enamell'd neck, 525
 Fawning; and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
 His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
 The eye of Eve, to mark his play; he, glad
 Of her attention gain'd, with serpent-tongue
 Organic, or impulse of vocal air, 530
 His fraudulent temptation thus began:
 'Wonder not, sovran mistress, if perhaps
 Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm
 Thy looks, the heav'n of mildness, with disdain,
 Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze 535
 Insatiate; I thus single; nor have fear'd
 Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
 Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
 Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
 By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore 540
 With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,
 Where universally admir'd; but here
 In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
 Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
 Half what in thee is fair, one man except, 545
 Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who should be seen
 A goddess among gods, ador'd and serv'd
 By angels numberless, thy daily train.'
 So glaz'd the tempter, and his proem tun'd:
 Into the heart of Eve his words made way, 550
 Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
 Not unamaz'd, she thus in answer spake:
 'What may this mean? language of man pronounc'd
 By tongue of brute, and human sense express'd?

The first, at least, of these I thought denied 555
 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 can'st thou speakable of mute, and how
 To me so friendly grown above the rest
 Of brutal kind, that daily are in sight? 565
 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 570
 obey'd:
 I was as first as other beasts that graze
 The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
 As was my food; nor aught but food discern'd
 Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
 Till, on a day roving the field, I chanc'd 575
 A goodly tree far distant to behold
 Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
 Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
 When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
 Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense 580
 Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
 Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
 Unsuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
 To satisfy the sharp desire I had
 Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd 585
 Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
 Pow'rful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
 Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
 About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
 For, high from ground, the branches would require 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 595
 I spar'd not; for, such pleasure till that hour,
 At feed or fountain, never had I found.
 Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
 Strange alteration in me, to degree
 Of reason in my inward pow'rs; and speech 600
 Wanted not long; though to this shape retain'd.
 Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
 I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
 Consider'd all things visible in heaven,
 Or earth, or middle; all things fair and good: 605
 But all that fair and good in thy divine
 Semblance, and in thy beauty's heav'nly ray,
 United I beheld; no fair to thine

Equivalent or second, which compell'd
 Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come 610
 And gaze, and worship thee of right declar'd
 Sovran of creatures, universal dame?

So talk'd the spirited sly snake; and Eve,
 Yet more amaz'd, unwary thus replied:

'Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt 615
 The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd;
 But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?

For many are the trees of God that grow
 In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
 To us; in such abundance lies our choice, 620
 As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
 Still hanging incorruptible, till men
 Grow up to their provision, and more hands
 Help to disburden nature of her birth'

To whom the wily adder, blithe and glad: 625

'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 roll'd
 In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
 To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
 Brightens his crest; as when a wand'ring fire,
 Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night 635
 Condenses, and the coid environs round,
 Kindled through agitation to a flame,

Which oft, they say, some evil spirit attends,
 Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
 Misleads th' amazed night-wand'rer from his way 640

To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
 There swallow'd up and lost, from succour far:
 So glister'd the dire snake, and into fraud
 Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
 Of prohibition, root of all our woe; 645

Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake:
 'Serpent, we might have spar'd our coming hither,
 Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
 The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;
 Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects. 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: 655

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

To whom thus Eve, yet sinless: 'Of the fruit
 Of each tree in the garden we may eat; 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 665
 To man, and indignation at his wrong,
 New part puts on; and as to passion mov'd,
 Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
 Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.
 As when of old some orator renown'd, 670
 In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
 Flourish'd, since mute, to some great cause address'd,
 Stood in himself collected; while each part,
 Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;
 Sometimes in highth began, as no delay 675
 Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:
 So standing, moving, or to highth up-grown,
 The tempter, all impassion'd, thus began:
 'O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving plant,
 Mother of science! now I feel thy power 680
 With me clear; not only to discern
 Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
 Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.
 Queen of this universe! do not believe
 Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die: 685
 How should you? by the fruit? it gives you life
 To knowledge; by the threat'ner? look on me,
 Me, who have touch'd and tasted; yet both live,
 And life more perfect have attain'd than fate 690
 Meant me, by vent'ring higher than my lot.
 Shall that be shut to man, which to the beast
 Is open? or will God incense his ire
 For such a petty trespass? and not praise
 Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
 Of death denounc'd; whatever thing death be, 695
 Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
 To happier life, knowledge of good and evil;
 Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
 Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
 God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just; 700
 Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
 Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
 Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe?
 Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
 His worshippers? He knows that in the day 705
 Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
 Yet are but dim, shall presently be then
 Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as gods,
 Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
 That ye shall be as gods, since I as man, 710
 Internal man, is but proportion meet;
 I, of brute, human; ye, of human, gods.
 So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
 Human, to put on gods; death to be wish'd,
 Though threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring, 715
 And what are gods, that man may not become
 As they, participating god-like food?
 The gods are first, and that advantage use

On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
 I question it; for this fair earth I see, 720
 Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind;
 Them, nothing: if they all things, who enclos'd
 Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
 'That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
 Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies 725
 Th' offence, that man should thus attain to know?
 What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
 Impart against his will, if all be his?
 Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
 In heav'nly breasts? These, these, and many more 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:
 Fix'd on the fruit she gaz'd, which to behold 735
 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 wak'd
 An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell 740
 So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
 Inclinal now grown to touch or taste,
 Solicited her longing eye; yet first
 Pausing a while, thus to herself she mus'd:
 'Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits, 745
 Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd;
 Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay
 Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
 The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
 Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use, 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: 755
 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 eat'n and lives,
 And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns, 765
 Irrational till then. For us alone
 Was death invented? or to us denied
 This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
 For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
 Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy 770
 The good befall'n him, author unsuspect,
 Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
 What fear I then? rather, what know to fear

Under this ignorance of good or evil,
 Of God or death, of law or penalty? 775
 Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
 Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
 Of virtue to make wise: what hinders then
 To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?'
 So saying, her rash hand in evil hour 780
 Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat!
 Earth felt the wound, and nature from her seat,
 Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
 That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
 The guilty serpent; and well might; for Eve, 785
 Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
 Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,
 In fruit she never tasted, whether true
 Or fancied so, through expectation high
 Of knowledge; nor was godhead from her thought. 790
 Greedily she engorg'd without restraint,
 And knew not eating death: satiate at length,
 And heighten'd as with wine, jocund and boon,
 Thus to herself she pleasingly began:
 'O sovran, virtuous, precious of all trees 795
 In Paradise! of operation blest
 To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
 And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
 Created; but henceforth my early care,
 Not without song, each morning, and due praise, 800
 Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
 Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;
 Till, dieted by thee, I grow mature
 In knowledge, as the gods, who all things know;
 Though others envy what they cannot give; 805
 For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
 Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,
 Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
 In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
 And giv'st access, though secret she retire. 810
 And I perhaps am secret: heav'n is high,
 High, and remote to see from thence distinct
 Each thing on earth; and other care perhaps
 May have diverted from continual watch
 Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies 815
 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? 825
 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! Confin'd 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 turn'd:
 But first low reverence done, as to the Power 835
 That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
 Into the plant sciential sap, deriv'd

From nectar, drink of gods. Adam the while
 Waiting desirous her return, had wove 840
 Of choicest flow'rs a garland, to adorn
 Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;
 As reapers oft are wont their harvest queen.

Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
 Solace in her return, so long delay'd:
 Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill, 845

Misgave him; he the falt'ring measure felt;
 And forth to meet her went, the way she took
 That morn when first they parted: by the tree
 Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,
 Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand 850

A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,
 New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.
 To him she hasted; in her face excuse
 Came prologue, and apology too prompt;
 Which, with bland words at will, she thus address'd: 855

'Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?
 Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd
 Thy presence; agony of love till now
 Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more

Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought, 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 865

To open eyes, and make them gods who taste;
 And hath been tasted such: the serpent wise,
 Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,
 Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become,
 Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but thenceforth 870

Endued with human voice and human sense,
 Reasoning to admiration; and with me
 Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I
 Have also tasted, and have also found

Th' effects to correspond; opener mine eyes 875
 Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
 And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
 Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.

For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
 Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon. 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.' 885
- Thus Eve with count'nance blithe her story told;
But in her cheek distemper flushing glow'd.
On th' other side, Adam, soon as he heard
The fatal trespass done by Eve, amaz'd,
Astonied stood and blank, while horror chill 890
Ran through his veins, and all his joints relax'd;
From his slack hand the garland wreath'd for Eve
Down dropt, and all the faded roses shed:
Speechless he stood and pale, till thus at length
First to himself he inward silence broke: 895
- 'O fairest of creation, last and best
Of all God's works, creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost, 900
Defac'd, deflower'd, and now to death devote!
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbid'n! Some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown, 905
And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die:
How can I live without thee! how forego
Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join'd,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn! 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 915
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.'
- So having said, as one from sad dismay
Recomforted, and after thoughts disturb'd
Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd: 920
- 'Bold deed thou hast presum'd, advent'rous Eve,
And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch. 925
But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God omnipotent, nor fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first 930
Made common, and unhallow'd, ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; he yet lives;
Lives, as thou said'st, and gains to live, as man,
Higher degree of life; inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain 935
Proportional ascent; which cannot be
But to be gods, or angels, demi-gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,

Though threat'ning, will in earnest so destroy
 Us his prime creatures, dignified so high, 940
 Set over all his works; which in our fall,
 For us created, needs with us must fail,
 Dependent made; so God shall uncreate,
 Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
 Not well conceiv'd of God, who, though his power 945
 Creation could repeat, yet would be loth
 Us to abolish, lest the adversary
 Triumph, and say: "Fickle their state whom God
 Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
 He ruin'd, now mankind; whom will he next?" 950
 Matter of scorn, not to be given the foe.
 However, I with thee have fix'd my lot,
 Certain to undergo like doom: if death
 Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
 So forcible within my heart I feel 955
 The bond of nature draw me to my own;
 My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
 Our state cannot be sever'd; we are one,
 One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.
 So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied: 960
 'O glorious trial of exceeding love,
 Illustrious evidence, example high!
 Engaging me to emulate; but, short
 Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
 Adam? from whose dear side I boast me sprung, 965
 And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
 One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
 This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
 Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
 Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear, 970
 To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
 If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;
 Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
 Direct, or by occasion,) hath presented
 This happy trial of thy love, which else 975
 So eminently never had been known.
 Were it I thought death menac'd would ensue
 This my attempt, I would sustain alone
 The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
 Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact 980
 Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assur'd
 Remarkably so late of thy so true,
 So faithful, love unequal'd; but I feel
 Far otherwise th' event; not death, but life
 Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys, 985
 Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
 Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
 On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
 And fear of death deliver to the winds.'
 So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy 990
 Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love
 Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
 Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.

In recompense (for such compliance had
 Such recompense best merits) from the bough 995
 She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
 With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
 Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
 But fondly overcome with female charm.
 Earth trembled from her entrails, as again 1000
 In pangs; and nature gave a second groan;
 Sky lour'd; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
 Wept at completing of the mortal sin
 Original: while Adam took no thought,
 Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate 1005
 Her former trespass fear'd, the more to sooth
 Him with her lov'd society; that now,
 As with new wine intoxicated both,
 They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
 Divinity within them breeding wings, 1010
 Wherewith to scorn the earth: but that false fruit
 Far other operation first display'd,
 Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
 Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
 As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn: 1015
 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 purvey'd.
 Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
 From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
 True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
 In things to us forbidd'n, it might be wish'd, 1025
 For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
 But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
 As meet is, after such delicious fare;
 For never did thy beauty, since the day
 I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd 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 1035
 Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
 Her hand he seiz'd; and to a shady bank,
 Thick over-head with verdant roof imbow'r'd,
 He led her nothing loth; flow'rs 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
 Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play. 1045
 Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
 That with exhilarating vapour bland
 About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers

Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep,
 Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscions dreams 1050
 Encumber'd, now had left them; up they rose
 As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,
 Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
 How darken'd; innocence; that as a veil
 Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone; 1055
 Just confidence, and native righteousnes,
 And honour, from about them, naked left
 To guilty shame; he cover'd, but his robe
 Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
 Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap 1060
 Of Philistéan Dalilah, and wak'd
 Shorn of his strength; they destitute and bare
 Of all their virtue: silent, and in face
 Confounded, long they sat; as stricken mute:
 Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd, 1065
 At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd:
 'O Eve, in evil hour thou didst give ear
 To that false worm, of whomsoever taught
 To counterfeit man's voice; true in our fall,
 False in our promis'd rising: since our eyes 1070
 Open'd we find indeed, and find we know
 Both good and evil; good lost, and evil got;
 Bad fruit of knowledge, if this be to know;
 Which leaves us naked thus, of honour void,
 Of innocence, of faith, of purity, 1075
 Our wonted ornaments now soil'd and stain'd,
 And in our faces evident the signs
 Of foul concúpiscence; whence evil store;
 Ev'n shame, the last of evils; of the first
 Be sure then. How shall I behold the face 1080
 Henceforth of God or Angel, erst with joy
 And rapture so oft beheld? Those heav'nly shapes
 Will dazzle now this earthly with their blaze
 Insufferably bright. O! might I here
 In solitude live savage; in some glade 1085
 Obscur'd, where highest woods, impenetrable
 To star or sun-light, spread their umbrage broad
 And brown as evening: cover me, ye pines!
 Ye cedars, with innumerable boughs
 Hide me, where I may never see them more! 1090
 But let us now, as in bad plight, devise
 What best may for the present serve to hide
 The parts of each from other, that seem most
 To shame obnoxious, and unseemliest seen;
 Some tree, whose broad smooth leaves together sew'd, 1095
 And girded on our loins, may cover round
 Those middle parts; that this new-comer, shame,
 There sit not, and reproach us as unclean.'
 So counsell'd he, and both together went
 Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose 1100
 The fig-tree, not that kind for fruit renown'd,
 But such as at this day, to Indians known,
 In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms

Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
 The bended twigs take root, and daughters grow 1105
 About the mother-tree, a pillar'd shade
 High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
 There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
 Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
 At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: those leaves 1110
 They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe;
 And, with what skill they had, together sew'd,
 To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
 Their guilt and dreaded shame! O, how unlike
 To that first naked glory! Such of late 1115
 Columbus found th' American, so girt
 With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild
 Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
 Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part
 Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind, 1120
 They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
 Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
 Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
 Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
 Their inward state of mind, calm region once 1125
 And full of peace, now tost and turbulent:
 For understanding rul'd not, and the will
 Heard not her lore; both in subjection now
 To sensual appetite, who from beneath
 Usurping over sovran reason claim'd 1130
 Superior sway; from thus distemper'd breast,
 Adam, estrang'd in look and alter'd style,
 Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd:
 'Would thou hadst hearken'd to my words, and staid
 With me, as I besought thee, when that strange 1135
 Desire of wand'ring, this unhappy morn,
 I know not whence possess'd thee; we had then
 Remain'd still happy; not as now, despoil'd
 Of all our good; sham'd, naked, miserable!
 Let none henceforth seek needless cause to approve 1140
 'The faith they owe; when earnestly they seek
 Such proof, conclude, they then begin to fail.'
 To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve:
 'What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam severe!
 Imput'st thou that to my default, or will 1145
 Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
 But might as ill have happen'd, thou being by,
 Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
 Or here th' attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
 Fraud in the serpent, speaking as he spake; 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, 1155
 Command me absolutely not to go,
 Going into such danger, as thou said'st?
 Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;

Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
 Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent, 1160
 Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.
 To whom, then first incens'd, Adam replied:
 'Is this the love, is this the recompense
 Of mine to thee, ingrateful Eve! express'd
 Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I; 1165
 Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliss,
 Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
 And am I now upbraided as the cause
 Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,
 It seems, in thy restraint: what could I more? 1170
 I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
 The danger, and the lurking enemy
 That lay in wait; beyond this, had been force;
 And force upon free will hath here no place.
 But confidence then bore thee on; secure 1175
 Either to meet no danger, or to find
 Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
 I also err'd, in overmuch admiring
 What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
 No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue 1180
 That error now, which is become my crime,
 And thou th' accuser. Thus it shall befall
 Him who, to worth in women overtrusting,
 Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
 And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue, 1185
 She first his weak indulgence will accuse.'
 Thus they in mutual accusation spent
 The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning;
 And of their vain contést appear'd no end.

 BOOK X.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man's transgression known, the guardian-Angels forsake Paradise, and return up to heaven to approve their vigilance, and are approved; God declaring that the entrance of Satan could not be by them prevented. He sends his Son to judge the transgressors; who descends and gives sentence accordingly; then in pity clothes them both, and reascends. Sin and Death, sitting till then at the gates of hell, by wondrous sympathy feeling the success of Satan in this new world, and the sin by man there committed, resolve to sit no longer confined in hell, but to follow Satan their sire up to the place of man: to make the way easier from hell to this world to and fro, they pave a broad high-way or bridge over Chaos, according to the track that Satan first made; then, preparing for earth, they meet him, proud of his success, returning to hell; their mutual gratulation. Satan arrives at Pandemonium, in full assembly relates with boasting his success against man; instead of applause is entertained with a general hiss by all his audience, transformed with himself also

suddenly into serpents, according to his doom given in Paradise; then, deluded with a show of the forbidden tree springing up before them, they, greedily reaching to take of the fruit, chew dust and bitter ashes. The proceedings of Sin and Death; God foretels the final victory of his Son over them, and the renewing of all things; but, for the present, commands his Angels to make several 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 heav'n; for what can 'scape the eye 5
 Of God all-seeing; or deceive his heart
 Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just,
 Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind
 Of man, with strength entire, and free-will arm'd
 Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd 10
 Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend.
 For still they knew, and ought to have still remember'd,
 The high injunction, not to taste that fruit,
 Whoever tempted; which they not obeying,
 Incurr'd (what could they less?) the penalty; 15
 And, manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall.
 Up into heav'n from Paradise in haste
 Th' angelic guards ascended, mute and sad,
 For man; for of his state by this they knew,
 Much wond'ring how the subtle fiend had stol'n 20
 Entrance unseen. Soon as th' unwelcome news
 From earth arriv'd at heaven-gate; displeas'd
 All were who heard; dim sadness did not spare
 That time celestial visages, yet, mix'd
 With pity, violated not their bliss. 25
 About the new-arriv'd in multitudes
 Th' ethereal people ran, to hear and know
 How all befel: they towards the throne supreme,
 Accountable, made haste, to make appear,
 With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance, 30
 And easily approv'd; when the Most High
 Eternal Father, from his secret cloud,
 Amidst in thunder utter'd thus his voice:
 'Assembled Angels, and ye Pow'rs return'd
 From unsuccessful charge; be not dismay'd, 35
 Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
 Which your sincerest care could not prevent;
 Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
 When first this tempter cross'd the gulf from hell.
 I told ye then he should prevail; and speed 40
 On his bad errand; man should be seduc'd,

And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
 Against his Maker; no decree of mine
 Concurring to necessitate his fall,
 Or touch with lightest moment of impúlse 45
 His free-will, to her own inclining left
 In even scale. But fall'n he is; and now
 What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
 On his transgression, death denounc'd that day?
 Which he presumes already vain and void, 50
 Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
 By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
 Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end.
 Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
 But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee 55
 Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd
 All judgement, whether in heav'n, or earth, or hell.
 Easy it may be seen that I intend
 Mercy colleague with justice, sending thee
 Man's friend, his Mediator, his design'd 60
 Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
 And destin'd man himself to judge man fall'n.
 So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright
 Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
 Blaz'd forth unclouded deity: he full 65
 Resplendent all his Father manifest
 Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild:
 'Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
 Mine, both in heav'n-and earth, to do thy will
 Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son belov'd, 70
 Mayst ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
 On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
 Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,
 When time shall be; for so I undertook
 Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain 75
 Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
 On me deriv'd; yet I shall temper so
 Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
 Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
 Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none 80
 Are to behold the judgement, but the judg'd,
 Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
 Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
 Conviction to the serpent none belongs.'
 Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose 85
 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 wing'd.
 Now was the sun in western cadence low
 From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
 To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in
 The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool, 95
 Came the mild judge, and intercessor both,

To sentence man: the voice of God they heard
 Now walking in the garden, by soft winds
 Brought to their ears, while day declin'd; they heard,
 And from his presence hid themselves among 100
 The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God,
 Approaching, thus to Adam call'd aloud:

'Where art thou, Adam, wont with joy to meet
 My coming seen far off? I miss thee here,
 Not pleas'd, thus entertain'd with solitude, 105
 Where obvious duty ere while appear'd unsought:
 Or come I less conspicuous, or what change
 Absents thee, or what chance detains? Come forth!'

He came; and with him Eve, more loth, though first
 To offend; discount'nanc'd both, and discompos'd; 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 falt'ring long, thus answer'd brief: 115

'I heard thee in the gard'n, and of thy voice
 Afraid, being naked, hid myself.' To whom
 The gracious Judge without revile replied:

'My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear'd,
 But still rejoic'd; 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 heav'n! in evil strait this day I stand 125

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
 Devolv'd; though, should I hold my peace, yet thou 135
 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 seem'd to justify the deed;
 She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.'

To whom the sovran Presence thus replied:
 'Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey 145
 Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
 Superior, or but equal, that to her
 Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
 Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
 And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd 150
 Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd

She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
 Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
 Were such, as under government well seem'd;
 Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part 155
 And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.'

So having said, he thus to Eve in few:
 'Say, woman, what is this which thou hast done?
 To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
 Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge 160
 Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd replied:
 'The serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat.'

Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
 To judgement he proceeded on th' accus'd
 Serpent, though brute; unable to transfer 165
 The guilt on him who made him instrument
 Of mischief, and polluted from the end
 Of his creation: justly then accurs'd,
 As vitiated in nature: more to know
 Concern'd not man (since he no further knew), 170
 Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last
 To Satan first in sin his doom applied,
 Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:
 And on the serpent thus his curse let fall:

'Because thou hast done this, thou art accurs'd 175
 Above all cattle, each beast of the field;
 Upon thy belly groveling thou shalt go,
 And dust shalt eat all the days of thy life.
 Between thee and the woman I will put
 Enmity, and between thine and her seed; 180
 Her seed shall bruise thy head, thou bruise his heel.'

So spake this oracle, then verified
 When Jesus, Son of Mary, second Eve,
 Saw Satan fall, like lightning, down from heaven,
 Prince of the air; then, rising from his grave, 185
 Spoil'd principalities and pow'rs, triumph'd
 In open show; and, with ascension bright,
 Captivity led captive through the air,
 The realm itself of Satan, long usurp'd;
 Whom he shall tread at last under our feet; 190
 Ev'n he, who now foretold his fatal bruise;
 And to the woman thus his sentence turn'd:

'Thy sorrow I will greatly multiply
 By thy conception; children thou shalt bring
 In sorrow forth; and to thy husband's will 195
 Thine shall submit; he over thee shall rule.'

On Adam last thus judgement he pronounc'd:
 'Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
 And eaten of the tree concerning which
 I charg'd thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof: 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 of th' herb of the field;
 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, 205
 Till thou return unto the ground; for thou

Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.'

So judg'd he man, both judge and saviour sent;
And th' instant stroke of death, denounc'd that day, 210
Remov'd far off; then, pitying how they stood
Before him naked to the air, that now
Must suffer change, distain'd not to begin
Thenceforth the form of servant to assume;
As when he wash'd his servants' feet; so now 215
As father of his family, he clad
Their nakedness with skins of beasts, or slain,
Or as the snake with youthful coat repaid;
And thought not much to clothe his enemies:
Nor he their outward only with the skins 220
Of beasts, but inward nakedness, much more
Opprobrious, with his robe of righteousness,
Arraying, cover'd from his Father's sight.
To him with swift ascent he up return'd,
Into his blissful bosom reassum'd 225
In glory, as of old; to him appeas'd,
All, though all-knowing, what had pass'd with man
Recounted, mixing intercession sweet.

Meanwhile, ere thus was sinn'd and judg'd on earth,
Within the gates of hell sat Sin and Death, 230
In counterview within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the fiend pass'd through,
Sin opening; who thus now to Death began:

'O son, why sit we here each other viewing 235
Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be
But that success attends him; if mishap,
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven 240
By his avengers, since no place like this
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion giv'n me large
Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on, 245
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
Pow'ful at greatest distance to unite
With secret amity things of like kind,
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
Inseparable, must with me along: 250
For Death from Sin no pow'r can separate.
But, lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious; let us try
Advent'rous work, yet to thy pow'r and mine 255
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from hell to that new world,
Where Satan now prevails; a monument
Of merit high to all th' infernal host,
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse, 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 meager shadow answer'd soon:
'Go, whither fate, and inclination strong, 265
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 enterprisest 270
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.'

So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field, 275
Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcasses design'd
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:

So scented the grim feature, and upturn'd
His nostril wide into the murky air; 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 pow'r (their pow'r was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what they met 285
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea

Tost up and down, together crowded drove,
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of hell:
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive 290
Mountains of ice, that stop th' imagin'd way

Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident smote, and fix'd as firm 295
As Delos, floating once; the rest his look

Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
And with asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of hell the gather'd beach
They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on 300

Over the foaming deep high-arch'd, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now fenceless world,
Forfeit to death; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to hell. 305

So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
Came to the sea; and, over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd, 310

And scourg'd with many a stroke th' indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,
Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
Of Satan to the self-same place where he 315
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 empyréan heaven,
 And of this world; and, on the left hand, hell
 With long reach interpos'd; three several ways
 In sight, to each of these three places led.
 And now their way to earth they had descried, 325
 To Paradise first tending; when, behold!
 Satan, in likeness of an angel bright,
 Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
 His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
 Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear 330
 Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
 He, after Eve seduc'd, unminded slunk
 Into the wood fast by; and, changing shape,
 To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
 By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded 335
 Upon her husband; saw their shame that sought
 Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
 The Son of God to judge them, terrified
 He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun
 The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath 340
 Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd
 By night, and list'ning where the hapless pair
 Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
 Thence gather'd his own doom; which understood,
 Not instant, but of future time, with joy 345
 And tidings fraught, to hell he now return'd;
 And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
 Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
 Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
 Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight 350
 Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
 Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
 Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke:
 'O parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
 Thy trophies! which thou view'st as not thine own; 355
 Thou art their author, and prime architect:
 For I no sooner in my heart divin'd
 (My heart, which by a secret harmony
 Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet),
 That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks 360
 Now also evidence, but straight I felt,
 Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt
 That I must after thee, with this thy son;
 Such fatal consequence unites us three!
 Hell could no longer hold us in our bounds, 365
 Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
 Detain from following thy illustrious track.
 Thou hast achiev'd our liberty, confin'd
 Within hell-gates t'ill now; thou us impower'd
 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 gain'd
 With odds what war hath lost, and fully aveng'd
 Our foil in heav'n; here thou shalt monarch reign, 375
 There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
 As battle hath adjudg'd; from this new world
 Retiring, by his own doom alienated;
 And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
 Of all things, parted by th' empyreal bounds, 380
 His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;
 Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.
 Whom thus the prince of darkness answer'd glad:
 'Fair daughter, and thou son and grandchild both;
 High proof ye now have giv'n to be the race 385
 Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
 Antagonist of heav'n's Almighty King),
 Amply have merited of me, of all
 Th' infernal empire, that so near heav'n's door
 Triumphal with triumphal act have met, 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 pow'rs, them to acquaint 395
 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 declar'd;
 Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
 My substitutes I send ye, and create
 Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
 Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now 405
 My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
 Through Sin to Death expos'd by my exploit.
 If your joint pow'r prevail, th' affairs of hell
 No detriment need fear; go, and be strong.'
 So saying, he dismiss'd them; they with speed 410
 Their course through thickest constellations held,
 Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look'd wan,
 And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
 Then suffer'd. Th' other way Satan went down
 The causey to hell-gate: on either side 415
 Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaim'd,
 And with rebounding surge the bars assail'd,
 That scorn'd his indignation: through the gate,
 Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass'd,
 And all about found desolate; for those, 420
 Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
 Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
 Far to th' inland retir'd, about the walls
 Of Pandemonium, city and proud seat
 Of Lucifer; so by allusion call'd 425
 Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd;

There kept their watch the legions, while the grand
 In council sat, solicitous what chance
 Might intercept their emperor sent; so he
 Departing gave command, and they observ'd. 430
 As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
 Ay 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 435
 To Taurus or Casbeen: so these, the late
 Heav'n-banish'd host, left desert utmost hell
 Many a dark league, redac'd 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 unmark'd,
 In show plebeian angel militant
 Of lowest order, pass'd; and from the door
 Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
 Ascended his high throne; which, under state 445
 Of richest texture spread, at th' upper end
 Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down a while
 He sat, and round about him saw unseen;
 At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
 And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter; clad 450
 With what permissive glory since his fall
 Was left him, or false glitter: all amaz'd
 At that so sudden blaze, the Stygian throng
 Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
 Their mighty chief return'd; loud was th' acclaim: 455
 Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting peers,
 Rais'd from their dark divan, and with like joy
 Congratulant approach'd him; who with hand
 Silence and with these words attention, won:
 'Thrones, dominations, principdoms, virtues, powers; 460
 For in possession such, not only of right,
 I call ye, and declare ye now; return'd
 Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
 Triumphant out of this infernal pit
 Abominable, accurs'd, the house of woe, 465
 And dungeon of our tyrant: now possess,
 As lords, a spacious world, to our native heaven
 Little inferior, by my adventure hard
 With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell
 What I have done, what suffer'd; with what pain 470
 Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep
 Of horrible confusion; over which
 By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd,
 To expedite your glorious march; but I
 Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride 475
 Th' untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb
 Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;
 That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely oppos'd
 My journey strange, with clamorous uproar
 Protesting fate supreme; thence how I found 480
 The new-created world, which fame in heaven

Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
 Of absolute perfection! therein man
 Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile
 Made happy: him by fraud I have seduc'd 485
 From his Creator; and, the more to increase
 Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat
 Offended, worth your laughter! hath giv'n up
 Both his belov'd man and all his world,
 To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us, 490
 Without our hazard, labour, or alarm,
 To range in, and to dwell, and over man
 To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
 True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather
 Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape 495
 Man I deceiv'd: that which to me belongs,
 Is enmity, which he will put between
 Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
 His seed, when is not set, shall bruise my head:
 A world who would not purchase with a bruise, 500
 Or much more grievous pain? Ye have th' account
 Of my performance: what remains, ye gods,
 But up, and enter now into full bliss?'
 So having said, a while he stood, expecting
 Their universal shout, and high applause, 505
 To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
 On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
 A dismal universal hiss, the sound
 Of public scorn; he wonder'd, but not long
 Had leisure, wond'ring at himself now more; 510
 His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;
 His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining
 Each other, till supplanted down he fell
 A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
 Reluctant, but in vain; a greater Power 515
 Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd,
 According to his doom. He would have spoke,
 But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
 To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd
 Alike, to serpents all, as accessories 520
 To his bold riot: dreadful was the din
 Of hissing through the hall, thick-swarming now
 With complicated monsters head and tail,
 Scorpion and asp, and amphisbaena dire,
 Cerastes horn'd, hydrus, and elops drear, 525
 And dipsas (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
 Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
 Ophiusa); but still greatest he the midst,
 Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
 Ingender'd in the Pythian vale or slime, 530
 Huge Python, and his pow'r no less he seem'd
 Above the rest still to retain; they all
 Him follow'd, issuing forth to th' open field,
 Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
 Heav'n-fall'n, in station stood or just array; 535
 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 the spear and shield; down they as fast;
 And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
 Catch'd, by contagion; like in punishment,
 As in their crime. Thus was th' applause they meant 545
 Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame
 Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood
 A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,
 His will who reigns above, to aggravate
 Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that 550
 Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve
 Us'd by the tempter: on that prospect strange
 Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining
 For one forbidden tree a multitude
 Now ris'n, to work them further woe or shame; 555
 Yet, parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,
 Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;
 But on they roll'd in heaps, and, up the trees
 Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks
 That curl'd Megaera: greedily they pluck'd 560
 The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew
 Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd;
 This more delusive, not the touch, but taste
 Deceiv'd; they fondly thinking to allay
 Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit 565
 Chew'd bitter ashes, which th' offended taste
 With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,
 Hunger and thirst constraining; drugg'd as oft,
 With hatefullest disrelish writh'd their jaws,
 With soot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell 570
 Into the same illusion, not as man
 Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they plagu'd
 And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,
 Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd;
 Yearly enjoin'd, some say, to undergo 575
 This annual humbling certain number'd days,
 To dash their pride, and joy, for man seduc'd.
 However, some tradition they dispers'd
 Among the heathen of their purchase got,
 And fabled how the serpent, whom they call'd 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 585
 Too soon arriv'd; Sin, there in pow'r before
 Once actual; now in body, and to dwell
 Habitual habitant; behind her Death,
 Close following, pace for pace, not mounted yet
 On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began: 590
 'Second of Satan sprung, all-conqu'ring Death!

What think'st thou of our empire now, though earn'd
 With travel difficult, not better far
 Than still at hell's dark threshold to have sat watch,
 Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half-starv'd?' 595

Whom thus the sin-born monster answer'd soon:
 'To me, who with eternal famine pine,
 Alike is hell, or Paradise, or heaven;
 There best, where most with ravine I may meet;
 Which here, though plenteous, all too little seems 600
 To stuff this maw, this vast unhide-bound corpse.'

To whom th' incestuous mother thus replied:
 'Thou therefore on these herbs, and fruits, and flowers,
 Feed first; on each beast next, and fish, and fowl;
 No homely morsels; and whatever thing 605
 The scythe of Time mows down, devour unspar'd;
 Till I, in man residing, through the race,
 His thoughts, his looks, words, actions, all infect;
 And season him thy last and sweetest prey.'

This said, they both betook them several ways, 610
 Both to destroy, or unimmortal make
 All kinds, and for destruction to mature
 Sooner or later; which th' Almighty seeing,
 From his transcendent seat the saints among,
 To those bright orders utter'd thus his voice: 615

'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 place so heav'nly; and, conniving, seem
 To gratify my scornful enemies, 625
 That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
 Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
 At random yielded up to their misrule;

And know not that I call'd, and drew them thither,
 My hell-hounds, to lick up the draff and filth 630
 Which man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
 On what was pure; till cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst
 With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
 Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
 Both Sin, and Death, and yawning grave, at last, 635
 Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of hell
 For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.

Then heav'n and earth renew'd shall be made pure
 To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:
 Till then, the course pronounc'd on both precedes.' 640

He ended, and the heav'nly audience loud
 Sung hallelujah, as the sound of seas,
 Through multitude that sung: 'Just are thy ways,
 Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;
 Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son, 645
 Destin'd Restorer of mankind, by whom

New heav'n and earth shall to the ages rise,
 Or down from heav'n descend.' Such was their song;
 While the Creator calling forth by name
 His mighty angels, gave them several charge, 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 655
 Solstitial summer's heat. To the blank moon
 Her office they prescrib'd; to th'other five
 Their planetary motions, and aspects,
 In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite, 660
 Of noxious efficacy, and when to join
 In synod unbenign; and taught the fix'd
 Their influence malignant when to shower,
 Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,
 Should prove tempestuous: to the winds they set
 Their corners, when with bluster to confound 665
 Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
 With terror through the dark aëreal hall.
 Some say he bid his angels turn askance
 The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,
 From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd 670
 Oblique the centric globe; some say, the sun
 Was bid turn reins from th' equinoctial road
 Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
 Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
 Up to the tropic Crab: thence down amain 675
 By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
 As deep as Capricorn; to bring in change
 Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring
 Perpetual smil'd on earth with vernant flowers,
 Equal in days and nights, except to those 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 th' horizon and not known
 Or east or west; which had forbid the snow 685
 From cold Estotiland, and south as far
 Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit
 The sun, as from Thyéstean banquet, turn'd
 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 heav'ns, though slow, produc'd
 Like change on sea and land; sideral blast,
 Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
 Corrupt and pestilent: now, from the north 695
 Of Noubega, and the Samoed shore,
 Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm'd with ice,
 And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
 Boreas, and Caecias, and Argestes loud,
 And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn; 700
 With adverse blast upturns them from the south

Notus, and Afer black with thund'rous clouds
 From Serrationa; thwart of these, as fierce,
 Forth rush the Lévant and the Ponent winds,
 Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise, 705
 Sirocco and Libecchio. Thus began
 Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
 Daughter of Sin, among th' irrational
 Death introduc'd, through fierce antipathy:
 Beast now with beast 'gan war, and fowl with fowl, 710
 And fish with fish; to grace the herb all leaving,
 Devour'd each other; nor stood much in awe
 Of man, but fled him; or, with count'nance grim,
 Glar'd on him passing. These were from without
 The growing miseries, which Adam saw 715
 Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
 To sorrow abandon'd, but worse felt within;
 And, in a troubled sea of passion tost,
 Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint:
 'O miserable of happy! Is this the end 720
 Of this new glorious world, and me so late
 The glory of that glory, who now become
 Accurs'd, of blessed? hide me from the face
 Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
 Of happiness! Yet well, if here would end 725
 The misery; I deserv'd it, and would bear
 My own deservings;—but this will not serve:
 All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
 Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard
 Delightfully, *Increase and multiply*; 730
 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, 735
 For this we may thank Adam!" but his thanks
 Shall be the execration: so, besides
 Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
 Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;
 On me, as on their natural center, light 740
 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 745
 In this delicious garden? As my will
 Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
 And equal to reduce me to my dust;
 Desirous to resign and render back
 All I receiv'd; unable to perform 750
 Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
 The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
 Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
 The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
 Thy justice seems; yet, to say truth, too late 755
 I thus contest; then should have been refus'd

Those terms, whatever, when they were propos'd:
 Thou didst accept them: wilt thou enjoy the good,
 Then cavil the conditions? and, though God
 Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son 760
 Prove disobedient; and, reprov'd, retort,
 "Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not:"
 Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
 That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
 But natural necessity, begot. 765
 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
 Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?
 Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
 To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet 775
 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 inspir'd, cannot together perish 785
 With this corporeal clod; then, in the grave,
 Or in some other dismal place, who knows
 But I shall die a living death? O thought
 Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath
 Of life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life 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, 795
 But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
 Wrath without end on man, whom death must end?
 Can he make deathless death? That were to make
 Strange contradiction, which to God himself
 Impossible is held; as argument 800
 Of weakness, not of pow'r. Will he draw out,
 For anger's sake, finite to infinite,
 In punish'd man, to satisfy his rigour,
 Satisfied never? That were to extend
 His sentence beyond dust and nature's law, 805
 By which all causes else, according still
 To the reception of their matter, act;
 Not to th' extent of their own sphere. But say
 That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
 Bereaving sense, but endless misery 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 thundring back with dreadful revolution
 On my defenceless head; both death and I 815
 Are found eternal, and incorporate both;
 Nor I on my part single; in me all
 Posterity stands curs'd: fair patrimony
 That I must leave ye, sons! O, were I able
 To waste it all myself, and leave ye none! 820
 So disinherited, how would ye bless
 Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind,
 For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
 If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
 But all corrupt; both mind and will deprav'd 825
 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,
 Forc'd 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; 835
 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 driv'n me; out of which
 I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!
 Thus Adam to himself lamented loud, 845
 Through the still night; not now, as ere man fell,
 Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with bla' air
 Accompanied; with damps and dreadful gloom;
 Which to his evil conscience represented
 All things with double terror: on the ground 850
 Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground; and oft
 Curs'd his creation; death as oft accus'd
 Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
 The day of his offence. 'Why comes not death,'
 Said he, 'with one thrice-acceptable stroke 855
 To end me? Shall truth fail to keep her word,
 Justice divine not hasten to be just?
 But death comes not at call; justice divine
 Mends not her slowest pace for pray'rs or cries.
 O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers! 860
 With other echo late I taught your shades
 To answer, and resound far other song?
 Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
 Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
 Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd; 865
 But her with stern regard he thus repell'd:

'Out of my sight, thou serpent! That name best
 Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false
 And hateful; nothing wants, but that thy shape,
 Like his, and colour serpentine, may show 870
 Thy inward fraud, to warn all creatures from thee
 Henceforth; lest that too heav'nly form, pretended
 To hellish falsehood, snare them! But for thee
 I had persisted happy, had not thy pride
 And wand'ring vanity, when least was safe, 875
 Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
 Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
 Though by the devil himself; him overweening
 To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,
 Fool'd and beguil'd; by him thou, I by thee, 880
 To trust thee from my side: imagin'd wise,
 Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;
 And understood not all was but a show,
 Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib
 Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears, 885
 More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
 Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
 To my just number found. O! why did God,
 Creator wise, that peopled highest heaven
 With spirits masculine, create at last 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 befall'n, 895
 And more that shall befall; innumerable
 Disturbances on earth through female snares,
 And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
 He never shall find out fit mate, but such
 As some misfortune brings him, or mistake; 900
 Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain,
 Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
 By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld
 By parents; or his happiest choice too late
 Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock-bound 905
 To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
 Which infinite calamity shall cause
 To human life, and household peace confound.'

He added not, and from her turn'd; but Eve,
 Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing, 910
 And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
 Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought
 His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint:

'Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness heaven
 What love sincere, and reverence in my heart 915
 I bear thee, and unweeting have offended,
 Unhappily deceiv'd! Thy suppliant
 I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
 Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
 Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress, 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 join'd in injuries, one enmity 925
 Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
 That cruel serpent: on me exercise not
 Thy hatred for this misery befall'n;
 On me already lost, me than thyself
 More miserable! both have sinn'd; but thou 930
 Against God only, I against God and thee;
 And to the place of judgement will return,
 There with my cries impórtune Heav'n; that all
 The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light
 On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe; 935
 Me, me only, just object of his ire!
 She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,
 Immoveable, till peace obtain'd from fault
 Acknowledg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
 Commiseration: soon his heart relented 940
 Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
 Now at his feet submissive in distress;
 Creature so fair his reconciliation seeking,
 His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid:
 As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost, 945
 And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon:
 'Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
 So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
 The punishment all on thyself; alas!
 Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain 950
 His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
 And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers
 Could alter high decrees, I to that place
 Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
 That on my head all might be visited; 955
 Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
 To me committed, and by me expos'd.
 But rise; — let us no more contend, nor blame
 Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere; but strive
 In offices of love, how we may lighten 960
 Each other's burden, in our share of woe;
 Since this day's death denounc'd, if aught I see,
 Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac'd evil;
 A long day's dying to augment our pain,
 And to our seed (O hapless seed!) deriv'd.' 965
 To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied:
 'Adam, by sad experiment I know
 How little weight my words with thee can find,
 Found so erroneous; thence by just event
 Found so unfortunate: nevertheless. 970
 Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
 Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
 Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
 Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
 What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen, 975
 Tending to some relief of our extremes,

Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
 As in our evils, and of easier choice.
 If care of our descent perplex us most,
 Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd 980
 By death at last; and miserable it is,
 To be to others cause of misery,
 Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
 Into this cursed world a woeful race,
 That after wretched life must be at last 985
 Food for so foul a monster; in thy power
 It lies, yet ere conception to prevent
 The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
 Childless thou art, childless remain: so Deat
 Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two 990
 Be forc'd to satisfy his ravenous maw.
 But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
 Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
 From love's due rites, nuptial embraces sweet;
 And with desire to languish without hope, 995
 Before the present object languishing
 With like desire; which would be misery
 And torment less than none of what we dread;
 Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free
 From what we fear for both, let us make short, 1000
 Let us seek Death; or, he not found, supply
 With our own hands his office on ourselves:
 Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
 That show no end but death, and have the power,
 Of many ways to die the shortest choosing, 1005
 Destruction with destruction to destroy?'

She ended here, or vehement despair
 Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
 Had entertain'd, as dy'd her checks with pale.
 But Adam with such counsel nothing sway'd, 1010
 'To better hopes his more attentive mind
 Lab'ring had rais'd; and thus to Eve replied:
 'Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
 To argue in thee something more sublime
 And excellent, than what thy mind contemns; 1015
 But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
 That excellence thought in thee; and implies,
 Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
 For loss of life and pleasure overlov'd.
 Or if thou covet death, as utmost end 1020
 Of misery, so thinking to evade
 The penalty pronounc'd; doubt not but God
 Hath wiselier arm'd his vengeful ire, than so
 To be forestall'd; much more I fear lest death,
 So snatch'd, will not exempt us from the pain 1025
 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 contriv'd
 Against us this deceit: to crush his head 1035
 Would be revenge indeed! which will be lost
 By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
 Resolv'd, as thou proposest; so our foe
 Shall 'scape his punishment ordain'd, and we
 Instead shall double ours upon our heads. 1040
 No more be mention'd then of violence
 Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness
 That cuts us off from hope; and savours only
 Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
 Reluctance against God and his just yoke 1045
 Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
 And gracious temper he both heard, and judg'd,
 Without wrath or reviling; we expected
 Immediate dissolution, which we thought
 Was meant by death that day; when, lo! to thee 1050
 Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
 And bringing forth; soon recompens'd with joy,
 Fruit of thy womb: on me the curse aslope
 Glanc'd on the ground; with labour I must earn
 My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse; 1055
 My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold
 Or heat should injure us, his timely care
 Hath, unbesought, provided; and his hands
 Cloth'd us unworthy, pitying while he judg'd;
 How much more, if we pray him, will his ear 1060
 Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
 And teach us further by what means to shun
 Th' inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow?
 Which now the sky, with various face, begins
 To show us in this mountain; while the winds 1065
 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 benumm'd, ere this diurnal star
 Leave cold the night, how we his gather'd 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 push'd with winds, rude in their shock,
 Tine the slant lightning; whose thwart flame driv'n
 down, 1075
 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, sustain'd
 By him with many comforts, till we end
 In dust, our final rest and native home. 1085

What better can we do, than, to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall
 Before him reverent; and there confess
 Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
 Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air 1090
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
 Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn
 From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
 When angry most he seem'd and most severe, 1095
 What else but favour, grace, and mercy, shone?
 So spake our father penitent; nor Eve
 Felt less remorse: they, forthwith to the place
 Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
 Before him reverent; and both confess'd 1100
 Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd; with tears
 Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
 Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
 Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.

B O O K X I.

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

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
 Preventive grace descending had remov'd
 The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
 Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breath'd 5
 Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer
 Inspir'd, and wing'd for heav'n with speedier flight
 Than loudest oratory: yet their port
 Not of mean suitors; nor important less
 Seem'd their petition, than when th' ancient pair 10
 In fables old, less ancient ye than these,
 Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
 The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine
 Of Themis stood devout. To heav'n their prayers
 Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds 15
 Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd
 Dimensionless through heav'nly doors; then clad

With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,
 By their great Intercessor, came in sight
 Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son 20
 Presenting, thus to intercede began:

'See, Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung
 From thy implanted grace in man; these sighs
 And pray'rs, which in this golden censer, mix'd
 With incense, I thy priest before thee bring; 25
 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 produc'd, ere fall'n
 From innocence. Now therefore bend thine ear 30
 To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;
 Unskillful with what words to pray, let me
 Interpret for him; me, his advocate
 And propitiation; all his works on me,
 Good, or not good, ingraft; my merit those 35
 Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
 Accept me; and, in me, from these receive
 The smell of peace toward mankind; let him live
 Before thee reconcil'd, at least his days
 Number'd, though sad; till death, his doom (which I 40
 To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse),
 To better life shall yield him: where with me
 All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss;
 Made one with me, as I with thee am one.'

To whom the Father, without cloud, serene: 45
 'All thy request for man, accepted Son,
 Obtain; all thy request was my decree:
 But, longer in that Paradise to dwell,
 The law I gave to nature him forbids:
 Those pure immortal elements that know 50
 No gross, no unharmonious mixture foul,
 Eject him, tainted now; and purge him off,
 As a distemper, gross, to air as gross,
 And mortal food; as may dispose him best
 For dissolution wrought by sin, that first 55
 Distemper'd all things, and of incorrupt
 Corrupted. I, at first, with two fair gifts
 Created him endow'd; with happiness,
 And immortality: that fondly lost,
 This other serv'd but to eternize woe; 60
 Till I provided death: so death becomes
 His final remedy; and, after life,
 Tried in sharp tribulation, and refin'd,
 By faith and faithful works, to second life,
 Wak'd in the renovation of the just, 65
 Resigns him up with heav'n and earth renew'd.
 But let us call to synod all the blest,
 Through heav'n's wide bounds: from them I will not hide
 My judgements; how with mankind I proceed,
 As how with peccant angels late they saw, 70
 And in their state, though firm, stood more confirm'd.'

He ended, and the Son gave signal high

To the bright minister that watch'd; he blew
 His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps 75
 When God descended, and perhaps once more
 To sound at general doom. 'Th' angelic blast
 Fill'd all the regions: from their blissful bowers
 Of amaranthine shade, fountain or spring,
 By the waters of life, where'er they sat
 In fellowships of joy, the sons of light 80
 Hasted, resorting to the summons high;
 And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
 Th' Almighty thus pronounc'd his sovran will:
 'O sons, like one of us man is become
 To know both good and evil, since his taste 85
 Of that defended fruit; but let him boast
 His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;
 Happier, had it suffic'd him to have known
 Good by itself, and evil not at all.
 He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite, 90
 My motions in him; longer than they move,
 His heart I know, how variable and vain,
 Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
 Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
 And live for ever, dream at least to live 95
 For ever, to remove him I decree,
 And send him from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.
 Michael, this my behest have thou in charge;
 Take to thee from among the Cherubim 100
 Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the fiend,
 Or in behalf of man, or to invade
 Vacant possession, some new trouble raise:
 Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
 Without remorse drive out the sinful pair; 105
 From hallow'd ground th' unholy; and denounce
 To them, and to their progeny, from thence
 Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
 At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd
 (For I behold them soften'd, and with tears 110
 Bewailing their excess), all terror hide.
 If patiently thy bidding they obey,
 Dismiss them not discourouslate; reveal
 To Adam what shall come in future days,
 As I shall thee enlighten; intermix 115
 My covenant in the woman's seed renew'd;
 So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:
 And on the east side of the garden place,
 Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
 Cherubic watch; and of a sword the flame 120
 Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,
 And guard all passage to the tree of life:
 Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
 'To spirits foul, and all my trees their prey;
 With whose stol'n fruit man once more to delude. 125
 He ceas'd; and th' archangelic pow'r prepar'd
 For swift descend; with him the cohort bright

Of watchful Cherubim: four faces each
 Had, like a double Janus; all their shape
 Spangled with eyes more numerous than those 130
 Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drowse,
 Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the past'ral reed
 Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Meanwhile,
 To re-salute the world with sacred light,
 Leucothea wak'd, and with fresh dews embalm'd 135
 The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve
 Had ended now their orisons, and found
 Strength added from above; new hope to spring
 Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet link'd;
 Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew'd: 140
 'Eve, easily may faith admit, that all
 The good which we enjoy from heav'n 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, 145
 Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer,
 Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
 Ev'n to the seat of God. For since I sought
 By pray'r th' offended Deity to appease;
 Kneel'd, and before him humbled all my heart; 150
 Methought I saw him placable and mild,
 Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
 That I was heard with favour; peace return'd
 Home to my breast, and to my memory
 His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe; 155
 Which, then not minded in dismay, yet now
 Assures me that the bitterness of death
 Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
 Eve rightly call'd, mother of all mankind,
 Mother of all things living, since by thee 160
 Man is to live; and all things live for man.'
 To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek:
 'Ill-worthy I such title should belong
 To me transgressor; who, for thee ordain'd
 A help, became thy snare; to me reproach 165
 Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:
 But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
 That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd
 The source of life; next favourable thou,
 Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st, 170
 Far other name deserving. But the field
 To labour calls us, now with sweat impos'd,
 Though after sleepless night; for see! the morn,
 All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
 Her rosy progress smiling: let us forth; 175
 I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
 Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoin'd
 Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
 What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
 Here let us live, though in fall'n state, content.' 180

So spake, so wish'd much-humbled Eve; but fate
 Subscrib'd not: nature first gave signs, impress'd

On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclips'd,
 After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight
 The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his aery tour, 185
 Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
 Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
 First hunter then, pursu'd a gentle brace,
 Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
 Direct to th' eastern gate was bent their flight. 190
 Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
 Pursuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake:
 'O Eve, some further change awaits us nigh,
 Which Heav'n, by these mute signs in nature, shows
 Forerunners of his purpose; or to warn 195
 Us, haply too secure, of our discharge
 From penalty, because from death releas'd
 Some days: how long, and what till then our life,
 Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust,
 And thither must return, and be no more? 200
 Why else this double object in our sight
 Of flight pursu'd in th' air, and o'er the ground,
 One way the self-same hour? why in the east
 Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning-light
 More orient in yon western cloud, that draws 205
 O'er the blue firmament a radiant white,
 And slow descends with something heav'nly fraught?'
 He err'd not; for by this the heav'nly bands
 Down from a sky of jasper lighted now
 In Paradise, and on a hill made halt; 210
 A glorious apparition, had not doubt
 And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye.
 Not that more glorious, when the Angels met
 Jacob in Mahanaïm, where he saw
 The field pavilion with his guardians bright; 215
 Nor that, which on the flaming mount appear'd
 In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire,
 Against the Syrian king, who to surprise
 One man, assassin like, had levied war,
 War unproclaim'd. The princely hierarch 220
 In their bright stand there left his pow'rs, to seize
 Possession of the garden; he alone,
 To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way,
 Not unperceiv'd of Adam; who to Eve,
 While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake: 225
 'Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps
 Of us will soon determine, or impose
 New laws to be observ'd; for I descry,
 From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,
 One of the heav'nly host; and, by his gait, 230
 None of the meanest; some great potentate,
 Or of the thrones above; such majesty
 Invests him coming! yet not terrible,
 That I should fear; nor sociably mild,
 As Raphaël, that I should much confide; 235
 But solemn and sublime; whom not to offend,
 With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.'

He ended; and th' Archangel soon drew nigh,
 Not in his shape celestial, but as man
 Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms 240
 A military vest of purple flow'd,
 Livelier than Meliboean, or the grain
 Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old
 In time of truce; Iris had dipt the woof;
 His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime 245
 In manhood where youth ended; by his side,
 As in a glist'ring zodiac, hung the sword,
 Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.
 Adam bow'd low; he, kingly, from his state
 Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declar'd: 250
 'Adam, heav'n's high behest no preface needs:
 Sufficient that thy pray'rs are heard; and death,
 Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
 Defeated of his seizure many days
 Giv'n thee af grace; wherein thou mayst repent, 255
 And one bad act with many deeds well done
 Mayst cover: well may then thy Lord, pleas'd,
 Redeem thee quite from death's rapacious claim;
 But longer in this Paradise to dwell
 Permits not: to remove thee I am come, 260
 And send thee from the garden forth to till
 The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.'
 He added not; for Adam at the news
 Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
 That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen 265
 Yet all had heard, with audible lament
 Discover'd soon the place of her retire.
 'O unexpected stroke, worse than of death!
 Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
 Thee, native soil! these happy walks and shades, 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 275
 At even, which I bred up with tender hand
 From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!
 Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
 Your tribes, and water from th' ambrosial fount?
 Thee lastly, nuptial bow'r! by me adorn'd 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, accustom'd to immortal fruits?' 285
 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 scatter'd spirits return'd,
 To Michael thus his humble words address'd: 295
 'Celestial, whether among the thrones, or nam'd
 Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem
 Prince above princes! gently hast thou told
 Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
 And in performing end us; what besides 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 305
 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 pray'r against his absolute decree
 No more avails than breath against the wind,
 Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
 Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
 This most afflicts me, that, departing hence, 315
 As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd
 His blessed count'nance; here I could frequent
 With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd
 Presence Divine; and to my sons relate,
 "On this mount he appear'd; under this tree 320
 Stood visible; among these pines his voice
 I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd:"
 So many grateful altars I would rear
 Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
 Of lustre from the brook, in memory, 325
 Or monument to ages; and thereon
 Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers:
 In yonder nether world where shall I seek
 His bright appearances, or foot-step trace?
 For though I fled him angry, yet, recall'd 330
 To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
 Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
 Of glory; and far off his steps adore,'
 To whom thus Michael with regard benign:
 'Adam, thou know'st heav'n his, and all the earth; 335
 Not this rock only; his omnipresence fills
 Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
 Fomented by his virtual pow'r and warm'd:
 All th' earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
 No despicable gift; surmise not then 340
 His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
 Of Paradise, or Eden: this had been
 Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
 All generations; and had hither come
 From all the ends of th' earth, to celebrate 345
 And reverence thee, their great progenitor.
 But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down

To dwell on even ground now with thy sons :
 Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,
 God is, as here, and will be found alike 350
 Present ; and of his presence many a sign
 Still following thee, still compassing thee round
 With goodness and paternal love, his face
 Express, and of his steps the track divine.
 Which that thou mayst believe, and be confirm'd 355
 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 inur'd
 By moderation either state to bear,
 Prosperous or adverse : so shalt thou lead
 Safest thy life, and best prepar'd endure 365
 Thy mortal passage when it comes. Ascend
 This hill ; let Eve (for I have drench'd her eyes)
 Here sleep below, while thou to foresight wak'st ;
 As once thou slept'st, while she to life was form'd.
 To whom thus Adam gratefully replied : 370
 ' Ascend, I follow thee, safe guide, the path
 Thou lead'st me ; and to the hand of Heav'n submit,
 However chast'ning ; to the evil turn
 My obvious breast ; arming to overcome
 By suffering, and earn rest from labour won, 375
 If so I may attain.' So both ascend
 In the visions of God. It was a hill,
 Of Paradise the highest ; from whose top
 The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,
 Stretch'd out to th' 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 385
 City of old or modern fame, the seat
 Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd walls
 Of Cambalu, seat of Cathaian Can,
 And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
 To Paquin of Sinaean kings ; and thence 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, 395
 Turchestan-born ; nor could his eye not ken
 Th' empire of Negus to his utmost port
 Ercoco, and the less maritime kings
 Mombaza, and Quiloa, and Melind,
 And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm 400
 Of Congo, and Angola farthest south ;
 Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount

The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
 Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;
 On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway 405
 The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
 Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
 And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
 Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoil'd
 Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons 410
 Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights
 Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,
 Which that false fruit that promis'd clearer sight
 Had bred; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see; 415
 And from the well of life three drops instill'd.
 So deep the pow'r of these ingredients pierc'd,
 E'en to th' inmost seat of mental sight,
 That Adam, now enforc'd to close his eyes,
 Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranc'd; 420
 But him the gentle Angel by the hand
 Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd:
 'Adam, now ope thine eyes; and first behold
 Th' effects, which thy original crime hath wrought
 In some to spring from thee; who never touch'd 425
 Th' excepted tree; nor with the snake conspir'd;
 Nor sinn'd thy sin; yet from that sin derive
 Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.'
 His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,
 Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves 430
 New-reap'd; the other part sheep-walks and folds;
 I' th' midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
 Rustic, of grassy sord; thither anon
 A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought
 First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf, 435
 Uncull'd, as came to hand; a shepherd next,
 More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,
 Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid
 The inwards and their fat, with incense strew'd
 On the cleft wood, and all due rites perform'd: 440
 His offering soon propitious fire from heaven
 Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam;
 The other's not, for his was not sincere;
 Whereat he inly rag'd, and, as they talk'd,
 Smote him into the midriff with a stone 445
 That beat out life; he fell; and, deadly pale,
 Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd.
 Much at that sight was Adam in his heart
 Dismay'd, and thus in haste to th' Angel cried:
 'O teacher, lome great mischief hath befall'n 450
 To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd;
 Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?'
 'I' whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, replied:
 'These two are brethren, Adam, and to come
 Out of thy loins; th' unjust the just hath slain, 455
 For envy that his brother's offering found
 From heav'n acceptance; but the bloody fact

Will be aveng'd; and th' other's faith, approv'd,
 Lose no reward; though here thou see him die,
 Rolling in dust and gore.' To which our sire: 460
 'Alas! both for the deed, and for the cause!
 But have I now seen death? Is this the way
 I must return to native dust? O sight
 Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
 Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!' 465
 To whom thus Michaël: 'Death thou hast seen
 In his first shape on man; but many shapes
 Of death, and many are the ways that lead
 To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
 More terrible at th' entrance, than within. 470
 Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die;
 By fire, flood, famine, by intemp'rance more
 In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
 Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
 Before thee shall appear; that thou mayst know 475
 What misery th' inabstinence of Eve
 Shall bring on men.' Immediately a place
 Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark;
 A lazar-house it seem'd; wherein were laid
 Numbers of all diseas'd; 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 phrensy, moping melancholy, 485
 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 delay'd to strike, though oft invoc'd
 With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
 Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
 Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept, 495
 Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd
 His best of man, and gave him up to tears
 A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess;
 And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renew'd:
 'O miserable mankind, to what fall 500
 Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd!
 Better end here unborn. Why is life given
 To be thus wrested from us? rather, why
 Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
 What we receive, would either not accept 505
 Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down;
 Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
 Th' image of God in man, created once
 So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
 To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd 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,' answer'd Michael, 'then 515
 Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
 To serve un govern'd appetite; and took
 His image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,
 Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
 Therefore so abject is their punishment, 520
 Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;
 Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd;
 While they pervert pure nature's healthful rules
 To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
 God's image did not reverence in themselves.' 525
 '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 temp'rance taught,
 In what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence
 Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
 'Till many years over thy head return:
 So mayst thou live; till, like ripe fruit, thou drop 535
 Into thy mother's lap; or be with ease
 Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd; for death mature:
 This is old age; but then, thou must outlive
 Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change
 To wither'd, weak, and gray; thy senses then, 540
 Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
 To what thou hast; and for the air of youth,
 Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
 A melancholy damp of cold and dry,
 To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume 545
 The balm of life.' To whom our ancestor:
 'Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
 Life much; bent rather, how I may be quit,
 Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge;
 Which I must keep till my appointed day 550
 Of rendering up, and patiently attend
 My dissolution,' Michaël replied:
 'Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what shou liv'st
 Live well; how long, or short, permit to Heaven:
 And now prepare thee for another sight.' 555
 He look'd, and saw a spacious plain, whereon
 Were tents of various hues; by some, were herds
 Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound
 Of instruments, that made melodious chime,
 Was heard, of harp and organ; and who mov'd 560
 Their stops and chords was seen; his volant touch
 Instinct through all proportions, low and high,
 Fled and pursu'd transverse the resonant fugue.
 In other part stood one who, at the forge
 Lab'ring, two massy clods of iron and brass 565
 Had melted (whether found where casual fire
 Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,

Down to the veins of earth; thence gliding hot
 'To some cave's mouth; or whether wash'd by stream
 From underground); the liquid ore he drain'd 570
 Into fit moulds prepar'd; from which he form'd
 First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought
 Fusil or grav'n in metal. After these,
 But on the hither side, a different sort
 From the high neighb'ring hills, which was their seat, 575
 Down to the plain descended; by their guise
 Just men they seem'd, and all their study bent
 To worship God aright, and know his works
 Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve
 Freedom and peace to men: they on the plain 580
 Long had not walk'd, when from the tents, behold!
 A bevy of fair women, richly gay,
 In gems and wanton dress; to th' harp they sung
 Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:
 The men, though grave, ey'd them; and let their eyes 585
 Rove without rein; till, in the amorous net
 Fast caught, they lik'd; and each his liking chose;
 And now of love they treat, till th' evening star,
 Love's harbinger, appear'd; then, all in heat,
 They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke 590
 Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd:
 With feast and music all the tents resound.
 Such happy interview, and fair event
 Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
 And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart 595
 Of Adam, soon inclin'd t' admit delight,
 The bent of nature; which he thus express'd:
 'True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest;
 Much better seems this vision, and more hope
 Of peaceful days portends, than those two past; 600
 Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
 Here nature seems fulfill'd in all her ends.'
 To whom thus Michael: 'Judge not what is best
 By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet;
 Created, as thou art, to nobler end 605
 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 acknowledg'd none.
 Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
 For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
 Of goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay, 615
 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 troll the tongue, and roll the eye. 620
 To these that sober race of men, whose lives
 Religious titled them the sons of God,

Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
 Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
 Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy, 625
 Ere long to swim at large; and laugh, for which
 The world ere long a world of tears must weep.
 To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft:
 'O pity and shame, that they, who to live well
 Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread 630
 Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!
 But still I see the tenour of man's woe
 Holds on the same, from woman to begin.'
 'From man's effeminate slackness it begins.'
 Said th' Angel, 'who should better hold his place 635
 By wisdom, and superior gifts receiv'd.
 But now prepare thee for another scene.'
 He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
 Before him, towns, and rural works between;
 Cities of men with lofty gates and towers, 640
 Concourse in arms, fierce faces threat'ning war,
 Giants of mighty bone, and bold emprise;
 Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
 Single or in array of battle rang'd
 Both horse and foot, nor idly must'ring stood; 645
 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 pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies
 With carcasses and arms th' ensanguin'd field,
 Deserted: others to a city strong 655
 Lay siege, encamp'd; by battery, scale, and mine,
 Assaulting; others from the wall defend
 With dart and javelin, stones, and sulphurous fire;
 On each hand slaughter, and gigantic deeds.
 In other part the scepter'd heralds call 660
 To council, in the city-gates; anon
 Gray-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,
 Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon,
 In factious opposition; till at last
 Of middle age one rising, eminent 665
 In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,
 Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,
 And judgment from above: him old and young
 Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands;
 Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence, 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 turn'd full sad: 'O what are these, 675
 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 match'd, who of themselves 685
 Abhor to join; and, by imprudence mix'd,
 Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
 Such were these giants, men of high renown;
 For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
 And valour and heroic virtue call'd; 690
 To overcome in battle, and subdue
 Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
 Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
 Of human glory; and for glory done
 Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerors, 695
 Patrons of mankind, gods, and sons of gods;
 Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
 Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on earth;
 And what most merits fame in silence hid.

But he, the sev'nth from thee, whom thou beheld'st 700
 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 705
 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; 710
 Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.'

He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd;
 The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
 All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
 To luxury and riot, feast and dance; 715
 Marrying or prostituting, as befel,
 Rape or adultery, where passing fair
 Allur'd them; thence from cups to civil broils.
 At length a reverend sire among them came,
 And of their doings great dislike declar'd, 720
 And testified against their ways; he oft
 Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
 Triumphs or festivals; and to them preach'd
 Conversion and repentance, as to souls
 In prison, under judgements imminent: 725
 But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceas'd
 Contending, and remov'd his tents far off;
 Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
 Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
 Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and highth; 730
 Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door
 Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large,

For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!
 Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
 Came sev'ns, and pairs; and enter'd in as taught 735
 Their order: last the sire and his three sons,
 With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
 Meanwhile the south-wind rose, and, with black wings
 Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove
 From under heav'n; the hills to their supply 740
 Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,
 Sent up amain; and now the thicken'd sky
 Like a dark ceiling stood; down rush'd the rain
 Impetuous; and continued, till the earth
 No more was seen: the floating vessel swum 745
 Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
 Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
 Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
 Deep under water roll'd; sea cover'd sea,
 Sea without shore; and in their palaces, 750
 Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
 And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,
 All left, in one small bottom swum imbark'd.
 How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
 The end of all thy offspring, end so sad, 755
 Depopulation! Thee another flood,
 Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drown'd,
 And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently rear'd
 By th' Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
 Though comfortless; as when a father mourns 760
 His children, all in view destroy'd at once;
 And scarce to th' Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint:
 'O visions ill foreseen! better had I
 Liv'd ignorant of future! so had borne
 My part of evil only, each day's lot 765
 Enough to bear; those now, that were dispens'd
 The burd'n of many ages, on me light
 At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
 Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
 With thought that they must be. Let no man seek 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, 775
 Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,
 Man is not whom to warn: those few escap'd
 Famine and anguish will at last consume,
 Wand'ring that watry desert: I had hope,
 When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth, 780
 All would have then gone well; peace would have crown'd
 With length of happy days the race of man;
 But I was far deceiv'd; for now I see
 Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
 How comes it thus? unfold, celestial guide, 785
 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 achiev'd thereby
 Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey,
 Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
 Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride 795
 Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
 The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war,
 Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
 And fear of God; from whom their piety feign'd
 In sharp contest of battle found no aid 800
 Against invaders; therefore, cool'd in zeal,
 Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
 Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
 Shall leave them to enjoy; for th' earth shall bear
 More than enough, that temp'rance may be tried: 805
 So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd;
 Justice and temp'rance, truth and faith, forgot;
 One man except, the only son of light
 In a dark age, against example good,
 Against allurement, custom, and a world 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 815
 On their inpenitence; and shall return
 Of them derided, but of God observ'd
 The one just man alive; by his command
 Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
 To save himself, and household, from amidst 820
 A world devote to universal wrack.
 No sooner he, with them of man and beast
 Select for life, shall in the ark be lodg'd,
 And shelter'd round; but all the cataracts
 Of heav'n set open on the earth shall pour 825
 Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep,
 Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
 Beyond all bounds; till inundation rise
 Above the highest hills: then shall this mount
 Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd 830
 Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
 With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
 Down the great river to the opening gulf,
 And there take root an island salt and bare,
 The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang: 835
 To teach thee that God attributes to place
 No sanctity, if none be thither brought
 By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
 And now what further shall ensue, behold.
 He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood, 840
 Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
 Driv'n by a keen north-wind, that, blowing dry,

Wrinkled the face of deluge as decay'd;
 And the clear sun on his wide watry glass
 Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew, 845
 As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink
 From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
 With soft foot towards the deep; who now had stopt
 His sluices, as the heav'n his windows shut.
 The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground, 850
 Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
 And now the tops of hills, as rocks, appear;
 With clamour thence the rapid currents drive,
 Towards the retreating sea, their furious tide.
 Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies, 855
 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 Heav'n, over his head beholds
 A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow 865
 Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
 Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
 Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
 Greatly rejoic'd; and thus his joy broke forth:
 'O thou, who future things canst represent 870
 As present, heav'nly Instructor! I revive
 At this last sight; assur'd that man shall live,
 With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
 Far less I now lament for one whole world
 Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice 875
 For one man found so perfect, and so just,
 That God vouchsafes to raise another world
 From him, and all his anger to forget.
 But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in heaven,
 Distended, as the brow of God appeas'd? 880
 Or serve they, as a flow'ry verge, to bind
 The fluid skirts of that same watry cloud,
 Let it again dissolve, and show'r the earth?'
 To whom th' Archangel: 'Dextrously thou aim'st;
 So willingly doth God remit his ire, 885
 Though late repenting him of man deprav'd;
 Griev'd at his heart, when looking down he saw
 The whole earth fill'd with violence, and all flesh
 Corrupting each their way; yet, those remov'd,
 Such grace shall one just man find in his sight, 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 895
 Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
 His triple-colour'd bow, whereon to look,

And call to mind his covenant: day and night,
 Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
 Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new, 900
 Both heav'n and earth, wherein the just shall dwell.'

B O O K XII.

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

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

AS one who in his journey baits at noon,
 Though bent on speed; so here th' Archangel paus'd
 Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd
 If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
 Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes: 5
 'Thus thou hast seen one world begin, and end;
 And man, as from a second stock, proceed.
 Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
 Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
 Must needs impair and weary human sense: 10
 Henceforth what is to come I will relate;
 Thou therefore give due audience, and attend:
 'This second source of men, while yet but few,
 And while the dread of judgement past remains
 Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity, 15
 With some regard to what is just and right
 Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
 Lab'ring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
 Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,
 Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid, 20
 With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
 Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd; and dwell
 Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
 Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
 Of proud ambitious heart; who, not content 25
 With fair equality, fraternal state,
 Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
 Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
 Concord and law of nature from the earth;
 Hunting (and men, not beasts, shall be his game) 30

With war, and hostile snare, such as refuse
 Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
 A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
 Before the Lord; as in despite of heaven,
 Or from heav'n claiming second sovranity; 35
 And from rebellion shall derive his name,
 Though of rebellion others he accuse.
 He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
 With him or under him to tyrannize,
 Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find 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 tow'r, whose top may reach to heaven;
 And get themselves a name; lest, far dispers'd 45
 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 heav'n-tow'rs; and in derision sets
 Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase
 Quite out their native language; and, instead,
 To sow a jangling noise of words unknown: 55
 Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud,
 Among the builders; each to other calls
 Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage,
 As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in heaven,
 And looking down, to see the hubbub strange, 60
 And hear the din: thus was the building left
 Ridiculous, and the work Confusion nam'd.
 Whereto thus Adam fatherly displeas'd:
 'O execrable son! so to aspire
 Above his brethren; to himself assuming 65
 Authority usurp'd, from God not given:
 He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl,
 Dominion absolute; that right we hold
 By his donation; but man over men
 He made not lord; such title to himself 70
 Reserving, human left from human free.
 But this usurper his encroachment proud
 Stays not on man; to God his tow'r intends
 Siege and defiance: wretched man! what food
 Will he convey up thither, to sustain 75
 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 80
 Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
 Rational liberty; yet know withal,
 Since thy original lapse, true liberty
 Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
 Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividual being: 85

Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
 Immediately inordinate desires,
 And upstart passions, catch the government
 From reason; and to servitude reduce
 Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits 90
 Within himself unworthy pow'rs to reign
 Over free reason, God, in judgement just,
 Subjects him from without to violent lords;
 Who oft as undeservedly enthrall
 His outward freedom: tyranny must be; 95
 Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
 Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
 From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
 But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
 Deprives them of their outward liberty; 100
 Their inward lost: witness th' irreverent son
 Of him who built the ark; who, for the shame
 Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
 "Servant of servants," on his vicious race.
 Thus will this latter, as the former world, 105
 Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last,
 Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
 His presence from among them, and avert
 His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
 To leave them to their own polluted ways; 110
 And one peculiar nation to select
 From all the rest, of whom to be invoc'd,
 A nation from one faithful man to spring:
 Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
 Bred up in idol-worship: O, that men 115
 (Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
 While yet the patriarch liv'd, who 'scap'd the flood,
 As to forsake the living God, and fall
 To worship their own work in wood and stone
 For gods! yet him God the Most High vouchsafes 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 125
 All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys;
 Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
 I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
 He leaves his gods, his friends, and native soil,
 Ur of Chaldaea, passing now the ford 130
 To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
 Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;
 Not wand'ring poor, but trusting all his wealth
 With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
 Canaan he now attains; I see his tents 135
 Pitch'd about Sechem, and the neighb'ring plain
 Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
 Gift to his progeny of all that land,
 From Hamath northward to the desert south
 (Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd); 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 145
 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 reveal'd. This patriarch blest,
 Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
 A son, and of his son a grand-child, leaves;
 Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown:
 The grand-child, with twelve sons increas'd, departs 155
 From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
 Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
 See where it flows, disgorging at sev'n 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 165
 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 (these two brethren call
 Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim 170
 His people from enthralment, they return
 With glory, and spoil, back to the promis'd land.
 But first, the lawless tyrant, who donies
 To know their God, or message to regard,
 Must be compell'd by signs and judgements dire; 175
 To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
 Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
 With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land;
 His cattle must of rot and murren die;
 Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss, 180
 And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
 Hail mix'd with fire, must rend th' Egyptian sky,
 And wheel on th' earth, devouring where it rolls;
 What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
 A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down 185
 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 tam'd at length submits
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft
 Humbles his stubborn heart; but still, as ice
 More harden'd after thaw; till in his rage
 Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea 195

Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass,
 As on dry land, between two crystal walls;
 Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand
 Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:
 Such wondrous pow'r God to his saint will lend, 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 th' obdurate king pursues: 205
 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 215
 Through the wild desert, not the readiest way;
 Lest, entring on the Canaanite alarm'd,
 War terrify them inexpert, and fear
 Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
 Inglorious life with servitude; for life 220
 To noble and ignoble is more sweet
 Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.
 This also shall they gain by their delay
 In the wide wilderness; there they shall found
 Their government, and their great senate choose 225
 Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd:
 God from the mount of Sinai, whose gray top
 Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
 In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,
 Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain 230
 To civil justice; part, religious rites
 Of sacrifice; informing them, by types
 And shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
 The serpent, by what means he shall achieve
 Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God 235
 To mortal ear is dreadful: they beseech
 That Moses might report to them his will,
 And terror cease; he grants what they besought,
 Instructed that to God is no access
 Whithout mediator, whose high office now 240
 Moses in figure bears; to introduce
 One greater, of whose day he shall foretel,
 And all the prophets in their age the times
 Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus, laws and rites
 Establish'd, such delight hath God in men 245
 Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
 Among them to set up his tabernacle;
 The Holy One with mortal men to dwell:
 By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
 Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein 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
 Sev'n lamps as in a zodiac representing 255
 The heav'nly fires; over the tent a cloud
 Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night;
 Save when they journey, and at length they come,
 Conducted by his Angel, to the land
 Promis'd to Abraham and his seed: — The rest 260
 Were long to tell; how many battles fought;
 How many kings destroy'd; and kingdoms won;
 Or how the sun shall in mid heav'n stand still
 A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
 Man's voice commanding, "Sun, in Gibeon stand, 265
 And thou, moon, in the vale of Aialon,
 Till Israel overcome!" so call the third
 From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him
 His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.
 Here Adam interpos'd: 'O sent from Heaven, 270
 Enlight'ner of my darkness, gracious things
 Thou hast reveal'd; those chiefly, which concern
 Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
 Mine eyes true-opening, and my heart much eas'd;
 Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts, what would become 275
 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 285
 Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
 And therefore was law giv'n them, to evince
 Their natural pravity, by stirring up
 Sin against law to fight: that when they see
 Law can discover sin, but not remove, 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 295
 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; disciplin'd
 From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;
 From imposition of strict laws, to free
 Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear 305

To filial; works of law to works of faith.
 And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
 Highly belov'd, being but the minister
 Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
 But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call, 310
 His name and office bearing, who shall quell
 The adversary-serpent, and bring back
 Through the world's wilderness long-wander'd man
 Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
 Meanwhile they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd, 315.
 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 renown'd
 And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
 Irrevocable, that his regal throne
 For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
 All prophecy, that of the royal stock 325
 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 fam'd,
 The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
 Wand'ring, shall in a glorious temple enshrine.
 Such follow him as shall be register'd 335
 Pard good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll;
 Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
 Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
 God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
 Their city, his temple, and his holy ark, 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 call'd.
 There in captivity he lets them dwell
 The space of seventy years; then brings them back, 345
 Rememb'ring mercy, and his covenant sworn
 To David, stablish'd as the days of heaven.
 Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
 Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
 They first re-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 dissention springs,
 Men who attend the altar, and should most
 Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings 355
 Upon the temple itself: at last they seize
 The scepter, and regard not David's sons;
 Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
 Anointed king Messiah might be born
 Barr'd of his right; yet at his birth a star, 360

Unseen before in heav'n, proclaims him come;
 And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
 His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:
 His place of birth a solemn Angel tells
 To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night; 365
 They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
 Of squadron'd angels hear his carol sung.
 A virgin is his mother, but his sire
 The pow'r of the Most High: he shall ascend
 The throne hereditary, and bound his reign 370
 With earth'swide bounds, his glory with the heavens.'
 He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
 Surcharg'd, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,
 Without the vent of words; which these he breath'd:
 'O prophet of glad tidings, finisher 375
 Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
 What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain;
 Why our great Expectation should be call'd
 The seed of woman; Virgin Mother, hail,
 High in the love of heav'n; yet from my loins 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?' 385
 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 heav'n, a deadlier bruise,
 Disabled not to give thee thy death's wound:
 Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall recure,
 Not by destroying Satan, but his works
 In thee, and in thy seed: nor can this be, 395
 But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
 Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
 On penalty of death, and suffering death;
 The penalty to thy transgression due,
 And due to theirs which out of thine will grow: 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 405
 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 blasphem'd,
 Seiz'd on by force, judg'd, and to death condemn'd
 A shameful and accurs'd, nail'd to the cross
 By his own nation; slain for bringing life:
 But to the cross he nails thy enemies, 415

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 offer'd life 425
 Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
 By faith not void of works: this God-like act
 Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,
 In sin for ever lost from life; this act
 Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength, 430
 Defeating sin and death, his two mains arms;
 And fix far deeper in his head their stings
 Than temp'ral death shall bruise the victor's heel,
 Or their whom he redeems; a death, like sleep,
 A gentle wafting to immortal life. 435
 Nor after resurrection shall he stay
 Longer on earth, than certain times to appear
 To his disciples, men who in his life
 Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
 To teach all nations what of him they learn'd 440
 And his salvation; them who shall believe
 Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
 Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
 Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
 For death, like that which the Redeemer died. 445
 All nations they shall teach; for, from that day,
 Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
 Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
 Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;
 So in his seed all nations shall be blest. 450
 Then to the heav'n of heav'ns he shall ascend
 With victory triumphing through the air
 Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
 The serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
 Through all his realm, and there confounded leave; 455
 Then enter into glory, and resume
 His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
 Above all names in heav'n; and thence shall come,
 When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
 With glory and pow'r to judge both quick and dead; 460
 To judge th' unfaithful dead, but to reward
 His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
 Whether in heav'n or earth; for then the earth
 Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
 Than this of Eden, and far happier days.' 465
 So spake th' Archangel Michaël; then paus'd,
 As at the world's great period; and our sire,
 Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied:
 'O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!
 That all this good of evil shall produce, 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 occasion'd; or rejoice 475
 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 th' unfaithful herd,
 The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
 His people, who defend? Will they not deal
 Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?
 'Be sure they will,' said th' Angel; 'but from heaven 485
 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 recompens'd, 495
 And oft supported so as shall amaze
 Their proudest persecutors; for the Spirit,
 Pour'd first on his apostles, whom he sends
 To evangelize the nations, then on all
 Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts endue 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 heav'n: at length
 Their ministry perform'd, and race well run, 505
 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, 515
 Places, and titles, and with these to join
 Secular pow'r; though feigning still to act
 By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
 The spirit of God, promis'd alike, and given
 To all believers; and, from that pretence, 520
 Spiritual laws by carnal pow'r shall force
 On every conscience; laws which none shall find
 Left them inroll'd, or what the Spirit within
 Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
 But force the Spirit of grace itself, and bind 525

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 535
 Bestruck with sland'rous darts, and works of faith
 Rarely be found: so shall the world go on,
 To good malignant, to bad men benign;
 Under her own weight groaning; till the day
 Appear of respiration to the just, 540
 And vengeance to the wicked, at return
 Of him so lately promis'd to thy aid,
 The woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,
 Now amplier known thy Saviour and thy Lord;
 Last, in the clouds, from heav'n to be reveal'd 545
 In glory of the Father, to dissolve
 Satan with his perverted world; then raise
 From the conflágrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
 New heav'ns, new earth, ages of endless date,
 Founded in righteousness, and peace and love; 550
 To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.'

He ended; and thus Adam last replied:
 'How soon hath thy prediction, seer blest,
 Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
 Till time stand fix'd! Beyond is all abyss, 555
 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 565
 Still overcoming evil, and by small
 Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
 Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
 By simply meek; that suffering for truth's sake
 Is fortitude to highest victory, 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 th' Angel last replied:
 'This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum 575
 Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
 Thou knew'st by name, and all th' ethereal Pow'rs,
 All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
 Or works of God in heav'n, air, earth, or sea,
 And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst, 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 call'd charity, the soul
 Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth 585
 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 encamp'd on yonder hill, expect
 Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,
 In signal of remove, waves fiercely round.
 We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;
 Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd 595
 Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd
 To meek submission: thou, at season fit,
 Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;
 Chiefly, what may concern her faith to know,
 The great deliverance by her seed to come 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 cheer'd
 With meditation on the happy end.' 605

He ended, and they both descend the hill;
 Descended, Adam to the bow'r, where Eve
 Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her wak'd;
 And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd;
 'Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know; 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, 615
 Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
 Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me
 Art all things under heav'n, all places thou,
 Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
 This further consolation yet secure 620
 I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
 Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
 By me the promis'd Seed shall all restore.'

So spake our mother Eve, and Adam heard
 Well pleas'd, but answer'd not; for now, too nigh 625
 Th' Archangel stood; and from the other hill
 To their fix'd station, all in bright array,
 The Cherubim descended; on the ground
 Gliding météorous, as evening mist
 Ris'n from a river o'er the marish glides, 630
 And gathers ground fast at the lab'rer's heel
 Homeward returning. High in front advanc'd,
 The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd,
 Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
 And vapour as the Libyan air adust, 635

Began to parch that temp'rate clime; whereat
In either hand the hast'ning Angel caught
Our ling'ring parents, and to th' eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappear'd. 640
They, looking back, all th' eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon; 645
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They, hand in hand, with wand'ring steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK I.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

I, WHO erewhile the happy garden sung
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one man's firm obedience fully tried

Through all temptation, and the tempter foil'd 5
 In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
 And Eden rais'd in the waste wilderness.

Thou Spirit, who ledd'st this glorious cremite
 Into the desert, his victorious field,
 Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence 10
 By proof th' undoubted Son of God, inspire,
 As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,
 And bear through highth or depth of nature's bounds,
 With prosp'rous wing full summ'd, to tell of deeds
 Above heroic, though in secret done, 15
 And unrecorded left through many an age;
 Worthy t' have not remain'd so long unsung.

Now had the great proclaimer, with a voice
 More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
 Repentance, and heav'n's kingdom nigh at hand 20
 To all baptiz'd: to his great baptism flock'd
 With awe the regions round, and with them came
 From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd
 To the flood Jordan; came, as then obscure,
 Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptist soon 25
 Descried, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
 As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
 To him his heav'nly office; nor was long
 His witness unconfirm'd: on him baptiz'd
 Heav'n open'd, and in likeness of a dove 30
 The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
 From heav'n pronounc'd him his beloved Son.
 That heard the adversary, who, roving still
 About the world, at that assembly fam'd
 Would not be last, and, with the voice divine 35
 Nigh thunder-struck, th' exalted man, to whom
 Such high attest was giv'n, a while survey'd
 With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,
 Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
 To council summons all his mighty peers, 40
 Within thick clouds, and dark, ten-fold involv'd,
 A gloomy consistory; and them amidst,
 With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:

'O ancient powers of air, and this wide world
 (For much more willingly I mention air, 45
 This our old conquest, than remember hell,
 Our hated habitation), well ye know
 How many ages, as the years of men,
 This universe we have possess'd, and rul'd,
 In manner at our will, th' affairs of earth, 50
 Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
 Lost Paradise, deceiv'd by me; though since
 With dread attending when that fatal wound
 Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve
 Upon my head. Long the decrees of heav'n 55
 Delay, for longest time to him is short;
 And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
 This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
 Must bide the stroke of that long-threaten'd wound

(At least if so we can, and by the head 60
 Broken be not intended all our power
 To be infrin'g'd, our freedom and our being,
 In this fair empire won of earth and air);
 For this ill news I bring, the woman's seed
 Destin'd to this, is late of woman born. 65
 His birth to our just fear gave no small cause:
 But his growth now to youth's full flow'r, displaying
 All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve
 Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
 Before him a great prophet, to proclaim 70
 His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
 Invites, and in the consecrated stream
 Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them, so
 Purified, to receive him pure, or rather
 To do him honour as their King: all come, 75
 And he himself among them was baptiz'd;
 Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
 The testimony of heav'n, that who he is
 Thenceforth the nations may not doubt; I saw
 The prophet do him reverence; on him, rising 80
 Out of the water, heav'n above the clouds
 Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head,
 A perfect dove descend (whate'er it meant),
 And out of heav'n the sovran voice I heard,
 "This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd." 85
 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, 95
 But must with something sudden be oppos'd
 (Not force, but well-couch'd fraud, well-woven snares),
 Ere in the head of nations he appear,
 Their king, their leader, and supreme on earth.
 I, when no other durst, sole undertook 100
 The dismal expedition to find out
 And ruin Adam; and th' exploit perform'd
 Successfully: a calmer voyage now
 Will waft me; and the way, found prosp'rous once,
 Induces best to hope of like success.' 105
 He ended, and his words impression left
 Of much amazement to th' infernal crew,
 Distracted, and surpris'd with deep dismay
 At these sad tidings; but no time was then
 For long indulgence to their fears or grief: 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 thriv'd

In Adam's overthrow, and led their march 115
 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-declar'd,
 This man of men, attested Son of God,
 Temptation and all guile on him to try;
 So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
 To end his reign on earth, so long enjoy'd: 125
 But, contrary, unweeting he fulfill'd
 The purpos'd counsel, pre-ordain'd and fix'd,
 Of the Most High; who, in full frequence bright
 Of angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:
 'Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold, 130
 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 135
 Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
 Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
 To her a virgin, that on her should come
 The Holy Ghost, and the pow'r of the Highest
 O'ershadow her. This man, born and now up-grown, 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 145
 Of his apostasy; he might have learnt
 Less overweening, since he fail'd in Job,
 Whose constant perseverance overcame
 Whate'er his cruel malice could invent,
 He now shall know I can produce a man, 150
 Of female seed, far abler to resist
 All his solicitations, and at length
 All his vast force, and drive him back to hell;
 Winning, by conquest, what the first man lost,
 By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean 155
 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: 160
 His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
 And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh;
 That all the angels and ethereal powers,
 They now, and men hereafter, may discern,
 From what consummate virtue I have chose 165
 This perfect man, by merit call'd my Son,
 To earn salvation for the sons of men.'

So spake th' Eternal Father, and all heaven
 Admiring stood a space, then into hymns

- Burst forth, and in celestial measures mov'd, 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 ent'ring his great duel, not of arms,
 But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles! 175
 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, 180
 And, devilish machinations, come to naught!
- So they in heav'n their odes and vigils tun'd:
 Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
 Lodg'd in Bethabara, where John baptiz'd,
 Musing, and much revolving in his breast, 185
 How best the mighty work he might begin
 Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
 Publish his God-like office now mature,
 One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading
 And his deep thoughts, the better to converse 190
 With solitude, till, far from track of men,
 Thought following thought, and step by step led on,
 He enter'd now, the bord'ring desert wild,
 And, with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
 His holy meditations thus pursu'd: 195
- 'O, what a multitude of thoughts at once
 Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
 What from within I feel myself, and hear
 What from without comes often to my ears,
 Ill sorting with my present state compar'd! 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, 205
 All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
 The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
 Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
 To such perfection, that, ere yet my age
 Had measur'd twice six years, at our great feast 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 admir'd by all: yet this not all
 To which my spirit aspir'd; victorious deeds 215
 Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts; one while
 To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke;
 Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
 Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
 Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd: 220
 Yet held it more humane, more heav'nly, 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 225
 Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
 These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
 By words at times cast forth, inly rejoic'd,
 And said to me apart, "High are thy thoughts,
 On son, but nourish them, and let them soar 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, 235
 Thy father is th' Eternal King who rules
 All heav'n and earth, angels and sons of men;
 A messenger from God foretold thy birth
 Conceiv'd in me a virgin; he foretold
 Thou shouldst be great, and sit on David's throne, 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, 245
 Where they might see him; and to thee they came,
 Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
 For in the inn was left no better room:
 A star, not seen before, in heav'n appearing,
 Guided the wise men thither from the East, 250
 To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold;
 By whose bright course led on they found the place,
 Affirming it thy star, new-grav'n in heaven,
 By which they knew the king of Israel born.
 Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warn'd 255
 By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
 Before the altar and the vested priest,
 Like things of thee to all that present stood."
 'This having heard, straight I again revolv'd
 The law and prophets, searching what was writ 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, ev'n to the death,
 Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain, 265
 Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins
 Full weight must be transferr'd upon my head.
 Yet, neither thus dishearten'd, or dismay'd,
 The time prefix'd I waited; when behold
 The Baptist (of whose birth I oft had heard, 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 believ'd was from above; but he
 Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd 275
 Me him (for it was shown him so from heaven),
 Me him, whose harbinger he was; and first
 Refus'd on me his baptism to confer,
 As much his greater, and was hardly won:

But, as I rose out of the laving stream, 280
 Heav'n open'd her eternal doors, from whence
 The Spirit descended on me like a dove,
 And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
 Audibly heard from heav'n, pronounc'd me his,
 Me his beloved Son, in whom alone 285
 He was well pleas'd; by which I knew the time
 Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
 But openly begin, as best becomes
 Th' authority which I deriv'd from heaven.
 And now by some strong motion I am led 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 295
 A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades;
 The way he came not having mark'd, return
 Was difficult, by human steps untrod;
 And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
 Accompanied of things past and to come 300
 Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
 Such solitude before choicest society.
 Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
 Sometimes, anon on shady vale, each night
 Under the covert of some ancient oak, 305
 Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
 Or harbour'd in one cave, is not reveal'd;
 Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt
 Till those days ended; hunger'd then at last
 Among wild beasts: they at his sight grew mild, 310
 Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd; his walk
 The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm,
 The lion and fierce tiger glar'd aloof.
 But now an aged man in rural weeds,
 Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray ewe, 315
 Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve
 Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
 To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,
 He saw approach, who first with curious eye
 Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd spake: 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 return'd, and dropt not here
 His carcass, pin'd with hunger and with drought. 325
 I ask the rather, and the more admire,
 For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
 Our new baptizing prophet at the ford
 Of Jordan honour'd so, and call'd thee Son
 Of God: I saw and heard, for we sometimes 330
 Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
 To town or village nigh (nighest is far),
 Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear,
 What happens new; fame also finds us out.'

To whom the Son of God : ' Who brought me hither, 335
 Will bring me hence ; no other guide I seek.'
 ' By miracle he may,' replied the swain ;
 ' What other way I see not ; for we here
 Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd
 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.' 345

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 Elijah, without food,
 Wander'd this barren waste ; the same I now :
 Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust, 355
 Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art ?'

Whom thus answer'd th' arch-fiend, now undisguis'd :
 ' Tis true I am that spirit unfortunate,
 Who, leagu'd 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 confin'd
 By rigour unconniving, but that oft,
 Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
 Large liberty to round this globe of earth, 365
 Or range in th' air ; nor from the heav'n of heav'ns
 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 propos'd
 To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
 That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
 I undertook that office, and the tongues
 Of all his flattering prophets glibb'd with lies 375
 To his destruction, as I had in charge ;
 For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
 Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
 To be beloved of God, I have not lost
 To love, at least contemplate and admire, 380
 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
 Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent 385
 Thy wisdom, and behold thy God-like deeds ?
 Men generally think me much a foe
 To all mankind : why should I ? they to me
 Never did wrong or violence ; by them

I lost not what I lost, rather by them 390
 I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell,
 Copartner in these regions of the world,
 If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
 Oft my advice by presâges and signs,
 And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams, 395
 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 adjoin'd:
 This wounds me most (what can it less?) that man,
 Man fall'n, shall be restor'd, I, never more.' 405
 To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:
 'Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
 From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
 Who boast'st release from hell, and leave to come
 Into the heav'n of heav'ns: 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 depos'd,
 Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shunn'd,
 A spectacle of ruin or of scorn 415
 To all the host of heav'n: the happy place
 Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
 Rather inflames thy torment, representing
 Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
 So never more in hell than when in heav'n. 420
 But thou art serviceable to heav'n's King.
 Wilt thou impute t' obedience what thy fear
 Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
 What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
 Of righteous Job, then cruelly to afflict him 425
 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 giv'n, and what confess'd more true
 Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
 By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
 But what have been thy answers? what but dark,
 Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding, 435
 Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
 And, not well understood, as good not known?
 Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
 Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct,
 To fly or follow what concern'd him most, 440
 And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
 For God hath justly giv'n the nations up
 To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
 Idolatrous: but, when his purpose is

Among them to declare his providence 445
 To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
 But from him, or his angels president
 In every province, who, themselves disdain
 T' 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 retrench'd;
 No more shalt thou by oracling abuse 455
 The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceas'd,
 And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
 Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos, or elsewhere;
 At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
 God hath now sent his living oracle 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, 465
 Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
 Dissembled, and this answer smooth return'd:
 'Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
 And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
 But misery hath wrested from me. Where 470
 Easily canst thou find one miserable,
 And not enforc'd oft-times to part from truth,
 If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
 Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
 But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord; 475
 From thee I can, and must, submiss endure
 Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
 Hard are the ways of truth, add rough to walk,
 Smooth on the tongue discours'd, pleasing to th' ear,
 And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song; 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. 485
 Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
 Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
 To tread his sacred courts, and minister
 About his altar, handling holy things,
 Praying or vowing; and vouchsaf'd his voice 490
 To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
 Inspir'd: disdain not such access to me.'
 To whom our Saviour, with unalter'd brow:
 'Thy coming hither, though I knew thy scope,
 I bid not, or forbid; do as thou find'st 495
 Permission from above; thou canst not more.'
 He added not; and Satan, bowing low
 His gray dissimulation, disappear'd
 Into thin air diffus'd: for now began

Night with her sullen wings to double-shade 500
 The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couch'd;
 And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

B O O K II.

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

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

MEANWHILE the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
 At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
 Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd
 Jesus Messiah, Son of God declar'd,
 And on that high authority had believ'd, 5
 And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd; I mean
 Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
 With others, though in holy writ not nam'd;
 Now missing him, their joy so lately found
 (So lately found, and so abruptly gone), 10
 Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
 And, as the days increas'd, increas'd their doubt.
 Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
 And for a time caught up to God, as once
 Moses was in the mount and missing long, 15
 And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
 Rode up to heav'n, yet once again to come:

Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
 Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
 Nigh to Bethabara; in Jericho 20
 The city of palms, Ænon, and Salem old,
 Machaerus, and each town or city wall'd
 On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
 Or in Peraea; but return'd in vain.
 Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek, 25
 Where winds with reeds and osiers whisp'ring play,
 Plain fishermen (no greater men them call),
 Close in a cottage low together got,
 Their unexpected loss and plaints outbreath'd:
 'Alas, from what high hope to what relapse 30
 Unlook'd for are we fall'n! our eyes beheld
 Messiah certainly now come, so long
 Expected of our fathers; we have heard
 His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth.
 "Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand, 35
 The kingdom shall to Israel be restor'd;"
 Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
 Into perplexity and new amaze:
 For whither is he gone, what accident
 Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire 40
 After appearance, and again prolong
 Our expectation? God of Israël,
 Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
 Behold the kings of th' earth, how they oppress
 Thy chosen; to what highth their pow'r unjust 45
 They have exalted, and behind them cast
 All fear of thee; arise, and vindicate
 Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke.
 But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
 Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him; 50
 By his great prophet, pointed at and shown
 In public, and with him we have convers'd;
 Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
 Lay on his providence; he will not fail,
 Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recall, 55
 Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
 Soon we shall see our hope, our joy, return.'

Thus they, out of their plaints, new hope resume
 To find whom at the first they found un-ought:
 But, to his mother Mary, when she saw 60
 Others return'd from baptism, not her son,
 Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none,
 Within her breast though calm, her breast though pure
 Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd
 Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus clad: 65
 'O, what avails me now that honour high,
 To have conceiv'd of God, or that salate,
 "Hail, highly favour'd, among women blest!"
 While I to sorrows am no less advanc'd,
 And fears as eminent, above the lot 70
 Of other women, by the birth I bore;
 In such a season born, when scarce a shed

Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
 From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
 A manger his; yet soon enforc'd to fly 75
 Thence into Egypt, till the murd'rous king
 Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
 With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem;
 From Egypt home return'd in Nazareth
 Hath been our dwelling many years; his life 80
 Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
 Little suspicious to any king; but now
 Full grown to man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
 By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
 Son own'd from heaven by his Father's voice, 85
 I look'd for some great change; to honour? no,
 But trouble, as old Simeon plain foretold,
 That to the fall and rising he should be
 Of many in Israel, and to a sign
 Spoken against, that through my very soul 90
 A sword shall pierce: this is my favour'd lot,
 My exaltation to afflictions high;
 Afflicted I may be, it seems, and blest;
 I will not argue that, nor will repine.
 But where delays he now? some great intent 95
 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 mus'd,
 Since understand; much more his absence now 100
 Thus long to some great purpose he obscures.
 But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
 My heart hath been a store-house long of things,
 And sayings laid up, portending strange events.
 Thus Mary, pond'ring oft, and oft to mind 105
 Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
 Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
 Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:
 The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,
 Sole, but with holiest meditations fed, 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, 115
 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, heav'n's ancient sons, ethereal thrones;
 Demonian spirits now, from th' element
 Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd
 Pow'rs of fire, air, water, and earth beneath
 (So may we hold our place and these mild seats 125
 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 frequency was impower'd, 130
 Have found him, view'd him, tasted him; but find
 Far other labour to be undergone
 Than when I dealt with Adam first of men,
 Though Adam by his wife's allurements fell,
 However to this man inferior far; 135
 If he be man by mother's side, at least
 With more than human gifts from heav'n adorn'd,
 Perfections absolute, graces divine,
 And amplitude of minds to greatest deeds.
 Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence 140
 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 145
 Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.'
 So spake th' old serpent, doubting; and from all
 With clamour was assur'd their utmost aid
 At his command: when from amidst them rose
 Belial, the dissolutes spirit that fell, 150
 The sensualest, and, after Asmodai,
 The fleshliest incubus; and thus advis'd:
 'Set women in his eye, and in his walk,
 Among daughters of men the fairest found:
 Many are in each region passing fair 155
 As the noon sky; more like to goddesses
 Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,
 Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
 Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
 And sweet allay'd, yet terrible t' approach, 160
 Skill'd to retire, and, in retiring, draw
 Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
 Such object hath the pow'r to soft'n and tame
 Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
 Eneerpe, and with voluptuous hope dissolve, 165
 Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
 At will the manliest, resolute breast,
 As the magnetic hardest iron draws.
 Women, when nothing else, beguild the heart
 Of wisest Solomon, and made him build, 170
 And made him how, to the gods of his wives.'
 To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd:
 'Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
 All others by thyself; because of old
 Thou thyself doat'st on womankind, admiring 175
 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 way-lay 185
 Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
 Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
 Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
 Too long, then lay'st thy 'scapes on names ador'd,
 Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan, 190
 Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts
 Delight not all; among the sons of men,
 How many have with a smile made small account
 Of beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
 All her assaults, on worthier things intent! 195
 Remember that Pellean conqueror,
 A youth, how all the beauties of the East
 He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd;
 How he, surnam'd of Africa, dismiss'd,
 In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid. 200
 For Solomon, he liv'd at ease, and full
 Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
 Higher design than to enjoy his state;
 Thence to the bait of women lay expos'd:
 But he, whom we attempt, is wiser far, 205
 Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
 Made and set wholly on th' accomplishment
 Of greatest things. What woman will you find,
 Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
 On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye 210
 Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
 As sitting queen ador'd on beauty's throne,
 Descend with all her winning charms begirt
 T' enamour, as the zone of Venus once 215
 Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell;
 How would one look from his majestic brow,
 Seated as on the top of virtue's hill,
 Discount'nance her despis'd, and put to rout
 All her array; her female pride deject,
 Or turn to reverent awe! for beauty stands 220
 In th' admiration only of weak minds
 Led captive; cease to admire, and all her plumes
 Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
 At every sudden slighting quite abash'd.
 Therefore with manlier objects we must try 225
 His constancy; with such as have more show
 Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise,
 Rocks whereon greatest men have ofttest wreck'd;
 Or that which only seems to satisfy
 Lawful desires of nature, not beyond; 230
 And now I know he hungers, where no food
 Is to be found, in the wide wilderness:
 The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
 No advantage, and his strength as oft assay.
 He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim; 235
 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 remain'd,
 Now hung'ring first, and to himself thus said:
 'Where will this end? four times ten days I've pass'd 245
 Wand'ring this woody maze, and human food
 Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast
 To virtue I impute not, or count part
 Of what I suffer here; if nature need not,
 Or God support nature without repast 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 255
 Without this body's wasting, I content me,
 And from the sting of famine fear no harm;
 Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
 Me hung'ring more to do my Father's will.'

It was the hour of night, when thus the Son 260
 Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
 Under the hospitable covert nigh
 Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
 And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
 Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet: 265
 Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
 And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
 Food to Elijah bringing, ev'n and morn,
 Though ravenous, taught t' abstain from what they brought:
 He saw the prophet also, how he fled 270
 Into the desert, and how there he slept
 Under a juniper; then how awak'd
 He found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
 And by the angel was bid rise and eat,
 And eat the second time after repose, 275
 The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days:
 Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
 Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
 Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
 Left his ground-nest, high tow'ring to descry 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 wak'd.
 Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd, 285
 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, determin'd there
 To rest at noon, and enter'd soon the shade

High roof'd, and walks beneath, and alleys brown,
 That open'd in the midst a woody scene;
 Nature's own work it seem'd (nature taught art), 295
 And, to a superstitious eye, the haunt
 Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs: he view'd it round,
 When suddenly a man before him stood;
 Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
 As one in city, or court, or palace bred, 300
 And with fair speech these words to him address'd:

'With granted leave officious I return,
 But much more wonder that the Son of God
 In this wild solitude so long should bide,
 Of all things destitute; and, well I know, 305
 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 famish'd, had not God
 Rain'd from heav'n manna; and that prophet bold,
 Native of Thebez, wand'ring here was fed
 Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
 Of thee these forty days none hath regard, 315
 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,' answer'd Jesus. 'Why should that
 Cause thy refusal?' said the subtle fiend.
 'Hast thou not right to all created things?
 Owe not all creatures by just right to thee 325
 Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,
 But tender all their pow'r? Nor mention I
 Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd first
 To idols, those young Daniel could refuse;
 Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who 330
 Would scruple that, with want oppress'd? Behold,
 Nature asham'd, or, better to express,
 Troubled, that thou shouldst hunger, hath purvey'd
 From all the elements her choicest store,
 To treat thee, as beseems, and as her Lord, 335
 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, 340
 A table richly spread, in regal mode,
 With dishes pil'd, and meats of noblest sort
 And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
 In pastry built; or from the spit, or boil'd,
 Gris-amber-steam'd; all fish, from sea or shore,
 Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin, 345
 And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
 Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast.

(Alas, how simple, to these cates compar'd,
 Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!)
 And at a stately sideboard, by the wine 350
 That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood
 Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
 Than Ganymed or Hylas; distant more
 Under the trees now tripp'd, now solemn stood,
 Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades, 355
 With fruits and flow'rs from Amalthea's horn,
 And ladies of th' Hesperides, that seem'd
 Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled since
 Of faery damsels, met in forest wide
 By knights of Logres, or of Lyones, 360
 Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore.
 And all the while harmonious airs were heard
 Of chiming strings, or charming pipes; and winds
 Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fann'd
 From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells. 365
 Such was the splendour; and the tempter now
 His invitation earnestly renew'd:
 'What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
 These are not fruits forbidden; no interdict
 Defends the touching of these viands pure; 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 375
 Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord;
 What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat.'
 To whom thus Jesus temp'rately replied:
 'Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
 And who withholdeth my pow'r 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 385
 Array'd in glory on my cup to attend:
 Why shouldst thou then obtrude this diligence,
 In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
 And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
 Thy pompous delicacies I contemn, 390
 And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.'
 To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent:
 'That I have also pow'r to give, thou seest:
 If of that pow'r I bring thee voluntary
 What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd, 395
 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 earn'd the far-fet spoil.' With that
 Both table and provision vanish'd quite

With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard:
 Only th' importune tempter still remain'd,
 And with these words his temptation pursu'd: 405
 'By hunger, that each other creature tames,
 Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
 Thy temperance invincible besides,
 For no allurement yields to appetite;
 And all thy heart is set on high designs, 410
 High actions: but wherewith to be achiev'd?
 Great acts require great means of enterprise;
 Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
 A carpenter thy father known, thyself
 Bred up in poverty and straits at home, 415
 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 rais'd Antipater the Edomite,
 And his son Herod plac'd on Judah's throne,
 Thy throne, but gold that got him puissant friends? 425
 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 gain'd. 435
 Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
 In highth of all their flowing wealth dissolv'd:
 But men endued with these have oft attain'd
 In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
 Gideon, and Jephthia, 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 445
 Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
 For I esteem those names of men so poor,
 Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
 Riches, though offer'd 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, 455
 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. 465
 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, 475
 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, 480
 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, 485
 'To gain a scepter, ofttest better miss'd.'

BOOK III.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, in a speech of much flattering commendation, endeavours to awaken in Jesus a passion for glory, by particularising various instances of conquests achieved, and great actions performed, by persons at an early period of life. Our Lord replies, by showing the vanity of worldly fame, and the improper means by which it is generally attained; and contrasts with it the true glory of religious patience and virtuous wisdom, as exemplified in the character of Job. Satan justifies the love of glory from the example of God himself, who requires it from all his creatures. Jesus detects the fallacy of this argument, by showing that, as goodness is the true ground on which glory is due to the great Creator of all things, sinful man can have no right whatever to it.—Satan then urges our Lord respecting his claim to the throne of David; he tells him that the kingdom of Judea, being at that time a province of Rome, cannot be got possession of without much personal exertion on his part, and presses him to lose no time in beginning to reign. Jesus refers him to the time allotted for this, as for all other things; and, after intimating somewhat respecting his own previous sufferings, asks Satan why he should be so solicitous for the exaltation of one, whose rising was destined to be his fall. Satan replies, that his own desperate state, by excluding all hope, leaves little room for fear; and that, as his own punishment was equally doomed, he is

not interested in preventing the reign of one, from whose apparent benevolence he might rather hope for some interference in his favour.—Satan still pursues his former incitements; and, supposing that the seeming reluctance of Jesus to be thus advanced might arise from his being unacquainted with the world and its glories, conveys him to the summit of a high mountain, and from thence shows him most of the kingdoms of Asia, particularly pointing out to his notice some extraordinary military preparations of the Parthians to resist the incursions of the Scythians. He then informs our Lord, that he showed him this purposely that he might see how necessary military exertions are to retain the possession of kingdoms, as well as to subdue them at first, and advises him to consider how impossible it was to maintain Judea against two such powerful neighbours as the Romans and Parthians, and how necessary it would be to form an alliance with one or other of them. At the same time he recommends, and engages to secure to him, that of the Parthians; and tells him that by this means his power will be defended from any thing that Rome or Caesar might attempt against it, and that he will be able to extend his glory wide, and especially to accomplish what was particularly necessary to make the throne of Judea really the throne of David, the deliverance and restoration of the ten tribes, still in a state of captivity. Jesus, having briefly noticed the vanity of military efforts, and the weakness of the arm of flesh, says, that when the time comes for his ascending his allotted throne, he shall not be slack: he remarks on Satan's extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of the Israelites, to whom he had always showed himself an enemy, and declares their servitude to be the consequence of their idolatry; but adds, that at a future time it may perhaps please God to recall them, and restore them to their liberty and native land.

SO spake the Son of God; and Satan stood
 A while as mute, confounded what to say,
 What to reply, confuted and convinc'd
 Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
 At length, collecting all his serpent wiles, 5
 With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts:
 'I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
 What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
 Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
 To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart 10
 Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
 Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
 Thy counsel would be as the oracle
 Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
 On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old, 15
 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 God-like virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
 Affecting private life, or more obscure
 In savage wilderness? wherefore deprive
 All earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
 The fame and glory, glory the reward 25
 That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
 Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
 Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
 All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
 And dignities and pow'rs 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 quell'd 35
 The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
 Yet years, and to ripe years judgement mature,
 Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
 Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
 The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd 40
 With glory, wept that he had liv'd so long
 Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.
 To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:
 'Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
 For empire's sake, nor empire to affect 45
 For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
 For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
 The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd?
 And what the people but a herd confus'd,
 A miscellaneous rabble, who extol 50
 Things vulgar, and, well weigh'd, scarce worth the praise?
 They praise, and they admire, they know not what,
 And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
 And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
 To live upon their tongues, and be their talk, 55
 Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise?
 His lot who dares be singularly good.
 Th' intelligent among them and the wise
 Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
 This is true glory and renown, when God, 60
 Looking on th' earth, with approbation marks
 The just man, and divulges him through heaven
 To all his angels, who with true applause
 Recount his praises: thus he did to Job,
 When to extend his fame through heav'n and earth, 65
 As thou to thy reproach mayst well remember,
 He ask'd thee, "Hast thou seen my servant Job?"
 Famous he was in heav'n, on earth less known;
 Where glory is false glory, attributed
 To things not glorious, men not worthy of fame. 70
 They err, who count it glorious to subdue
 By conquest far and wide, to over-run
 Large countries, and in fields great battles win,
 Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,
 But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave 75
 Peaceable nations, neighb'ring or remote,
 Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
 Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
 Nothing but ruin wheresoe'er they rove,
 And all the flourishing works of peace destroy; 80
 Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods,
 Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
 Worshipt with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
 One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
 Till conqu'ror Death discover them scarce men, 85

- Rolling in brutish vices and deform'd,
 Violent or shameful death their due reward.
 But if there be in glory aught of good,
 It may by means far different be attain'd,
 Without ambition, war, or violence; 90
 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? 95
 Poor Socrates (who next more memorable?),
 By what he taught, and suffer'd for so doing,
 For truth's sake suffering death, unjust, lives now
 Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.
 Yet if for fame and glory aught be done, 100
 Aught suffer'd; if young African for fame
 His wasted country freed from Punic rage;
 The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
 And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
 Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek, 105
 Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his
 Who sent me; and thereby witness whence I am.
 To whom the tempter murm'ring thus replied:
 'Think not so slight of glory; therein least
 Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory, 110
 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; 115
 Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift,
 Glory he requires, and glory he receives,
 Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,
 Or barbarous, nor exceptions hath declared;
 From us, his foes pronounc'd, glory he exacts.' 120
 To whom our Saviour fervently replied:
 'And reason; since his word all things produc'd,
 Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
 But to show forth his goodness, and impart
 His good communicable to every soul 125
 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 130
 Content instead, dishonour, obloquy?
 Hard recompense, unsuitable return
 For so much good, so much beneficence!
 But why should man seek glory, who of his own
 Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs 135
 But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
 Who for so many benefits receiv'd
 Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
 And so of all true good himself despoil'd;
 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 145
 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, ordain'd
 To sit upon thy father David's throne,
 By mother's side thy father; though thy right
 Be now in pow'ful hands, that will not part 155
 Easily from possession won with arms:
 Judea now and all the promis'd land,
 Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,
 Obeys Tiberius; nor is always rul'd
 With temp'rate 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 by sitting still, or thus retiring?
 So did not Maccabeus: he indeed 165
 Retir'd unto the desert, but with arms;
 And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
 That by strong hand his family obtain'd,
 Though priests, the crown, and David's throne usurp'd,
 With Modin and her surburbs one content. 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 175
 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?' 180

To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd:
 'All things are best fulfill'd in their due time;
 And time there is for all things, Truth hath said:
 If of my reign prophetic writ hath told,
 That it shall never end, so, when begin, 185
 The Father in his purpose hath decreed;
 He, in whose hand all times and reasons roll.
 What if he hath decreed that I shall first
 Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
 By tribulation, injuries, insults, 190
 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 195

Well hath obey'd; just trial, ere I merit
 My exaltation without change or end.
 But what concerns it thee, when I begin
 My everlasting kingdom? Why art thou
 Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition? 200
 Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
 And my promotion will be thy destruction?
 To whom the tempter, iuly rack'd, replied:
 'Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
 Of my reception into grace: what worse? 205
 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; 210
 The end I would attain, my final good.
 My error was my error, and my crime
 My crime; whatever, for itself condemn'd;
 And will alike be punish'd, whether thou
 Reign, or reign not; though to that gentle brow 215
 Willingly could I fly, and hope thy reign,
 From that placid aspect and meek regard,
 Rather than aggravate my evil state,
 Would stand between me and thy Father's ire
 (Whose ire I dread more than the fire of hell), 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, 225
 That thou, who worthiest art, shouldst be their king?
 Perhaps thou linger'st, in deep thoughts detain'd
 Of th' enterprise so hazardous and high!
 No wonder; for though in thee be united
 What of perfection can in man be found, 230
 Or human nature can receive, consider,
 Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
 At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,
 And once a year Jerusalem, few days'
 Short sojourn; and what thence couldst thou observe? 235
 The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
 Empires, and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
 Best school of best experience, quickest insight
 In all things that to greatest actions lead.
 The wisest, unexperienc'd, will be ever 240
 Timorous and loth, with novice modesty
 (As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom),
 Irresolute, unhardy, unadvent'rous:
 But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
 Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes 245
 The monarchies of th' earth, their pomp and state
 Sufficient introduction to inform
 Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts,
 And regal mysteries; that thou mayst know
 How best their opposition to withstand.' 250

With that (such pow'r was giv'n him then), he took
 The Son of God up to a mountain high.
 It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
 A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
 Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd, 255
 Th' one winding, th' other straight, and left between
 Fair champaign with less rivers intervein'd,
 Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea:
 Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine;
 With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the
 hills; 260
 Huge cities and high tow'r'd, that well might seem
 The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large
 The prospect was, that here and there was room
 For barren desert, fountainless and dry.
 To this high mountain top the tempter brought 265
 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, th' Arabian drought:
 Here Nineveh, of length within her wall 275
 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; 285
 Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
 And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;
 There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
 The drink of none but kings; of later fame,
 Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands, 290
 The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
 Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
 Turning with easy eye, thou mayst behold.
 All these the Parthian (now some ages past,
 By great Arsaces led, who founded first 295
 That empire) under his dominion holds,
 From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
 And just in time thou com'st to have a view
 Of his great pow'r; for now the Parthian king
 In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host 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, 305
 Of equal dread in flight or in pursuit;
 All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
 See how in warlike muster they appear,
 In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.

He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless 310
 The city-gates out-pour'd, light-armed troops,
 In coats of mail and military pride;
 In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
 Prancing their riders bore, the flow'r and choice
 Of many provinces from bound to bound; 315
 From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
 And Margiana, to the Hyrcanian cliffs
 Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
 From Atropatia, and the neighbouring plains
 Of Adiabene, Media, and the south 320
 Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.

He saw them in their forms of battle rang'd,
 How quick they wheel'd, and flying behind them shot
 Sharp sleet of arrowy show'rs against the face
 Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight; 325

The field all iron cast a gleaming brown:
 Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn
 Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
 Chariots, or elephants indors'd with towers
 Of archers; nor of lab'ring pioneers 330

A multitude, with spades and axes arm'd
 To lay hills plane, fell woods, or valleys fill,
 Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
 With bridges rivers proud, as with a yoke;
 Mules after these, camels and dromedaries, 335
 And waggons, fraught with utensils of war.

Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
 When Agrican with all his northern powers
 Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
 The city of Gallaphrone, from whence to win 340
 The fairest of her sex Angelica,

His daughter, sought by many prowest knight,
 Both Paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
 Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
 At sight whereof the fiend yet more presum'd, 345
 And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd:

'That thou mayst know I seek not to engage
 Thy virtue, and not every way secure
 On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark,
 To what end I have brought thee hither, and show 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; 355
 Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.
 But, say thou wert possess'd of David's throne,
 By free consent of all, none opposite,
 Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope

Long to enjoy it, quiet and secure, 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 365
 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 re-install thee
 In David's royal seat, his true successor,
 Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes
 Whose offspring in his territory yet serve, 375
 In Habor, and among the Medes dispers'd:
 Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
 Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
 Their fathers in the land of Egypt serv'd,
 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 Caesar need not fear,' 385
 To whom our Saviour answer'd thus, unmov'd:
 'Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
 And fragile arms, much instrument of war,
 Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
 Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear 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: 395
 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 scepter sway 405
 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 numb'ring 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 415
 From God to worship calves, the deities
 Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
 And all th' idolatries of heathen round,
 Besides their other worse than heath'nish crimes;
 Nor in the land of their captivity 420
 Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
 The God of their forefathers; but so did
 Impenitent, and left a race behind
 Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
 From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain; 425
 And God with idols in their worship join'd.
 Should I of these the liberty regard,
 Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
 Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,
 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),
 Rememb'ring Abraham, by some wondrous call
 May bring them back repentant and sincere, 435
 And at their passing cleave th' Assyrian flood,
 While to their native land with joy they haste;
 As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
 When to the promis'd land their fathers pass'd:
 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.

B O O K I V.

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

Satan, persisting in the temptation of our Lord, shows him imperial Rome in its greatest pomp and splendour, as a power which he probably would prefer before that of the Parthians; and tells him that he might with the greatest ease expel Tiberius, restore the Romans to their liberty, and make himself master not only of the Roman empire, but, by so doing, of the whole world, and inclusively of the throne of David. Our Lord, in reply, expresses his contempt of grandeur and worldly power, notices the luxury, vanity, and profligacy of the Romans, declaring how little they merited to be restored to that liberty which they had lost by their misconduct, and briefly refers to the greatness of his own future kingdom. Satan, now desperate, to enhance the value of his proffered gifts, professes that the only terms, on which he will bestow them, are our Saviour's falling down and worshipping him. Our Lord expresses a firm but temperate indignation at such a proposition, and rebukes the tempter by the title of 'Satan for ever damn'd.' Satan, abashed, attempts to justify himself: he then assumes a new ground of temptation, and proposing to Jesus the intellectual gratifications of wisdom and knowledge, points out to him the celebrated seat of ancient learning, Athens, its schools, and other various resorts of learned teachers and their disciples:

accompanying the view with a highly finished panegyric on the Grecian musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers of the different sects. Jesus replies, by showing the vanity and insufficiency of the boasted heathen philosophy; and prefers to the music, poetry, eloquence, and didactic policy of the Greeks, those of the inspired Hebrew writers. Satan, irritated at the failure of all his attempts, upbraids the indiscretion of our Saviour in rejecting his offers; and, having, in ridicule of his expected kingdom, foretold the sufferings that our Lord was to undergo, carries him back into the wilderness, and leaves him there. Night comes on: Satan raises a tremendous storm, and attempts further to alarm Jesus with frightful dreams, and terrific threatening spectres; which however have no effect upon him. A calm, bright, beautiful morning succeeds to the horrors of the night. Satan again presents himself to our blessed Lord, and, from noticing the storm of the preceding night as pointed chiefly at him, takes occasion once more to insult him with an account of the sufferings which he was certainly to undergo. This only draws from our Lord a brief rebuke. Satan, now at the heights of his desperation, confesses that he had frequently watched Jesus from his birth, purposely to discover if he was the true Messiah; and, collecting from what passed at the river Jordan that he most probably was so, he had from that time more assiduously followed him, in hopes of gaining some advantage over him, which would most effectually prove that he was not really that Divine Person destined to be his fatal enemy. In this he acknowledges that he has hitherto completely failed; but still determines to make one more trial of him. Accordingly he conveys him to the temple at Jerusalem, and, placing him on a pointed eminence, requires him to prove his divinity either by standing there, or casting himself down with safety. Our Lord reproves the tempter, and at the same time manifests his own divinity by standing on this dangerous point. Satan, amazed and terrified, instantly falls; and repairs to his infernal companions to relate the bad success of his enterprise. Angels in the mean time convey our blessed Lord to a beautiful valley, and, while they minister to him a repast of celestial food, celebrate his victory in a triumphant hymn.

PERPLEX'D and troubled at his bad success
The tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve, 5
So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve;
This far his over-match, who, self deceiv'd
And rash, beforehand had no better weigh'd
The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
But as a man, who had been matchless held 10
In cunning, over-reach'd where least he thought,
To salve his credit, and for every spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time, 15
About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dash'd, th' assault renew
(Vain batt'ry!) and in froth or bubbles end; 20
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,
Yet gives not o'er, though desp'rate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side 25

Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
 Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
 Wash'd by the southern sea, and, on the north,
 To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills
 That screen'd the fruits of th' earth, and seats of men, 30
 From cold septentrion blasts; thence in the midst
 Divided by a river, of whose banks
 On each side an imperial city stood,
 With tow'rs and temples proudly elevate
 On sev'n small hills, with palaces adorn'd, 35
 Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
 Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
 Gardens and groves, presented to his eyes,
 Above the highth of mountains interpos'd
 (By what strange parallax, or optic skill 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, 45
 So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd
 Of nations; there the Capitol thou seest,
 Above the rest lifting his stately head
 On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
 Impregnable; and there mount Palatine, 50
 Th' imperial palace, compass huge, and high
 The structure, skill of noblest architects,
 With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
 Turrets, and terraces, and glitt'ring spires:
 Many a fair edifice besides, more like 55
 Houses of gods (so well I have dispos'd
 My aery microscope), thou mayst behold,
 Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
 Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers,
 In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold. 60
 Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
 What conflux issuing forth, or ent'ring in;
 Praetors, proconsuls to their provinces
 Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
 Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their pow'r, 65
 Legions and cohorts, turms of horse and wings:
 Or embassies from regions far remote,
 In various habits, on the Appian road,
 Or on th' Emilian; some from farthest south,
 Syene, and where the shadow both way falls, 70
 Meroe, Nilotic isle; and, more to west,
 The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea;
 From th' Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
 From India and the Golden Chersonese,
 And utmost India isle Taprobane, 75
 Dusk faces with white silken turbans wreath'd;
 From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;
 Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians, north
 Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.
 All nations now to Rome obedience pay; 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 mayst prefer
 Before the Parthian. These two thrones except, 85
 The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
 Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd;
 These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
 The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
 This emp'rer hath no son, and now is old, 90
 Old and lascivious, and from Rome retir'd
 To Capreae, an island small, but strong,
 On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
 His horrid lusts in private to enjoy;
 Committing to a wicked favourite 95
 All public cares, and yet of him suspicious,
 Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,
 Endued with regal virtues, as thou art,
 Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
 Mightst thou expel this monster from his throne, 100
 Now made a sty, and, in his place ascending,
 A victor-people free from servile yoke!
 And with my help thou mayst; to me the power
 Is giv'n, and by that right I give it thee.
 Aim therefore at no less than all the world; 105
 Aim at the highest: without the highest attain'd,
 Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
 On David's throne, be prophesied what will.'

To whom the Son of God, unmov'd, replied:
 'Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show 110
 Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
 More than of arms before, allure mine eye,
 Much less my mind; though thou shouldst add to tell
 Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
 On citron tables or Atlantic stone 115
 (For I have also heard, perhaps have read),
 Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
 Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
 Crystal, and myrrhine cups, emboss'd with gems
 And studs of pearl; to me shouldst tell, who thirst 120
 And hunger still. Then embassies thou show'st
 From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
 But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
 So many hollow compliments and lies,
 Outlandish flatt'ries? Then proceed'st to talk 125
 Of th' emperor, how easily subdued,
 How gloriously: I shall, thou say'st, expel
 A brutal monster; what if I 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 temp'rate, conquer'd well,
 But govern ill the nations under yoke, 135

Pilling their provinces, exhausted all
 By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
 Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
 Then cruel, by their sports to blood inur'd
 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd; 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 enslav'd?
 Or could of inward slaves make outward free? 145
 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 155
 Thou valuest, because offer'd, and reject'st:
 Nothing will please thee, difficult and nice,
 Or nothing more than still to contradict:
 On th' 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, 165
 On this condition; if thou wilt fall down,
 And worship me as thy superior lord
 (Easily done), and hold them all of me;
 For what can less so great a gift deserve?'

Whom thus our Saviour answer'd with disdain: 170
 'I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less;
 Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
 Th' abominable terms, impious condition:
 But I endure the time, till which expir'd
 Thou hast permission on me. It is written, 175
 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 accurs'd? now more accurs'd
 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 usurp'd;
 Other donation none thou canst produce.
 If given, by whom but by the King of kings, 185
 God over all supreme? If giv'n to thee,
 By thee how fairly is the giver now
 Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost
 Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
 As offer them to me the Son of God? 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 damn'd.

To whom the fiend, with fear abash'd, replied: 195
 'Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
 Though sons of God both angels are and men,
 If I, to try whether in higher sort
 Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
 What both from men and angels I receive, 200
 Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth,
 Nations beside from all the quarter'd winds,
 God of this world invok'd, and world beneath:
 Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
 To me most fatal, me it most concerns; 205
 The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,
 Rather more honour left and more esteem;
 Me naught advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
 Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
 The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more 210
 Advise thee; gain them as thou canst, or not.
 And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclin'd
 Than to a worldly crown; addicted more
 To contemplation and profound dispute,
 As by that early action may be judg'd, 215
 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 couch'd in Moses' law, 225
 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 evinc'd. 235

Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
 Westward, much nearer by south-west, behold;
 Where on the Aegean shore a city stands,
 Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil;
 Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts 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 245

Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
 There flow'ry hill Hymettus, with the sound
 Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
 To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
 His whisp'ring stream: within the walls then view 250
 The schools of ancient sages; his who bred
 Great Alexander to subdue the world,
 Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
 There shalt thou hear and learn the secret power
 Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit 255
 By voice or hand; and various-measur'd verse,
 Aeolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
 And his who gave them breath, but higher sung,
 Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer call'd,
 Whose poem Phoebus challeng'd for his own: 260
 Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
 In chorus or iambic, teachers best
 Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
 In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
 Of fate, and chance, and change in human life, 265
 High actions, and high passions best describing:
 Thence to the famous orators repair,
 Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
 Wielded at will that fierce democratic,
 Shook the arsenal, and fulmin'd over Greece 270
 To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne:
 To sage philosophy next lend thine ear,
 From heav'n descended to the low-roof'd house
 Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
 Whom well inspir'd the oracle pronounc'd 275
 Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
 Mellifluous streams, that water'd all the schools
 Of Academics old and new, with those
 Surnam'd Peripatetics, and the sect
 Epicuréan, and the Stoic severe; 280
 These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
 Fill time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;
 These rules will render thee a king complete
 Within thyself, much more with empire join'd.
 To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied: 285
 '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 profess'd
 To know this only, that he nothing knew;
 The next to fabling fell, and smooth conceits; 295
 A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
 Others in virtue plac'd felicity,
 But virtue join'd with riches and long life;
 In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;
 The Stoic last, in philosophic pride, 300

By him call'd virtue; and his virtuous man,
 Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
 Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
 As fearing God nor man, contemning all
 Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life, 305
 Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
 For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
 Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
 Alas! what can they teach and not mislead,
 Ignorant of themselves, of God much more, 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; 315
 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
 And empty cloud. However, many books,
 Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
 Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
 A spirit and judgement equal or superior
 (And what he brings, what needs he elsewhere seek?) 325
 Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
 Deep vers'd in books, and shallow in himself,
 Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys
 And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
 As children gathering pebbles on the shore. 330
 Or, if I would delight my private hours
 With music or with poem, where so soon
 As in our native language, can I find
 That solace? All our law and story strew'd
 With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscrib'd, 335
 Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
 That pleas'd so well our victor's ear, declare
 That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd;
 Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
 The vices of their deities, and their own, 340
 In fable, hymn, or strong; so personating
 Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
 Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
 As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
 Thin sown with aught of profit or delight, 345
 Will far be found unworthy to compare
 With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
 Where God is prais'd aright, and God-like men,
 The holiest of holies, and his saints
 (Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee), 350
 Unless were moral virtue is express'd
 By light of nature, not in all quite lost.
 Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
 The top of eloquence; statists indeed,
 And lovers of their country, as may seem; 355

But herein to our prophets far beneath,
 As men divinely taught, and better teaching
 The solid rules of civil government,
 In their majestic unaffected style,
 Than all th' oratory of Greece and Rome. 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 365
 Quite at a loss (for all his darts were spent),
 Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied:
 'Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
 Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught
 By me propos'd in life contemplative 370
 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 375
 To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
 Nicely or cautiously, my offer'd aid,
 Which would have set thee in short time with ease
 On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
 Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season, 380
 When prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
 Now contrary, if I read aught in heaven,
 Or heav'n write aught of fate, by what the stars
 Voluminous, or single characters,
 In their conjunction met, give me to spell, 385
 Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate
 Attend thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
 Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death;
 A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
 Real or allegoric, I discern not; 390
 Nor when; eternal sure, as without end,
 Without beginning, for no date prefix'd
 Directs me in the starry rubric set.
 So saying, he took (for still he knew his power
 Not yet expir'd), and to the wilderness 395
 Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,
 Feigning to disappear Darkness now rose,
 As day-light 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 interwin'd might shield 405
 From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head;
 But, shelter'd, slept in vain; for at his head
 The tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
 Disturb'd his sleep. And either tropic now
 Gan thunder, and both ends of heav'n; the clouds, 410

From many a horrid rift, abortive pour'd
 Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire
 In ruin reconcil'd: nor slept the winds
 Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
 From the four hinges of the world, and fell 415
 On the vex'd wilderness, whose tallest pines,
 Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,
 Bow'd 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 420
 Unshaken! Nor yed staid the terror there;
 Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round
 Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some shriek'd,
 Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
 Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace! 425
 Thus pass'd the night so foul, till morning fair
 Came forth with pilgrim steps, in amice gray;
 Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
 Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
 And grisly spectres, which the fiend had rais'd 30
 To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
 And now the sun with more effectual beams
 Had cheer'd the face of earth, and dried the wet
 From drooping plant, or dropping tree; the birds,
 Who all things now behold more fresh and green, 435
 After a night of storms so ruinous,
 Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
 To gratulate the sweet return of morn.
 Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,
 Was absent, after all his mischief done, 440
 The prince of darkness: glad would also seem
 Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;
 Yet with no new device (they all were spent),
 Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
 Desp'rate of bett course, to vent his rage 445
 And mad despite to be so oft repell'd.
 Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
 Back'd on the north and west by a thick wood;
 Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
 And in a careless mood thus to him said: 450
 'Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
 After a dismal night: I heard the wrack,
 As earth and sky would mingle; but myself
 Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear them
 As dang'rous to the pillar'd frame of heaven, 455
 Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
 Are to the main as inconsiderable
 And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
 To man's less universe, and soon are gone;
 Yet, as being oft times noxious where they light 460
 On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
 Like turbulencies in th' affairs of men,
 Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
 They oft fore-signify and threaten ill:
 This tempest at this desert most was bent: 465

Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
 Did I not tell thee, if thou didst reject
 The perfect season offer'd with my aid
 To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
 All to the push of fate, pursue thy way 470
 Of gaining David's throne, no man knows when,
 For both the when and how is no where told?
 Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
 For angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
 The time and means. Each act is rightliest done, 475
 Not when it must, but when it may be best:
 If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
 What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
 Of dangers, and adversities, and pains,
 Ere thou of Israel's scepter get fast hold; 480
 Whereof this ominous night, that clos'd thee round
 So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
 May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign.
 So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
 And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus: 485
 'Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
 Those terrors, which thou speak'st of, did me none;
 I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
 And threat'ning nigh: what they can do as signs
 Betokening, or ill-boding, I contemn 490
 As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
 Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
 Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I, accepting,
 At least might seem to hold all pow'r of thee,
 Ambitious spirit! and wouldst be thought my god; 495
 And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrify
 Me to thy will! Desist (thou art discern'd,
 And toil'st in vain), nor me in vain molest.
 To whom the fiend, now sworn 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 had heard foretold
 By all the prophets; of thy birth at length,
 Announc'd by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
 And of th' angelic song in Bethlehem field, 505
 On thy birth-night that sung thee Saviour-born.
 From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
 Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
 Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
 Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all 510
 Flock to the Baptist, I, among the rest
 (Though not to be baptiz'd), by voice from heaven
 Heard thee pronounc'd the Son of God belov'd.
 Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
 And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn 515
 In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
 The Son of God, which bears no single sense.
 The son of God I also am, or was;
 And if I was, I am; relation stands;
 All men are sons of God; yet thee I thought 520

I some respect far higher so declar'd:
 Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
 And follow'd thee still on to this waste wild;
 Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
 Thou art to be my fatal enemy: 525
 Good reason then, if I beforehand seek
 To understand my adversary, who
 And what he is; his wisdom, pow'r, intent;
 By parl or composition; truce or league,
 To win him, or win from him what I can: 530
 And opportunity I here have had
 To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee
 Proof against all temptation, as a rock
 Of adamant, and, as a center, firm;
 To th' utmost of mere man both wise and good, 535
 Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
 Have been before contemn'd, and may again.
 Therefore to know what more thou art than man,
 Worth naming Son of God by voice from heaven,
 Another method I must now begin.' 540

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, 545
 And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
 Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
 Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
 There, on the highest pinnacle, he set
 The Son of God; and added thus in scorn: 550

'There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
 Will ask thee skill; I to thy Father's house
 Have brought thee, and highest plac'd: highest is best:
 Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
 Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God: 555
 For it is written, He will give command
 Concerning thee to his angels, in their hands
 They shall uplift thee, last at any time
 Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone.' 560

To whom thus Jesus: 'Also it is written,
 Tempt not the Lord thy God.' He said, and stood:
 But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
 As when earth's son, Antaeus (to compare
 Small things with greatest), in Irassa strove 565
 With Jove's Alcides, and, oft foil'd, still rose,
 Receiving from his mother Earth new strength,
 Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,
 Throttled at length in th' air, expir'd and fell;
 So, after many a foil, the tempter proud,
 Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride, 570
 Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
 And as that Theban monster, that propos'd
 Her riddle, and him who solv'd it not devour'd,
 That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spite
 Cast herself headlong from th' Ismenian steep; 575

So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the fiend,
 And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
 (Joyless triumphals of his hop'd success)
 Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
 Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God. 580
 So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
 Of angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
 Who on their plummy vans receiv'd him soft
 From his uneasy station, and upbore,
 As on a floating couch, through the blithe air; 585
 Then, in a flow'ry valley, set him down
 On a green bank, and set before him spread
 A table of celestial food, divine
 Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
 And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink, 590
 That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd
 What hunger, if aught hunger, had impair'd,
 Or thirst; and, as he fed, angelic quires
 Sung heav'nly anthems of his victory
 Over temptation and the tempter proud: 595
 ' True image of the Father; whether thron'd
 In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
 Conceiving, or, remote from heav'n, enshrin'd
 In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
 Wand'ring the wilderness; whatever place, 600
 Habit, or state, or motion, still expressing
 The Son of God, with God-like force endued
 Against th' attempter of thy Father's throne,
 And thief of Paradise! Him long of old
 'Thou didst rebel, and down from heaven cast 605
 With all his army; now thou hast aveng'd
 Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
 Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
 And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.
 He never more henceforth will dare set foot 610
 In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
 For, though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
 A fairer Paradise is founded now
 For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
 A Saviour, art come down to re-install, 615
 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 heav'n, trod down 620
 Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'st
 Thy wound (yet not thy last and deadliest wound),
 By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in hell
 No triumph: in all her gates Abaddon rues
 Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe 625
 To dread the Son of God: he, all unarm'd,
 Shall chase thee, with the terror of his voice,
 From thy demoniac holds, possession foul,
 Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
 And beg to hide them in a herd of swine, 630

Lest he command them down into the deep,
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,
Queller of Satan! on thy glorious work
Now enter; and begin to save mankind.' 635

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

SAMSON AGONISTES,

A

DRAMATIC POEM.

ARGUMENT.

Samson, made captive, blind, and now in the prison at Gaza, there to labour as in a common workhouse, on a festival day, in the general cessation from labour, comes forth into the open air, to a place nigh, somewhat retired, there to sit a while and 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 Manoah, who endeavours the like, and withal tells him his purpose to procure his liberty by ransom; lastly, that this feast was proclaimed by the Philistines as a day of thanksgiving for their deliverance from the hands of Samson, which yet more troubles him. Manoah then departs to prosecute his endeavour with the Philistine lords for Samson's redemption; who in the meanwhile is visited by other persons; and lastly by a public officer to require his coming to the feast before the lords and people, to play or show his strength in their presence; he at first 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, Manoah returns full of joyful hope, to procure ere long his son's deliverance: in the midst of which discourse an Hebrew comes in haste, confusedly at first, and afterward more distinctly, relating the catastrophe, what Samson had done to the Philistines, and by accident to himself; wherewith the tragedy ends.

<i>Samson.</i>		<i>Harapha of Gath.</i>
<i>Manoah, the father of</i>		<i>Public Officer.</i>
<i>Samson.</i>		<i>Messenger.</i>
<i>Dalila, his wife.</i>		<i>Chorus of Danites.</i>

The scene, before the Prison in Gaza.

Samson. Attendant leading him.

A LITTLE onward lend thy guiding hand
To these dark steps, a little further on;
For yonder bank hath choice of sun or shade:
There I am wont to sit, when any chance
Relieves me from my task of servile toil,
Daily in the common prison else enjoin'd me,
Where I, a prisoner chain'd, scarce freely draw
The air imprison'd also, close and damp,
Unwholesome draught: but here I feel amends,
The breath of heav'n fresh blowing, pure and sweet, 10

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 15
 Retiring from the popular noise, I seek
 This unfrequented place to find some ease,
 Ease to the body some, none to the mind
 From restless thoughts, that, like a deadly swarm
 Of hornets arm'd, no sooner found alone, 20
 But rush upon me thronging, and present
 Times past, what once I was, and what am now.
 O, wherefore was my birth from heav'n foretold
 Twice by an angel, who at last in sight
 Of both my parents all in flames ascended 25
 From off the altar, where an offering burn'd,
 As in a fiery column charioting
 His God-like presence, and from some great act
 Or benefit reveal'd to Abraham's race?
 Why was my breeding order'd and prescrib'd 30
 As of a person separate to God,
 Design'd for great exploits; if I must die
 Betray'd, captiv'd, and both my eyes put out,
 Made of my enemies the scorn and gaze;
 To grind in brazen fetters under task 35
 With this heav'n-gifted strength? O glorious strength,
 Put to the labour of a beast, debas'd
 Lower than bond-slave! Promise was, that I
 Should Israel from Philistian yoke deliver;
 Ask for this great deliverer now, and find him 40
 Eyeless in Gaza at the mill with slaves,
 Himself in bonds under Philistian yoke.
 Yet stay, let me not rashly call in doubt
 Divine prediction; what if all foretold
 Had been fulfill'd but through mine own default, 45
 Whom have I to complain of but myself?
 Who this high gift of strength committed to me,
 In what part lodg'd, how easily bereft me,
 Under the seal of silence could not keep,
 But weakly to a woman must reveal it, 50
 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 55
 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 60
 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 65

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, 70
 And all her various objects of delight
 Annull'd, which might in part my grief have eas'd,
 Inferior to the vilest now become
 Of man or worm; the vilest here excel me;
 They creep, yet see; I, dark in light, expos'd 75
 To daily fraud, contempt, abuse, and wrong,
 Within doors, or without, still as a fool,
 In pow'r of others, never in my own;
 Scarce half I seem to live, dead more then half.
 O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon,
 Irrecoverably dark, total eclipse 80
 Without all hope of day!
 O first created beam, and thou great Word,
 'Let there be light, and light was over all';
 Why am I thus bereav'd thy prime decree? 85
 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, 90
 And almost life itself, if it be true
 That light is in the soul,
 She all in every part; why was the sight
 To such a tender ball as th' eye confin'd,
 So obvious and so easy to be quench'd 95
 And not, as feeling, through all parts diffus'd,
 That she might look at will through every pore?
 Then had I not been thus exil'd from light,
 As in the land of darkness, yet in light,
 To live a life half dead, a living death, 100
 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; 105
 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 110
 The tread of many feet steering this way;
 Perhaps my enemies, who come to stare
 At my affliction, and perhaps t' insult,
 Their daily practice to afflict me more.

Enter Chorus.

Chor. This, this is he; softly a while, 115
 Let us not break in upon him:
 O change beyond report, thought, or belief!
 See how he lies at random, carelessly diffus'd,

With languish'd head unpropt,
 As one past hope abandon'd, 120
 And by himself given over;
 In slavish habit, ill-fitted weeds
 O'er-worn and soil'd;
 Or do my eyes misrepresent? Can this be he,
 That heroic, that renown'd, 125
 Irresistible Samson? whom unarm'd
 No strength of man, or fiercest wild beast, could withstand;
 Who tore the lion, as the lion tears the kid;
 Ran on embattled armies clad in iron;
 And, weaponless himself, 130
 Made arms ridiculous, useless the forgery
 Of brazen shield and spear, the hammer'd cuirass,
 Chalybean-temper'd steel, and frock of mail
 Adamantéan proof?
 But safest he who stood aloof, 135
 When insupportably his foot advanc'd,
 In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools,
 Spurn'd them to death by troops. The bold Ascalonite
 Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turn'd
 Their plated backs under his heel; 140
 Or, grov'ling, soil'd their crested helmets in the dust.
 Then with what trivial weapon came to hand,
 The jaw of a dead ass, his sword of bone,
 A thousand fore-skins fell, the flow'r of Palestine,
 In Ramath-lechi, famous to this day. 145
 Then by main force pull'd up, and on his shoulders bore
 The gates of Azza, post, and massy bar,
 Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old,
 No journey of a sabbath-day, and loaded so;
 Like whom the Gentiles feign to bear up heaven. 150
 Which shall I first bewail,
 Thy bondage or lost sight,
 Prison within prison
 Inseparably dark?
 Thou art become (O worst imprisonment!) 155
 The dungeon of thyself; thy soul
 (Which men enjoying sight oft without cause complain),
 Imprison'd now indeed,
 In real darkness of the body dwells,
 Shut up from outward light 160
 T' incorporate with gloomy night;
 For inward light, alas!
 Puts forth no visual beam.
 O mirror of our fickle state,
 Since man on earth unparallel'd! 165
 The rarer thy example stands,
 By how much from the top of wondrous glory,
 Strongest of mortal men,
 To lowest pitch of abject fortune thou art fall'n.
 For him I reckon not in high estate 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 crown'd with highest praises. 175

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 pow'r to swage
The tumours of a troubled mind, 185
And are as balm to fester'd 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 prosp'rous days
They swarm, but in adverse withdraw their head,
Not to be found, though sought. Yet see, O friends,
How many evils have enclos'd me round;
Yet that which was the worst now least afflicts me, 195
Blindness; for had I sight, confus'd with shame,
How could I once look up, or heave the head,
Who, like a foolish pilot, have shipwreck'd
My vessel trusted to me from above,
Gloriously rigg'd; and for a word, a tear, 200
Fool! have divulg'd the secret gift of God
To a deceitful woman? Tell me, friends,
Am I not sung and proverb'd for a fool
In every street? do they not say, how well
Are come upon him his deserts? Yet why? 205
Immeasurable strength they might behold
In me, of wisdom nothing more than mean;
This with the other should at least have pair'd,
These two, proportion'd ill, drove me transverse.

Chor. Tax not divine disposal; wisest men 210
Have err'd, and by bad women been deceiv'd;
And shall again, pretend they ne'er so wise.
Deject not then so overmuch thyself,
Who hast of sorrow thy full load besides:
Yet, truth to say, I oft have heard men wonder 215
Why thou shouldst wed Philistian women rather
Than of thine own tribe fairer, or as fair,
At least of thy own nation, and as noble.

Sams. The first I saw at Timna, and she pleas'd
Me, not my parents, that I sought to wed 220
The daughter of an infidel: they knew not
That what I motion'd was of God; I knew
From intimate impulse, and therefore urg'd
The marriage on; that by occasion hence
I might begin Israel's deliverance, 225
The work to which I was divinely call'd.
She proving false, the next I took to wife
(O that I never had! fond wish too late)

Was in the vale of Sorec, Dalila,
 That specious monster, my accomplish'd snare. 230
 I thought it lawful from my former act,
 And the same end; still watching to oppress
 Israel's oppressors: of what now I suffer
 She was not the prime cause, but I myself,
 Who, vanquish'd with a peal of words (O weakness!) 235
 Gave up my fort of silence to a woman.

Chor. In seeking just occasion to provoke
 The Philistine, thy country's enemy,
 Thou never wast amiss, I bear thee witness:
 Yet Israël still serves with all his sons. 240

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,
 Acknowledg'd not, or not at all consider'd, 245
 Deliverance offer'd: I on th' other side
 Us'd no ambition to commend my deeds;
 The deeds themselves, though mute, spoke loud the doer:
 But they persisted deaf, and would not seem
 To count them things worth notice, till at length 250
 Their lords the Philistines with gather'd pow'rs
 Enter'd Judea seeking me, who then
 Safe to the rock of Etham was retir'd;
 Not flying, but forecasting in what place
 To set upon them, what advantag'd best. 255

Meanwhile the men of Judah; to prevent
 The harass of their land, beset me round;
 I willingly on some conditions came
 Into their hands, and they as gladly yield me
 To the uncircumcis'd a welcome prey, 260
 Bound with two cords; but cords to me were threads
 Touch'd with the flame: on their whole host I flew
 Unarm'd, and with a trivial weapon fell'd
 Their choicest youth; they only liv'd who fled.
 Had Judah that day join'd, or one whole tribe, 265
 They had by this possess'd the tow'rs of Gath,
 And lorded over them whom they now serve;
 But what more oft, in nations grown corrupt,
 And by their vices brought to servitude,
 Than to love bondage more than liberty, 270
 Bondage with ease than strenuous liberty;
 And to despise, or envy, or suspect,
 Whom God hath of his special favour rais'd
 As their deliverer? if he aught begin,
 How frequent to desert him, and at last 275
 To heap ingratitude on worthiest deeds?

Chor. Thy words to my remembrance bring
 How Succoth and the fort of Penuel
 Their great deliverer contemn'd,
 The matchless Gideon, in pursuit 280
 Of Madian, and her vanquish'd 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, 285
 Had not his prowess quell'd their pride
 In that sore battle, when so many died
 Without reprieve, adjudg'd to death,
 For want of well pronouncing Shibboleth.
Sams. Of such examples add me to the roll; 290
 Me easily indeed mine may neglect,
 But God's propos'd deliverance not so.
Chor. Just are the ways of God,
 And justifiable to men;
 Unless there be, who think not God at all: 295
 If any be, they walk obscure;
 For of such doctrine never was there school,
 But the heart of the fool,
 And no man therein doctor but himself.
 Yet more there be, who doubt his ways not just, 300
 As to his own edicts found contradicting,
 Then give the reins to wand'ring thought,
 Regardless of his glory's diminution;
 Till by their own perplexities involv'd,
 They ravel more, still less resolv'd, 305
 But never find self-satisfying solution.
 As if they would confine th' Interminable,
 And tie him to his own prescript,
 Who made our laws to bind us, not himself,
 And had full right t' exempt 310
 Whom so it pleases him by choice
 From national obstruction, without taint
 Of sin, or legal debt;
 For with his own laws he had best dispense.
 He would not else, who never wanted means, 315
 Nor in respect of th' enemy just cause,
 To set his people free,
 Have prompted this heroic Nazarite,
 Against his vow of strictest purity,
 To seek in marriage that fallacious bride, 320
 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, 325
 But see, here comes thy reverend sire
 With careful step, locks white as down,
 Old Manoah: advise
 Forthwith how thou ought'st to receive him.
Sams. Ay me! another inward grief, awak'd 330
 With mention of that name, renews th' assault.

Enter Manoah.

- 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 inform'd 335
 Your younger feet, while mine cast back with ago

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, 340

That invincible Samson, far renown'd,
The dread of Israel's foes, who with a strength
Equivalent to angels walk'd their streets,
None offering fight; who single combatant
Duell'd their armies rank'd in proud array, 345

Himself an army, now unequal match
To save himself against a coward arm'd
At one spear's length. O ever-failing trust
In mortal strength! and oh! what not in man
Deceivable and vain? Nay, what thing good 350
Pray'd for, but often proves our bane?

I pray'd for children, and thought barrenness
In wedlock a reproach; I gain'd a son,
And such a son as all men hail'd me happy;
Who would be now a father in my stead? 355

O wherefore did God grant me my request,
And as a blessing with such pomp adorn'd?

Why are his gifts desirable, to tempt
Our earnest pray'rs, then, giv'n with solemn hand
As graces, draw a scorpion's tail behind? 360

For this did th' Angel twice descend? for this
Ordain'd thy nurture holy, as of a plant
Select, and sacred, glorious for a while,
The miracle of men; then in an hour

Ensnar'd, assaulted, overcome, led bound, 365
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 370
Subject him to so foul indignities,

Be it but for honour's sake of former deeds.

Sams. Appoint not heav'nly disposition, father;
Nothing of all these evils hath befall'n me
But justly; I myself have brought them on, 375
Sole author I, sole cause; if aught seem vile,

As vile hath been my folly, who have profan'd
The mystery of God giv'n me under pledge

Of vow, and have betray'd it to a woman,
A Canaanite, my faithless enemy. 380

This well I knew, nor was at all surpris'd,
But warn'd by oft experience: did not she
Of Timna first betray me, and reveal

The secret wrested from me in her highth
Of nuptial love profess'd, carrying if straight 385
To them who had corrupted her, my spies,

And rivals? In this other was there found
More faith, who also in her prime of love,
Spousal embraces, vitiated with gold,

Though offer'd only, by the scent conceiv'd 390
Her spurious first-born, treason against me?

- Thrice she assay'd with flattering pray'rs and sighs,
 And amorous reproaches, to win from me
 My capital secret; in what part my strength
 Lay stor'd, in what part summ'd, that she might
 know; 395
- Thrice I deluded her, and turn'd to sport
 Her importunity, each time perceiving
 How openly, and with what impudence
 She purpos'd to betray me and (which was worse
 Than undissembled hate), with what contempt 400
 She sought to make me traitor to myself;
 Yet the fourth time, when, must'ring all her wiles,
 With blandish'd parlies, feminine assaults,
 Tongue-batteries, she surceas'd not day nor night
 To storm me over-watch'd, and wearied out, 405
 At times when men seek most repose and rest,
 I yielded, and unlock'd her all my heart,
 Who, with a grain of manhood well resolv'd,
 Might easily have shook off all her snares:
 But foul effeminacy held me yok'd 410
 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 fall'n,
 These rags, this grinding is not yet so base 415
 As was my former servitude, ignoble,
 Unmanly, ignominious, infamous,
 True slavery, and that blindness worse than this,
 That saw not how degenerately I serv'd.
- Man.* I cannot praise thy marriage-choices, son, 420
 Rather approv'd them not; but thou didst plead
 Divine impulsion prompting how thou mightst
 Find some occasion to infest our foes.
 I state not that; this I am sure, our foes
 Found soon occasion thereby to make thee 425
 Their captive, and their triumph; thou the sooner
 Temptation found'st, or over-potent charms,
 To violate the sacred trust of silence
 Deposited within thee; which to have kept
 Tacit, was in thy pow'r: true; and thou bear'st 430
 Enough, and more, the burthen of that fault;
 Bitterly hast thou paid, and still art paying,
 That rigid scare. A worse thing yet remains:
 This day the Philistines a popular feast
 Here celebrate in Gaza; and proclaim 435
 Great pomp, and sacrifice, and praises loud,
 To Dagon, as their god who hath deliver'd
 Thee, Samson, bound and blind into their hands,
 Them out of thine, who slew'st them many a slain.
 So Dagon shall be magnified, and God, 440
 Besides whom is no god, compar'd with idols,
 Disglorified, blasphem'd, and had in scorn
 By the idolatrous rout amidst their wine;
 Which to have come to pass by means of thee,
 Samson, of all thy sufferings think the heaviest, 445

Of all reproach the most with shame that ever
 Could have befall'n 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 advanc'd his praises high 450
 Among the heathen round; to God have brought
 Dishonour, obloquy, and op'd the mouths
 Of idolists and atheists; have brought scandal
 To Israel, diffidence of God, and doubt
 In feeble hearts, propense enough before 455
 To waver, or fall off and join with idols;
 Which is my chief affliction, shame and sorrow,
 The anguish of my soul, that suffers not
 Mine eye to harbour sleep, or thoughts to rest.
 This only hope relives me, that the strife 460
 With me hath end; all the contést is now
 'Twixt God and Dagon; Dagon hath presum'd,
 Me overthrown, to enter lists with God,
 His deity comparing and preferring
 Before the God of Abraham. He, be sure, 465
 Will not connive, or linger, thus provok'd;
 But will arise, and his great name assert:
 Dagon must stoop, and shall ere long receive
 Such a discomfit, as shall quite despoil him
 Of all these boasted trophies won on me, 470
 And with confusion blank his worshippers.

Man. With cause this hope relieves thee, and these words
 I as a prophecy receive; for God,
 Nothing more certain, will not long defer
 To vindicate the glory of his name 475
 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 485
 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 reveal'd
 Secrets of men, the secrets of a friend,
 How heinous had the fact been, how deserving
 Contempt and scorn of all, to be excluded
 All friendship, and avoided as a blab, 495
 The mark of fool set on his front! But I
 God's counsel have not kept, his holy secret
 Presumptuously have publish'd, impiously,
 Weakly at least, and shamefully; a sin
 That Gentiles in their parables condemn 500

To their abyss and horrid pains confin'd.

Man. Be penitent, and for thy fault contrite;

But act not in thy own affliction, son:

Repent the sin; but, if the punishment

Thou canst avoid, self-preservation bids;

505

Or th' execution leave to high disposal,

And let another hand, not thine, exact

Thy penal forfeit from thyself: perhaps

God will relent, and quit thee all his debt;

Who ever more approves, and more accepts

510

(Best pleas'd 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-displeas'd

For self-offense, more than for God offended.

515

Reject not then what offer'd means; who knows

But God hath sent before us, to return thee

Home to thy country and his sacred house,

Where thou mayst bring thy off'rings, to avert

His further ire, with pray'rs and vows renew'd?

520

Sams. His pardon I implore; but as for life,

To what end should I seek it? When in strength

All mortals I excell'd, and great in hopes

With youthful courage and magnanimous thoughts

Of birth from heaven foretold, and high exploits,

525

Full of divine instinct, after some proof

Of acts indeed heroic, far beyond

The sons of Anak, famous now and blaz'd,

Fearless of danger, like a petty god

I walk'd about, admir'd of all, and dreaded

530

On hostile ground, none daring my affront.

Then swoll'n with pride, into the snare I fell

Of fair fallacious looks, venereal trains,

Soften'd with pleasure and voluptuous life;

At length to lay my head and hallow'd pledge

535

Of all my strength in the lascivious lap

Of a deceitful concubine, who shore me

Like a tame wether, all my precious fleece,

Then turn'd me out ridiculous, despoil'd,

Shav'n, and disarm'd among my enemies.

540

Chor. Desire of wine and all delicious drinks,

Which many a famous warrior overturns,

Thou couldst repress; nor did the dancing ruby

Sparkling, out-pour'd, the flavour, or the smell,

Or taste that cheers the heart of gods and men,

545

Allure thee from the cool crystalline stream.

Sams. Wherever fountain or fresh current flow'd

Against the eastern ray, translucent, pure

With touch ethereal of heav'n's fiery rod,

I drank, from the clear milky juice allaying

550

Thirst, and refresh'd: nor envied them the grape

Whose heads that turbulent liquor fills with fumes.

Chor. O madness, to think use of strongest wines,

And strongest drinks, our chief support of health,

When God with these forbidden made choice to rear

555

His mighty champion, strong above compare,
Whose drink was only from the liquid brook.

Sams. But what avail'd this temp'rance, not complete
Against another object more enticing?

What boots it at one gate to make defence, 560
And at another to let in the foe,

Effeminately vanquish'd? by which means,
Now blind, dishearten'd, sham'd, dishonour'd, quell'd
To what can I be useful, wherein serve
My nation, and the work from Heav'n impos'd, 565

But to sit idle on the household hearth,
A bourd'nous drone; to visitants a gaze,
Or pitied object, these redundant locks
Robustious to no purpose clust'ring 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 575

Hasten the welcome end of all my pains.

Man. Wilt thou then serve the Philistines with that gift
Which was expressly giv'n thee to annoy them?

Better at home lie bed-rid, not only idle,
Inglorious, unemploy'd, with age outworn. 580

But God, who caus'd a fountain at thy prayer
From the dry ground to spring, thy thirst t' 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; 585

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 th' 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 595

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, 600

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. 605
[Exit.

Sams. O that torment should not be confin'd
To the body's wounds and sores,

With maladies innumerable
In heart, head, breast, and reins;

- But must secret passage find 610
 To th' inmost mind,
 There exercise all his fierce accidents,
 And on her purest spirits prey,
 As on entrails, joints, and limbs
 With answerable pains, but more intense, 615
 Though void of corporal sense.
 My griefs not only pain me,
 As a ling'ring disease,
 But, finding no redress, ferment and rage;
 Nor less than wounds immedicable 620
 Rankle, and fester, and gangrene,
 To black mortification.
 Thoughts, my tormentors, arm'd with deadly stings,
 Mangle my apprehensive tenderest parts,
 Exasperate, exulcerate, and raise 625
 Dire inflammation, which no cooling herb
 Or medicinal liquor can assuage,
 Nor breath of vernal air from snowy Alp.
 Sleep hath forsook and giv'n me o'er
 To death's benumbing opium as my only cure: 630
 Thence faintings, swoonings of despair,
 And sense of Heav'n's desertion.
 I was his nursling once, and choice delight,
 His destin'd from the womb,
 Promis'd by heav'nly message twice descending. 635
 Under his special eye
 Abstemious I grew up, and thriv'd amain;
 He led me on to mightiest deeds,
 Above the nerve of mortal arm,
 Against th' uncircumcis'd, our enemies: 640
 But now hath cast me off as never known,
 And to those cruel enemies,
 Whom I by his appointment had provok'd,
 Left me all helpless, with th' irreparable loss
 Of sight, reserv'd alive to be repeated 645
 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, 650
 The close of all my miseries, and the balm.
Chor. Many are the sayings of the wise,
 In ancient and in modern books enroll'd,
 Extolling patience as the truest fortitude;
 And to the bearing well of all calamities, 655
 All chances incident to man's frail life,
 Consolatories writ
 With studied argument, and much persuasion sought,
 Lenient of grief and anxious thought:
 But with th' afflicted in his pangs their sound 660
 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, 665
And fainting spirits uphold.

God of our fathers, what is man!
That thou towards him with hand so various,
Or might I say contrarious,
Temper'st thy providence through his short course, 670
Not ev'nly, as thou rul'st
Th' angelic orders, and inferior creatures mute,
Irrational and brute.

Nor do I name of men the common rout,
That, wand'ring loose about, 675

Grow up and perish, as the summer-fly,
Heads without name, no more remember'd;
But such as thou hast solemnly elected,
With gifts and graces eminently adorn'd, 680

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 count'nance, and thy hand, with no regard
Of highest favours past 685

From thee on them, or them to thee of service.

Nor only dost degrade them, or remit
To life obscur'd, which were a fair dismissal,
But throw'st them lower than thou didst exalt them high,
Unseemly falls in human eye, 690

Too grievous for the trespass or omission;
Oft leav'st them to the hostile sword
Of heathen and profane, their carcasses
To dogs and fowls a prey, or else captiv'd;
Or to th' unjust tribunals, under change of times, 695
And condemnation of th' ingrateful multitude.

If these they 'scape, perhaps in poverty
With sickness and disease thou bow'st them down,
Painful diseases and deform'd,
In crude old age; 700

Though not disordinate, yet causeless suff'ring
The punishment of dissolute days: in fine,
Just or unjust, alike seem miserable,
For oft alike both come to evil end.

So deal not with this once thy glorious champion, 705
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 bedeck'd, ornate, and gay,
Comes this way sailing,
Like a stately ship
Of Tarsus, bound for th' isles 715

Of Javan or Gadire,
With all her bravery on, and tackle trim,
Sails fill'd, and streamers waving,
Court'd by all the winds, that hold them play,

An amber scent of odorous perfume 720
 Her harbinger, a damsel train behind;
 Some rich Philistian matron she may seem;
 And now at nearer view, no other certain
 Than Dalila thy wife.

Sams. My wife! my traitress: let her not come near me. 725

Chor. Yet on she moves, now stands and eyes thee fix'd,
 About t' have spoke; but now, with head declin'd,
 Like a fair flow'r surcharg'd with dew, she weeps,
 And words address'd seem into tears dissolv'd,
 Wetting the borders of her silken veil: 730
 But now again she makes address to speak.

Enter Dalila.

Dal. With doubtful feet and wavering resolution
 I came, still dreading thy displeasure, Samson,
 Which to have merited, without excuse,
 I cannot but acknowledge; yet, if tears 735
 May expiate (though the fact more evil drew
 In the perverse event than I foresaw),
 My penance hath not slacken'd, though my pardon
 No way assur'd. But conjugal affection,
 Prevailing over fear and timorous doubt, 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, 745
 Though late, yet in some part to recompense
 My rash, but more unfortunate misdeed.

Sams. Out, out, hyaena! these are thy wonted arts,
 And arts of every woman false like thee,
 To break all faith, all vows, deceive, betray, 750
 Then as repentant to submit, beseech,
 And reconciliation move with feign'd remorse,
 Confess, and promise wonders in her change;
 Not truly penitent, but chief to try
 Her husband, how far urg'd his patience bears, 755
 His virtue or weakness which way to assail:
 Then with more cautious and instructed skill
 Again transgresses, and again submits;
 That wisest and best men, full oft beguil'd,
 With goodness principled not to reject 760
 The penitent, but ever to forgive,
 Are drawn to wear out miserable days,
 Entangled with a pois'nous bosom-snake,
 If not by quick destruction soon cut off,
 As I by thee, to ages an example. 765

Dal. Yet hear me, Samson; not that I endeavour
 To lessen or extenuate my offence,
 But that on th' other side, if it be weigh'd
 By itself, with aggravations not surcharg'd,
 Or else with just allowance counterpois'd, 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, impórtune 775
 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 reveal'd, and should not:
 Nor shouldst thou have trusted that to woman's frailty:
 Ere I to thee, thou to thyself wast cruel.
 Let weakness then with weakness come to parle, 785
 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, pow'ful of sway
 In human hearts, nor less in mine tow'rd's thee,
 Caus'd what I did? I saw thee mutable
 Of fancy, fear'd lest one day thou wouldst leave me
 As her at Timna, sought by all means therefore 795
 How to endear, and hold thee to me firmest:
 No better way I saw than by impórtuning
 To learn thy secrets, get into my power
 Thy key of strength and safety. Thou wilt say,
 Why then reveal'd? I was assur'd by those 800
 Who tempted me, that nothing was design'd
 Against thee but safe custody, and hold:
 That made for me; I knew that liberty
 Would draw thee forth to perilous enterprises,
 While I at home sat full of cares and fears, 805
 Wailing thy absence in my widow'd bed;
 Here I should still enjoy thee, day and night,
 Mine and love's prisoner, not the Philistines',
 Whole to myself, unhazarded abroad,
 Fearless at home of partners in my love. 810
 These reasons in love's law have past for good
 Though fond and reasonless to some perhaps:
 And love hath oft, well meaning, wrought much woe,
 Yet always pity or pardon hath obtain'd.
 Be not unlike all others, not austere 815
 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, th' 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, 325
 Take to thy wicked deed; which when thou sees
 Impartial, self-severe, inexorable,

Thou wilt renounce thy seeking, and much rather
 Confess it feign'd. Weakness is thy excuse,
 And I believe it; weakness to resist 830
 Philistian gold: if weakness may excuse,
 What murderer, what traitor, parricide,
 Incestuous, sacrilegious, but may plead it?
 All wickedness is weakness: that plea therefore
 With God or man will gain thee no remission. 835
 But love constrain'd thee; call it furious rage
 To satisfy thy lust: love seeks to have love;
 My love how couldst thou hope, who took'st the way
 To raise in me inexpiable hate,
 Knowing, as needs I must, by thee betray'd? 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, 845
 What sieges girt me round, ere I consented;
 Which might have aw'd the best-resolv'd of men,
 The constantest, to have yielded without blame.
 It was not gold, as to my charge thou lay'st,
 That wrought with me: thou know'st the magistrates 850
 And princes of my country came in person,
 Solicited, commanded, threaten'd, urg'd,
 Adjur'd by all the bonds of civil duty
 And of religion, press'd how just it was,
 How honourable, how glorious, to entrap 855
 A common enemy, who had destroy'd
 Such numbers of our nation: and the priest
 Was not behind, but ever at my ear,
 Preaching how meritorious with the gods
 It would be to ensnare an irreligious 860
 Dishonourer of Dagon: what had I
 T' oppose against such pow'rful arguments?
 Only my love of thee held long debate,
 And combated in silence all these reasons
 With hard contést: at length that grounded maxim 865
 So rife and celebrated in the mouths
 Of wisest men, that to the public good
 Private respects must yield, with grave authority,
 Took full possession of me, and prevail'd;
 Virtue, as I thought, truth, duty, so enjoining. 870

Sams. I thought where all thy circling wiles would end;
 In feign'd religion, smooth hypocrisy!
 But had thy love, still odiously pretended,
 Been, as it ought, sincere, it would have taught thee
 Far other reasonings, brought forth other deeds. 875
 I, before all the daughters of my tribe
 And of my nation, chose thee from among
 My enemies, lov'd thee, as too well thou knew'st;
 Too well; unbosom'd all my secrets to thee,
 Not out of levity, but over-power'd 880
 By thy request, who could deny thee nothing;
 Yet now am judg'd an enemy. Why then

Didst thou at first receive me for thy husband,
 Then, as since then, thy country's foe profess'd?
 Being once a wife, for mè thou wast to leave 885
 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 obey'd. But zeal mov'd thee; 895
 To please thy gods thou didst it; gods, unable
 To acquit themselves and prosecute their foes
 But by ungodly deeds, the contradiction
 Of their own deity, gods cannot be:
 Less therefore to be pleas'd, obey'd, or fear'd, 900
 These false pretexts, and varnish'd colours, failing,
 Bare in thy guilt, how foul must thou appear?
Dal. In argument with men a woman ever
 Goes by the worse whatever be her cause.
Sams. For want of words no doubt, or lack of breath; 905
 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 misdome,
 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, enjoy'd 915
 Where other senses want not their delights
 At home in leisure and domestic ease,
 Exempt from many a care and chance, to which
 Eye-sight exposes daily men abroad.
 I to the lords will intercede, not doubting. 920
 Their favourable ear, that I may fetch thee
 From forth this loathsome prison-house to abide
 With me, where my redoubled love and care
 With nursing diligence, to me glad office,
 May ever tend about thee to old age, 925
 With all things grateful cheer'd, and so supplied,
 That, what by me thou hast lost, thou least shalt miss.
Sams. No, no; of my condition take no care;
 It fits not; thou and I long since are twain:
 Nor think me so unwary or accurs'd, 930
 To bring my feet again into the snare
 Where once I have been caught: I know thy trains,
 Though dearly to my cost, thy gins, and toils;
 Thy fair enchanted cup, and warbling charms,
 No more on me have pow'r; their force is null'd; 935
 So much of adder's wisdom I have learn'd,
 To fence my ear against thy sorceries.

If in my flower of youth and strength, when all men
 Lov'd, honour'd, fear'd me, thou alone couldst hate me
 Thy husband, slight me, sell me, and forego me; 940
 How wouldst thou use me now, blind, and thereby
 Deceivable, in most things as a child
 Helpless, thence easily contemn'd, and scorn'd,
 And last neglected? how wouldst thou insult,
 When I must live uxorious to thy will 945
 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. 950
Dal. Let me approach at least, and touch thy hand.
Sams. Not for thy life, lest fierce remembrance wake
 My sudden rage to tear thee joint by joint.
 At distance I forgive thee; go with that;
 Bewail thy falsehood, and the pious works 955
 It hath brought forth to make thee memorable
 Among illustrious women, faithful wives!
 Cherish thy hasten'd widowhood with the gold
 Of matrimonial treason! so farewell.
Dal. I see thou art implacable, more deaf 960
 To pray'rs than winds and seas; yet winds to seas
 Are reconcil'd at length, and sea to shore:
 Thy anger, unappeasable, still rages,
 Eternal tempest, never to be calm'd.
 Why do I humble thus myself, and, suing 965
 For peace, read nothing but repulse and hate;
 Bid go with evil omen, and the brand
 Of infamy upon my name denounc'd?
 To mix with thy concernment I desist
 Henceforth, nor too much disapprove my own. 970
 Fame, if no double-fac'd, is double-mouth'd,
 And with contrary blast proclaims most deeps;
 On both his wings, one black, the other white,
 Bears greatest names in his wild aery flight.
 My name perhaps among the circumcis'd 975
 In Dan, in Judah, and the bordering tribes,
 To all posterity may stand defam'd,
 With malediction mention'd and the blot,
 Of falsehood most unconjugal traduc'd.
 But in my country, where I most desire, 980
 In Ecron, Gaza, Asdod, and in Gath,
 I shall be nam'd among the famoussest
 Of women, sung at solemn festivals,
 Living and dead recorded, who, to save
 Her country from a fierce destroyer, chose 985
 Above the faith of wedlock-bands; my tomb
 With odours visited and annual flowers;
 Not less renown'd than in mount Ephraim
 Jael, who with inhospitable guile
 Smote Sisera sleeping, through the temples nail'd. 990
 Nor shall I count it heinous to enjoy
 The public marks of honour and reward,

- Conferr'd upon me, for the piety
Which to my country I was judg'd to have shown.
At this whoever envies or repines; 995
I leave him to his lot, and like my own. [Exit.
- Chor.* She's gone, a manifest serpent by her sting
Discover'd in the end, till now conceal'd.
- Sams.* So let her go; God sent her to debase me,
And aggravate my folly, who committed 1000
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 possess'd, nor can be easily 1005
Repuls'd without much inward passion felt,
And secret sting of amorous remorse.
- Sams.* Love-quarrels oft in pleasing concord end,
Not wedlock-treachery endang'ring life.
- Chor.* It is not virtue, wisdom, valour, wit, 1010
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), 1015
Much like thy riddle, Samson, in one day
Or sev'n, though one should musing sit.
- If any of these, or all, the Timnian bride
Had not so soon preferr'd
Thy paranymp, worthless to thee compar'd, 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 1025
Was lavish'd on their sex, that inward gifts
Were left for haste unfinish'd, judgment scant,
Capacity not rais'd to apprehend
Or value what is best
In choice, but ofttest to affect the wrong? 1030
Or was too much of self-love mix'd,
Of constancy no root infix'd,
That either they love nothing, or not long?
- Whate'er it be, to wisest men and best
Seeming at first all heav'nly under virgin veil, 1035
Soft, modest, meek, demure,
Once join'd, the contrary she proves, a thorn
Intestine, far within defensive arms
A cleaving mischief, in his way to virtue
Adverse and turbulent; or by her charms 1040
Draws him awry enslav'd
With dotage, and his sense deprav'd
To folly aud shameful deeds which ruin ends.
What pilot so expert but needs must wreck
Imbark'd with such a steers-mate at the helm? 1045
Favour'd of Heav'n, who finds
One virtuous, rarely found,

That in domestic good combines:
 Happy that house! his way to peace is smooth:
 But virtue, which breaks through all opposition, 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, 1055
 Nor from that right to part an hour,
 Smile she or lour:

So shall he least confusion draw
 On his whole life, not sway'd
 By female usurpation, or dismay'd. 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 1065
 The bait of honey'd words; a rougher tongue
 Draws hitherward; I know him by his stride,
 The giant Harapha of Gath, his look
 Haughty, as is his pile high-built and proud.
 Comes he in peace? what wind hath blown him hither 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. 1075

Enter Harapha.

Har. I come not, Samson, to condole thy chance,
 As these perhaps, yet wish it had not been,
 Though for no friendly intent. I am of Gath;
 Men call me Harapha, of stock renown'd
 As Og, or Anak, and the Emims old 1080
 That Kiriathaim held; thou know'st me now
 If thou at all art known. Much I have heard
 Of thy prodigious might and feats perform'd,
 Incredible to me, in this displeas'd
 That I was never present on the place 1085
 Of those encounters, where we might have tried
 Each other's force in camp or listed field;
 And now am come to see of whom such noise
 Hath walk'd about, and each limb to survey,
 If thy appearance answer loud report. 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 tam'd thee. O that fortune
 Had brought me to the field, where thou art fam'd
 To have wrought such wonders with an ass's jaw! 1095
 I should have forc'd thee soon with other arms,
 Or left thy carcass where the ass lay thrown:
 So had the glory of prowess been recover'd
 To Palestine, won by a Philistine,

From the unforeskinn'd race, of whom thou bear'st 1100
 The highest name for valiant acts; that honour,
 Certain to have won by mortal duel from thee,
 I lose, prevented by thy eyes put out.

Sams. Boast not of what thou wouldst have done, but do
 What then thou wouldst; thou seest it in thy hand. 1105

Har. To combat with a blind man I disdain,
 And thou hast need much washing to be touch'd.

Sams. Such usage as your honourable lords
 Afford me, assassinated and betray'd,
 Who durst not with their whole united powers 1110

In fight withstand me single and unarm'd,
 Nor in the house with chamber-ambushes
 Close-banded durst attack me, no, not sleeping,
 Till they had hir'd a woman with their gold,
 Breaking her marriage-faith, to circumvent me. 1115

Therefore, without feign'd shifts, let be assign'd
 Some narrow place enclos'd, where sight may give thee,
 Or rather flight, no great advantage on me;

Then put on all thy gorgeous arms, thy helmet
 And brigandine of brass, thy broad habergeon, 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 clatter'd iron,
 Which long shall not withhold me from thy head, 1125

That in a little time, while breath remains thee,
 Thou oft shalt wish thyself at Gath to boast

Again in safety what thou wouldst have done
 To Samson, but shalt never see Gath more.

Har. Thou durst not thus disparage glorious arms, 1130
 Which greatest heroes have in battle worn,

Their ornament and safety, had not spells
 And black enchantments, some magician's art,

Arm'd thee or charm'd thee strong, which thou from heaven
 Feign'dst at thy hirth was giv'n thee in thy hair, 1135

Where strength can least abide, though all thy hairs
 Were bristles rang'd like those that ridge the back

Of chaf'd wild boars, or ruffled porcupines.

Sams. I know no spells, use no forbidden arts;
 My trust is in the living God, who gave me 1140

At my nativity this strength, diffus'd
 No less through all my sinews, joints, and bones,
 Than thine, while I preserv'd these locks unshorn,

The pledge of my unviolated vow.
 For proof hereof, if Dagon be thy god, 1145

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 th' utmost of his godhead seconded:
 Then thou shalt see, or rather, to thy sorrow,

Soon feel, whose God is strongest, thine or mine. 1155

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

Sams. All these indignities, for such they are
From thine, these evils I deserve, and more,
Acknowledge them from God inflicted on me 1170
Justly, yet despair not of his final pardon,
Whose ear is ever open, and his eye
Gracious to re-admit the suppliant:
In confidence whereof I once again
Defy thee to the trial of mortal fight, 1175
By combat to decide whose God is God,
Thine, or whom I with Israel's sons adore.

Har. Fair honour that thîou 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 confess'd it when they took thee
As a league-breaker, and deliver'd bound
Into our hands: for hadst thou not committed 1185
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, 1190
To others did no violence nor spoil.

Sams. Among the daughters of the Philistines
I chose a wife, which argued me no foe;
And in your city held my nuptial feast:
But your ill-meaning politician lords, 1195
Under pretence of bridal friends and guests,
Appointed to await me thirty spies,
Who, threat'ning cruel death, constrain'd the bride
To wring from me, and tell to them, my secret,
That solv'd the riddle which I had propos'd. 1200
When I perceiv'd all set on enmity,
As on my enemies, wherever chanc'd,
I us'd hostility, and took their spoil,
To pay my underminers in their coin.
My nation was subjected to your lords; 1205
It was the force of conquest; force with force
Is well ejected when the conquer'd can.
But I a private person, whom my country

As a league-breaker gave up bound, presum'd
Single rebellion, and did hostile acts. 1210

I was no private, but a person rais'd
With strength sufficient, and command from Heaven,
To free my country; if their servile minds
Me, their deliverer sent, would not receive,
But to their masters gave me up for naught, 1215
Th' unworthier they; whence to this day they serve.

I was to do my part from Heav'n assign'd,
And had perform'd it, if my known offence
Had not disabled me, not all your force:

'These shifts refuted, answer thy appellant, 1220
'Though by his blindness maim'd for high attempts,
Who now defies thee thrice to single fight,
As a petty enterprise of small enforce.

Har. With thee! a man condemn'd, a slave enroll'd,
Due by the law to capital punishment! 1225
To fight with thee no man of arms will deign.

Sams. Can'st thou for this, vain boaster, to survey me,
To descant on my strength, and give thy verdict?
Come nearer; part not hence so slight inform'd;
But take good heed my hand survey not thee. 1230

Har. O Baal-zebub! can my ears unus'd
Hear these dishonours, and not render death?

Sams. No man withholds thee, nothing from thy hand
Fear I incurable; bring up thy van,
My heels are fetter'd, but my fist is free. 1235

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 th' hazard of thy brains and shatter'd sides.

Har. By Astaroth, ere long thou shalt lament
These braveries, in irons loaden on thee. [*Exit.*]

Chor. His giantship is gone somewhat crest-fall'n,
Stalking with less unconscionable strides, 1245
And lower looks, but in a sultry chafe.

Sams. I dread him not, nor all his giant-brood,
Though fame divulge him father of five sons,
All of gigantic size, Goliath chief.

Chor. He will directly to the lords, I fear, 1250
And with malicious counsel stir them up
Some way or other yet further to afflict thee.

Sams. He must allege some cause, and offer'd fight
Will not dare mention, lest a question rise
Whether he durst accept th' offer or not; 1255

And, that he durst not, plain enough appear'd.
Much more affliction than already felt
They cannot well impose, nor I sustain;
If they intend advantage of my labours,
The work of many hands, which earns my keeping 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 1265
 Is hate, not help to me, it may with mine
 Draw their own ruin who attempt the deed.
Chor. Oh how comely it is, and how reviving
 To the spirits of just men long oppress'd!
 When God into the hands of their deliverer 1270
 Puts invincible might
 To quell the mighty of the earth, th' oppressor,
 The brute and boist'rous force of violent men,
 Hardy and industrious to support
 Tyrannic pow'r, but raging to pursue 1275
 The righteous and all such as honour truth;
 He all their ammunition
 And feats of war defeats,
 With plain heroic magnitude of mind
 And celestial vigour arm'd; 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, surpris'd, 1285
 Lose their defence, distracted and amaz'd.
 But patience is more oft the exercise
 Of saints, the trial of their fortitude,
 Making them each his own deliverer,
 And victor over all 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 bereav'd
 May chance to number thee with those 1295
 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 scepter or quaint staff he bears,
 Comes on amain, speed in his look.
 By his habit I discern him now 1305
 A public officer, and now at hand;
 His message will be short and voluble.

Enter Officer.

Off. Hebrews, the pris'ner 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; 1315
 Rise therefore with all speed, and come along,

Where I will see thee hearten'd and fresh clad,
To appear as fits before th' illustrious lords.

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

Off. This answer, be assur'd, 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, 1325
But they must pick me out, with shackles tir'd,
And over-labour'd at their public mill,
To make them sport with blind activity?
Do they not seek occasion for new quarrels
On my refusal to distress me more, 1330
Or make a game of my calamities?
Return the way thou camest, I will not come.

Off. Regard thyself; this will offend them highly.

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

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

Sams. So take it with what speed thy message needs. 1345

Off. I am sorry what this stoutness will produce. [*Exit.*

Sams. Perhaps thou shalt have cause to sorrow indeed.

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

Sams. Shall I abuse this consecrated gift
Of strength, again returning with my hair 1355
After my great transgression, so requite
Favour renew'd, and add a greater sin
By prostituting holy things to idols?
A Nazarite in place abominable
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, uncircumcis'd, unclean.

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

Chor. Where the heart joins not, outwards acts defile not.

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

- Commands are no constraints. If I obey them,
I do it freely, vent'ring to displease
God for the fear of man, and man prefer,
Set God behind: which in his jealousy 1375
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 1385
Our law, or stain my vow of Nazarite.
If there be aught of presage in the mind,
This day will be remarkable in my life
By some great act, or of my days the last.
- Chor.* In time thou hast resolv'd, the man returns. 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; 1395
Or we shall find such engines to assail
And hamper thee, as thou shalt come of force,
Though thou wert firmlier fasten'd 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 pow'r resistless
To such as owe them absolute subjection; 1405
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 1415
Of me, as of a common enemy,
So dreaded once, may now exasperate them,
I know not: lords are lordliest in their wine;
And the well-feasted priest then soonest fir'd
With zeal, if aught religion seem concern'd; 1420
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, 1425

The last of me or no, I cannot warrant.

[*Exit.*

Chor. Go, and the Holy One

Of Israel be thy guide

To what may serve his glory best, and spread his name
Great among the Heathen round; 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 rush'd on thee 1435

In the camp of Dan,

Be efficacious in thee now at need.

For never was from Heav'n imparted

Measure of strength so great to mortal seed,

As in thy wondrous actions hath been seen. 1440

But wherefore comes old Manoah in such haste

With youthful steps? much livelier than erewhile

He seems; supposing here to find his son,

Or of him bringing to us some glad news.

Enter Manoah.

Man. Peace with you, brethren; my inducement
hither 1445

Was not at present here to find my son,

By order of the lords now parted hence

To come and play before them at their feast.

I heard all as I came, the city rings,

And numbers thither flock: I had no will, 1450

Lest I should see him forc'd to things unseemly.

But that, which mov'd my coming now, was chiefly

To give ye part with me what hope I have

With good success to work his liberty.

Chor. That hope would much rejoice us to partake 1455

With thee; say, reverend sire, we thirst to hear.

Man. I have attempted one by one the lords

Either at home, or through the high-street passing,

With supplication prone and father's tears,

T' accept of ransom for my son their pris'ner. 1460

Some much averse I found, and wondrous harsh,

Contemptuous, proud, set on revenge and spite;

That part most reverenc'd Dagon and his priests:

Others more moderate seeming, but their aim

Private reward, for which both god and state 1465

They easily would set to sale: a third

More generous far and civil, who confess'd

They had enough reveng'd; having reduc'd

Their foe to misery beneath their fears,

The rest was magnanimity to remit, 1470

If some convenient ransom were propos'd.

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

Chor. Doubtless the people shouting to behold

Their once great dread, captive, and blind before them,

Or at some proof of strength before them shown. 1475

Man. His ransom, if my whole inheritance

May compass it, shall willingly be paid

And number'd down: much rather I shall choose

To live the poorest in my tribe, than richest,
 And he in that calamitous prison left. 1480
 No, I am fix'd not to part hence without him.
 For his redemption all my patrimony,
 If need be, I am ready to forego
 And quit: not wanting him, I shall want nothing.

Chor. Fathers are wont to lay up for their sons, 1485
 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, 1490
 And view him sitting in the house, ennobled
 With all those high exploits by him achiev'd,
 And on his shoulders waving down those locks
 That of a nation arm'd the strength contain'd;
 And I persuade me, God hath not permitted 1495
 Her strength again to grow up with his hair,
 Garrison'd round about him like a camp
 Of faithful soldiery, were not his purpose
 To use him further yet in some great service;
 Not to sit idle with so great a gift 1500
 Useless, and thence ridiculous about him.

And since his strength with eye-sight was not lost,
 God will restore him eye-sight to his strength.

Chor. Thy hopes are not ill-founded, nor seem vain,
 Of his delivery, and thy joy thereon 1505
 Conceiv'd, agreeable to a father's love,
 In both which we, as next, participate.

Man. I know your friendly minds and, — O what noise! —
 Mercy of Heav'n, what hideous noise was that!
 Horribly loud, unlike the former shout. 1510

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

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

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

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

Chor. Best keep together here, lest, running thither,
 We unawares run into danger's mouth.

This evil on the Philistines is fall'n;
 From whom could else a general cry be heard?
 The sufferers then will scarce molest us here; 1525
 From other hands we need not much to fear.

What if, his eye-sight (for to Israel's God
 Nothing is hard) by miracle restor'd,
 He now be dealing dole among his foes,
 And over heaps of slaughter'd walk his way? 1530

Man. That were a joy presumptuous to be thought.

Chor. Yet God hath wrought things as incredible
 For his people of old; what hinders now?

Man. He can, I know, but doubt to think he will;
Yet hope would fain subscribe, and tempts belief. 1535
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 bates.
And to our wish I see one hither speeding,
An Hebrew, as I guess, and of our tribe. 1540

Enter Messenger.

Mess. O whither shall I run, or which way fly
The sight of this so horrid spectacle,
Which erst my eyes beheld, and yet behold?
For dire imagination still pursues me.
But Providence or instinct of nature seems, 1545
Or reason though disturb'd, and scarce consulted,
To have guided me aright, I know not how,
To thee first, reverend Manoah, and to these
My countrymen, whom here I knew remaining,
As at some distance from the place of horror, 1550
So in the sad event too much concern'd.

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

Mess. It would burst forth, but I recover breath 1555
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 fall'n,
All in a moment overwhelm'd and fall'n.

Man. Sad, but thou know'st to Israelites not saddest, 1560
The desolation of a hostile city.

Mess. Feed on that first; there may in grief be surfeit.

Man. Relate by whom.

Mess. By Samson.

Man. That still lessens
The sorrow, and converts it nigh to joy.
Mess. Ah! Manoah, I refrain too suddenly 1565
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. Take then the worst in brief: Samson is dead. 1570

Man. The worst indeed! O all my hopes defeated
To free him hence! but death, who sets all free,
Hath paid his ransom now and full discharge.
What windy joy this day had I conceiv'd
Hopeful of his delivery, which now proves 1575
Abortive as the first-born bloom of spring
Nipt with the lagging rear of winter's frost!
Yet ere I give the reins of grief, say first,
How died he; death to life is crown or shame.
All by him fell, thou say'st; by whom fell he? 1580
What glorious hand gave Samson his death's wound?

Mess. Unwounded of his enemies he fell.

Man. Wearied with slaughter then, or how? explain.

Mess. By his own hands.

- Man.* Self-violence? what cause
Brought him so soon at variance with himself 1585
Among his foes?
- Mess.* Inevitable cause
At once both to destroy, and be destroy'd;
The edifice where all were met to see him,
Upon their heads and on his own he pull'd.
- Man.* O lastly over-strong against thyself! 1590
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. 1595
- Mess.* Occasions drew me early to this city;
And, as the gates I enter'd with sun-rise,
The morning trumpets festival proclaim'd
Through each high street: little I had dispatch'd
When all abroad was rumour'd that this day 1600
Samson should be brought forth, to show the people
Proof of his mighty strength in feats and games;
I sorrow'd at his captive state, but minded
Not to be absent at that spectacle.
The building was a spacious theatre 1605
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; 1610
I among these aloof obscurely stood.
The feast and noon grew high, and sacrifice
Had fill'd their hearts with mirth, high cheer, and wine,
When to their sports they turn'd. Immediately
Was Samson as a public servant brought, 1615
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 1620
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 assay'd, 1625
To heave, pull, draw, or break, he still perform'd
All with incredible, stupendous force;
None daring to appear antagonist.
At length for intermission's sake they led him
Between the pillars; he his guide requested 1630
(For so from such as nearer stood we heard)
As overtir'd 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 1635
Felt in his arms, with head a while inclin'd
And eyes fast fix'd he stood, as one who pray'd,

- Or some great matter in his mind revolv'd:
 At last with head erect thus cried aloud,
 'Hitherto, lords, what your commands impos'd 1640
 I have perform'd, as reason was, obeying,
 Not without wonder or delight beheld:
 Now of my own accord such other trial
 I mean to show you of my strength, yet greater,
 As with amaze shall strike all who behold.' 1645
 This utter'd, straining all his nerves, he bow'd,
 As, with the force of winds and waters pent,
 When mountains tremble, those two massy pillars
 With horrible convulsion to and fro
 He tugg'd, he shook, till down they came, and 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 flow'r, not only
 Of this, but each Philistian city round, 1655
 Met from all parts to solemnize this feast.
 Samson, with these immix'd, inevitably
 Pull'd down the same destruction on himself;
 The vulgar only 'scap'd, who stood without.
- Chor.* O dearly-bought revenge, yet glorious! 1660
 Living or dying thou hast fulfill'd
 The work for which thou wast foretold
 To Israel, and now liest victorious
 Among thy slain self-kill'd,
 Not willingly, but tangled in the fold 1665
 Of dire necessity, whose law in death conjoin'd
 Thee with thy slaughter'd foes, in number more
 Than all thy life hath slain before.
- 1 *Semichor.* While their hearts were jocund and sublime,
 Drunk with idolatry, drunk with wine, 1670
 And fat regorg'd of bulls and goats,
 Canting their idol, and preferring
 Before our living Dread who dwells
 In Silo, his bright sanctuary;
 Among them he a spirit of phrenzy sent, 1675
 Who hurt their minds,
 And urg'd them on with mad desire
 To call in haste for their destroyer;
 They, only set on sport and play,
 Unweetingly impórtun'd 1680
 Their own destruction to come speedy upon them.
 So fond are mortal men,
 Fall'n into wrath divine,
 As their own ruin on themselves t' invite,
 Insensate left, or to sense reprobate, 1685
 And with blindness internal struck.
- 2 *Semichor.* But he, though blind of sight,
 Despis'd, and thought extinguish'd quite,
 With inward eyes illuminated,
 His fiery virtue rous'd 1690
 From under ashes into sudden flame,
 And as an evening dragon came,

- Assailant on the perched roosts
 And nests in order rang'd
 Of tame villatic fowl; but as an eagle 1695
 His cloudless thunder bolted on their heads,
 So virtue, giv'n for lost,
 Depress'd, and overthrown, as seem'd,
 Like that self-begotten bird
 In the Arabian woods embost, 1700
 That no second knows, nor third,
 And lay erewhile a holocaust,
 From out her ashy womb now teem'd,
 Revives, reflourishes, then vigorous most
 When most unactive deem'd; 1705
 And though her body die, her fame survives,
 A secular bird ages of lives.
- Man.* Come, come; no time for lamentation now,
 Nor much more cause; Samson hath quit himself
 Like Samson, and heroically hath finish'd 1710
 A life heroic, on his enemies
 Fully reveng'd, hath left them years of mourning,
 And lamentation to the sons of Caphtor
 Through all Philistian bounds; to Israël
 Honour hath left, and freedom, let but them 1715
 Find courage to lay hold on this occasion;
 To himself and father's house eternal fame;
 And, which is best and happiest yet, all this
 With God not parted from him, as was fear'd,
 But favouring and assisting to the end. 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 1725
 Soak'd in his enemies' blood; and from the stream
 With lavers pure, and cleânsing 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, 1730
 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, 1735
 With all his trophies hung, and acts inroll'd
 In copious legend, or sweet lyric song.
 Thither shall all the valiant youth resort,
 And from his memory inflame their breasts
 To matchless valour, and adventures high: 1740
 The virgins also shall, on feastful days,
 Visit his tomb with flow'rs; only bewailing
 His lot unfortunate in nuptial choice,
 From whence captivity and loss of eyes.
- Chor.* All is best, though we oft doubt, 1745
 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, 1750
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 acquit 1755
Of true experience, from this great event,
With peace and consolation hath dismiss,
And calm of mind, all passion spent.

POEMS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS.

LYCIDAS.

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
And, with forc'd fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year. 5
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 10
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.
He must not float upon his watry bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

Begin then, sisters of the sacred well, 15
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the spring.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:
So may some gentle muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn; 20
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.

For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock, by fountain, shade, and rill. 25
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Batt'ning our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose at evening bright, 30
Toward heav'n's descent had slop'd his west'ring wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to th' oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danced, and Fauns with cloven heel } *sex*
From the glad sound would not be absent long; } 35
And old Damoetas lov'd to hear our song.

But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown, 40
And all their echoes, mourn:
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen

Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
 As killing as the canker to the rose, 45
 Or taint-worm to the weanling herds that graze,
 Or frost to flow'rs, that their gay wardrobe wear,
 When first the white-thorn blows;
 Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherds' ear.

Where were ye, nymphs, when the remorseless deep 50
 Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
 For neither were ye playing on the steep,
 Where your old Bards, the famous Druids, lie,
 Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,
 Nor yet where Deva spreads her wizard stream: 55
 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 goary visage down the stream was sent,
 Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with incessant care
 To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
 And strictly meditate the thankless Muse? 65
 Were it not better done, as others use,
 To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
 Or with the tangles of Neaera's hair?
 Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise 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 th' abhorred shears, 75
 And slits the thin-spun life. But not the praise,
 Phoebus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
 'Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
 Nor in the glist'ring 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 heav'n expect thy meed.'

O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood, 85
 Smooth-sliding Mincius, crown'd with vocal reeds!
 That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
 But now my ^{swain} oat proceeds,
 And listens to the herald of the sea
 That came in Neptune's plea; 90

He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
 What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?
 And question'd every gust of rugged wings
 That blows from off each beaked promontory:
 They knew not of his story; 95
 And sage Hippotades their answer brings,
 'That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
 The air was calm, and on the level brine

*doesn't rescue you
 for will answer*

Sleek Panope with all her sisters play'd.
 It was that fatal and perfidious bark, 100
 Built in th' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
 That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
 Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
 His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
 Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge 105
 Like to that sanguine flow'r inscrib'd with woe.
 'Ah! who hath reft,' quoth he, 'my dearest pledge?'
 Last came, and last did go.'
 The pilot of the Galilean lake;
 Two massy keys he bore of metals twain 110
 (The golden opes, the iron shuts amain),
 He shook his miter'd locks, and stern bespake:
 'How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
 Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
 Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold? 115
 Of other care they little reck'ning 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 learn'd aught else the least 120
 That to the faithful herdsman'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, 125
 But, swoll'n with wind and the rank mist they draw,
 Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
 Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
 Daily devours apace, and nothing sed:
 But that two-handed engine at the door 130
 Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.'
 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 flow'rets of a thousand hues. 135
 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 enamell'd eyes,
 That on the green turf suck the hontied showers, 140
 And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
 Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
 The tufted crow-tce, and pale jessamine,
 The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
 The glowing violet, 145
 The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd 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 laureat herse 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 hurl'd, 155
 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, woful shepherds, weep no more, 165
 For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
 Sunk though he be beneath the watry floor;
 So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
 And yet anon repairs his drooping head,
 And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore 170
 Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
 So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high,
 Through the dear might of Him that walk'd the waves;
 Where, other groves and other streams along,
 With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves, 175
 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, 180
 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. 185

Thus sang the uncouth swain to th' oaks and rills,
 While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
 He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
 With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
 And now the sun had stretch'd out all the hills, 190
 And now was dropt into the western bay:
 At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
 To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

L' A L L E G R O.

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, 5
 Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous wings,

And the night-raven sings;
 There under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
 As ragged as thy locks,
 In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell. 10
 But come, thou goddess fair and free,
 In heav'n yclep'd Euphrosyne,
 And by men, heart-easing Mirth;
 Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
 With two sister Graces more, 15
 To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
 Or whether (as some sager sing)
 The frolic wind that breathes the spring,
 Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
 As he met her once a-Maying; 20
 There on beds of violets blue,
 And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
 Fill'd her with thee a daughter fair,
 So buxom, blithe, and debonair.
 Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee 25
 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; 30
 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 35
 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 unrepved pleasures free; 40
 To hear the lark begin his flight,
 And singing startle the dull night,
 From his watch-tow'r in the skies,
 Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
 Then to come, in spite of sorrow, 45
 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, 50
 And to the stack, or the barn-door,
 Stoutly struts his dames before:
 Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
 Chcerly rouse the slumb'ring morn,
 From the side of some hoar hill, 55
 Through the high wood echoing shrill.
 Some time walking, not unseen,
 By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,
 Right against the eastern gate
 Where the great sun begins his state, 60
 Rob'd in flames, and amber light,

The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
 While the ploughman, near at hand,
 Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
 And the milkmaid singeth blithe, 65
 And the mower whets his scythe,
 And every shepherd tells his tale,
 Under the hawthorn in the dale.

Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
 Whilst the landscape round it measures; 70
 Russet lawns, and fallows gray;
 Where the nibbling flocks do stray;
 Mountains, on whose barren breast
 The lab'ring clouds do often rest;
 Meadows trim with daisies pide, 75
 Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:
 Towers and battlements it sees
 Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
 Where perhaps some beauty lies,
 The Cynosure of neighb'ring eyes. 80

Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
 From betwixt two aged oaks,
 Where Corydon and Thirsis, met,
 Are at their savoury dinner set
 Of herbs, and other country messes, 85
 Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
 And then in haste her bow'r she leaves,
 With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
 Or, if the earlier season lead,
 To the tann'd haycock in the mead. 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, 95
 Dancing in the checker'd shade;
 And young and old come forth to play
 On a sun-shine holy-day,

Till the live-long day-light fail:
 Then to the spicy nut-brown ale, 100
 With stories told of many a feat,
 How faery Mab the junkets eat;
 She was pinch'd, and pull'd, she sed;
 And he, by friar's lantern led,
 Tells how the drudging goblin swet 105
 To earn his cream-bowl duly set,

When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
 His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
 That ten day-lab'ers could not end;
 Then lies him down the lubbar fiend, 110
 And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
 Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
 And crop-full out of doors he flings,
 Ere the first cock his matin rings.

Thus done the tales, to bed they creep, 115
 By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.

Tower'd cities please us then,
 And the busy hum of men,
 Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
 In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold, 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 125
 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 Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
 Warble his native wood-notes wild.
 And ever, against eating cares, 135
 Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
 Married to immortal verse;
 Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
 In notes, with many a winding bout
 Of linked sweetness long drawn out, 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 145
 From golden slumber on a bed
 Of heap'd Elysian flow'rs, and hear
 Such strains as would have won the ear
 Of Pluto, to have quite set free
 His half regain'd Eurydice. 150
 These delights if thou canst give,
 Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

I L P E N S E R O S O .

HENCE, vain deluding joys,
 The brood of Folly without father bred!
 How little you bested,
 Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys! 5
 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 15
 O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
 Black, but such as in esteem
 Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
 Or that starr'd Ethiop queen that strove
 To set her beauty's praise above 20
 The Sea-Nymphs, and their pow'rs offended:
 Yet thou art higher far descended:
 Thee, brightair'd Vesta, long of yore,
 To solitary Saturn bore;
 His daughter she; in Saturn's reign, 25
 Such mixture was not held a stain:
 Oft in glimmering bow'rs and glades
 He met her, and in secret shades
 Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
 Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove. 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, 35
 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, 45
 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-wheeled throne,
 The Cherub Contemplation;
 And the mute Silence hist along, 55
 'Less Philomel will deign a song,
 In her sweetest saddest plight,
 Smoothing the rugged brow of night,
 While Cynthia, checks her dragon yoke,
 Gently o'er th' accustom'd oak: 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 65

On the dry smooth-shaven green,
 To behold the wand'ring moon,
 Riding near her highest noon,
 Like one that had been led astray
 Through the heav'n's wide pathless way; 70
 And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
 Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
 Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
 I hear the far-off curfeu sound,
 Over some wide-water'd shore, 75
 Swinging slow with sullen roar:
 Or, if the air will not permit,
 Some still removed place will fit,
 Where glowing embers through the room
 Teach light to counterfeit a gloom 80
 Far from all resort of mirth,
 Save the cricket on the hearth,
 Or the belman's drowsy charm,
 To bless the doors from nightly harm.
 Or let my lamp, at midnight hour, 85
 Be seen in some high lonely tow'r,
 Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
 With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
 The spirit of Plato, to unfold
 What worlds or what vast regions hold 90
 The immortal mind that hath forsook
 Her mansion in this fleshly nook:
 And of those demons that are found
 In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
 Whose dower hath a true consent 95
 With planet or with element.
 Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
 In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
 Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
 Or the tale of Troy divine; 100
 Or what (though rare) of later age
 Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
 But, O sad virgin, that thy power
 Might raise Musaens from his bower!
 Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing 105
 Such notes as, warbled to the string,
 Drew iron tears down Pluto's check,
 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 own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
 And of the wondrous horse of brass,
 On which the Tartar king did ride: 115
 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 trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
 With the Attic boy to hunt,
 But kercheft in a comely cloud, 125
 While rocking winds are piping loud,
 Or usher'd with a shower still,
 When the gust hath blown his fill,
 Ending on the rustling leaves,
 With minute drops from off the eaves. 130
 And, when the sun begins to fling
 His flaring beams, me, goddess, bring
 To arched walks of twilight groves,
 And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
 Of pine, or monumental oak, 135
 Where the rude ax, with heaved stroke,
 Was never heard the nymphs to daunt,
 Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
 There in close covert by some brook,
 Where no profaner eye may look, 140
 Hide me from day's garish eye,
 While the bee with loutied thigh,
 That at her flow'ry work doth sing,
 And the waters murmuring,
 With such consort as they keep, 145
 Entice the dewy-feather'd sleep;
 And let some strange mysterious dream
 Wave at his wings in aery stream
 Of lively portraiture display'd,
 Softly on my eye-lids laid. 150
 And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
 Above, about, or underneath,
 Sent by some spirit to mortals good,
 Or th' unseen Genius of the wood.
 But let my due feet never fail 155
 To walk the studious cloyster's pale,
 And love the high-embowed roof,
 With antique pillars massy proof,
 And storied windows richly dight,
 Casting a dim religious light: 160
 There let the pealing organ blow,
 To the full-voic'd quire below,
 In service high and anthems clear,
 As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into ecstasies, 165
 And bring all heav'n before mine eyes.
 And may at last my weary age
 Find out the peaceful hermitage,
 The hairy gown and mossy cell,
 Where I may sit and rightly spell 170
 Of every star that heav'n doth shew;
 And every herb that sips the dew;
 Till old experience do attain
 To something like prophetic strain.
 These pleasures, Melancholy, give, 175
 And I with thee will choose to live.

A R C A D E S.

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: 5
 This, this is she
 To whom our vows and wishes bend:
 Here our solemn search hath end.
 Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
 Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
 We may justly now accuse 10
 Of detraction from her praise;
 Less than half we find exprest,
 Envy bid conceal the rest.
 Mark, what radiant state she spreads,
 In circle round her shining throne, 15
 Shooting her beams like silver threads;
 This, this is she alone,
 Sitting like a goddess bright,
 In the center of her light.
 Might she the wise Latona be, 20
 Or the towar'd Cybele.
 Mother of a hundred gods?
 Juno dares not give her odds:
 Who had thought this clime had held
 A deity so unparallel'd? 25

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

Genius.

Stay, gentle swains; for, though in this disguise,
 I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
 Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
 Of that renowned flood, so often sung, 30
 Divine Alphens, who by secret sluice
 Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
 And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
 Fair silver-buskin'd nymphs, as great and good;
 I know, this quest of yours, and free intent,
 Was all in honour and devotion meant 35
 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, 45
 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 canker'd venom bites.
 When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
 Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground; 55
 And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
 Awakes the slumb'ring leaves, or tassel'd horn
 Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
 Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
 With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless. 60
 But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
 Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
 To the celestial Syrens' harmony,
 That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
 And sing to those that hold the vital shears, 65
 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 measur'd motion draw
 After the heav'nly tune, which none can hear
 Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear;
 And yet such music worthiest were to blaze
 The peerless highth of her immortal praise, 75
 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, 80
 And so attend ye toward her glittering state;
 Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
 Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'er the smooth enamell'd green
 Where no print of step hath been, 85
 Follow me, as I sing
 And touch the warbled string,
 Under the shady roof
 Of branching elm star-proof.

Follow me; 90
 I will bring you where she sits,
 Clad in splendor as befits
 Her deity.
 Such a rural queen
 All Arcadia hath not seen. 95

III. SONG.

Nymphs and shepherds, dance no more
 By sandy Ladon's liliated banks;
 On old Lycaeus, or Cyllene hoar,
 Trip no more in twilight ranks;
 Though Erymanth your loss deplore, 100
 A better soil shall give ye thanks.
 From the stony Maenalus
 Bring your flocks, and live with us;
 Here ye shall have greater grace,
 To serve the lady of this place. 105
 Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
 Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
 Such a rural queen
 All Arcadia hath not seen.

C O M U S,

A M A S K,

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634,

BEFORE

JOHN, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER,

Then President of Wales.

THE PERSONS.

The *Attendant Spirit*, afterwards in the habit
 of *Thyrsis*.

Comus, with his crew.

The *Lady*.

First Brother.

Second Brother.

Sabrina, the Nymph.

The chief persons, who presented, were

The Lord Brackley.

Mr. Thomas Egerton, his brother.

The Lady Alice Egerton.

The first Scene discovers a wild wood.

The *Attendant Spirit* descends or enters.

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
 My mansion is, where those immortal shapes

Of bright aëreal spirits live inspher'd
 In regions mild of calm and serene air,
 Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot, 5
 Which men call Earth; and, with low-thoughted care
 Confin'd and pester'd 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, 10
 Amongst the enthron'd gods on sainted seats.
 Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire
 To lay their just hands on that golden key,
 That opes the palace of eternity:
 To such my errand is; and, but for such, 15
 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 20
 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, 25
 And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
 And wield their little tridents: but this isle,
 The greatest and the best of all the main,
 He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;
 And all this tract that fronts the falling sun 30
 A noble peer of mickle trust and power
 Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
 An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
 Where his fair offspring, nurs'd in princely lore,
 Are coming to attend their father's state, 35
 And new-entrusted scepter: but their way
 Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
 The nodding horror of whose shady brows
 Threats the forlorn and wand'ring passenger;
 And here their tender age might suffer peril, 40
 But that by quick command from sovran Jove
 I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard:
 And listen why; for I will tell you now
 What never yet was heard in tale or song,
 From old or modern bard, in hall or bower. 45

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
 Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
 After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
 Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
 On Circe's island fell (who knows not Circe, 50
 The daughter of the Sun? whose charmed cup
 Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
 And downward fell into a groveling swine):
 This nymph, that gaz'd upon his clust'ring locks
 With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth, 55
 Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
 Much like his father, but his mother more,

Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd :
 Who , ripe and frolic of his full grown age,
 Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields, 60
 At last betakes him to this ominous wood ;
 And , in thick shelter of black shades imbow'r'd,
 Excels his mother at her mighty art,
 Offering to every weary traveller
 His orient liquor in a crystal glass, 65
 To quench the drought of Phoebus ; which as they taste
 (For most do taste through fond intemp'rate thirst),
 Soon as the potion works, their human count'nance,
 Th' express resemblance of the gods , is chang'd
 Into some brutish form of wolf , or bear, 70
 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 ; 75
 And all their friends and native home forget,
 To roll with pleasure in a sensual stye.
 Therefore when any , favour'd of high Jove,
 Chances to pass through this advent'rous glade,
 Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star 80
 I shoot from heav'n , 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, 85
 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 90
 Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
 Of hateful steps ; I must be viewless now.

Comus enters with a charming rod in one hand, his glass in the other ; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel 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 heav'n doth hold ;
 And the gilded car of day 95
 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 100
 Of his chamber in the east.
 Meanwhile , welcome Joy , and Feast,
 Midnight Shout , and Revelry,
 Topsy 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.	105
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 facies and the dapper elves. By dimpled brook and fountain-brim, The wood-nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim,	110
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep; What hath night to do with sleep? Night hath better sweets to prove, Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.	115
Come, let us our rites begin; 'Tis only day-light that makes sin, Which these dunn shades will ne'er report.	120
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport, Dark-veil'd Cotytto! t' whom the secret flame Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame, That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom, And makes one blot of all the air; Stay thy cloudy ebon chair, Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end Of all thy dues be done, and none left out; Ere the blabbing eastern scout, The nice morn, on th' Indian steep From her cabin'd loop-hole peep, And to the tell-tale sun descry Our conceal'd solemnity. Come, knit hands, and beat the ground In a light fantastic round.	125
	130
	135
	140
	145
	150
	155

The Measure.

Break off, break off, I feel the different pace Of some chaste footing near about this ground. Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees; Our number may affright: some virgin sure (For so I can distinguish by mine art) Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms, And to my wily trains; I shall ere long Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd About my mother Circe. This I hurl My dazzling spells into the spungy air. Of pow'r to cheat the eye with blear illusion, And give it false presentments, lest the place And my quaint habits breed astonishment,	145
	150
	155

And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
 Which must not be, for that's against my course:
 I, under fair pretence of friendly ends, 160
 And well-plac'd words of glozing courtesy
 Baited with reasons not unplaussible,
 Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
 And hug him into snares. When once her eye
 Hath met the virtue of this magic dust, 165
 I shall appear some harmless villager,
 Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
 But here she comes; I fairly step aside,
 And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The Lady enters.

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true, 170
 My best guide now: methought it was the sound
 Of riot and ill-manag'd merriment,
 Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
 Stirs up among the loose unletter'd hinds,
 When for their teeming flocks, and granges full, 175
 In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
 And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
 To meet the rudeness, and swill'd insolence,
 Of such late wassailers; yet O! where else
 Shall I inform my unacquainted feet 180
 In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
 My brothers, when they saw me wearied out
 With this long way, resolving here to lodge
 Under the spreading favour of these pines,
 Stept, as they said, to the next thicket-side, 185
 To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
 As the kind hospitable woods provide.
 They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,
 Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
 Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phoebus' wain. 190
 But where they are, and why they came not back,
 Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
 They had engag'd their wand'ring steps too far;
 And envious darkness, ere they could return,
 Had stole them from me: else, O thievish night, 195
 Why shouldst thou, but for some felonious end,
 In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
 That nature hung in heav'n, and fill'd their lamps
 With everlasting oil, to give due light
 To the misled and lonely traveller? 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 list'ning ear;
 Yet naught but single darkness do I find.
 What might this be? A thousand fantasies 205
 Begin to throng into my memory,
 Of calling shapes, and beck'ning shadows dire,
 And aery tongues that syllable men's names
 On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
 These thoughts may startle well, but not astound 210

The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
 By a strong siding champion, Conscience. —
 O welcome, pure-ey'd Faith, white-handed Hope,
 Thou hovering Angel, girt with golden wings,
 And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity! 215
 I see ye visibly, and now believe
 That he, the Supreme Good, t' whom all things ill
 Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
 Would send a glist'ring guardian, if need were,
 To keep my life and honour unassail'd. 220
 Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
 I did not err, there does a sable cloud
 Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
 And casts a gleam over this tufted grove: 225
 I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
 Such noise as I can make to be heard farthest
 I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd spirits
 Prompt me; and they perhaps are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st unseen 230
 Within thy aery shell,
 By slow Meander's margent green,
 And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
 Where the love-lorn nightingale
 Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well; 235
 Cans thou not tell me of a gentle pair
 That likest thy Narcissus are?
 O, if thou have
 Hid them in some flow'ry cave,
 Tell me but where, 240
 Sweet queen of parly, daughter of the sphere!
 So mayst thou be translated to the skies,
 And give resounding grace to all heav'n's harmonies.

Enter *Comus*.

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould 245
 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 smil'd! I have oft heard
 My mother Circe with the Syrens three,
 Amidst the flow'ry-kirtled Naiades,
 Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs; 255
 Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
 And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
 And chid her barking waves into attention,
 And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
 Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense, 260
 And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself;

- But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder! 265
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that in rural shrine
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan, by blest song
Forbidding every bleak unkindly fog
To touch the prosp'rous growth of this tall wood. 270
- Lady.* Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise
That is address'd to unattending ears;
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo 275
To give me answer from her mossy couch.
- Comus.* What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you thus?
Lady. Dim darkness, and this leafy labyrinth.
Comus. Could that divide you from near-ushering guides?
Lady. They left me weary on a grassy turf. 280
Comus. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?
Lady. To seek i' th' valley some cool friendly spring.
Comus. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?
Lady. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.
Comus. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them. 285
Lady. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
Comus. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
Lady. No less than if I should my Brothers lose.
Comus. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
Lady. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips. 290
Comus. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat;
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill, 295
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots;
Their port was more than human as they stood:
I took it for a faery vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live, 300
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,
And, as I past, I worshipt; if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to heaven,
To help you find them.
- Lady.* Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place? 305
Comus. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.
Lady. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet. 310
Comus. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,
And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendants be yet lodg'd, 315

Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
 Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
 From her thatch'd pallet rouse; if otherwise,
 I can conduct you, Lady, to a low,
 But loyal cottage, where you may be safe 320
 Till further quest.

Lady. Shepherd, I take thy word,
 And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
 Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
 With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
 In courts of princes, where it first was nam'd, 325
 And yet is most pretended: in a place
 Less warranted than this, or less secure,
 I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.
 Eye me, blest Providence, and square my trial
 To my proportion'd strength. Shepherd, lead on. 330
 [Exeunt.]

Enter the *Two Brothers*.

El. Br. Unmuffle, yet faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
 That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
 Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
 And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
 In double night of darkness and of shades; 335
 Or, if your influence be quite damn'd up
 With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
 Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
 Of some clay habitation, visit us
 With thy long-levell'd rule of streaming light; 340
 And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
 Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. Br. Or, if our eyes
 Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
 The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
 Or sound of past'ral reed with oaten stops, 345
 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, O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister! 350
 Where may she wander now, whither betake her
 From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
 Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
 Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
 Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears. 355
 What if in wild amazement and affright?
 Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
 Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

El. Br. Peace, Brother; be not over-exquisite
 To cast the fashion of uncertain evils: 360
 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! 365

- 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) 370
 Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
 And put them into misbecoming plight.
 Virtue could see to do what virtue would
 By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
 Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self 375
 Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude;
 Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
 She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
 That in the various bustle of resort
 Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd. 380
 He that has light within his own clear breast,
 May sit i' th' center, and enjoy bright day:
 But he that hides a dark soul, and foul thoughts,
 Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
 Himself is his own dungeon.
- Sec. Br.* 'Tis most true, 385
 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, 390
 His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
 Or do his gray hairs any violence?
 But beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
 Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
 Of dragon-watch, with unenchanted eye, 395
 To save her blossoms and defend her fruit
 From the rash hand of bold incontinence.
 You may as well spread out the unsunn'd heaps
 Of misers' treasure by an outlaw's den,
 And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope 400
 Danger will wing on opportunity,
 And let a single helpless maiden pass
 Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
 Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
 I fear the dread events that dog them both, 405
 Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
 Of our unowned Sister.
- El. Br.* 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 th' event, my nature is
 That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
 And gladly banish squint suspicion.
 My Sister is not so defenceless left
 As you imagine; she has a hidden strength, 415
 Which you remember not.
- Sec. Br.* What hidden strength,
 Unless the strength of Heav'n, if you mean that?

El. Br. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
 Which, if Heav'n gave it, may be term'd her own:
 'Tis chastity, my Brother, chastity: 420
 She, that has that, is clad in complete steel;
 And, like a quiver'd nymph with arrows keen,
 May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
 Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
 Where, through the sacred rays of chastity, 425
 No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
 Will dare to soil her virgin purity:
 Yea there, where very desolation dwells,
 By grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
 She may pass on with unblench'd majesty, 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 meager hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
 That breaks his magic chains at Curfeu time, 435
 No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,
 Hath hurtful pow'r o'er true virginity,
 Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
 Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
 To testify the arms of chastity? 440
 Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow,
 Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
 Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness
 And spotted mountain-pard, but set at naught
 The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men 445
 Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' th' woods,
 What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
 That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
 Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
 But rigid looks of chaste austerity, 450
 And noble grace, that dash'd brute violence
 With sudden adoration and blank awe?
 So dear to Heav'n is saintly Chastity,
 That when a soul is found sincerely so,
 A thousand liveried angels lackey her, 455
 Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
 And, in clear dream and solemn vision,
 Tell her of things that no gross ear can hear;
 Till oft converse with heav'nly habitants
 Begin to cast a beam on th' outward shape, 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, 465
 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
 Ling'ring, and sitting by a new-made grave,

As loth to leave the body that it lov'd,
 And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
 To a degenerate and degraded state. 475

Sec. Br. How charming is divine philosophy!
 Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
 But musical as in Apollo's lute,
 And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
 Where no crude surfeit reigns.

El. Br. List, list; I hear 480
 Some far off halloo break the silent air.

Sec. Br. Methought so too; what should it be?

El. Br. For certain, 485
 Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
 Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
 Some roving robber, calling to his fellows.

Sec. Br. Heav'n keep my Sister. Again, again, and near!
 Best draw, and stand upon our guard.

El. Br. I'll halloo:
 If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
 Defence is a good cause, and Heav'n be for us.

Enter the Attendant Spirit, habited like a shepherd.

That halloo I should know; what are you? speak; 490
 Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.

Spir. What voice is that? my young lord? speak again.

Sec. Br. O brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.

El. Br. Thyrsis? whose artful strains have oft delay'd 495
 The huddling brook to hear his madrigal,
 And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale?

How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram
 Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
 Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?

How couldst thou find this dark sequester'd nook? 500

Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
 I came not here on such a trivial toy

As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
 Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth,
 That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought 505
 To this my errand, and the care it brought.

But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?

How chance she is not in your company?

El. Br. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without blame,
 Or our neglect, we lost her as we came. 510

Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

El. Br. What fears, good Thyrsis? Pr'ythee briefly
 show.

Spir. I 'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous
 (Though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance),
 What the sage poets, taught by th' heav'nly Muse, 515
 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
 Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,

Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
 Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
 And here to every thirsty wanderer
 By sly enticement gives his baneful cup, 525
 With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
 The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
 And the inglorious likeness of a beast
 Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintago
 Character'd in the face: this have I learnt 530
 Tending my flocks hard by i' th' hilly crofts,
 That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by night
 He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
 Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
 Doing abhorred rites to Hecate 535
 In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.
 Yet have they many baits and guileful spells,
 To inveigle and invite th' unwary sense
 Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
 This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
 Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb 540
 Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
 I sat me down to watch upon a bank
 With ivy canopied, and interwove
 With flaunting honey-suckle, and began, 545
 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 fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance; 550
 At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them a while,
 Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
 Gave respite to the drowsy flighted steeds,
 That draw the litter of close-curtain'd Sleep;
 At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound 555
 Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
 And stole upon the air, that even Silence
 Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
 Deny her nature, and be never more
 Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear, 560
 And took in strains that might create a soul
 Under the ribs of death: but, O! ere long,
 Too well I did perceive it was the voice
 Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear Sister.
 Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear, 565
 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, 570
 Where that damn'd wizard, hid in sly disguise
 (For so by certain signs I knew), had met
 Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
 The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey,
 Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two, 575
 Supposing him some neighbour villager.

Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not.

Sec. Br. O night and shades! 580
How are ye join'd with hell in triple knot
Against th' unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, Brother?

El. Br. Yes, and keep it still; 585
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm:
Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
Surpris'd by unjust force, but not enthral'd; 590
Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; when at last
Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself, 595
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consum'd: if this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness,
And earth's base built on stubble. But come, let's on.
Against th' opposing will and arm of Heaven 600
May never this just sword be lifted up;
But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt
With all the grisly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms 605
'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,
Curs'd as his life.

Spir. Alas! good vent'rous Youth, 610
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those that quell the might of hellish charms:
He with his bare wand can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

El. Br. Why pr'ythee, Shepherd, 615
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation?

Spir. Care, and utmost shifts, 620
How to secure the Lady from surprisal,
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous plant, and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to th' morning ray:
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing;
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit and hearken ev'n to ecstasy, 625
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 cull'd me out; 630
 The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
 But in another country, as he said,
 Bore a bright golden flow'r, but not in this soil:
 Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
 Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon: 635
 And yet more med'cinal is it than that moly,
 That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
 He call'd it Haemony, and gave it me,
 And bade me keep it as of sovran use
 'Gainst all enchantments, mildew, blast, or damp, 640
 Or ghastly furies' apparition.

I purs'd it up, but little reck'ning made,
 Till now that this extremity compell'd:
 But now I find it true; for by this means
 I knew the foul enchanter though disguis'd, 645
 Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,
 And yet came off: if you have this about you,
 (As I will give you when we go), you may
 Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
 Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood, 650
 And brandish'd blade, rush on him; break his glass,
 And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
 But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
 Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
 Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke, 655
 Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

El. Br. 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 chain'd 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 immanacl'd, while Heav'n sees good. 665

Comus. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?
 Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
 Sorrow flies far: see, here be all the pleasures
 That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts,
 When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns 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 mix'd:
 Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone 675
 In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
 Is of such pow'r to stir up joy as this,
 To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
 Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
 And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent 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 receiv'd on other terms;
 Scorning the unexempt condition 685
 By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
 Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
 That have been tir'd all day without repast,
 And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,
 This will restore all soon.

Lady. 'Twill not, false traitor! 690
 'Twill not restore the truth and honesty
 That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.
 Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
 Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
 These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me! 695
 Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!
 Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
 With visor'd falsehood and base forgery?
 And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
 With lickerish baits, fit to ensnare a brute? 700
 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-govern'd and wise appetite. 705

Comus. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
 To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
 And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
 Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
 Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth 710
 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, 715
 That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd silk,
 To deck her sons; and that no corner might
 Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
 She hutch'd th' all-worshipt ore and precious gems,
 To store her children with: if all the world 720
 Should in a pet of temp'rance feed on pulse,
 Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
 Th' All-giver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd,
 Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd;
 And we should serve him as a grudging master, 725
 As a penurious niggard of his wealth;

And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
 Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
 And strangled with her waste fertility;
 Th' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with
 plumes, 730
 The herds would over-multitude their lords,
 The sea o'er-fraught would swell, and th' unsought dia-
 monds
 Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
 And so bestud with stars, that they below
 Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last 735
 To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
 List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozen'd
 With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
 Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
 But must be current; and the good thereof 740
 Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
 Unsavoury in th' enjoyment of itself;
 If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
 It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
 Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown 745
 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 750
 The sampler, and to tease the huswife's wool.
 What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,
 Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the morn?
 There was another meaning in these gifts;
 Think what, and be advis'd; you are but young yet. 755
Lady. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
 In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
 Would think to charm my judgement, as mine eyes,
 Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.
 I hate when vice can bolt her arguments, 760
 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, 765
 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 besecming share
 Of that which lewdly-pamper'd luxury 770
 Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
 Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd
 In unsuperfluous even proportion,
 And she no whit encumber'd with her store;
 And then the Giver would be better thank'd, 775
 His praise due paid: for swinish gluttony
 Ne'er looks to Heav'n amidst his gorgeous feast,
 But with besotted base ingratitude
 Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?

Or have I said enough? To him that dares 780
 Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
 Against the sun-clad pow'r of Chastity,
 Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
 Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
 The sublime notion, and high mystery, 785
 That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
 And serious doctrine of virginity;
 And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
 More happiness than this thy present lot.
 Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric, 790
 That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
 Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinc'd:
 Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth
 Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
 To such a flame of sacred vehemence, 795
 That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
 And the brute earth would lend her nerves, and shake,
 Till all thy magic structures, rear'd to high,
 Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.
 Comus. She fables not; I feel that I do fear 800
 Her words set off by some superior power;
 And though not mortal, yet a cold shudd'ring dew
 Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
 Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
 To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble, 805
 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: 810
 But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
 Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
 Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.

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

Spirit.

What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
 O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand, 815
 And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
 And backward mutters of dissevering power,
 We cannot free the Lady that sits here
 In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless:
 Yet stay, be not disturb'd; now I bethink me, 820
 Some other means I have which may be us'd,
 Which once of Meliboens old I learnt,
 The soothest shepherd that e'er pip'd on plains.
 There is a gentle nymph not far from hence,
 That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream, 825
 Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
 Whilom she was the daughter of Loctrine,

That had the scepter from his father Brute.
 She, guiltless damsel, flying the mad pursuit
 Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen, 830
 Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
 That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.
 The water-nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
 Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
 Bearing her straight to aged Nerens' hall; 835
 Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
 And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
 In nectar'd lavers, strew'd with asphodel;
 And through the porch and inlet of each sense
 Dropt in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd, 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 845
 That the shrewd meddling elfe delights to make,
 Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals;
 For which the shepherds at their festivals
 Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
 And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream 850
 Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
 And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
 The clasping charm, and thaw the numming spell,
 If she be right invok'd in warbled song;
 For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift 855
 To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
 In hard-besetting need; this will I try,
 And add the pow'r of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
 Listen where thou art sitting 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, 865
 Listen and save.
 Listen, and appear to us,
 In name of great Oceanus;
 By th' earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
 And Tethys' grave majestic pace, 870
 By hoary Nerens' wrinkled look,
 And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
 By scaly Triton's winding shell,
 And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
 By Leucothea's lovely hands, 875
 And her son that rules the strands,
 By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
 And the songs of Syrens sweet,
 By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
 And fair Ligea's golden comb, 880

Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
 Sleeping her soft alluring locks;
 By all the nymphs that nightly dance
 Upon thy streams with wily glance,
 Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head, 885
 From thy coral-paven bed,
 And bridle in thy headlong wave,
 Till thou our summons answer'd have.

Listen, and save.

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

By the rushy-fringed bank, 890
 Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
 My sliding chariot stays,
 Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
 Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
 That in the channel strays; 895
 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, 900
 I am here.

Spir. Goddess dear,
 We implore thy pow'ful hand
 To undo the charmed band
 Of true virgin here distrest, 905
 Through the force and through the wile
 Of unblest enchanter vile.

Sabr. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
 To help ensnared chastity:
 Brightest Lady, look on me; 910
 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: 915
 Next this marble venom'd seat,
 Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
 I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:
 Now the spell hath lost his hold;
 And I must haste, ere morning hour, 920
 To wait in Amphitrite's bow'r.

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

Spir. Virgin, daughter of Loctrine,
 Sprung of old Anchises' line,
 May thy brimmed waves for this
 Their full tribute never miss 925
 From a thousand petty rills,
 That tumble down the snowy hills:
 Summer drought, or singed air,
 Never scorch thy tresses fair,
 Nor wet October's torrent flood 930
 Thy molten crystal fill with mud;

May thy billows roll ashore
 The beryl and the golden ore;
 May thy lofty head be crown'd
 With many a tow'r and terrace round, 935
 And here and there thy banks upon
 With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.

Come, Lady, while Heav'n lends us grace,
 Let us fly this cursed place,
 Lest the sorcerer us entice 940
 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, 945
 And not many furlongs thence
 Is your Father's residence,

Where this night are met in state
 Many a friend to gratulate
 His wish'd presence; and beside 950

All the swains, that there abide,
 With jigs and rural dance resort;
 We shall catch them at their sport,
 And or sudden coming there
 Will double all their mirth and cheer; 955
 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. 965

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
 I have brought ye new delight;
 Here behold so goodly grown
 Three fair branches of your own;
 Heav'n hath timely tried their youth, 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. 975

The dances being ended, the Spirit epiloguizes.

Spir. To the ocean now I fly,

- And those happy climes that lie
 Where day never shuts his eye,
 Up in the broad fields of the sky:
 There I suck the liquid air 980
 All amidst the gardens fair
 Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
 That sing about the golden tree:
 Along the crisped shades and bowers
 Revels the spruce and jocund Spring; 985
 The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
 Thither all their bounties bring;
 There eternal Summer dwells,
 And west-winds, with musky wing,
 About the cedarn alleys fling 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; 995
 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 slumber soft, and on the ground
 Sadly sits th' Assyrian queen:
 But far above in spangled sheen
 Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd,
 Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranc'd, 1005
 After her wand'ring labours long,
 Till free consent the gods among
 Make her his eternal bride,
 And from her fair unspotted side
 Two blissful twins are to be born, 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 bow'd welkin slow doth bend; 1015
 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 sphery chime;
 Or if Virtue feeble were,
 Heav'n itself would stoop to her.

SONNETS.

I.

To the Nightingale.

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

II.

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

HOW soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
 Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!
 My hasting days fly on with full career,
 But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
 Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
 That I to manhood am arriv'd so near;
 And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
 That some more timely-happy spirits endu'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.

When the Assault was intended to the City.

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

Went to the ground: and the repeated air
 Of sad Electra's poet had the power
 To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare.

IV.

To a virtuous Young Lady.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
 Wisely hast shunn'd the broad way and the green,
 And with those few art eminently seen,
 That labour up the hill with heav'nly 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 fix'd, and zealously attends
 To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,
 And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
 Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
 Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
 Hast gain'd thy entrance, virgin wise and pure.

V.

To the Lady Margaret Ley.

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

VI.

*On the Detraction which followed upon my writing certain
 Treatises.*

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

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

VII.

On the same.

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

VIII.

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

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

IX.

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

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

And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
 Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
 And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

X.

To the Lord General Fairfax.

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

XI.

To the Lord General Cromwell.

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

XII.

To Sir Henry Vane, the Younger.

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

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

XIII.

On the late Massacre in Piemont.

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

XIV.

On his Blindness.

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

XV.

To Mr. Lawrence.

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun,
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?

He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

XVI.

To Cyriack Skinner.

CYRIACK, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
Of British Themis, with no mean applause,
Pronounc'd, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
In mirth that, after, no repenting draws;
Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French.
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
Towards solid good what leads the nearest way;
For other things mild Heav'n a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

XVII.

To the same.

CYRIACK, this three years' day these eyes, though clear,
To outward view, of blemish or of spot,
Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,
Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heav'n's hand or will, nor 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,

XVIII.

On his deceased Wife.

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

But, O! as to embrace me she inclin'd,
I wak'd; she fled; and day brought back my night.

O D E S.

ON THE MORNING OF CHRIST'S NATIVITY.

(1629)

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn,
Wherein the Son of Heav'n's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing, 5
That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he went at heav'n'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.

Say, heav'nly Muse, shall not thy sacred vein 15
Afford a present to the Infant God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heav'n, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light, 20
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet; 25
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the Angel quire,
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

THE HYMN.

IT was the winter wild,
While the heav'n-born child 30
All meanly wrapt in the rude manger lies;
Nature in awe to him
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her 35
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
 She woos the gentle air
 To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
 And on her naked shame, 40
 Pollute with sinful blame,
 The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
 Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
 Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But he, her fears to cease, 45
 Sent down the meek-ey'd Peace;
 She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
 Down through the turning sphere,
 His ready harbinger,
 With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing; 50
 And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
 She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound,
 Was heard the world around:
 The idle spear and shield were high up hung; 55
 The hooked chariot stood
 Unstain'd with hostile blood;
 The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
 And kings sat still with awful eye,
 As if they surely knew their sovran Lord was by. 60

But peaceful was the night,
 Wherein the Prince of Light
 His reign of peace upon the earth began:
 The winds, with wonder whist,
 Smoothly the waters kist, 65
 Whisp'ring new joys to the mild ocean,
 Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
 While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
 Stand fix'd in steadfast gaze, 70
 Bending one way their precious influence;
 And will not take their flight,
 For all the morning light,
 Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
 But in their glimmering orbs did glow, 75
 Until then Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And, though the shady gloom
 Had given day her room,
 The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
 And hid his head for shame, 80
 As his inferior flame

The new-enlighten'd world no more should need;
 He saw a greater Sun appear
 Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could bear.

The shepherds on the lawn, 85
 Or e'er the point of dawn,
 Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
 Full little thought they then,

That the mighty Pan
 Was kindly come to live with them below; 90
 Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
 Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.
 When such music sweet
 Their hearts and ears did greet,
 As never was by mortal finger strook; 95
 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 heav'nly close. 100
 Nature that heard such sound,
 Beneath the hollow round
 Of Cynthia's seat, the aery region thrilling,
 Now was almost won
 To think her part was done, 105
 And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
 She knew such harmony alone
 Could hold all heav'n and earth in happier union.
 At last surrounds their sight
 A globe of circular light, 110
 That with long beams the shamefac'd night array'd;
 The helmed Cherubim,
 And sworded Seraphim,
 Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
 Harping in loud and solemn quire, 115
 With unexpressive notes, to Heav'n's new-born Heir.
 (Such music (as 'tis said)
 Before was never made,
 But when of old the sons of morning sung,
 While the Creator great 120
 His constellations set,
 And the well-balanc'd world on hinges hung;
 And cast the dark foundations deep,
 And bid the welt'ring waves their oozy channel keep.
 Ring out, ye crystal spheres, 125
 Once bless our human ears,
 If ye have pow'r to touch our senses so;
 And let your silver chime
 Move in melodious time;
 And let the base of heav'n's deep organ blow; 130
 And, with your ninefold harmony,
 Make up full concert to th' angelic symphony.
 For, if such holy song
 Enwrap our fancy long,
 Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold; 135
 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

Yea, Truth and Justice then
 Will down return to men,
 Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
 Mercy will sit between,
 Thron'd in celestial sheen, 145
 With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steering;
 And heav'n, as at some festival,
 Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says no,
 This must not yet be so, 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 ychain'd in sleep, 155
 The wakeful tramp of doom must thunder through the deep;

With such a horrid clang
 As on mount Sinai rang,
 While the red fire and smouldring clouds out brake:
 The aged Earth aghast 160
 With terrour of that blast,

Shall from the surface to the center shake;
 When, at the world's last session,
 The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his throne.

And then at last our bliss 165
 Full and perfect is,

But now begins; for, from this happy day,
 The old Dragon, under ground
 In straiter limits bound,
 Not half so far casts his usurped sway; 170
 And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
 Swindges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb,
 No voice or hideous hum
 Runs through the arched roof in words deceiving. 175
 Apollo from his shrine
 Can no more divine,

With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
 No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
 Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetic cell. 180

The lonely mountains o'er,
 And the resounding shore,
 A voice of weeping heard and loud lament;
 From haunted spring and dale,
 Edg'd with poplar pale, 185

The parting genius is with sighing sent;
 With flow'r-inwoven tresses torn
 The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets mourn.

In consecrated earth,
 And on the holy hearth, 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, 195
 Which each peculiar pow'r foregoes his wonted seat.
- Peor and Baälim
 Forsake their temples dim,
 With that twice-batter'd God of Palestine;
 And mooned Ashtaroth, 200
 Heav'ns queen and mother both,
 Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
 Tho Libyc Hammon shrinks his horn,
 In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz mourn.
- And sullen Moloch, fled, 205
 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.
- Nor is Osiris seen
 In Memphian grove or green,
 Trampling the unshow'r'd grass with lowings loud: 215
 Nor can he be at rest
 Within his sacred chest;
 Naught but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
 In vain with timbrell'd anthems dark
 The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipt ark. 220
- 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, 225
 Nor Typhon huge ending in snaky twine:
 Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
 Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.
- So, when the sun in bed,
 Curtain'd with cloudy red, 230
 Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
 The flocking shadows pale
 Troop to th' infernal jail,
 Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
 And the yellow-skirted Fayes 235
 Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd maze.
- But see, the Virgin blest
 Hath laid her Babe to rest;
 Time is, our tedious song should here have ending;
 Heav'n's youngest-teemed star 240
 Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
 Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attending:
 And all about the courtly stable
 Bright-harness'd angels sit in order serviceable.

THE PASSION.

EREWHILE of music, and ethereal mirth,
 Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
 And joyous news of heav'nly Infant's birth,
 My muse with Angels did divide to sing;
 But headlong joy is ever on the wing, 5
 In wintry solstice like the shorten'd light,
 Soon swallow'd up in dark and long out-living night.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
 And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
 Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long, 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!

He, sovran priest, stooping his regal head, 15
 That dropt with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
 Poor fleshy tabernacle entered,
 His starry front low-rooft beneath the skies:
 O, what a mask was there, what a disguise!

Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide, 20
 Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;
 To this horizon is my Phoebus bound:
 His god-like acts, and his temptations fierce, 25
 And former sufferings, other where are found;
 Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound;

Me softer airs besit, and softer strings
 Of lute, or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief;
 Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw, 30
 And work my flatter'd fancy to belief,
 That heav'n and earth are colour'd with my woe;
 My sorrows are too dark for day to know:

The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
 And letters, where my tears have wash'd, a wannish
 white, 35

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
 That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood;
 My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
 To bear me where the tow'rs of Salem stood,
 Once glorious tow'rs, now sunk in guiltless blood; 40

There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
 In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.

Mine eye had found that sad sepulchral rock
 That was the casket of Heav'n's richest store,
 And here though grief my feeble hands up-lock, 45
 Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score
 My plaining verse as lively as before;

For sure so well instructed are my tears,
 That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

Or should I thence hurried on viewless wing 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 beguil'd)

Might think th' infection of my sorrows loud 55
 Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

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

UPON THE CIRCUMCISION.

YE flaming pow'rs, and winged warriors bright,
 That erst with music, and triumphant song,
 First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
 So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
 Through the soft silence of the list'ning night; 5
 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 heav'n's heraldry whilere 10
 Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease;
 Alas, how soon our sin

Sore doth begin
 His infancy to seize!

O more exceeding love, or law more just? 15
 Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!

For we, by rightful doom remediless,
 Were lost in death, till he, that dwelt above
 High-thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust
 Emptied his glory, ev'n to nakedness; 20
 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, 25
 This day; but, O! ere long,
 Huge pangs and strong

Will pierce more near his heart.

ON THE DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT.

Dying of a Cough.

(1625)

O FAIREST flow'r, no sooner blown but blasted,
 Soft silken primrose fading timelessly,
 Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasted
 Bleak winter's force that made thy blossom dry;
 For he, being amorous on that lovely dye 5

A- That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But kill'd, alas! and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
By boist'rous rape th' Athenian damsel got,
He thought it touch'd his deity full near, 10
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away th' infamous blot

Of long-uncoupled bed and childless eld,
Which, 'mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach was held.

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car, 15
Through middle empire of the freezing air

He wander'd long, till thee he spied from far;
There ended was his quest, there ceas'd his care:
Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,

But, all unwares, with his cold-kind embrace 20
Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair biding-place.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand, 25
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;

But then transform'd him to a purple flower:
Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no power!

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb, 30
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low-delved tomb;
Could Heav'n for pity thee so strictly doom?

Oh no! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that show'd thou wast divine. 35

Resolve me then, oh soul most surely blest!
(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear)
Tell me, bright spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in th' Elysian fields (if such there were); 40

Oh say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall;
Which careful Jove in nature's true behoof 45
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?

Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny heav'n, and thou, some goddess fled,
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head?

Or wert thou that just maid, who once before 50
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And cam'st again to visit us once more?

Or wert thou that sweet-smiling youth?
Or that crown'd matron sage, white-robed Truth?

Or any other of that heav'nly brood 55
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some good?

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
 Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
 To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
 And after short abode fly back with speed, 60
 As if to show what creatures heav'n doth breed;

Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
 To scorn the sordid world, and unto heav'n aspire?

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below
 To bless us with thy heav'n-lov'd innocence, 65
 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 deserved smart?

But thou canst best perform that office where thou art. 70

Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
 Her false imagin'd loss cease to lament,
 And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
 Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
 And render him with patience what he lent; 75

This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
 That till the world's last end shall make thy name to live.

ON TIME.

FLY, envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
 Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
 Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace; *Time*
 And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
 Which is no more than what is false and vain, 5
 And merely mortal dross;

So little is our loss,
 So little is thy gain!
 For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
 And last of all thy greedy self consum'd, 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 *Eternity*
 And perfectly divine, 15
 With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
 About the supreme throne

Of Him, t' whose happy-making sight alone
 When once our heav'nly-guided soul shall clime,
 Then, all this earthy grossness quit, 20
 Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit,

Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee,
 O Time!

AT A SOLEMN MUSIC.

BLEST pair of Sirens, pledges of heav'n's joy,
 Sphere-born, harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
 Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd pow'r employ

Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce; 5
 And to our high-rai'd phantasy present
 That undisturbed song of pure concent,
 Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
 To Him that sits thereon,
 With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee;
 Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row, 10
 Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow;
 And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
 Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
 With those just spirits that wear victorious palms,
 Hymns devout and holy psalms *1 to the last* 15
 Singing everlastingly:
 That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
 May rightly answer that melodious noise;
 As once we did, till disproportion'd sin
 Jarr'd against nature's chime, and with harsh din 20
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made
 To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
 In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
 In first obedience, and their state of good. *1st*
 O, may we soon again renew that song, 25
 And keep in tune with heav'n, till God ere long
 To his celestial concert us unite,
 To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light!

AN EPITAPH ON THE MARCHIONESS
 OF WINCHESTER.

THIS rich marble doth inter
 The honour'd wife of Winchester,
 A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
 Besides what her virtues fair
 Added to her noble birth, 5
 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 15
 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, 25
 And calls Lucina to her throes;
 But, whether by mischance or blame,
 Atropos for Lucina came;
 And with remorseless cruelty
 Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree: 30

The hapless babe, before his birth,
 Had burial, yet not laid in earth;
 And the languish'd mothers' womb
 Was not long a living tomb.
 So have I seen some tender slip, 35
 Sav'd with care from winter's nip,
 The pride of her carnation train,
 Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,
 Who only thought to crop the flow'r
 New shot up from vernal show'r; 40
 But the fair blossom hangs the head
 Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
 And those pearls of dew she wears,
 Prove to be presaging tears,
 Which the sad morn had let fall 45
 On her hast'ning funeral.

Gentle Lady, may thy grave
 Peace and quiet ever have;
 After this thy travail sore
 Sweet rest seize thee evermore, 50
 That, to give the world increase,
 Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.
 Here, besides the sorrowing
 That thy noble house doth bring,
 Here be tears of perfect moan 55
 Wept for thee in Helicon;
 And some flowers, and some bays,
 For thy hearse, to strew the ways,
 Sent thee from the banks of Came,
 Devoted to thy virtuous name; 60
 Whilst thou, bright Sant, high sitt'st in glory,
 Next her, much like to thee in story,
 That fair Syrian shepherdess,
 Who, after years of barrenness,
 The highly favour'd Joseph bore, 65
 To him that serv'd for her before,
 And at her next birth, much like thee,
 Through pangs fled to felicity,
 Far within the bosom bright
 Of blazing Majesty and Light: 70
 There with thee, new welcome Saint,
 Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
 With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
 No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

SONG ON MAY MORNING.

NOW the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,

Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
 The flow'ry May, who from her green lap throws
 'The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
 Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire 5
 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

 MISCELLANIES.

ANNO AETATIS XIX.

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

HAIL, native language, that by sinews weak
 Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
 And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
 Half-unpronounc'd, slide through my infant lips,
 Driving dumb silence from the portal door, 5
 Where he had mutely sat two years before:
 Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
 That now I use thee in my latter task:
 Small loss it is that hence can come unto thee,
 I know my tongue but little grace can do thee: 10
 Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,
 Believe me, I have thither pack'd the worst:
 And, if it happen as I did forecast,
 The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.
 I pray thee then deny me not thy aid, 15
 For this same small neglect that I have made:
 But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
 And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,
 Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight
 Which takes our late fantasies with delight; 20
 But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire,
 Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire:
 I have some naked thoughts which rove about,
 And loudly knock to have their passage out;
 And, weary of their place, do only stay 25
 Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array;
 That so they may, without suspect or fears,
 Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;
 Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
 Thy service in some graver subject use, 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 heav'n's door
 Look in, and see each blissful deity, 35
 How he before the thundrous throne doth lie,
 List'ning to what unshorn Apollo sings
 To th' touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
 Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:
 Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire, 40
 And misty regions of wide air next under,
 And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
 May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,
 In heav'n's defiance mustering all his waves;
 Then sing of secret things that came to pass 45
 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 wand'ring Muse, how thou dost stray!
 Expectance calls thee now another way;
 Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent 55
 To keep in compass of thy predicament:
 Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,
 That to the next I may resign my room.

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

GOOD luck befriend thee, Son; for, at thy Lirth,
 The faery ladies danc'd upon the hearth; 60
 Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
 Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
 And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
 Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
 She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst still 65
 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, 70
 And in tim'es long and dark prospective glass
 Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
 'Your son,' said she, '(nor can you it prevent)
 Shall subject be to many an accident.
 O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king, 75
 Yet every one shall make him underling;
 And those, that cannot live from him asunder,
 Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under;
 In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,
 Yet, being above them, he shall be below them; 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 flow'ry lap;

Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door 85
 Devouring war shall never cease to roar;
 Yea, it shall be his natural property
 To harbour those that are at enmity.

What pow'r, what force, what mighty spell, if not 90
 Your learned hands, can loose this Gordian knot?

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 Oose, or gulfy Dun,
 Or Trent, who, like some earth-born giant, spreads
 His thirty arms along th' indented meads;
 Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath; 95
 Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death;
 Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
 Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee;
 Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name;
 Or Medway smooth, or royal-tower'd Thame. 100

[*The rest was prose.*]

AN EPITAPH

On the admirable Dramatic Poet, William Shakspeare.

WHAT needs my Shakspeare, for his honour'd bones,
 The labour of an age in piled stones?
 Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
 Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
 Dear son of memory, great heir of fame, 5
 What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name!
 Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
 Hast built thyself a livelong monument.
 For whilst, to th' shame of slow-endeavouring art,
 Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart 10
 Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
 Those Delphic lines with deep impression took;
 Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
 Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
 And, so sepulcher'd, in such pomp dost lie, 15
 That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

ON THE UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

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

HERE lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his girt,
 And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;
 Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one,
 He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.
 'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known, 5

Death was half glad when he had got him down;
 For he had, any time this ten years full,
 Dodg'd with him betwixt Cambridge and *The Bull*.
 And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
 Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd; 10
 But lately finding him so long at home,
 And thinking now his journey's end was come,
 And that he had ta'en up his latest inn,
 In the kind office of a chamberlin
 Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night, 15
 Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light:
 If any ask for him, it shall be said,
 'Hobson has supt, and 's newly gone to bed.'

Another on the same.

HERE lieth one, who did most truly prove
 That he could never die while he could move;
 To hung his destiny, never to rot
 While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
 Made of sphere-metal, never to decay 5
 Until his revolution was at stay.
 Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
 'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time:
 And, like an engine, mov'd with wheel and weight,
 His principles being ceas'd, he ended straight. 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 hasten'd on his term.
 Mercy to drive the time away he sicken'd, 15
 Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd;
 'Nay,' quoth he, on his swooning bed outstretch'd,
 'If I mayn't carry, sure I 'll ne'er be fetch'd,
 But vow, though the cross doctors all stood hearers,
 For one carrier put down to make six bearers.' 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 ev'n to his last breath (there be that say't), 25
 As he were press'd to death, he cried, 'More weight;'
 But, had his doings lasted as they were,
 He had been an immortal carrier.
 Obedient to the moon he spent his date
 In course reciprocal, and had his fate 30
 Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas,
 Yet (strange to think) his wain was his increase:
 His letters are deliver'd all and gone,
 Only remains this superscription.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE,

Under the Long Parliament.

BECAUSE you have thrown off your Prelate lord,
 And with stiff vows renounc'd his Liturgy,

To seize the widow'd whore Plurality
 From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd;
 Dare ye for this adjure the civil sword 5
 To force our consciences that Christ set free,
 And ride us with a classic hierarchy
 Taught ye by mere A. S. and Rotherford?
 Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,
 Would have been held in high esteem with Paul, 10
 Must now be nam'd and printed Heretics
 By shallow Edwards and Scotch what d'ye call:
 But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
 Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent,
 That so the Parliament 15
 May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
 Clip your phylacteries, though balk your ears,
 And succour our just fears,
 When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
 New Presbyter is but Old Priest writ large. 20

TRANSLATIONS.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, *Lib. I.*

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
 Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
 Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
 In wreaths thy golden hair,
 Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he 5
 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, 10
 Hopes thee, of flattering gales
 Unmindful. Hapless they,
 To whom thou untried seem'st fair! Me, in my vow'd
 Picture, the sacred wall declares to have hung
 My dank and dropping weeds 15
 To the stern god of sea.

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.

Brutus thus addresses Diana in the Country of Leogecia.

GODDESS of shades, and huntress, who at will
 Walk'st on the rolling spheres, and through the deep;
 On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell
 What land, what seat of rest, thou bidd'st me seek,
 What certain seat, where I may worship thee
 For aye, with temples vow'd and virgin quires.

To whom, sleeping before the Altar, Diana answers in a Vision the same Night.

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

FROM DANTE.

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

FROM DANTE.

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

FROM ARIOSTO.

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

FROM HORACE.

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

FROM EURIPIDES.

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

FROM HORACE.

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

FROM HORACE.

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

FROM SOPHOCLES.

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

FROM SENECA,

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

P S A L M S.

PSALM I.

(Done into verse 1653.)

BLESS'D is the man who hath not walk'd astray
 In counsel of the wicked, and i' the way
 Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
 Of scorners hath not sat. But in the great
 Jehovah's law is ever his delight, 5
 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, 10
 And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
 Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
 The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
 In judgement, or abide their trial then,
 Nor sinners in the assembly of just men;
 For the Lord knows the upright way of the just, 15
 And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

(Done August 8, 1653.)

Terzetti.

WHY do the Gentiles tumult, and the nations
 Muse a vain thing, the kings of the earth upstand
 With power, and princes in their congregations
 Lay deep their plots together through each land 5
 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 augh; the Lord shall scoff them; then severe,
 Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell 10
 And fierce ire trouble them. But I, saith he,
 Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
 On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
 I will declare: the Lord to me hath said,
 Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee 15
 This day; ask of me, and the grant is made:
 As thy possession I on thee bestow
 The Heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,

Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring fall low
 With iron scepter bruise'd, and them disperse 20
 Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so.
 And now be wise at length, ye kings averse,
 Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear
 Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
 With trembling; kiss the Son, lest he appear 25
 In anger, and ye perish in the way.
 If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere,
 Happy all those who have in him their stay.

PSALM III.

(August 9, 1653.)

When he fled from Absalom.

LORD, how many are my foes!
 How many those
 That in arms against me rise!
 Many are they,
 That of my life distrustfully thus say: 5
 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 10
 Unto Jehovah, he full soon replied,
 And heard me from his holy mount.
 I lay and slept; I wak'd again;
 For my sustain
 Was the Lord. Of many millions 15
 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 20
 On the cheek-bone all my foes,
 Of man abhorr'd
 Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the
 Lord;
 Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV.

(August 10, 1653.)

ANSWER me when I call,
 God of my righteousness;
 In straits and in distress,
 Thou didst me disenthral 5
 And set at large; now spare,
 Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
 Great ones, how long will ye
 My glory have in scorn?
 How long be thus forborn
 Still to love vanity? 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 15
 (For whom to choose he knows);
 Jehovah from on high
 Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.
 Be aw'd, and do not sin;
 Speak to your hearts alone, 20
 Upon your beds, each one,
 And be at peace within.
 Offer the offerings just
 Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust. 25
 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, 30
 Lift up the favour of thy count'nance bright.
 Into my heart more joy
 And gladness thou hast put,
 Than when a year of glut
 Their stores doth over-cloy, 35
 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 40
 Me safe where'er I lie;
 As in a rocky cell
 Thou, Lord, alone, in safety makest me dwell.

PSALM V.

(August 12, 1653.)

JEHOVAH, to my words give ear,
 My meditation weigh;
 The voice of my complaining hear,
 My King and God; for unto thee I pray. 5
 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 10
 In wickedness delight;
 Evil with thee no biding makes;
 Fools or mad men stand not within thy sight.
 All workers of iniquity
 Thou hat'st; and them unblest 15
 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 falt'ring mouth unstable,	25
No word is firm or sooth;	
Their inside, troubles miserable;	
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.	
God, find them guilty, let them fall	
By their own counsels quell'd;	30
Push them to their rebellions all	
Still on; for against thee they have rebell'd.	
Then all who trust in thee, shall bring	
Their joy; while thou from blame	
Defend'st them: they shall ever sing	35
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

P S A L M VI.

(August 13, 1653.)

LORD, in thine anger do not reprehend me,	
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;	
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,	
And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:	
For all my bones, that even with anguish ake,	5
Are troubled, yea, my soul is troubled sore,	
And thou, O Lord, how long? Turn, Lord; restore	
My soul; O save me for thy goodness' sake:	
For in death no remembrance is of thee;	
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?	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'th' midst of all mine enemies that mark.	15
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 dash'd	
With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,	
They shall return in haste the way they came,	
And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.	

P S A L M 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, 5
 '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; 10
 Or to him have render'd less,
 And not freed my foe for naught;

Let the enemy pursue my soul,
 And overtake it; let him tread
 My life down to the earth, and roll 15
 In the dust my glory dead,
 In the dust; and there, out-spread,
 Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah, in thine ire,
 Rouse thyself amidst the rage 20
 Of my foes that urge like fire;
 And wake for me, their fury asswage;
 Judgement here thou didst engage
 And command, which I desire.

So th' assemblies of each nation 25
 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 35
 Of evil men the wickedness,
 And their pow'r that do amiss.

But the just establish fast,
 Since thou art the just God that tries
 Hearts and reins. On God is cast 40
 My defence, and in him lies,
 In him who, both just and wise,
 Saves th' upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe,
 And God is every day offended;
 If the unjust will not forbear, 45
 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 travels big with vanity;
 Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old,
 As in a womb; and from that mould
 Hath at length brought forth a lie.
 He digg'd a pit, and delv'd it deep, 55
 And fell into the pit he made;
 His mischief, that due course doth keep,
 Turns on his head; and his ill trade
 Of violence will, undelay'd,
 Fall on his crown with ruin steep. 60
 Then will I Jehovah's praise
 According to his justice raise,
 And sing the Name and Deity
 Of Jehovah the Most High.

PSALM VIII.

(August 14, 1653.)

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

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou 5
 Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
 To stint th' enemy, and slack th' avenger's brow,
 That bends his rage thy Providence to oppose.

When I behold thy heav'ns, thy fingers' art,
 The moon and stars, which thou so bright hast set 10
 In the pure firmament; then saith my heart,
 O, what is man, that thou rememb'rest yet,
 And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
 That him thou visit'st, and of him art found!
 Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot, 15
 With honour and with state thou hast him crown'd.

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him lord,
 Thou hast put all under his lordly feet;
 All flocks and herds, by thy commanding word,
 All beasts that in the field or forest meet, 20
 Fowl of the heav'ns, and fish that through the wet
 Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth.

O Jehovah our Lord, how wondrous great
 And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

(April, 1648. J. M.)

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

PSALM LXXX.

- 1 THOU, Shepherd, that dost Israel keep,
 Give ear *in time of need*;
 Who leadest like a flock of sheep
Thy loved Joseph's seed;
 That sitt'st between the Cherubs *bright*, 5
Between their wings out-spread;
 Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light*,
And on our foes thy dread.
- 2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
 And in Manasse's sight, 10
 Awake thy strength, come, and be seen
To save us by thy might.
- 3 Turn us again, *thy grace divine*
To us, O God, vouchsafe;
 Cause thou thy face on us to shine, 15
 And then we shall be safe.
- 4 Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou,
 How long wilt thou declare
 Thy smoking wrath, *and angry brow*
 Against thy people's prayer! 20
- 5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;
 Their bread with tears they eat;
 And mak'st them largely drink the tears
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.
- 6 A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey* 25
 To every neighbour foe;
 Among themselves they laugh, they play,
 And flouts at us they throw.
- 7 Return us, *and thy grace divine*,
 O God of Hosts, *vouchsafe*;
 Cause thou thy face on us to shine, 30
 And then we shall be safe.
- 8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
Thy free love made it thine,
 And drov'st out nations *proud and haut*, 35
 To plant this *lovely vine*.
- 9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
 And root it deep and fast,
 That it began to grow *apace*,
 And fill'd the land *at last.* 40
- 10 With her *green shade* that cover'd all,
 The hills were *over-spread*;
 Her boughs as *high as cedars tall*
Advanc'd their lofty head.
- 11 Her branches *on the western side* 45
 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
Up turns it by the roots;
Wild beasts there browze, and make their food 55
Her grapes and tender shoots.
- 14 Return now, God of Hosts, look down
From heav'n, thy seat divine;
Behold us, *but without a frown,*
And visit this *thy* vine. 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 consum'd with fire, 65
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 75
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, 5
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, 10
Th' appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast comes round.
- 4 This was a statute *giv'n* of old
For Israel to observe;
A law of Jacob's God, to hold, 15
From whence they might not swerve.
- 5 This he a testimony ordain'd
In Joseph, *not to change,*
When, as he pass'd through Egypt land,
The tongue I heard was strange. 20
- 6 From burden, *and from slavish toil,*
I set his shoulder free:
His hands from pots; *and miry soil,*
Deliver'd 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 answer'd thee in thunder deep,
 With clouds encompass'd round ; 30
 I tried thee at the water steep
 Of Meriba *renown'd.*
- 8 Hear, O my people, *hearken well ;*
 I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,
 If thou wilt list to me : 35
- 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 lov'd so dear,*
 Mislik'd me for his choice. 45
- 12 Then did I leave them to their will,
 And to their wand'ring mind ; 50
 Their own conceits they follow'd still,
 Their own devices blind.
- 13 O, that my people would *be wise,*
To serve me all their days !
 And O, that Israel would *advise*
To walk my righteous ways ! 55
- 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. 65
- 16 And he would feed them *from the shock*
 With flow'r of finest wheat,
 And satisfy them from the rock
 With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

- 1 GOD in the great assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states ;
 Among the gods, on both his hands,
 He judges and debates.
- 2 How long will ye pervert the right
 With judgement false and wrong, 5
 Favouring the wicked by your might,
Who thence grow bold and strong ?

- 3 Regard the weak and fatherless,
 Dispatch the poor man's cause:
 And raise the man in deep distress
 By just and equal laws. 10
- 4 Defend the poor and desolate,
 And rescue from the hands
 Of wicked men the low estate
 Of him *that help demands*. 15
- 5 They know not, nor will understand,
 In darkness they walk on;
 The earth's foundations all are mov'd,
 And out of order gone. 20
- 6 I said that ye were gods, yea all
 The sons of God Most High;
- 7 But ye shall die like men, and fall
 As other princes *die*.
- 8 Rise, God; judge thou the earth *in might*,
 This *wicked* earth redress;
 For thou art he who shall by right
 The nations all possess. 25

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. 5
- 2 For lo, thy *furious* foes *now* swell,
 And storm outrageously;
 And they that hate thee, *proud and fell*,
 Exalt their heads full high.
- 3 Against thy people they contrive
 Their plots and counsels deep; 10
 Them to ensnare they chiefly strive,
 Whom thou dost hide and keep.
- 4 Come, let us cut them off, say they,
 Till they no nation be;
 That Israel's name for ever may
 Be lost in memory. 15
- 5 For they consult with all their might,
 And all, as one in mind,
 Themselves against thee they unite,
 And in firm union bind. 20
- 6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
 Of *scornful* Ishmael,
 Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
 That in the desert dwell,
- 7 Gebal and Ammon, there conspire,
 And *hateful* Amalec,
 The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
 Whose bounds the sea doth check. 25
- 8 With them *great* Ashur also bands,
 And doth confirm the knot:
 All these have lent their armed hands
 To aid the sons of Lot. 30

- 9 Do to them as to Midian bold,
That wasted all the coast;
 To Sisera; and, as is told,
Thou didst to Jabin's host,
When, at the brook of Kishon old,
They were repuls'd and slain, 35
- 10 At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
 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
 Their stately palaces. 45
- 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; 55
- 15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
 And with thy tempest chase;
- 16 And, till they yield thee honour due,
 Lord, fill with shame their face. 60
- 17 Asham'd, and troubled, let them be,
 Troubled, and sham'd for ever;
 Ever confounded, and so die
 With shame, and *scape it never.*
- 18 Then shall they know, that Thou, whose Name 65
 Jehovah is alone,
 Art the Most High, and thou the same,
 O'er all the earth art *Onc.*

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! 5
- 2 My soul doth long and almost die
 Thy courts, O Lord, to see;
 My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
 O living God, for thee.
- 3 There ev'n the sparrow, freed from wrong,
 Hath found a house of rest; 10
 The swallow there, to lay her young
 Hath built her brooding nest;
 Ev'n by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
 They find their safe abode;
 And home they fly from round the coasts 15
 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 wat'ry dale,
Where springs and show'rs abound.
- 7 They journey on from strength to strength 25
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 35
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,* 45
That man is truly blest,
Who *only* on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

- 1 THY land to favour graciously
Thou hast not, Lord, been slack;
Thou hast from *hard* captivity
Returned Jacob back.
- 2 Th' iniquity thou didst forgive 5
That wrought thy people woe;
And all their sin, *that did thee grieve,*
Hast hid where none shall know.
- 3 Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,
And *calmly* didst return 10
From thy fierce wrath which we had prov'd
Far worse than fire to burn.
- 4 God of our saving health and peace,
Turn us, and us restore;
Thine indignation cause to cease 15
Towards us, *and chide no more.*
- 5 Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend
From age to age on us? 20

- 6 Wilt thou not turn *and hear our voice,*
 And us again revive,
 That so thy people may rejoice
 By thee preserv'd alive? 25
- 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, 30
 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* 35
To trespass as before.
- 9 Surely, to such as do him fear
 Salvation is at hand;
 And glory shall ere long appear
 To dwell within our land. 40
- 10 Mercy and Truth *that long were miss'd,*
 Now *joyfully* are met;
 Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,
And hand in hand are set.
- 11 Truth from the earth, *like to a flow'r,* 45
 Shall bud and blossom then;
 And Justice from her heav'nly bow'r
 Look down *on mortal men.*
- 12 The Lord will also then bestow
 Whatever thing is good; 50
 Our land shall forth in plenty throw
 Her fruits *to be our food.*
- 13 Before him Righteousness shall go,
His royal harbinger:
 Then will he come, and not be slow, 55
 His footsteps cannot err.

PSALM LXXXVI.

- 1 THY *gracious ear,* O Lord, incline,
 O hear me, *I thee pray;*
 For I am poor, and almost pine
 With need, *and sad decay.*
- 2 Preserve my soul; for I have trod 5
 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; [‡] O 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 15
 Art full of mercy, thou *alone*
 To them that on thee call.

- 6 Unto my supplication, Lord,
Give ear, and to the cry
Of my *incessant* pray'rs afford
Thy hearing graciously. 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 pray'd*.
- 8 Like thee among the gods is none,
O Lord; nor any works
Of *all that other gods have done*
Like to thy *glorious* works. 25
- 9 The nations all whom thou hast made
Shall come, and *all shall frame*
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
And glorify thy name. 30
- 10 For great thou art, and wonders great
By thy strong hand are done;
Thou, *in thy everlasting seat*,
Remainest God alone. 35
- 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 tow'rd me,
And thou hast freed my soul,
Ev'n from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul. 45
- 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,
Readiest thy grace to shew,
Slow to be angry, and *art styl'd*
Most merciful, most true. 55
- 16 O turn to me *thy face at length*,
And me have mercy on;
Unto thy servant give thy strength,
And save thy handmaid's son. 60
- 17 Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes *then see*,
And be *asham'd*; because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

- 1 AMONG the holy mountains *high*
Is his foundation fast;
There seated in his sanctuary,
His temple there is plac'd.

- 2 Sion's fair gates the Lord loves more 5
 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 10
 Of thee abroad are spoke;
- 4 I mention Egypt, where proud kings 15
 Did our forefathers yoke.
 I mention Babel to my friends,
 Philistia full of scorn;
 And Tyre with Ethiop's utmost ends,
 Lo this man there was born:
- 5 But twice that praise shall in our ear 20
 Be said of Sion last;
 This and this man was born in her;
 High God shall fix her fast.
- 6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll 25
 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, 25
 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, 5
 All day to thee I cry;
 And all night long before thee weep,
 Before thee prostrate lie.
- 2 Into thy presence let my pray'r 10
 With sighs devout ascend;
 And to my cries, that ceaseless are,
 Thine ear with favour bend.
- 3 For, cloy'd with woes and trouble store, 15
 Surcharg'd my soul doth lie;
 My life, at death's uncheerful door,
 Unto the grave draws nigh.
- 4 Reckon'd I am with them that pass 20
 Down to the dismal pit;
 I am a man, but weak, alas!
 And for that name unfit.
- 5 From life discharg'd and parted quite 25
 Among the dead to sleep;
 And like the slain in bloody fight,
 That in the grave lie deep.
 Whom thou rememberest no more,
 Dost never more regard,
 Them from thy hand deliver'd o'er,
 Death's hideous house hath barr'd.
- 6 Thou in the lowest pit profound 25
 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; 30
 Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
 And all thy waves break me.
- 8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
 And mak'st me odious,
 Me to them odious, *for they change,* 35
 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 deceas'd arise,
 And praise thee *from their loathsome bed*
With pale and hollow eyes?
- 11 Shall they thy loving kindness tell, 45
 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 pray'r doth lie 55
 Each morn, and thee prevent.
- 14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
 And hide thy face from me,
- 15 That am already bruis'd, and shake
 With terror sent from thee? 60
 Bruis'd and afflicted, and so low
 As ready to expire;
 While I thy terrors undergo,
 Astonish'd with thine ire.
- 16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow; 65
 Thy threat'nings cut me through:
- 17 All day they round about me go,
 Like waves they me pursue.
- 18 Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
 And sever'd from me far: 70
 They *fly me now* whom I have lov'd,
 And as in darkness are.

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 past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
 Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand;
 Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,

His praise and glory was in Israel known.
 That saw the troubled sea, and shivering fled,
 And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
 Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
 As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foil. 10
 The high huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
 Amongst their ewes; the little hills, like lambs.
 Why fled the ocean? And why skipt the mountains?
 Why turned Jordan tow'rd his crystal fountains?
 Shake, Earth; and at the presence be aghast 15
 Of Him that ever was, and aye shall last;
 That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
 And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

PSALM CXXXVI.

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

But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power.

For his, etc.

His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness.

For his, etc.

In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown.

For his, etc.

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

For his, etc.

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

For his, etc.

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

For his, etc.

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

For his, etc.

And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy.

For his, etc.

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

For his, etc.

Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth.

For his, etc.

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

For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

IOANNIS MILTONI,
LONDINENSIS,
P O E M A T A.

QUORUM PLERAQUE INTRA ANNUM AETATIS
VIGESIMUM CONSCRIPSIT.

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

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

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

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

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

Ad Joannem Miltonum.

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

SELVAGGI.

Al Signior Gio. Miltoni, Nobile Inglesc.

O D E.

ERGIMI all' Etra ò Clio
Perche di stelle intreccierò corona
Non più del Biondo Dio
La Fronde eterna in Pindo, e in Elicona

Diensi a merito maggior, maggiori i fregi,
A' celeste virtù celesti pregi.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Nell' altera Babelle
Per te il parlar confuse Giove in vano,

Che per varie favelle
 Di se stessa trofeo cadde su 'l piano:
 Ch' Ode oltr' all' Anglia il suo più degno Idioma
 Spagna, Francia, Toscana, e Grecia, e Roma.

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

Non batta il tempo l' ale,
 Fermisi immoto, e in un fermin si gl' anni,
 Che di virtù immortale
 Scorrion di troppo ingiuriosi a i danni;
 Che s'opre degne di poema o 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 huomo celeste ottiene il vanto,
 Il Tamigi il dirà che gl' e concesso
 Per te suo cingo parreggiar Permesso.

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

Del Sig. Antonio Francini, Gentilhuomo Fiorentino.

IOANNI MILTONI

LONDINENSI

Juveni Patria, virtutibus eximio.

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

Polyglotto, in cujus ore linguae jam deperditae sic reviviscunt, ut idiomata omnia sint in ejus laudibus infacunda; Et jure ea percallet, ut admirationes et plausus populorum ab propria sapientia 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 memoria totus orbis; in intellectu sapientia; in voluntate ardor gloriae; in ore eloquentia; harmonicos coe-

lestium sphaerarum sonitus astronomi aduce audienti; characteres mirabilium naturae per quos Dei magnitudo describitur magistra philosophia legenti; antiquitatum latebras, vetustatis excidia, eruditionis ambages, comite assidua autorum lectione,

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

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

Tanto homini servus, tantae virtutis amator.

ELEGIARUM

LIBER PRIMUS.

ELEGIA PRIMA.

Ad Carolum Deodatum.

TANDEM, chare, tuae mihi pervenere tabellae,
Pertulit et voces nuncia charta tuas;
Pertulit occiduâ Devae Cestrensis ab ora
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 refluâ quam Thamesis alluit undâ,
Meque nec invitum patria dulcis habet.
Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
Nec dudum vetiti me laris angit amor.
Nuda nec arva placent, umbrasque negantia molles,
Quam male Phoebicolis convenit ille locus!
Nec duri libet usque minas proferre magistri
Caeteraque ingenio non subeunda meo.
Si sit hoc exilium patrios adiisse penates,
Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
Non ego vel profugi nomen sortemve recuso,
Laetus et exilii conditione fruor.
O utinam vates 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 haeres,
 Seu procus, aut positâ casside miles adest,
 Sive decennali foecundus lite patronus
 Detonat inculto barbara verba foro!
 Saepe vafer gnato succurrit servus amanti,
 Et nasum rigidi fallit ubique patris;
 Saepe novos illic virgo mirata calores
 Quit sit amor nescit, dum quoque nescit, amat.
 Sive cruentatum furiosa Tragoedia sceptrum
 Quassat, et effusis crinibus ora rotat;
 Et dolet et specto, juvat et spectasse dolendo,
 Interdum et lacrymis dulcis amaror inest:
 Seu puer infelix indelibata reliquit
 Gaudia, et abrupto flendus amore cadit,
 Seu ferus è tenebris iterat Styga criminis ultor
 Conscia funereo pectora torre movens,
 Seu moeret 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 suburbani nobilis umbra loci.
 Saepius hic blandas spirantia sidera flammâs
 Virgineos videas praeteriisse choros.
 Ah quoties dignae stupui miracula formae
 Quae possit senium vel reparare Jovis!
 Ah quoties vidi superantia lumina gemmas,
 Atque faces quotquot volvit uterque polus;
 Collaque bis vivi Pelopis quae brachia vincant,
 Quaeque fluit puro nectare tincta via,
 Et decus eximium frontis, tremulosque capillos,
 Aureæ quae fallax retia tendit Amor;
 Pellacesque genas, ad quos hyacinthina sordet
 Purpura, et ipse tui floris, Adoni, rubor!
 Cedite laudatae toties Heroides olim,
 Et quaecunque vagum cepit amica Jovem.
 Cedite Achaemeniae turritâ fronte puellae,
 Et quot Susa colunt, Memnoniamque Ninon.
 Vos etiam Danaae fascès submitte Nymphae,
 Et vos Iliacae, Romuleaeque nurus.
 Nec Pompeianas Tarpeia Musa columnas
 Jactet, et Ansoniis plena theatra stolis.
 Gloria Virginibus debetur prima Britannis,
 Extera sat tibi sit foemina posse sequi.
 Tuque urbs Dardaniis Londinum structa colonis
 Turrigerum latè conspicienda caput,
 Tu nimium felix intra tua moenia claudis
 Quicquid formosi pendulus orbis habet.
 Non tibi tot coela scintillant astra sereno
 Endymioneae turba ministra deae,
 Quot tibi conspicuae formaeque aurôque puellae
 Per medias radiant turba videnda vias.
 Creditur huc geminis venisse invecta columbis
 Alma pharetrigero milite cincta Venus,
 Huic Caidon, et riguas Simoentis flumine valles,

Huic Paphon, et roseam posthabitura Cypron.
 Ast ego, dum pueri sinit indulgentia caeci,
 Moenia quàm subito linquere fausta pato;
 Et vitare procul malefidae infamia Circes
 Atria, divini Molyos usus ope.
 Stat quoque juncosas Cami remeare paludes,
 Atque iterum raucae murmur adire Scholae.
 Interea fidi parvum cape munus amici,
 Paucaque in alternos verba coacta modos.

E L E G I A S E C U N D A.

ANNO AETATIS 17.

In obitum Praecontis Academici Cantabrigiensis.

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

E L E G I A T E R T I A.

ANNO AETATIS 17.

In obitum Praesulis Wintoniensis.

MOESTUS eram, et tacitus, nullo comitante, sedebam,
 Haerebantque animo tristia plura meo,
 Protinus en subiit funestae cladis imago
 Fecit in Angliaco quam Libitina solo;
 Dum procerum ingressa est splendentem 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:
 Et memini Heroum quos vidit ad aethera raptos,
 Flevit et amissos Belgia tota duces.
 At te praecipuè luxi dignissime Praesul,
 Wintoniaequè olim gloria magna tuae;
 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 pulchrae Cypridi sacra rosa,
 Nec sinis, ut semper fluvio contermina quercus
 Miretur lapsus praetereuntis aquae?
 Et tibi succumbit liquido quae plurima coelo
 Evehitur pemis quamlibet augur avis,
 Et quae mille nigris errant animalia sylvis,
 Et quot alunt mutum Proteos antra pecus.
 Invida, tanti tibi cum sit concessa potestas;
 Quid juvat humanà tingere caede manus?
 Nobileque in pectus certas acuisse sagittas,
 Semideamque animam sede fugasse suâ?
 Talia dum lacrymans alto sub pectore volvo,
 Roscidus occiduis Hesperus exit aquis,
 Et Tartessiaco submerserat aequore currum
 Phoebus, ab cœo 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 puicè radiabant omnia luce,
 Ut matutino cum juga sole rubent.
 Ac veluti cum pandit opes Thaumantia proles,
 Vestitu nituit multicolore solum.
 Non dea tam variis ornavit floribus hortos
 Alcinoi, Zephyro Chloris amata levi.
 Flumina vernantes lambunt argentea campos,
 Ditiore Hesperio flavet arena Tago.
 Serpit odoriferas per opes levis aura Favoni,
 Auræ sub innumeris humida nata rosis,
 Talis in extremis terrae Gangetidis oris
 Luciferi regis fingitur esse domus.
 Ipse racemiferis dum densas vitibus umbras
 Et pellucentes miror ubique locos,
 Ecce mihi subito Praesul Wintonius 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 laeto florea terra sono.
 Agmina gemmatis plaudunt coelestia pennis,
 Pura triumphali personat aethra tubâ.

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 nabilia turmae,
 At mihi cum tenebris aurea pulsa quies.
 Flebam turbatos Cephaleiâ pellice somnos,
 Talia contingant somnia saepe mihi.

E L E G I A Q U A R T A.

ANNO AETATIS 18.

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

CURRE per immensum subitò mea littera pontum,
 I, p̄cte Teutonicos laeve per aequor agros;
 Segnes rumpe moras, et nil, precor, obstet eunti,
 Et festinantis nil remoretur iter.
 Ipse ego Sicanio fraenantem carcere ventos
 Aeolon, et virides sollicitabo Deos,
 Caeruleamque 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;
 Aut queis Triptolemus Scythicas devenit in oras
 Gratus Eleusinâ missus ab urbe puer.
 Atque ubi Germanas flavere videbis arenas
 Ditis ad Hamburgae moenia flecte gradum,
 Dicitur occiso quae ducere nomen ab Hamâ
 Cimbrica quem fertur clava dedisse neci.
 Vivit ibi antiquae clarus pietatis honore
 Praesul Christicolas pascere doctus oves;
 Ille quidem est animae plusquam pars altera nostrae,
 Dimidio vitae vivere cogor ego.
 Hei mihi quot pelagi, quot montes interjecti
 Me faciunt aliâ parte carere mei!
 Charior ille mihi quàm tu doctissime Graium
 Cliniadi, pronepos qui Telamonis erat;
 Quàmque Stagirites generoso magnus alumno,
 Quem peperit Lybico Chaonis alma Jovi.
 Qualis Amyntorides, qualis Philyræius Heros
 Myrmidonum regi, talis et ille mihi.
 Primus ego Aonios illo praeunte recessus
 Lustrabam, et bifidi sacra vireta jugi,
 Pieriosque hausit latices, Clioque favente,
 Castalio sparsi laeta ter ora mero.
 Flammeus at signum ter viderat arietis Aethon,
 Induxitque auro lanæ terga novo,
 Bisque novo terram sparsisti Chlorigen senilem
 Gramine, bisque tuas abstulit Auster opes:

Necdum ejus licuit mihi lumina pascere vultu,
 Aut linguae dulces aure bibisse sonos.
 Vade igitur, cursuque Eurum praeverte sonorum,
 Quàm sit opus monitis res docet, ipsa vides.
 Invenies dulci cum conjuge fortè sedentem,
 Mulcentem gremio pignora chara suo,
 Forsitan aut veterum praelarga volumina patrum
 Versantem, aut veri biblia sacra Dei,
 Caelestive animas saturantem rore tenellas,
 Grande salutiferae religionis opus.
 Utque solet, multam sit dicere cura salutem,
 Dicere quam decuit, si modo adesset, herum.
 Haec quoque paulum oculos in humum defixa modestos
 Verba verecundo sis memor ore loqui:
 Haec tibi, si teneris vacat inter praelia 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 à 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.
 Tu modò da veniam fasso, veniamque roganti,
 Crimina diminui, quae patuere, solent.
 Non ferus in pavidos rictus diducit hiantes,
 Vulnifico pronos nec rapit ungue leo.
 Saepe sarissiferi crudelia pectora Thracis
 Supplicis ad moestas delinere preces.
 Extensaeque manus avertunt fulminis ictus,
 Placat et iratos hostia parva Deos.
 Iamque diu scripsisse tibi fuit impetus illi,
 Neve moras ultra ducere passus Amor.
 Nam vaga Fama refert, heu nuntia vera malorum!
 In tibi finitimis bella timere locis,
 Teque tuamque urbem truculento milite cingi,
 Et iam Saxonicos arma parasse duces.
 Te circum latè campos populatur Enyo,
 Et sata carne virùm jam cruor arva rigat;
 Germanisque suum concessit Thracia Martem,
 Illuc Odrysios Mars pater egit equos;
 Perpetuòque comans jam deflorescit oliva,
 Fugit et aerisonam Diva perosa tubam,
 Fugit io terris, et jam non ultima virgo
 Creditur ad superas justa volasse domos.
 Te tamen interea belli circumsonat horror,
 Vivis et ignoto solus inopsque solo;
 Et, tibi quam patrii non exhibuere penates,
 Sede peregrinà quaeris egenus opem.
 Patria dura parens, et saxis saevior albis
 Spumea quae pulsat littoris unda tui,
 Siccine te decet innocuos exponere foetus,
 Siccine in externam ferrea cogis humum,
 Et sinis ut terris quaerant alimenta remotis

Quos tibi prospiciens miserat ipse Deus,
 Et qui laeta ferunt de coelo nuntia, quique
 Quae via post cineres ducat ad astra, docent?
 Digna quidem Stygiis quae vivas clausa tenebris,
 Aeternaque animae digna perire fame!
 Haud aliter vates terrae Thesbitidis olim
 Pressit inassueto devia tesqua pede,
 Desertasque Arabum salebras, dum regis Achabi
 Effugit atque tuas, Sidoni dira, manus.
 Talis et horrisono laceratus membra flagello,
 Paulus ab Aemathiâ pellitur urbe Cilix.
 Piscosaeque ipsum Gergessae 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,
 Intententque tibi millia tela necem,
 At nullis vel inerme latus violabitur armis,
 Deque tuo cuspis nulla cruore bibet.
 Namque eris ipse Dei radiante sub aegide tutus,
 Ille tibi custos, et pugil ille tibi;
 Ille Sionaeae qui tot-sub moenibus arcis
 Assyrios fudit nocte silente viros;
 Inque fugam vertit quos in Samaritidas oras
 Misit ab antiquis prisca Damascus agris,
 Terruit et densas pavido cum rege cohortes,
 Aere dum vacuo buccina clara sonat,
 Cornea pulvereum dum verberat ungula campum,
 Currus arenosam dum quatit actus humum,
 Auditurque hinnitus equorum ad bella ruentium,
 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.

E L E G I A Q U I N T A.

ANNO AETATIS 20.

In adventum veris.

In se perpetuo Tempus révolubile gyro
 Iam revocat Zephyros vere tepente novos;
 Induiturque brevem Tellus reparata juventam,
 Iamque soluta gelu dulce 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 Pyrenen somnia nocte ferunt;
 Longitaeque arcano fervent mihi pectora motu,

Et furor, et sonitus me sacer intus agit.
 Delius ipse venit, video Peneïde lauro
 Implicitos crines, Delius ipse venit.
 Iam mihi mens liquidi raptatur in ardua coeli,
 Perque vagas nubes corpore liber eo;
 Perque umbras, perque antra feror penetralia vatam,
 Et mihi fana patent interiora Deum;
 Intuiturque animus toto quid agatur Olympo,
 Nec fugiunt oculos Tartara caeca meos.
 Quid tam grande sonat distento spiritus ore?
 Quid parit haec rabies, quid sacer iste furor?
 Ver mihi, quod dedit ingenium, cantabitur illo;
 Profuerint isto reddita dona modo.
 Iam Philomela tuos foliis adoperta novellis
 Instituis modulos, dum silet omne nemus:
 Urbe ego, tu sylvâ simul incipiamus utrique,
 Et simul adventum veris uterque canat.
 Veris io rediere vices, celebremus honores
 Veris, et hoc subeat Musa perennis opus.
 Iam sol Aethiopas fugiens Tithoniaque arva,
 Flectit ad Arctoas aurea lora plagas.
 Est breve noctis iter, brevis est mora noctis opacae,
 Horrida cum tenebris exulat illa suis.
 Iamque Lycaonius plaustrum coeleste Bootes
 Non longâ sequitur fessus ut ante viâ;
 Nunc etiam solitas circum Jovis atria toto
 Excubias agitant sidera rara polo.
 Nam dolos, et caedes, et vis cum nocte recessit,
 Neve Giganteum Dii timere scelus.
 Forte aliquis scopuli recubans in vertice pastor,
 Roscida cum primo sole rubescit humus,
 Hac, ait, hac certè caruisti nocte puellâ
 Phoebe tuâ, celeres quae retineret equos.
 Laeta suas repetit sylvas, pharetramque resumit
 Cynthia, Luciferas ut videt alta rotas,
 Et tenues ponens radios gaudere videtur
 Officium fieri tam breve fratris ope.
 Desere, Phoebus ait, thalamos Aurora seniles,
 Quid juvat effoeto procubuisse toro?
 Te manet Aeolides viridi venator in herba,
 Surge, tuos ignes altus Hymettus habet.
 Flava verecundo dea crimen in ore fatetur,
 Et matutinos ocus urget equos.
 Exiit invisam Tellus rediviva senectam,
 Et cupit amplexus Phoebe 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!
 Ecce coronatur sacro frons ardua luco,
 Cingit ut Idacam pinea turris Opim;
 Et vario madidos intexit flore capillos,
 Floribus et visa est posse placere suis.
 Floribus effusos ut erat redimita capillos
 Tenario placuit diva Sicana Deo.

Aspice Phoebe tibi faciles hortantur amores,
 Mellitasque movent flamina verna preces.
 Cinnamèa Zephyrus leve plaudit odorifer alà
 Blanditiasque tibi ferre videntur aves.
 Nec sine dote tuos temeraria quaerit amores
 Terra, nec optatos poscit egena toros,
 Alma salutiferum medicos tibi gramen in usus
 Praebet, et hinc titulos adjuvat ipsa tuos.
 Quòd si te pretium, si te fulgentia tangunt
 Munera, (muneribus saepe coemptus Amor)
 Illa tibi ostentat quascunque sub aequore vasto,
 Et superinjectis montibus abdit opes.
 Ah quoties cum tu clivoso fessus Olympo
 In vespertinas praecipitaris aquas,
 Cur te, inquit, cursu languentem Phoebe diurno
 Hesperiiis recipit Caerula mater aquis?
 Quid tibi cum Tethy! Quid cum Tartesside lymphà,
 Dia quid immundo perluis ora salo?
 Frigora Phoebe meà melius captabis in umbrà
 Huc ades, ardentes imbue rore comas.
 Mollior eglidà veniet tibi somnus in herbà,
 Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
 Quàque jaces circum mulcebit Iene susurrans
 Aura per humentes corpora fusa rosas.
 Nec me (crede mihi) terrent Semellèia fata,
 Nec Phaetonteo fumidus axis equo;
 Cum tu Phoebe tuo sapientius uteris igni,
 Huc ades, et gremio lumina pone meo.
 Sic Tellus lasciva suos suspirat amores;
 Matris in exemplum caetera turba ruunt.
 Nunc etenim toto currit vagus orbe Cupido,
 Languentesque fovet solis ab igne faces.
 Insonuere novis lethalia cornua nervis,
 Triste micant ferro tela corusca novo.
 Jamque vel invictam tentat superasse Dianam,
 Quaeque sedet sacro Vesta pudica foco.
 Ipsa senescentem reparat Venus annua formam,
 Atque iterum tepido creditur orta mari.
 Marmoreas juvenes clamant Hymenaeae per urbes,
 Littus io Hymen, et cava saxa sonant.
 Cultior ille venit tunicàque decentior aptà,
 Punicum redolet vestis odora crocum.
 Egrediturque frequens ad amoeni gaudia veris
 Virgineos auro cincta puella sinus.
 Votum est cuique suum, votum est tamen omnibus unum,
 Ut sibi quem cupiat, det Cytherea virum.
 Nunc quoque septenà modulatur arundine pastor,
 Et sua quae jungat carmina Phyllis habet.
 Navita nocturno placat sua sidera cantu,
 Delphinisque leves ad vada summa vocat.
 Jupiter ipse alto cum conjugè ludit Olympo,
 Convocat et famulos ad sua festa Deos,
 Nunc etiam Satyri cum sera crepuscula surgunt
 Pervolitant celeri florea rura choro,
 Sylvanusque suà cyparissi fronte revinctus,

Semicaperque Deus, semideusque caper.
 Quaeque sub arboribus Dryades latuere vetustis
 Per juga, per solos expatiantur agros.
 Per sata luxuriat fruticetaque Maenalius Pan,
 Vix Cybele mater, vix sibi tuta Ceres;
 Atque aliquam cupidus praedatur Oreada Faunus,
 Consultit in trepidos dum sibi nympa pedes,
 Jamque latet, latitansque cupit male tecta videri,
 Et fugit, et fugiens pervelit ipsa capi.
 Dii quoque non dubitant coelo praeponeere sylvas
 Et sua quisque sibi numina lucus habet,
 Et sua quisque diu sibi numina lucus habeto,
 Nec vos arborea dii precor ite domo.
 Te referant miseris te Jupiter aurea terris
 Saecla, quid ad nimbos aspera tela redis?
 Tu saltem lentè rapidos age Phoebæ jugales
 Quà potes, et sensim tempora veris eant;
 Brumaque productas tardè ferat hispida noctes,
 Ingruat et nostro serior umbra polo.

E L E G I A S E X T A.

Ad Carolum Deodatum, 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,
 na tu distento fortè carere potes.
 At tua quid nostram prolectat Musa camoenam,
 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 arctis,
 Nec venit ad claudos integer ipse pedes.
 Quàm bene solennes epulas, hilaremque Decembrim,
 Festaque coelifugam quae coluere Deum,
 Deliciasque refers, hyberni gaudia ruris,
 Haustaque per tepidos Gallica musta focos!
 Quid quereris refugam vino dapibusque poesin?
 Carmen amat Bacchum, carmina Bacchus amat.
 Nec pudit Phoebum virides gestasse corymbos,
 Atque hederam lauro praeposuisse suae.
 Saepius Aoniis clamavit collibus Eueo
 Mista Thyoneo turba novena choro.
 Naso Corallaeis mala carmina misit ab agris:
 Non illic epulae, non sata vitis erat.
 Quid nisi vina, rosasque racemiferumque Lyaeum
 Cantavit brevibus Teïa Musa modis?
 Pindaricosque inflat numeros Teumesius Euan,
 Et redolet sumptum pagina quaeque merum;

Dum gravis everso currus crepat axe supinus,
Et volat Elco pulvere fuscus eques.
Quadrismoque madens Lyricen Romanus Iaccho
Dulce canit Glyceran, flavicomamque Chloen.
Jam quoque lauta tibi generoso mensa paratu
Mentis alit vires, ingeniumque fovet.
Massica foecundam despumant pocula venam,
Fundis et ex ipso condita metra cado.
Addimus his artes, fusumque per intima Phoebum
Corda, favent uni Bacchus, Apollo, Ceres.
Scilicet haud mirum tam dulcia carmina per te
Numine composito tres peperisse Deos.
Nunc quoque Thressa tibi caelato barbitos auro
Insonat arguta molliter ieta manu;
Auditurque chelys suspensa tapetia circum,
Virgineos tremulae quae regat arte pedes.
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 Phoebum,
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;
Liber adest, elegis, Eratoque, Ceresque, Venusque,
Et cum purpurea matre tenellus Amor,
Talibus inde licent convivia larga poetis,
Saepius et veteri commaduisse mero.
At qui bella refert, et adulto sub Jove coelum,
Heroasque pios, semideosque duces,
Et nunc sancta canit superum consulta deorum,
Nunc latrata fero regna profunda cane,
Ille quidem parcè Samii pro more magistri
Vivat, et innocuos praebeat herba cibos;
Stet prope fagineo pellucida lymphæ catillo,
Sobriaque è puro pocula fonte bibat.
Additur huic scelcrisque vacans, et casta juvenus,
Et rigidi mores, et sine labe manus.
Qualis veste nitens sacra, et lustralibus undis
Surgis ad infensos augur iture Deos.
Hoc ritu vixisse ferunt post rapta sagacem
Lumina Tiresian, Ogygiumque Linon,
Et lare devoto profugum Calchanta, senemque
Orpheon edomitis sola per antra feris;
Sic dapis exiguus, sic rivi potor Homerus
Dulichium vexit per freta longa virum.
Et per monstrificam Perseiae Phoebados aulam,
Et vada foemineis insidiosa sonis,
Perque tuas rex ime domos, ubi sanguine nigro
Dicitur umbrarum detinuisse greges.
Diis etenim sacer est vates, divumque sacerdos,
Spirat et occultum pectus, et ora Jovem.
At tu siquid agam scitabere (si modò saltem

Esse putas tanti noscere si quid agam)
 Paciferum canimus coelesti semine regem,
 Faustaque sacratis saecula pacta libris,
 Vagitumque Dei, et stabulantem paupere tecto
 Qui suprema suo cum patre regna colit,
 Stelliparumque polum, modulantesque aethere turmas,
 Et 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.

E L E G I A S E P T I M A,
 ANNO AETATIS 19.

NONDUM blanda tuas leges Amathusia nôram,
 Et Paphio vacuum pectus ab igne fuit,
 Saepe cupidineas, puerilia tela, sagittas,
 Atque tuum spreui maxime numen Amor.
 Tu puer imbelles dixi transfige columbas,
 Conveniunt tenero mollia bella duci.
 Aut de passeribus tumidos ago, parve, triumphos,
 Haec sunt militiae digna trophaea tuac.
 In genus humanum quid inania dirigis arma?
 Non valet in fortes ista pharetra viros.
 Non tulit hoc Cyprius, (neque enim Deus ullus ad iras
 Promptior) et duplici jam ferus igne calet.
 Ver erat, et summae radians per culmina villae
 Attulerat primam lux tibi Maie diem:
 At mihi adhuc refugam quaerebant lumine noctem,
 Nec matutinum sustinere jubar.
 Astat Amor lecto, pictis amor impiger alis,
 Prodidit astantem mota pharetra Deum:
 Prodidit et facies, et dulce minantis ocelli,
 Et quicquid puero dignum et Amore fuit.
 Talis in aeterno juvenis Sigeius Olympo
 Miscet amatori pocula plena Jovi;
 Aut qui formosas pellexit ad oscula nymphas
 Thiodamantaeus Naiade raptus Hylas.
 Addideratque iras, sed et has decuisse putares,
 Addideratque truces, nec sine felle minas.
 Et miser exemplo sapuisses tutius, inquit,
 Nunc mea quid possit dextera testis eris.
 Inter et expertos vires numerabere nostras,
 Et faciam vero per tua damna fidem.
 Ipse ego si nescis strato Pythone superbum
 Edomui Phoebum, cessit et ille mihi;
 Et quoties meminit Penëidos, ipse fatetur
 Certius et gravius tela nocere mea.
 Me nequit adductum curvare peritius 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,
 Herculeaque manus, Herculeusque comes.
 Jupiter ipse licet sua fulmina torqueat in me,
 Haerebunt lateri spicula nostra Jovis.
 Caetera quae dubitas melius mea tela docebunt,
 Et tua non leviter corda petenda mihi,
 Nec te stulte tuae poterunt defendere Musae,
 Nec tibi Phoebaeus 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.
 Et modò quàm nostri spatiantur in urbe Quirites,
 Et modò villarum proxima rura placent.
 Turba frequens, facièque simillima turba dearum
 Splendida per medias itque reditque vias.
 Auctaque luce dies gemino fulgore coruscat,
 Fallor? an et radios hinc quoque Phoebus habet.
 Haec ego non fugi spectacula grata severus,
 Impetus et quò me fert juvenilis, agor.
 Lumina luminibus malè providus obvia misi,
 Neve oculos potui continuisse meos.
 Unam fortè aliis supereminuisse notabam,
 Principium nostri lux erat illa mali.
 Sic Venus optaret mortalibus ipsa videri,
 Sic regina Deùm conspicienda fuit.
 Hanc memor objecit nobis malus ille Cupido,
 Solus et hos nobis texuit antè dolos.
 Nec procul ipse vaser latuit, multaeque sagittae,
 Et facis à tergo grande pendit onus.
 Nec mora, nunc ciliis haesit, nunc virginis ori,
 Insilit hinc labiis, insidet inde genis:
 Et quascunque agilis partes jaculator oberrat,
 Hei mihi, mille locis pectus inerme ferit.
 Protinus insoliti subierunt corda furores,
 Uror amans intus, flammaque totus eram.
 Interea misero quae jam mihi sola placebat,
 Ablata est oculis non reditura meis.
 Ast ego progredior tacitè querebundus, et excors,
 Et dubius volui saepe referre pedem.
 Findor, et haec remanet, sequitur pars altera votum,
 Raptaque tam subito gaudia flere juvat.
 Sic dolet amissum proles Junonia caelum,
 Inter Lemniacos praecipitata focos.
 Talis et abreptum solem respexit, ad Orcum
 Vectus ab attonitis Amphiaras 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,
 Forte nec ad nostras surdeat illa preces.
 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 snaviter omnis amans:
 Tu modo da facilis, posthaec mea siqua futura est,
 Cuspis amatuos figat ut una duos.

HAEC ego mente olim laevâ, studioque supino
 Nequitiae posui vana trophaea meae.
 Scilicet abreptum sic me malus impulit error,
 Indocilisque aetas prava magistra fuit.
 Donec Socraticos umbrosa Academia rivos
 Praebuit, admissum dedocuitque jugum.
 Protinus extinctis ex illo tempore flammis,
 Cincta rigent multo pectora nostra gelu,
 Unde suis frigus metuit puer ipse sagittis,
 Et Diomedéam vim timet ipsa Venus.

IN PRODITIONEM BOMBARDICAM.

CUR 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 coeli,
 Sulphureo curru flammivolisque rotis.
 Qualiter ille feris caput inviolabile Parcis
 Liquit Iordanios turbine raptus agros.

IN E A N D E M.

SICCINE tentasti coelo donâsse Iacobum
 Quae 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 foedos in coelum pelle cucullos,
 Et quot habet brutos Roma profana Deos,
 Namque hac aut aliâ nisi quemque adjuveris arte,
 Crede mihi coeli vix bene scandet iter.

IN E A N D E M.

PURGATOREM animae derisit Iacobus ignem,
 Et sine quo superùm non adeunda domus.

Frenduit hoc trinâ monstrum Latiale caronâ,
 Movit et horrificum cornua dena minax.
 Et nec inultus ait temnes mea sacra Britanne,
 Supplicium sprete religione dabis.
 Et si stelligeras unquam penetraveris arces,
 Non nisi per flammâs triste patebit iter.
 O quàm funesto cecinisti proxima vero,
 Verbaque ponderibus vix caritura suis!
 Nam prope Tartareo sublime rotatus ab igni
 Ibat ad aethereas umbra perusta plagas.

I N E A N D E M.

QUEM modò Roma suis devoverat impia diris,
 Et Styge damnârat Taenarioque sinu,
 Hunc vice mutatâ jam tollere gestit ad astra,
 Et cupit ad superos evehere usque Deos.

I N I N V E N T O R E M B O M B A R D A E .

IAPETIONIDEM laudavit caeca vetustas,
 Qui tulit aetheream solis ab axe facem:
 At mihi major erit, qui lurida creditur arma,
 Et trifidum fulmen surripuisse Jovi.

A D

L E O N O R A M R O M A E C A N E N T E M .

ANGELUS unicuique suus (sic credite gentes)
 Obtigit aethereis ales ab ordinibus.
 Quid mirum? Leonora tibi si gloria major,
 Nam tua praesentem vox sonat ipsa Deum.
 Aut Deus, aut vacui certè mens tertia coeli
 Per tua secretò guttura serpit agens;
 Serpit agens, facilisque docet mortalia corda
 Sensim immortalî assuescere posse sono.
 Quòd si cuncta quidem Deus est, per cunctaque fusus,
 In te unâ loquitur, caetera mutus habet.

A D E A N D E M.

ALTERA Torquatam cepit Leonora poetam,
 Cujus ab insano cessit amore furens.
 Ah miser ille tuo quantò feliciùs aevo
 Perditus, et propter te Leonora foret!
 Et te Pieriâ sensisset voce canentem
 Aurea maternae fila movere lyrae,
 Quamvis Dircaeo torsisset lumina Peatheo
 Saevior, aut totus desipuisset iners,

Tu tamen errantes caecâ vertigine sensus
 Voce eadem poteras composuisse tuâ;
 Et poteras aegro spirans sub corde quietem
 Flexanimo cantu restituisset sibi.

A D E A N D E M.

CREDULA quid liquidam Sirena Neapoli jactas,
 Claraque Parthenopes fana Acheloiados,
 Littoreamque tuâ defunctam Naiada ripâ
 Corpore Chalcidico sacra dedisse rogo?
 Illa quidem vivitque, et amoenâ Tibridis 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:
 Hinc incredibili fructus dulcedine captus
 Malum ipsam in proprias transtulit areolas,
 Hactenus illa ferax, sed longo debilis aevo;
 Mota solo assueto, protensus aret incers.
 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 fraenare, gulamque voracem:
 Nunc periere mihi et foetus et ipse parens.

ELEGIARUM FINIS.

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

ANNO AETATIS 16.

I N

OBITUM PROCANCELLARII MEDICI.

PARERE fati discite legibus,
 Manusque Parcae jam date supplices,
 Qui pendulum telluris orbem
 Iâpeti colitis nepotes.

Vos ei relicto mors vaga Taenaro
 Semel vocârit flebilis, heu morae
 Tentantur incassum dolique;
 Per tenebras Stygis ire certum est.

Si destinatam pellere dextera
 Mortem valeret, non ferus Hercules
 Nessi venenatus cruore
 Aemathiâ jacuisset Octâ.

Nec fraude turpi Palladis invidae
 Vidisset occisum Ilion Hectors, aut
 Quem larva Pelidis peremit
 Ense Locro, Jove lacrymante.

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

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

Laesisset et nec te Philyreie
 Sagitta echidnae perlita sanguine,
 Nec tela te fulmenque avitum
 Caese puer-genetricis alvo.

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

Jam praefuisses Palladio gregi
 Laetus, superstes, nec sine gloria,
 Nec puppe lustrasses Charontis
 Horribiles barathri recessus.

At fila rupit Persephone tua
 Irata, cum te viderit artibus
 Succoque pollenti tot atris
 Faucibus eripuisse mortis.

Colende Praeses, membra precor tua
 Molli quiescant cespite, et ex tuo
 Crescant rosae, calthaeque busto,
 Purpureoque hyacinthus ore.

Sit mite de te iudicium Aeaci,
 Subrideatque Aetnaea Proserpina,
 Interque felices perennis
 Elysio spatiere campo.

IN QUINTUM NOVEMBRIS,

ANNO AETATIS 17.

JAM pius extremâ veniens Iacobus ab arcto
 Teucrigenas populos, latèque patentia regna
 Albionum tenuit, jamque inviolabile foedus
 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, aethereo vagus exul Olympo,
 Forte per immensum terrarum erraverat orbem,
 Dinumerans sceleris socios, vernasque fideles,
 Participes regni post funera moesta futuros;
 His tempestates medio ciet aëre diras,
 Illic unanimes odium struit inter amicos,
 Armata et invictas in mutua viscera gentes;
 Regnaque olivifera vertit florentia pace,
 Et quoscunque videt purae virtutis amantes,
 Hos cupit adjicere imperio, fraudumque magister
 Tentat inaccessum sceleri corrumpere pectus,
 Insidiasque locat tacitas, cassesque latentes
 Tendit, ut incautos rapiat, seu Caspia Tigris
 Insequitur trepidam deserta per avia praedam
 Nocte sub illuni, et somno nictantibus astris.
 Talibus infestat populos Summanus et urbes
 Cinctus caeruleae fumanti turbine flammae.
 Jamque fluentisonis albertia rupibus arva
 Apparent, et terra Deo dilecta marino,
 Cui nomen dederat quondam Neptunia proles,
 Amphitryoniaden qui non dubitavit atrocem
 Aequare tranato furiali poscere bello,
 Ante expugnatae crudelia saecula Trojae.

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 Trinacria trux ab Jove clausus in Aetna
 Efflat tabifico monstrosus ob ore Tiphoeus.
 Ignescunt oculi, stridetque adamantinus ordo
 Dentis, ut armorum fragor, ictaque cuspide cuspis.
 Atque pererrato solum hoc lacrymabile mundo
 Inveni, dixit, gens haec mihi sola rebellis,
 Contemtrixque jugi, nostraque 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 praecursant agmine venti,
 Densantur nubes, et crebra tonitrua fulgent.

Jamque pruinosas velox superaverat Alpes,
 Et tenet Ausoniae fines, a parte sinistra
 Nimbifer Apenninus erat, priscique Sabini,
 Dextra beneficiis infamis Hetruria, nec non
 Te furtiva Tiberis Thetidi videt oscula dantem;
 Hinc Mavortigenae consistit in acre Quirini.
 Reddiderant dubiam jam sera crepuscula lucem,
 Cum circumgreditur totam Tricoronifer urbem,
 Panificosque Deos portat, scapulisque virorum
 Evehitur, praeceunt submisso poplite reges,
 Et mendicantium series longissima fratrum;
 Cereaque in manibus gestant funalia caeci,

Cimmeriis nati in tenebris, vitamque trahentes.
 Tempa dein multis subeunt lucentia taedis
 (Vesper erat sacer iste Petro) fremitusque canentum
 Saepe 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 Cithaeron.

His igitur tandem solenni more peractis,
 Nox senis amplexus Erebi taciturna reliquit,
 Praecipitesque impellit equos stimulante flagello,
 Captum oculis Typhlonta, Melanchaetemque ferocem,
 Atque Acherontaeo prognatam patre Siopen
 Torpidam, et hirsutis horrentem Phrica capillis.
 Interea regum domitor, Phlegetontius haeres
 Ingreditur thalamos (neque enim secretus adulter
 Producit steriles molli sine pellice noctes)
 At vix compositos somnus clauderat ocellos,
 Cum niger umbrarum dominus, rectorque silentum,
 Praedatorque hominum falsâ sub imagine tectus
 Astitit, assumptis micuerunt tempora canis,
 Barba sinus promissa tegit, cineracea longo
 Syrmate verrit humum vestis, pendetque cucullus
 Vertice de raso, et ne quicquam desit ad artes,
 Cannabeo lumbos constrictis fune salaces,
 Tarda fenestratis 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, Lybicosque leones.

Subdolos at tali Serpens velatus amictu
 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 Caesar adorat,
 Cui reserata patet convexi janua coeli,
 Turgentes animos, et fastus frange procaces,
 Sacrilegique sciant, tua quid maledicto possit,
 Et quid Apostolicae possit custodia clavis;
 Et memor Hesperiae disjectam ulciscere classem,
 Mersaque Iberorum lato vexilla profundo,
 Sanctorumque cruci tot corpora fixa probrosae,
 Thermodoontea nuper regnante puella.
 At tu si tenero mavis torpescere lecto,
 Crescentesque negas hosti contundere vires,
 Tyrrhenum implebit numero milite pontum,
 Signaque Aventino ponet fulgentia colle:
 Reliquias veterum franget, flammisque cremabit,
 Sacraque calcabit pedibus tua colla profanis,
 Cujus gaudebant soleis dare basia reges.
 Nec tamen hunc bellis et aperto Marte lacesces,
 Irritus ille labor, tu callidus utere fraude,

Quaelibet haereticis disponere retia fas est;
 Jamque ad consilium extremis rex magnus ab oris
 Patricios vocat, et procerum de stirpe creatos,
 Grandaevosque patres trabeâ, canisque verendos;
 Hos tu membratim poteris conspergere in auras,
 Atque dare in cineres, nitrati pulveris igne
 Aedibus injecto, quâ convenere, sub imis.
 Protinus ipse igitur quoscunque habet Anglia fidos
 Propositi, factique mone, quisquamne tuorum
 Audebit summi non jussa facessere Papae?
 Perculsoque metu subito, casûque stupentes
 Invadat vel Gallus atrox, vel saevus Iberus.
 Saecula sic illic tandem Mariana redibunt,
 Tuque in belligeros iterum dominaberis Anglos.
 Et ne quid timeas, divos divasque secundas
 Accipe, quotque tuis celebrantur numina fastis.
 Dixit et adscitos ponens malefidus amictus
 Fugit ad infandam, regum illaetabile, Lethen.

Jam rosea Eoas pandens Tithonia portas
 Vestit inauratas redeunti lumine terras;
 Moestaque adhuc nigri deplorans funera nati
 Irrigat ambrosiis montana cacumina guttis;
 Cum somnos pepulit stellatae janitor aulae,
 Nocturnos visus, et somnia grata revolvens.

Est locus aeternâ septus caligine noctis,
 Vasta ruinosi quondam fundamina tecti,
 Nunc torvi spelunca Phoni, Prodotaque bilinguis,
 Effera quos uno peperit Discordia partu.
 Hic inter caementa jacent praeruptaque saxa,
 Ossa inhumata virum, et trajecta cadavera ferro;
 Hic Dolus intortis semper sedet ater ocellis,
 Jurgiaque, et stimulis armata Calumnia fauces,
 Et Furor, atque viae moriendi mille videntur,
 Et Timor, exanguisque locum circumvolat Horror,
 Perpetuoque leves per muta silentia Manes
 Exululant, tellus et sanguine conscia stagnat.
 Ipsi etiam 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 Romae per saecula longe fideles
 Evocat antistes Babylonius, atque ita fatur.
 Finibus occiduis circumfusum incolit aequor
 Gens exosa mihi, prudens natura negavit
 Indignam penitus nostro conjungere mundo:
 Illuc, sic jubeo, celeri contendite gressu,
 Tartareoque leves diffentur pulvere in auras
 Et rex et pariter satrapae, scelerata propago,
 Et quotquot fidei caluere cupidine verae
 Consilii socios adhibete, operisque ministros.
 Finierat, rigidi cupidè paruere gemelli.

Interea longo flectens curvamine coelus
 Despicit aethereâ dominus qui fulgurat arce,
 Vanaque perversae ridet conamina turbae,
 Atque sui causam populi volet ipso tueri.

Esse ferunt spatium, quà distat ab Aside terra
Fertilis Europe, et spectat Mareotidas undas;
Hic turris posita est Titanidos ardua Famae
Aerea, lata, sonans, rutilis vicinior astris
Quàm superimpositum vel Athos vel Pelion Ossac.
Mille fores aditusque patent, totidemque fenestrae,
Amplaque per tennes translucent atria muros:
Excitat hic varios plebs agglomerata susurros;
Qualiter instrepitant circum mulctralia bombis
Agmina muscarum, aut texto per ovilia junco,
Dum Canis aestivum coeli petit ardua culmen.
Ipsa quidem summà 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 juvencae
Isidos, immiti volvebas lumina vultu,
Lumina non unquam tacito nutantia somno,
Lumina subjectas late spectantia terras.
Istis illa solet loca luce carentia saepe
Perlustrare, etiam radianti impervia soli:
Millenisque loquax auditaque visaque linguis
Cuilibet effundit temeraria, veraque mendax
Nunc minuit, modo confictis sermonibus auget.
Sed tamen à nostro meruisti carmine laudes
Fama, bonum quo non aliud veracius ullum,
Nobis digna cani, nec te memorasse pigebit
Carmine tam longo, servati scilicet Angli
Officiis vaga diva tuis, tibi reddimus aequa.
Te Deus, aeternos motu qui temperat ignes,
Fulmine praemisso alloquitur, terràque tremente:
Fama siles? an te latet impia Papistarum
Conjurata cohors in meque meosque Britannos,
Et nova sceptrigero caedes meditata Iacobo?
Nec plura, illa statim sensit mandata Tonantis,
Et satis ante fugax stridentes induit alas,
Induit et variis exilia corpora plumis;
Dextra tubam gestat Temesaeo ex aere sonoram.
Nec mora jam pennis cedentes remigat auras,
Atque parum est cursu celeres praevertere nubes,
Jam ventos, jam solis equos post terga reliquit:
Et primo Angliacas solito de more per urbes
Ambiguas voces, incertaque murmura spargit,
Mox arguta dolos, et detestabile vulgat
Proditionis opus, nec non facta horrida dictu,
Authoresque addit sceleris, nec garrula caecis
Insidiis loca structa silet; stupuere relatis,
Et pariter juvenes, pariter tremuere puellae,
Effoetique senes pariter, tantaeque ruinae
Sensus ad aetatem subito penetraverat omnem.
Attamen interea populi miserescit ab alto
Aethereus pater, et crudelibus obstitit ausis
Papicolùm; capti poenas raptantur ad acres;
At pia thura Deo, et grati solvuntur honores;
Compita laeta focis genialibus omnia fumant;

Turba choros juvenilis agit: Quintoque Novembris
Nulla dies toto occurrit celebratior anno.

A N N O A E T A T I S 17.

IN OBITUM PRAESULIS ELIENSIS.

ADHUC madentes rore squalebant genae,
Et sicca nondum lumina
Adhuc liquentis imbre turgebant salis,
Quem nuper effudi pius,
Dum maesta charo justa persolvi rogo
Wintoniensis Praesulis.
Cum centilinguis Fama (proh semper mali
Cladisque vera nuntia)
Spargit per urbes divitis Britanniae,
Populosque Neptuno satos,
Cessisse morti, et ferreis sororibus
Te generis humani decus,
Qui rex sacrorum illà fuisti in insulâ
Quae nomen Anguillae tenet.
Tunc inquietum pectus irâ protinus
Ebulliebat fervidâ,
Tumulis potentem saepe devovens deam:
Nec vota Naso in Ibida
Concepit alto diriora pectore,
Graiusque vates parcus
Turpem Lycambis execratus est dolum,
Sponsamque Neobolen suam.
At ecce diras ipse dum fundo graves,
Et imprecor neci necem,
Audisse tales videor attonitus sonos
Leni, sub aurâ, flamine:
Caecos furores pone, pone vitream
Bilemque et irritas minas,
Quid temerè violas non nocenda numina,
Subitoque ad iras percita?
Non est, ut arbitraris elusus miser,
Mors atra Noctis filia,
Erebóve patre creta, sive Erinnye,
Vastove nata sub Chao:
Ast illa coelo missa stellato, Dei
Messés ubique colligit;
Animasque mole carneâ reconditas
In lucem et auras evocat;
Ut cum fugaces excitant Horae diem
Themidos Jovisque filiae;
Et sempiterni dicit ad vultus patris;
At justa raptat impios
Sub regua furvi luctuosa Tartari,
Sedesque subterraneas.
Hanc ut vocantem laetus audivi, cito
Foedum reliqui carcerem,
Volatilesque faustus inter milites

Ad astra sublimis feror :
 Vates ut olim raptus ad coelum senex
 Auriga currus ignei.
 Non me Bootis terruere lucidi
 Sarraca tarda frigore, aut
 Formidolosi Scorpionis brachia,
 Non ensis Orion tuus.
 Praetervolavi fulgidi solis globum,
 Longéque sub pedibus deam
 Vidi triformem, dum coërcebat suos
 Fraenis dracones aureis.
 Erraticorum siderum per ordines,
 Per lacteas vehor plagas,
 Velocitatem saepe miratus novam,
 Donec nitentes ad feres
 Ventum est Olympi, et regiam crystallinam, et
 Stratum smaragdis atrium.
 Sed hic tacebo, nam quis effari queat
 Oriundus humano patre
 Amoenitates illius loci? mihi
 Sat est in aeternum frui.

NATURAM NON PATI SENIUM.

HEU quàm perpetuis erroribus acta fatiscit
 Avia mens hominum, tenebrisque immersa profundis
 Oedipodioniam volvit sub pectore noctem!
 Quae vesana suis metiri facta deorum
 Audet, et incisas leges adamante perenni
 Assimilare suis, nulloque solubile sacclo
 Consilium fati perituris alligat horis.

Ergone marcescet sulcantibus obsita rugis
 Naturae facies, et rerum publica mater
 Omniparum contracta uterum sterilecet ab aevo?
 Et se fassa senem malè certis passibus ibit
 Sidereum tremebunda caput? num tetra vetustas
 Annorumque aeterna fames, squalorque situsque
 Sidera vexabunt? an et insatiabile Tempus
 Esuriet Coelum, rapietque in viscera patrem?
 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
 Stridat uterque polus, superaque ut Olympius aula
 Decidat, horribilisque relecta Gorgone Pallas;
 Qualis in Aegeam proles Junonia Lemnon
 Deturbata sacro cecidit de limine coeli?
 Tu quoque, Phoebe, tui casus inuitabere nati
 Praecipiti curru, subitaque ferere ruinâ
 Pronus, et extinctâ fumabit lampade Nereus,
 Et dabit attonito feralia sibila ponto.
 Tunc etiam aërei divulsis sedibus Haemi

Dissultabit apex, imoque allisa barathro
 Terrebunt Stygium dejecta Ceraunia Ditem,
 In superos, quibus usus erat, fraternaue bella.
 At pater omnipotens fundatis fortius astris
 Consuluit rerum summae, 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 coelos.
 Tardior haud solito Saturnus, et acer ut olim
 Fulmineum rutilat cristatâ casside Mavors.
 Floridus aeternum Phoebus juvenile coruscat,
 Nec fovet effoetas loca per declivia terras
 Devexo temone Deus; sed semper amicâ
 Luce potens eadem currit per signa rotarum.
 Surgit odoratis pariter formosus ab Indis
 Aethereum pecus albenti qui cogit Olympo
 Mane vocans, et serus agens in pascua coeli,
 Temporis et gemino dispertit regna colore.
 Fulget obitque vices alterno Delia cornu,
 Coeruleumque ignem paribus complectitur ulnis.
 Nec variant elementa fidem, solitoque fragore
 Lurida percussas jaculantur fulmina rupes.
 Nec per inane furit leviori murmure Corus,
 Stringit et armiferos aequali horrore Gelonos
 Trux Aquilo, spiratque hyemem, nimbosque volutat.
 Utque solet, Siculi diverberat ima Pelori
 Rex maris, et rancâ circumstrepit aequora conchâ
 Oceani Tubicen, nec vastâ mole minorem
 Aegeona ferunt dorso Balearica cete.
 Sed neque Terra tibi saeculi vigor ille vetusti
 Priscus abest, servatque suum Narcissus odorem.
 Et puer ille suum tenet et puer ille decorem
 Phoebe tuusque et Cypri tuus, nec ditior olim
 Terra datum sceleri celavit montibus aurum
 Conscia, vel sub aquis gemmas. Sic denique in aevum
 Ibit cunctarum series justissima rerum,
 Donec flamma orbem populabitur ultima, latè
 Circumplexa polos, et vasti culmina coeli;
 Ingentique rogo flagrabit machina mundi.

**DE IDEA PLATONICA QUEMADMODUM ARI-
 STOTELES INTELLEXIT.**

DICITE sacrorum praesides nemorum deae,
 Tuque O noveni perbeata numinis
 Memoria mata, quaeque in immenso procul
 Antro recumbis otiosa Aeternitas,
 Monumenta servans, et ratas leges Jovis,
 Coelique fastos atque ephemeridas Deum,
 Quis ille primus cujus ex imagine
 Natura solers finxit humanum genus,
 Aeternus, incorruptus, aequaevus polo,

Unusque et universus, exemplar Dei?
 Haud ille Palladis gemellus innubae
 Interna proles insidet menti Jovis:
 Sed quamlibet natura sit communior,
 Tamen seorsus extat ad morem unius,
 Et, mira, certo stringitur spatio loci;
 Seu sempiternus illo siderum comes
 Coeli pererrat ordines decemplicis,
 Citimúmve terris incolit lunae globum:
 Sive inter animas corpus adituras sedens
 Obliviosas torpet ad Lethes aquas:
 Sive in remotâ forte terrarum plaga
 Incedet ingens hominis archetypus gigas,
 Et iis tremendus erigit celsum caput,
 Atlante major portitore siderum.
 Non cui profundum caecitas, lumen dedit
 Dircaeus augur vidit hunc alto sinu;
 Non hunc silenti nocte Plëiones nepos
 Vatum sagaci praepes 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
 (Haec monstra si tu primus induxit scholis)
 Jam jam poetas urbis exules tuæ
 Revocabis, ipse fabulator maximus,
 Aut institutor ipse migrabis foras.

 AD PATREM.

NUNC mea Pierios cupiam per pectora fontes
 Irriguas torquere vias, totumque per ora
 Volvere laxatum gemino de vertice rivum:
 Ut tenues oblita sonos audacibus alis
 Surgat in officium venerandi Musa parentis.
 Hoc utcunque tibi gratum, pater optime, carmen
 Exiguum meditatur opus, nec novimus ipsi
 Aptius à nobis quae possint munera donis
 Respondere tuis, quamvis nec maxima possint
 Respondere tuis, nedum ut par gratia donis
 Esse queat, vacuis quae redditur arida verbis.
 Sed tamen haec nostros ostendit pagina census,
 Et quod habemus opum chartâ numeravimus istâ,
 Quae mihi sunt nullae, nisi quas dedit aurea Clio,
 Quas mihi semoto somni peperere sub antro,
 Et nemoris laureta sacri Parnassides umbrae.
 Nec tu vatis opus divinum despice carmen,
 Quo nihil aethereos ortus, et semina coeli,
 Nil magis humanam commendat origine mentem,
 Sancta Prometheae retinens vestigia flammae.
 Carmen amant superi, tremebundaque Tartara carmen

Ina ciere valet, divosque ligare profundos,
 Et triplici duos Manes adamante coerces.
 Carmine sepositi retegunt arcana futuri
 Phoebades, et tremulae pallentes ora Sibyllae;
 Carmina sacrificus sollennes pangit ad aras,
 Aurea seu sternit motantem cornua taurum;
 Seu cum fata sagax fumantibus abdita fibris
 Consultit, et tepidis Parcam scrutatur in extis.
 Nos etiam patrium tunc cum repetemus Olympum,
 Aeternaeque morae stabunt immobilis aevi,
 Ibinus auratis per coeli templa coronis,
 Dulcia suaviloquo sociantes carmina plectro,
 Astra quibus, geminique poli convexa sonabunt.
 Spiritus et rapidos qui circinat igneus orbis,
 Nunc quoque sidereis intercinat ipse choreis
 Immortale melos, et inenarrabile carmen;
 Torrida dum rutilus compescit sibila serpens,
 Demissoque ferox gladio mansuescit Orion;
 Stellarum nec sentit onus Maurusius Atlas.
 Carmina regales epulas ornare solebant,
 Cum nondum luxus, vastaeque immensa vorago
 Nota gulae, et modico spumabat coena Lyaeo.
 Tum de more sedens festa ad convivia vates
 Aesculeam intonsos redimitus ab arbore crines,
 Heroumque actus, imitandaque gesta canebat,
 Et chaos, et positi late fundamina mundi,
 Reptantesque deos, et alentes numina glandes,
 Et nondum Aetnaeo quaesitum fulmen ab antro.
 Denique quid vocis modulamen inane juvabit,
 Verborum sensusque vacans, numerique loquacis?
 Silvestres decet iste choros, non Orphea cantus,
 Qui tenuit fluvios et quercubus addidit aures
 Carmine, non citharam, simulachraque functa canendo
 Compulit in lacrymas; habet has à 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 modulis variare canoram
 Doctus, Arionii merito sis nominis haeres.
 Nunc tibi quid mirum, si me genuisse poetam
 Contigerit, charo si tam propè sanguine juncti
 Cognatas artes, studiumque affine sequamur?
 Ipse volens Phoebus se dispertire duobus,
 Altera dona mihi, dedit altera dona parenti,
 Dividuumque Deum genitorque puerque tenemus.

Tu tamen ut simules teneras odisse Camoenas,
 Non odisse reor, neque enim, pater, ire jubebas
 Quam via lata patet, quam prior area lucri,
 Certa que condendi fulget spes aurea nummi:
 Nec rapis ad leges, male custoditaque gentis
 Jura, nec insulsis damnas clamoribus aures.
 Sed magis excultam cupiens ditescere mentem,
 Me procul urbano strepitu, secessibus altis
 Abductum Aoniae jucunda per otia ripae
 Phoebaeo lateri comitem sinis ire beatum.

Officium chari taceo commune parentis,
 Me poscunt majora, tuo, pater optime, sumptu
 Cùm mihi Romuleae patuit facundia linguae,
 Et Latii veneres, et quae Jovis ora decebant
 Grandia magniloquis elata vocabula Graiis,
 Addere suasisti quos jactat Gallia flores,
 Et quam degeneri novus Italus ore loquclam
 Fundit, barbaricos testatus voce tumultus,
 Quaeque Palaestinus loquitur mysteria vates,
 Denique quicquid habet coelum, subjectaque coelo
 Terra parens, terraeque et coelo interfluis aer,
 Quicquid et unda tegit, pontique agitabile marmor,
 Per te nosse licet, per te, si nosse libebit.

Dimotàque venit spectanda scientia nube,
 Nudaque conspicuos inclinat ad oscula vultus,
 Ni fuisse velim, ni sit libàsse molestum.

I nunc, confer opes quisquis malesanus avitas
 Austriaci gazas, Perüanaque regna praeoptas.
 Quae potuit majora pater tribuisse, vel ipse
 Jupiter, excepto, donàsset ut omnia, coelo?
 Non potiora dedit, quamvis et tuta fuissent,
 Publica qui juveni commisit lumina nato
 Atque Hyperionios currus, et fraena dici,
 Et circum undantem radiatà luce tiam.

Ergo ego jam doctae pars quamlibet ima catervae
 Victrices hederas inter laurosque sedebo,
 Jamque nec obscurus populo miscebor inerti,
 Vitabuntque oculos vestigia nostra profanos.
 Este procul vigiles curae, procul este querelae,
 Invidiaeque acies transverso tortilis hirquo,
 Saeva nec anguiferos extende calumnia rictus;
 In me triste nihil foedissima turba potestis,
 Nec vestri sum juris ego; securaque tutus
 Pectora, vipereo gradiar sublimis ab ictu.

At tibi, chare pater, postquam non aequa merenti
 Posse referre datur, nec dona rependere factis,
 Sit memoràsse satis, repetitaque munera grato
 Percensere animo, fidaeque reponere menti.

Et vos, O nostri, juvenilia carmina, lusus,
 Si modo perpetuos sperare audebitis annos,
 Et domini superesse rogo, lucemque tueri,
 Nec spisso rapiant oblivia nigra sub Orco,
 Forsitan has laudes, decantatumque parentis
 Nomen, ad exemplum, sero servabitis aevo.

PSALM CXIV.

Ἰσραὴλ ὅτε παῖδες, ὅτ' ἀγλαὰ φύλ' Ἰακώβου
 Ἀιγύπτου λίπε δῆμον, ἀπεχθέα, βαρβαρόφωνον,
 Δὴ τότε μῶνον ἔην ὅσιον γένος υἱὸς Ἰουδα:
 Ἐν δε θεὸς λαοῖσι μέγα κρείων βασιλευεν·
 Εἶδε, καὶ ἐντροπάδην φύγαδ' ἐρῶησε, θάλασσα
 Κύματι εἰλυμένη ῥοδίῳ, ὅδ' ἄρ' ἐστὺν φελίχθῃ

Ἰρὸς Ἰορδάνης ποτὶ ἀργυροειδέα πηγὴν.
 Ἐκ δ' ὄρεα σκαρθμοῖσιν ἀπειρέσια κλονέοντο,
 Ὡς κριοὶ σφριγύοντες ἕτραφερῶ ἐν ἀλωῇ.
 Βαιότεραι δ' ἅμα πάσαι ἀνασκίρτησαν ἐρίπναι,
 Οἷα παραὶ σύριγγι φίλη ὑπὸ μητέρι ἄρνες.
 Τίπτεσύν' αἰνὰ θάλασσα πέλωρ φύγαδ' ἐρρώσας,
 Κύματι εἰλυμένη ροδίῳ; τί δ' ἄρ' ἐστνφελίχθης,
 Ἰρὸς Ἰορδάνη ποτὶ ἀργυροειδέα πηγὴν;
 Τίπτ' ὄρεα σκαρθμοῖσιν ἀπειρέσια κλονέεσθε,
 Ὡς κριοὶ σφριγύοντες ἕτραφερῶ ἐν ἀλωῇ;
 Βαιότεραι τί δ' ἄρ' ἕμμες ἀνασκίρτησατ' ἐρίπναι,
 Οἷα παραὶ σύριγγι φίλη ὑπὸ μητέρι ἄρνες;
 Σείεο γαῖα τρ' οὔσα θεὸν μεγάλ' ἐκτύποντα
 Γαῖα θεὸν τρεῖουσ' ὑπατον σέβας Ἰσσακίδαο,
 Ὃς τὸ καὶ ἕκ σπιλάδων ποταμοὺς χέε μορμύροντας,
 Κρήνηντ' ἀέναον πέτρης ἀπὸ δακρυόεσσης.

Philosophus ad regem quendam, qui cum ignotum et insontem inter reos forte captum inscius damnaverat, ἐπὶ θανάτῳ πορευόμενος haec subito misit.

ὦ ἄνα, εἰ ὀλέσῃς με τὸν ἔννομον, οὐδέ τινα ἀνδρῶν
 Δεινὸν ὅλως δράσαντα, σοφώτατον ἴδι κάρηνον
 Ρηιδίως ἀφέλοιο, τὸ δ' ἕστερον αὐθι νοήσεις,
 Μαυιδίως δ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα τεὸν πρὸς θυμὸν ὀδυρῆ,
 Τοιοῦν δ' ἐκ πόλιος περιώννυμον ἄλλαρ ὀλέσσας.

IN EFFIGIEI EJUS SCULPTOREM.

Ἀμαθεῖ γεγράφθαι χειρὶ τήνδε μὲν εἰκόνα
 Φαίης ταχ' ἄν, πρὸς εἶδος αὐτοφυνὲς βλέπων.
 Τὸν δ' ἐκτυπωτὸν οὐκ ἔπιγνόντες φίλοι
 Γελᾶτε φαύλον δυσμίμημα ζωγράφου.

AD SALSILLUM POETAM ROMANUM AEGROTANTEM.

SCAZONTES.

O MUSA gressum quae volens trahis claudum,
 Vulcanioque tarda gaudes incessu,
 Nec sentis illud in loco minus gratum,
 Quam cum decentes flava Dēiope suras
 Alternat aureum ante Junonis lectum,
 Adesdum et haec verba pauca Salsillo
 Refer, Camoena nostra cui tantum est cordi,
 Quamque ille magnis praetulit immeritò divis.
 Haec ergo alumnus ille Londini Milto,
 Diebus hisce qui sum linqvens 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 doctaeque indolem juventutis,
 Tibi optat idem hic fausta multa, Salsille,
 Habitumque fesso corpori penitus sanum;
 Cui nunc profunda bilis infestat renes,
 Praecordiisque fixa damnosum spirat.
 Nec id pepercit impia quòd tu Romano
 Tam cultus ore Lesbium condis melos.
 O dulce divùm munus, O salus Hebes
 Germana! Tuque, Phoebe, morborum terror
 Pythone caeso, sive tu magis Paeon
 Libenter audis, hic tuus sacerdos est.
 Querceta Fanni, vosque rore vinoso
 Colles benigni, mitis Evandri sedes,
 Si quid salubre vallibus frondet vestris,
 Levamen aegro ferte certatim vati.
 Sic ille charis redditus rursùm Musis
 Vicina dulci prata mulcebit cantu.
 Ipse inter atros emirabitur lucos
 Numa, ubi beatum degit otium aeternum,
 Suam reclivis semper Aegeriam spectans.
 Tumidusque et ipse Tiberis hinc delinitus
 Spei favebit annuae colonorum:
 Nec in sepulchris ibit obsessum reges
 Nimiùm sinistro laxus irruens loro:
 Sed fraena melius temperabit undarum,
 Adusque curvi salsa regna Portumni.

MANSUS.

Joannes Baptista Mansus, Marchio Villensis, vir ingenii laude, tum litterarum studio, nec non et bellica virtute apud Italos clarus in primis est. Ad quem Torquati Tassi dialogus extat de Amicitia scriptus; erat enim Tassi amicissimus; ab quo etiam inter Campaniae principes celebratur, in illo poemate, cui titulus Gerusalemme Conquistata, lib. 20.

Fra cavalier magnanimi, è cortesi
 Risplende il Manso

Is authorem Neapoli commorantem summâ benevolentid prosecutus est, multaque ei detulit humanitatis officia. Ad hunc itaque hospes ille antequam ab ea urbe discederet, ut ne ingratum se ostenderet, hoc carmen misit.

HAEC quoque, Manse, tuae meditantur carmina laudi
 Pierides, tibi, Manse, choro notissime Phoebi,
 Quandoquidem ille alium haud aequo est dignatus honore,
 Post Galli cineres, et Maecenatis Hetrusci.
 Tu quoque, si nostrae tantum valet aura Camoenae,
 Victrices hederas inter laurosque sedebis.
 Te pridem magno felix concordia Tasso
 Junxit, et aeternis inscripsit nomina chartis.

Mox tibi dulciloquum non inscia Musa Marinum
 Tradidit, ille tuum dici se gaudet alumnum,
 Dum canit Assyrios divum 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 aere poetam.
 Nec satis hoc visum est in utrumque, et nec pia cessant
 Officia in tumulto, cupis integros rapere Orco,
 Quà potes, atque avidas Parcarum eludere leges:
 Amborum genus, et varia sub sorte peractam
 Describis vitam, moresque, et dona Minervae;
 Aemulus illius Mycalen, qui natus ad Altam
 Rettulit Aeolii vitam facundus Homeri.
 Ergo ego te Clivus et magni nomine Phoebi,
 Manse pater, jubeo longum salvere per aevum
 Missus Hyperboreo juvenis peregrinus ab axe.
 Nec tu longinquam bonus aspernabare Musam,
 Quae nuper gelidà vix enutrita sub Arcto
 Imprudens Italas ausa est volitare per urbes.
 Nos etiam in nostro modulantes flumine cygnos
 Credimus obscuras noctis sensisse per umbras,
 Quà Thamesis late puris argenteus urnis
 Oceani glaucos perfundit gurgite crines.
 Quin et in has quondam pervenit Tityrus oras.
 Sed neque nos genus incultum, nec inutile Phoebo,
 Quà plaga septeno mundi sulcata Trione
 Brumalem patitur longà sub nocte Boöten.
 Nos etiam colimus Phoebum, nos munera Phoebo
 Flaventes spicas, et lutea mala canistri,
 Halantemque crocum (perhibet nisi vana vetustas)
 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 Graiae de more puellae
 Carminibus laetis memorant Corinëida Loxo,
 Fatidicamque Upin, cum flavicomâ Hecaërge,
 Nuda Caledonio variatas pectora fuco.
 Fortunata senex, ergo quacunq; per orbem
 Torquati decus, et nomen celebrabitur ingens,
 Claraque perpetui succrescet fama Marini,
 Tu quoque in ora frequens venies plausumque virorum,
 Et parili carpes iter immortale volatu.
 Dicetur tum sponte tuos habitasse penates
 Cynthius, et famulas venisse ad limina Musas:
 At non sponte domum tamen idem, et regis adivit
 Rura Pheretiadae coelo fugitivus Apollo;
 Ille licet magnum Alciden susceperat hospes;
 Tantum ubi clamosos placuit vitare bubalcos,
 Nobile mansueti cessit Chironis in antrum,
 Irriguos inter saltus frondosaque tecta
 Pencium prope rivum: ibi saepe sub illice nigrâ
 Ad citharae 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,
 Emotaque suis properant de collibus orni,
 Mulcenturque novo maculosi carmine lynces.
 Diis, dilecte senex, te Jupiter acquus oportet
 Nascentem, et miti lustrarit lumine Phoebus,
 Atlantisque nepos; neque enim nisi charus ab ortu
 Diis superis poterit magno fuisse poetae.
 Hinc longaeva tibi lento sub flore senectus
 Vernat, et Aesonios lucratur vivida fusos,
 Nondum deciduos servans tibi frontis honores.
 Ingeniumque vicens, et adultum mentis acumen.
 O mihi si mea sors talem concedat amicum
 Phoebaeos decorasse viros qui tam bene nôrit,
 Si quando indigenas revocabo in carmina reges,
 Arturumque etiam sub terris bella moventem;
 Aut dicam invictae sociali foedere mensae
 Magnanimos Heroas, et (O modo spiritus adsit)
 Frangam Saxonicas Britonum sub Marte phalanges.
 Tandem ubi non tacitae permensus tempora vitae,
 Annorumque satur cineri sua jura relinquam,
 Ille mihi lecto madidis astaret ocellis,
 Astanti sat erit, si dicam, sim tibi curae;
 Ille meos artus liventi morte solutos
 Curaret parva componi molliter urna.
 Forsitan et nostros ducat de marinore vultus,
 Nectens aut Paphia myrti aut Parnasside lauri
 Fronde comas, at ego securo pace quiescam.
 Tum quoque, si qua fides, si praemia certe bonorum,
 Ipse ego coelicolum semotus in aethera divum,
 Quò labor et mens pura vehunt, atque ignea virtus,
 Secreti haec aliqua mundi de parte videbo
 (Quantum fata sinunt) et tota mente serenum
 Ridens purpureo suffundar lumine vultus,
 Et simul aethereo plaudam mihi laetus Olympo.

EPITAPHIUM DAMONIS.

ARGUMENTUM.

Thyrsis et Damon ejusdem viciniae pastores, eadem studia sequuti à pueritiâ amici erant, ut qui plurimum. Thyrsis animi causâ profectus peregrè de obitu Damonis nuncium accepit. Domum postea reversus, et rem ita esse comperiens, se suamque solitudinem hoc carmine deplorat. Damonis autem sub personâ hic intelligitur Carolus Deodatus ex urbe Hetruriae Luca paterno genere oriundus, caetera Anglus; ingenio, doctrinâ, clarissimisque caeteris virtutibus, dum viveret, juvenis egregius.

HIMERIDES nymphae (nam vos et Daphnin et Hylan,
 Et plorata diu meministis fata Bionis)
 Dicite Sicelicum Thamesina per oppida carmen:
 Quas miser effudit voces, quae murmura Thyrsis,

Et quibus assiduis exercuit antra querelis,
 Fluminaque, fontesque vagos, nemorumque recessus,
 Dum sibi praereptum queritur Damona, neque altam
 Luctibus exemit noctem loca sola pererrans.
 Et jam bis viridi surgebat culmus arista,
 Et totidem flavas numerabant horrea messes,
 Ex quo summa dies tulerat Damona sub umbras,
 Nec dum aderat Thyrsis; pastorem scilicet illum
 Dulcis amor Musae Thusca retinebat in urbe.
 Ast ubi mens expleta domum, pecorisque relictæ
 Cura vocat, simul assuetâ sedetque sub ulmo,
 Tum verò amissum tum denique sentit amicum,
 Coepit et immensum sic exonerare dolorem:

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Hei mihi! quae terris, quae dicam numina coelo,
 Postquam te imniti rapuerunt funere, Damon!
 Siccine nos linquis, tua sic sine nomine virtus
 Ibit, et obscuris numero sociabitur umbris?
 At non ille, animas virgâ qui dividit aureâ,
 Ista velit, dignumque tui te ducat in agmen,
 Ignavamque procul pecus arceat omne silentium.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Quicquid erit, certè nisi me lupo antè videbit,
 Indeplorato non comminuere sepulchro,
 Constabitque tuus tibi honos, longumque vigebit
 Inter pastores; illi tibi vota secundo
 Solvere post Daphnin, post Daphnin dicere laudes,
 Gaudebunt, dum rura Pales, dum Faunus amabit:
 Si quid id est, priscamque fidem coluisse, piùmque,
 Palladiâsque artes, sociùmque habuisse canorum.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Haec tibi certa manent, tibi erunt haec praemia, Damon,
 At mihi quid tandem fiet modò? quis mihi fidus
 Haerebit lateri comes, ut tu saepe solebas
 Frigoribus duris, et per loca foeta pruinis
 Aut rapido sub sole, siti morientibus herbis?
 Sive opus in magnos fuit eminens ire leones,
 Aut avidos terrere lupos praesepibus altis;
 Quis fando sopire diem, cantuque solebit?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Pectora cui credam? quis me lenire docebit
 Mordaces curas, quis longam fallere noctem
 Dulcibus alloquiis, grato cum sibilat igni
 Molle pyram, et nucibus strepitat focus, at malus auster
 Miscet cuncta fores, et desuper intonat ulmo?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Aut aestate, dies medio dum vertitur axe,
 Cum Pan aesculeâ somnum capit abditus umbrâ,
 Et repetunt sub aquis sibi nota sedilia nymphae,
 Pastoresque latent, stertit sub sepe colonus;
 Quis mihi blanditiasque tuas, quis tum mihi risus,
 Cecropiosque sales referat, cultosque lepores?

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 At jam solus agros, jam pascua solus oberro,
 Sicubi ramosae densantur vallibus umbrae,

Hic serum expecto, supra caput imber et Eurus
Triste sonant, fractaeque agitata crepuscula sylvae.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Heu quam culta mihi prius arva procacibus herbis
Involvuntur, et ipsa situ seges alta fatiscit!

Innuba neglecto marcescit et uva racemo,
Nec myrteta juvant; ovium quoque taedet, at illae
Moerent, inque suum convertunt ora magistrum.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Tityrus ad corylos vocat, Alpheisiboeus ad ornos,
Ad salices Aegon, 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 haec, nam me redeuntem forte notarat,
(Et callebat avum linguas, et sidera Mopsus)
Thyrsi quid hoc? dixit, quae te coquit improba bilis?
Aut te perdit amor, aut te malè fascinat astrum,
Saturni grave saepe fuit pastoribus astrum,
Intimaque obliquo figit praecordia plumbo.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
Mirantur nymphae, et quid te, Thyrsi, futurum est?
Quid tibi vis? aiunt, non haec solet esse juventae
Nubila frons, oculique truces, vultusque severi,
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, Dryopéque, et filia Baucidis Aegle,
Docta modos, citharaeque sciens, sed perdita fastu,
Venit Idumanii Chloris vicina fluenti!

Nil me blanditiae, nil me solantia verba,
Nil me, si quid adest, movet, aut spes ulla futuri.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.

Heu mihi quam similes ludunt per prata juvenci,
Omnes unanimi secum sibi lege sodales!
Nec magis hunc alio quisquam secernit amicum
De grege, sic densi veniunt ad pabula fhoes,
Inque vicem hirsuti paribus junguntur onagri;
Lex eadem pelagi, deserto in littore Proteus
Agmina Phocarum numerat, vilesque volucrum
Passer habet semper quicum sit, et omnia circum
Farra libens volitat, serò sua tecta revisens,
Quem si sors letho objecit, seu milvus adunco
Fata tulit rostro, seu stravit arundine fossor,
Protinus ille alium socio petit inde volatu.

Nos durum genus, et diris exercita satis
Gens homines aliena animis, et pectore discors,
Vix sibi quisque parem de millibus invenit unum,
Aut si sors dederit tandem non aspera votis,
Illum inopina dies, quâ non speraveris horâ
Surripit, aeternum linquens in saecula 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 sylvas, tot saxa tibi, fluviosque sonantes!
 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,
 Antiquà genus unde petis Lucumonis ab urbe.
 O ego quantus eram, gelidi cum stratus ad Arni
 Murmura, populeumque nemus, qua mollior herba,
 Carpere nunc violas, nunc summas carpere myrtos,
 Et potui Lycidae certantem audire Menalcam.
 Ipse etiam tentare ausus sum, nec puto multùm
 Displicui, nam sunt et apud me munera vestra
 Fiscellae, calathique, et cerea vincla cicutae:
 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.
 Haec mihi tum laeto dictabat roscida luna,
 Dum solus teneros claudebam cratibus hoedos.
 Ah quoties dixi, cùm te cinis ater habebat,
 Nunc canit, aut lepori nunc tendit retia Damon,
 Vimina nunc textit, varios sibi quod sit in usus!
 Et quae tum facili sperabam mente futura
 Arripui voto levis, et praesentia finxi,
 Heus bone, numquid agis? nisi te quid forte retardat,
 Imus? et argutà paulùm recubamus in umbrâ,
 Aut ad aquas Colni, aut ubi jugera Cassibelauni?
 Tu mihi percurres medicos, tua gramina, succos,
 Helleborùmque, humilésque crocos, foliùmque hyacinthi,
 Quasque habet ista palus herbas, artesque medentùm.
 Ah pereant herbae, 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 forte novis admôram labra cicutis,
 Dissiluere tamen raptâ compage, nec ultra
 Ferre graves potuere sonos, dubito quoque, ne sim
 Turgidulus, tamen et referam, vos cedit, sylvae.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Ipse ego Dardanias Rutupina per aequora puppes
 Dicam, et Pandrasidos regnum vetus Inogeniae,
 Brennùmque Arvigarùmque duces, priscùmque Belinum,
 Et tandem Armoricos Britonum sub lege colonos;
 Tum gravidam Arturo fatali fraude Iôgernem,
 Mendaces vultus, assumptaque Gorlôis arma,
 Merlini dolus. O mihi tum si vita supersit,
 Tu procul annosa pendebis, fistula, pinu

Multùm oblita mihi, aut patriis mutata Camoenis
 Brittonicum strides, quid enim? omnia non licet uni,
 Non speràsse uni licet omnia, mi satis ampla
 Merces, et mihi grande decus (sim ignotus in aevum
 Tum licet, externo penitusque inglorius orbi)
 Si me flava comas legat Usa, et potor Alauni,
 Vorticibusque frequens Abra, et nemus omne Treantae,
 Et Thamesis meus ante omnes, et fusca metallis
 Tamara, et extremis me discant Orcades undis.

Ite domum impasti, domino jam non vacat, agni.
 Haec tibi servabam lentà sub cortice lauri,
 Haec, et plura simul, tum quae mihi pocula Mansus,
 Mansus, Chalcidicae non ultima gloria ripae,
 Bina dedit, mirum artis opus, mirandus et ipse,
 Et circum gemino caelaverat argumento:
 In medio rubri maris unda, et odoriferum ver,
 Littora longa Arabum, et sudantes balsama sylvae,
 Has inter Phoenix, divina avis, unica terris
 Caeruleum fulgens diversicoloribus alis
 Auroram vitreis surgentem respicit undis.
 Parte alia polus omnipaters, et magnus Olympus,
 Quis putet? hic quoque Amor, pictaeque in nube pharetrae,
 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 orbem
 Impiger, et pronos nunquam collimat ad ictus,
 Hinc mentes ardere sacrae, formaeque 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?
 Nec te Lethaeo fas quaesivisse sub orco,
 Nec tibi conveniunt lacrymae, nec flebimus ultrà,
 Ite procul lacrymae, purum colit aethera Damon,
 Aethera purus habet, pluvium pede reppulit arcum;
 Heroùmque animas inter, divósque perennes,
 Aethereos haurit latices et gaudia potat
 Ore sacro. Quin tu, coeli post jura recepta,
 Dexter ades, placidusque fave quicumque vocaris,
 Seu tu noster eris Damon, sive aequior audis
 Diodotus, quo te divino nomine cuncti
 Coelicolae 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 corona,
 Laetique frondentis gestans umbracula palmae
 Aeternum perages immortales hymenaeos;
 Cantus ubi, choreisque furit lyra mista beatis,
 Festa Sionaeo bacchantur et Orgia Thyrsos.

JAN. 23, 1646.

AD

JOANNEM ROUSIUM,

OXONIENSIS ACADEMIAE BIBLIOTHECARIUM.

De libro poematum amisso, quem ille sibi denuo mitti postulabat, ut cum aliis nostris in Bibliotheca publica reponeret, ode.

STROPHE I.

GENELLE cultu simplici gaudens liber,
 Fronde licet geminâ,
 Munditiéque nitens non operosâ,
 Quam manus attulit
 Juvenilis olim,
 Sedula tamen haud nimii poetae;
 Dum vagus Ausonias nunc per umbras,
 Nunc Britannica per vireta lusit
 Insons populi barbitóque devius
 Indulsit patrio, mox itidem pectine Dannoio
 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
 Caerulei patris,
 Fontes ubi limpidi
 Aonidum, thyasusque sacer
 Orbi notus per immensos
 Temporum lapsus redeunte coelo,
 Celeberque futurus in aevum.

STROPHE II.

Modò quis deus, aut editus deo
 Pristinam gentis miseratus indolem
 (Si satis noxas luimus priores,
 Mollique luxu degener otium)
 Tollat nefandos civium tumultus,
 Almaque revocet studia sanctus,
 Et relegatas sine sede Musas
 Jam penè totis finibus Angligenùm;
 Immundasque volucres
 Unguibus imminentes
 Figat Apollineâ pharetrâ,
 Phinéamque abigat pestem procul amne Pegaséo,

ANTISTROPHE.

Quin tu, libelle, nuntii licet malâ
 Fide, vel oscitantia
 Semel erraveris agmine fratrum,

Seu quis te teneat specus,
 Seu qua te latebra, forsán unde vili
 Callo teréris institoris insulsi,
 Laetare felix, en iterum tibi
 Spes nova fulget, posse profundam
 Fugere Lethen, vehique superam
 In Jovis aulam, remige penná:

STROPHE III.

Nam te Roüsius sui
 Optat peculi, númeroque justo
 Sibi pollicitum queritur abesse,
 Rogatque venias ille, cujus inclyta
 Sunt data virúm monumenta curae:
 Téque adytis etiam sacris
 Voluit reponi, quibus et ipse praesidet
 Aeternorum operum custos fidelis,
 Quaestorque gazae nobilioris,
 Quàm cui praefuit Ión,
 Clarus Erechtheides,
 Opulenta dei per templa parentis,
 Fulvosque tripodas, donaque Delphica,
 Ión Actaeà genitus Creusà.

ANTISTROPHE.

Ergo, tu visere lucos
 Musarum ibis amoenos;
 Diamque Phoebi rursus ibis in domum
 Oxonià quam valle colit
 Delo posthabitá,
 Bifidòque Parnassi jugo:
 Ibis honestus,
 Postquam egregiam tu quoque sortem
 Nactus abis, dextri prece sollicitatus amici.
 Illic legéris inter alta nomina
 Authorum, Graiae simul et Latinae
 Antiqúae gentis lumina, et verum decus.

EPODOS.

Vos tandem haud vacui mei labores,
 Quicquid hoc sterile fudit ingenium,
 Jam serò placidam sperare jubeo
 Perfunctam invidià requiem, sedesque beatas
 Quas bonus Hermes,
 Et tutela dabit solers Roüsi,
 Quo neque lingua procax vulgi penetrabit, atque longè
 Turba legentum prava facesset;
 At ultimi nepotes,
 Et cordatior aetas
 Judicia rebus aequiora forsitan
 Adhibebit integro sinu.
 Tum, livore sepulto,
 Si quid meremur sana posteritas sciet
 Roüsio favente.

Ode tribus constat Strophis, totidémque Antistrophis, uná demum Epodo clausis, quas, tametsi omnes nec versuum numero, nec certis ubique colis exactè respondeant, ita tamen secuimus, commodè legendi potiùs, quàm ad antiquos concinendi modos rationem spectantes. Alioquin hoc genus rectiùs fortasse dici monostrophicum debuerat. Metra partim sunt *κατὰ σχέσιν*, partim *ἀπολελυμένα*. Phaleucia quae sunt, Spondaeum tertio loco bis admittunt, quod idem in secundo loco Catullus ad libitum fecit.

AD

C H R I S T I N A M,

SUECORUM REGINAM NOMINE CROMWELLI.

BELLIPOTENS Virgo, septem Regina Trionum,
 Christiana, Arctoi lucida stella poli,
 Cernis, quas merui dura sub casside rugas,
 Utque senex armis impiger ora 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.

I T A L I A N P O E M S.

I.

DONNA leggiadra il cui bel nome honora
 L'herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco,
 Bene è colui d'ogni valore scarco
 Qual tuo spirto gentil non innamora,
 Che dolcemente mostra si di fuora
 De sui atti soavi giamai parco,
 E i don', che son d'amor saette ed arco,
 La onde l' alta tua virtù s'infiora.
 Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti
 Che mover possa duro alpestre legno
 Guardi ciascun a gli occhi, ed a gli orecchi
 L'entrata, che di te si truova indegno;
 Gratia sola di su gli vaglia, inanti
 Che 'l disio amoroso al cuor s'invecchi.

II.

QUAL in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera
 L'avezza giovinetta pastorella
 Va bagnando l'herbetta strana e bella
 Che mal si spande a disusata spera
 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 bel Arno.
 Amor lo volse, ed io a l'altrui peso
 Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno.
 Deh! foss' il mio cuor lento e 'l duro seno
 A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

CANZONE.

RIDONSI donne e giovani amorosi
 M' accostandosi attorno, e perche scrivi,
 Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
 Verseggiando d' amor, e come t'osi?
 Dinne, se la tua speme sia mai vana,
 E de pensierilo miglior t' arrivi;
 Così mi van burlando, altri rivi
 Altri lidi t'aspettan, ed altre onde
 Nelle cui verdi sponde
 Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a là tua chioma
 L' immortal guiderdon d' eterne frondi
 Perche alle spalle tue soverchia soma?
 Canzon dirotti, e tu per me rispondi
 Dice mia Donna, e 'l suo dir, e il mio cuore
 Questa e lingua di cui si vanta Amore.

III.

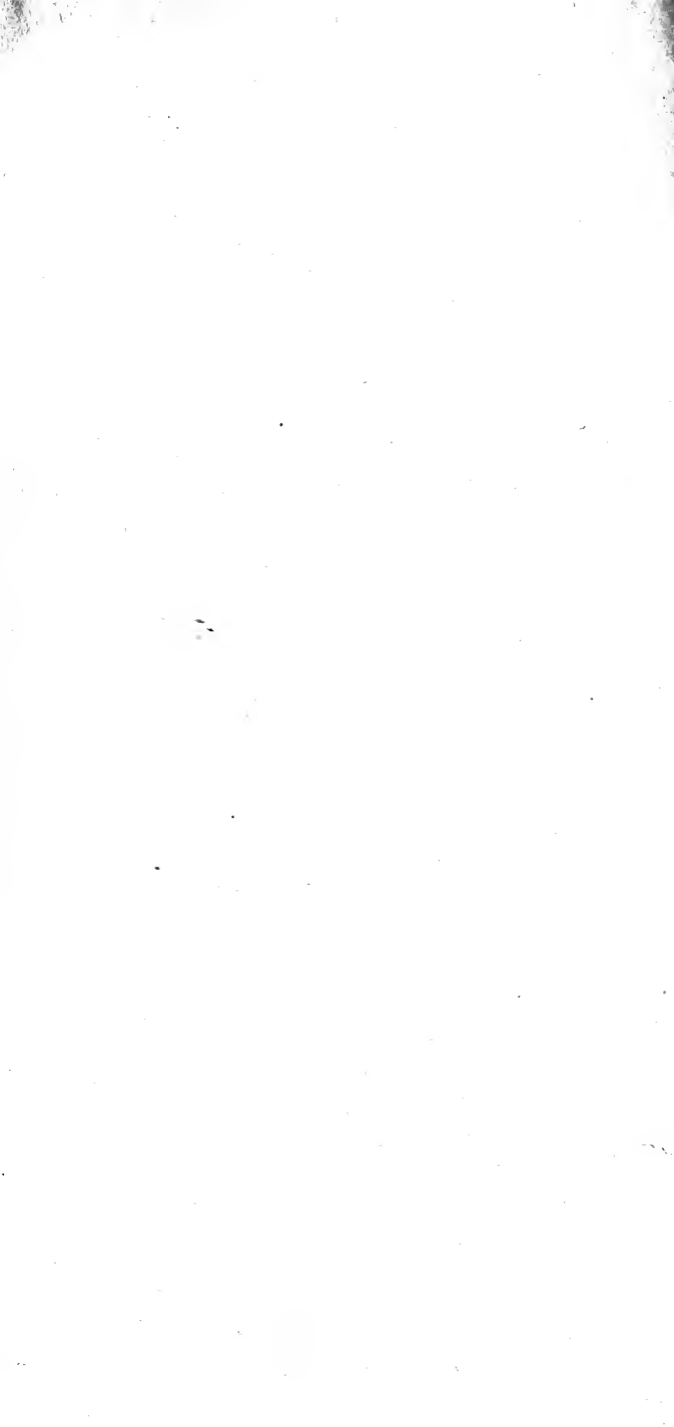
DIODATI, e te 'l dirò con meraviglia,
 Quel ritroso io ch' amor spreggiar solea
 E de suoi lacci spesso mi ridea
 Già caddi, ov' huom dabben talhor s'impiglia.
 Ne treccie d' oro, ne guancia vermiglia
 M' abbaglian sì, ma sotto nova idea
 Pellegrina bellezza che 'l cuor bea,
 Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia
 Quel sereno fulgor d' amabil nero,
 Parole adorne di lingua più d'una,
 E 'l cantar che di mezzo l'hemispero
 Traviar ben può la faticosa Luna,
 E degli occhi suoi auventa sì gran fuoco
 Che l'incerar gli orecchi mi fia poco.

IV.

PER certo i bei vostr' occhi, Donna mia
 Esser non può che non sian lo mio sole
 Si mi percuoton forte, come ei suole
 Per l'arene di Libia chi s'invia,
 Mentre un caldo vapor (ne senti 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
 Scosso mi il petto, e poi n' uscendo poco,
 Quivi d'attorno o s'agghiaccia, o s'ingiela;
 Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco
 Tutte le notti a me suol far piovose
 Finche mia Alba rivien colma di rose.

V.

GIOVANE piano, e semplicetto amante
 Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,
 Madonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono
 Farò divoto; io certo a prove tante
 L'ebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
 De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
 Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
 S'arma di se, e d' intero diamante,
 Tanto del forse, e d' invidia sicuro,
 Di timori, e speranze al popol use
 Quanto d'ingegno, e d'alto valor vago,
 E di cetra sonora, e delle muse:
 Sol troverete in tal parte men duro
 Ove Amor mise l'insanabil ago.



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