

## Paradise Lost<sup>1</sup> (1667)

By John Milton

### Paradise Lost: The First Book

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

OF MAN’S first disobedience, and the fruit  
Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste  
Brought death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of Eden, till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat, 5  
Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top  
Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire  
That Shepherd who first taught the chosen seed  
In the beginning how the heavens and earth  
Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill 10  
Delight thee more, and Siloa’s brook that flowed  
Fast by the oracle of God, I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar

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<sup>1</sup> Copied from Bartleby.com [http://www.bartleby.com/4/401.html]. 31 July 2015. Poem in public domain.

Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues 15  
 Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.  
 And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer  
 Before all temples the upright heart and pure,  
 Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first  
 Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread, 20  
 Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,  
 And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark  
 Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
 That, to the highth of this great argument,  
 I may assert Eternal Providence, 25  
 And justify the ways of God to men.  
 Say first—for Heaven hides nothing from thy view,  
 Nor the deep tract of Hell—say first what cause  
 Moved our grand Parents, in that happy state,  
 Favoured of Heaven so highly, to fall off 30  
 From their Creator, and transgress his will  
 For one restraint, lords of the World besides.  
 Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?  
 The infernal Serpent; he it was whose guile,  
 Stirred up with envy and revenge, deceived 35  
 The mother of mankind, what time his pride  
 Had cast him out from Heaven, with all his host  
 Of rebel Angels, by whose aid, aspiring  
 To set himself in glory above his peers,  
 He trusted to have equalled the Most High, 40  
 If he opposed, and, with ambitious aim  
 Against the throne and monarchy of God,  
 Raised impious war in Heaven and battle proud,  
 With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
 Hurl'd headlong flaming from the ethereal sky, 45  
 With hideous ruin and combustion, down  
 To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
 In adamant chains and penal fire,  
 Who durst defy the Omnipotent to arms.  
 Nine times the space that measures day and night 50  
 To mortal men, he, with his horrid crew,  
 Lay vanquished, rowling in the fiery gulf,  
 Confounded, though immortal. But his doom  
 Reserved him to more wrath; for now the thought  
 Both of lost happiness and lasting pain 55  
 Torments him: round he throws his baleful eyes,  
 That witnessed huge affliction and dismay,  
 Mixed with obdurate pride and steadfast hate.  
 At once, as far as Angel's ken, he views  
 The dismal situation waste and wild. 60

A dungeon horrible, on all sides round,  
 As one great furnace flamed; yet from those flames  
 No light; but rather darkness visible  
 Served only to discover sights of woe,  
 Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace 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 unconsumed.  
 Such place Eternal Justice had prepared 70  
 For those rebellious; here their prison ordained  
 In utter darkness, and their portion set,  
 As far removed from God and light of Heaven  
 As from the centre thrice to the utmost pole.  
 Oh how unlike the place from whence they fell! 75  
 There the companions of his fall, o'erwhelmed  
 With floods and whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
 He soon discerns; and, weltering by his side,  
 One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
 Long after known in Palestine, and named 80  
 Beëlzebub. To whom the Arch-Enemy,  
 And thence in Heaven called Satan, with bold words  
 Breaking the horrid silence, thus began:—  
 “If thou beest he—but Oh how fallen! how changed  
 From him!—who, in the happy realms of light, 85  
 Clothed with transcendent brightness, didst outshine  
 Myriads, though bright—if he whom mutual league,  
 United thoughts and counsels, equal hope  
 And hazard in the glorious enterprise,  
 Joined with me once, now misery hath joined 90  
 In equal ruin; into what pit thou seest  
 From what highth fallen: so much the stronger proved  
 He with his thunder: and till then who knew  
 The force of those dire arms? Yet not for those,  
 Nor what the potent Victor in his rage 95  
 Can else inflict, do I repent, or change,  
 Though changed in outward lustre, that fixed mind,  
 And high disdain from sense of injured merit,  
 That with the Mightiest raised me to contend,  
 And to the fierce contention brought along 100  
 Innumerable force of Spirits armed,  
 That durst dislike his reign, and, me preferring,  
 His utmost power with adverse power opposed  
 In dubious battle on the plains of Heaven,  
 And shook his throne. What though the field be lost? 105  
 All is not lost—the unconquerable will,

And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
 And courage never to submit or yield:  
 And what is else not to be overcome.  
 That glory never shall his wrath or might 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 advanced,  
 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 the excess of joy  
 Sole reigning holds the tyranny of Heaven."  
 So spake the apostate Angel, though in pain, 125  
 Vaunting aloud, but racked with deep despair;  
 And him thus answered soon his bold Compeer;—  
 “O Prince, O Chief of many thronèd Powers  
 That led the embattled Seraphim to war  
 Under thy conduct, and, in dreadful deeds 130  
 Fearless, endangered Heaven's perpetual King,  
 And put to proof his high supremacy,  
 Whether upheld by strength, or chance, or fate!  
 Too well I see and rue the dire event  
 That, with sad overthrow and foul defeat, 135  
 Hath lost us Heaven, and all this mighty host  
 In horrible destruction laid thus low,  
 As far as Gods and Heavenly Essences  
 Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains  
 Invincible, and vigour soon returns, 140  
 Though all our glory extinct, and happy state  
 Here swallowed up in endless misery.  
 But what if He our Conqueror (whom I now  
 Of force believe Almighty, since no less  
 Than such could have o'erpowered such force as ours) 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 errands in the gloomy Deep?

What can it then avail though yet we feel  
 Strength undiminished, or eternal being  
 To undergo eternal punishment?" 155  
 Whereto with speedy words the Arch-Fiend replied:—  
 "Fallen Cherub, to be weak is miserable,  
 Doing or suffering: but of this be sure—  
 To do aught good never will be our task,  
 But ever to do ill our sole delight, 160  
 As being the contrary to His high will  
 Whom we resist. If then His providence  
 Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
 Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
 And out of good still to find means of evil; 165  
 Which oftentimes may succeed so as perhaps  
 Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
 His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
 But see! the angry Victor hath recalled  
 His ministers of vengeance and pursuit 170  
 Back to the gates of Heaven: the sulphurous hail,  
 Shot after us in storm, o'erblown hath laid  
 The fiery surge that from the precipice  
 Of Heaven received us falling; and the thunder,  
 Winged with red lightning and impetuous rage, 175  
 Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
 To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.  
 Let us not slip the occasion, whether scorn  
 Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.  
 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 uplift above the wave, and eyes  
 That sparkling blazed; his other parts besides 195  
 Prone on the flood, extended long and large,  
 Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge  
 As whom the fables name of monstrous size,  
 Titanian or Earth-born, that warred on Jove,

Briareos or Typhon, whom the den  
 By ancient Tarsus held, or that sea-beast 200  
 Leviathan, which God of all his works  
 Created hugest that swim the ocean-stream.  
 Him, haply slumbering on the Norway foam,  
 The pilot of some small night-foundered skiff,  
 Deeming some island, oft, as seamen tell, 205  
 With fixèd anchor in his scaly rind,  
 Moors by his side under the lee, while night  
 Invests the sea, and wishèd morn delays.  
 So stretched out huge in length the Arch-Fiend lay,  
 Chained on the burning lake; nor ever thence 210  
 Had risen, or heaved his head, but that the will  
 And high permission of all-ruling Heaven  
 Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
 That with reiterated crimes he might  
 Heap on himself damnation, while he sought 215  
 Evil to others, and enraged might see  
 How all his malice served but to bring forth  
 Infinite goodness, grace, and mercy, shewn  
 On Man by him seduced, but on himself  
 Treble confusion, wrath, and vengeance poured. 220  
 Forthwith upright he rears from off the pool  
 His mighty stature; on each hand the flames  
 Driven backward slope their pointing spires, and, rowled  
 In billows, leave i' the 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 burned  
 With solid, as the lake with liquid fire,  
 And such appeared in hue as when the force 230  
 Of subterranean wind transports a hill  
 Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side  
 Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible  
 And fuelled entrails, thence conceiving fire,  
 Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds, 235  
 And leave a singèd bottom all involved  
 With stench and smoke. Such resting found the sole  
 Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate;  
 Both glorying to have scaped the Stygian flood  
 As gods, and by their own recovered strength, 240  
 Not by the sufferance of supernal power.  
 “Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,”  
 Said then the lost Archangel, “this the seat  
 That we must change for Heaven?—this mournful gloom

For that celestial light? Be it so, since He 245  
 Who now is sovran can dispose and bid  
 What shall be right: fardest from Him is best,  
 Whom reason hath equalled, force hath made supreme  
 Above his equals. Farewell, happy fields,  
 Where joy forever dwells! Hail, horrors! hail, 250  
 Infernal World! and thou, profoundest Hell,  
 Receive thy new possessor—one who brings  
 A mind not to be changed by place or time.  
 The mind is its own place, and in itself  
 Can make a Heaven of Hell, a Hell of Heaven. 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; the 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,  
 The associates and co-partners of our loss, 265  
 Lie thus astonished on the oblivious pool,  
 And call them not to share with us their part  
 In this unhappy mansion, or once more  
 With rallied arms to try what may be yet  
 Regained in Heaven, or what more lost in Hell?" 270  
 So Satan spake; and him Beëlzebub  
 Thus answered:—"Leader of those armies bright  
 Which, but the Omnipotent, none could have foiled!  
 If once they hear that voice, their liveliest pledge  
 Of hope in fears and dangers—heard so oft 275  
 In worst extremes, and on the perilous edge  
 Of battle, when it raged, in all assaults  
 Their surest signal—they will soon resume  
 New courage and revive, though now they lie  
 Grovelling and prostrate on yon lake of fire, 280  
 As we erewhile, astounded and amazed;  
 No wonder, fallen such a pernicious highth!"  
 He scarce had ceased when the superior Fiend  
 Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous 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 walked 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 endured, till on the beach  
 Of that inflamèd sea he stood, and called 300  
 His legions—Angel Forms, who lay entranced  
 Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks  
 In Vallombrosa, where the Etrurian shades  
 High over-arched imbower; or scattered sedge  
 Afloat, when with fierce winds Orion armed 305  
 Hath vexed 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 called so loud that all the hollow deep  
 Of Hell resounded:—“Princes, Potentates, 315  
 Warriors, the Flower of Heaven—once yours; now lost,  
 If such astonishment as this can seize  
 Eternal Spirits! Or have ye chosen this place  
 After the toil of battle to repose  
 Your wearied virtue, for the ease you find 320  
 To slumber here, as in the vales of Heaven?  
 Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
 To adore the Conqueror, who now beholds  
 Cherub and Seraph rowling in the flood  
 With scattered arms and ensigns, till anon 325  
 His swift pursuers from Heaven-gates discern  
 The advantage, and, descending tread us down  
 Thus drooping, or with linkèd thunderbolts  
 Transfix us to the bottom of this gulf?—  
 Awake, arise, or be for ever fallen!” 330  
 They heard, and were abashed, and up they sprung  
 Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch,  
 On duty sleeping found by whom they dread,  
 Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.  
 Nor did they not perceive the evil plight 335  
 In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;



Yet to their General's voice they soon obeyed  
 Innumerable. As when the potent rod  
 Of Amram's son, in Egypt's evil day,  
 Waved round the coast, up-called a pitchy cloud 340  
 Of locusts, warping on the eastern wind,  
 That o'er the realm of impious Pharaoh hung  
 Like Night, and darkened all the land of Nile;  
 So numberless were those bad Angels seen  
 Hovering on wing under the cope of Hell, 345  
 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding fires;  
 Till, as a signal given, the uplifted spear  
 Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
 Their course, in even balance down they light  
 On the firm brimstone, and fill the plain: 350  
 A multitude like which the populous North  
 Poured never from her frozen loins to pass  
 Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous sons  
 Came like a deluge on the South, and spread  
 Beneath Gibraltar to the Libyan sands. 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 powers that erst in Heaven sat on thrones, 360  
 Though of their names in Heavenly records now  
 Be no memorial, blotted out and rased  
 By their rebellion from the Books of Life.  
 Nor had they yet among the sons of Eve  
 Got them new names, till, wondering 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 the invisible  
 Glory of Him that made them to transform 370  
 Oft to the image of a brute, adorned  
 With gay religions full of pomp and gold,  
 And devils to adore for deities:  
 Then were they known to men by various names,  
 And various idols through the heathen world. 375  
 Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,  
 Roused from the slumber on that fiery couch,  
 At their great Emperor's call, as next in worth  
 Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,  
 While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof. 380  
 The chief were those who, from the pit of Hell  
 Roaming to seek their prey on Earth, durst fix

Their seats, long after, next the seat of God,  
 Their altars by His altar, gods adored  
 Among the nations round, and durst abide 385  
 Jehovah thundering out of Sion, throned  
 Between the Cherubim; yea, often placed  
 Within His sanctuary itself their shrines,  
 Abominations; and with cursed things  
 His holy rites and solemn feasts profaned, 390  
 And with their darkness durst affront His light.  
 First, *Moloch*, horrid King, besmeared with blood  
 Of human sacrifice, and parents' tears;  
 Though, for the noise of drums and timbrels loud,  
 Their children's cries unheard that passed through fire 395  
 To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite  
 Worshiped in Rabba and her watery plain,  
 In Argob and in Basan, to the stream  
 Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such  
 Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart 400  
 Of Solomon he led by fraud to build  
 His temple right against the temple of God  
 On that opprobrious hill, and made his grove  
 The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence  
 And black Gehenna called, the type of Hell. 405  
 Next *Chemos*, the obscene dread of Moab's sons,  
 From Aroar to Nebo and the wild  
 Of southmost Abarim; in Hesebon  
 And Horonaim, Seon's realm, beyond  
 The flowery dale of Sibma clad with vines, 410  
 And Elealè to the Asphaltick Pool:  
 Peor his other name, when he enticed  
 Israel in Sittim, on their march from Nile,  
 To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
 Yet thence his lustful orgies he enlarged 415  
 Even to that hill of scandal, by the grove  
 Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate,  
 Till good Josiah drove them thence to Hell.  
 With these came they who, from the bordering flood  
 Of old Euphrates to the brook that parts 420  
 Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names  
 Of *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth*—those male,  
 These feminine. For Spirits, when they please,  
 Can either sex assume, or both; so soft  
 And uncompounded is their essence pure, 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 condensed, bright or obscure,  
 Can execute their aery purposes, 430  
 And works of love or enmity fulfil.  
 For those the race of Israel oft forsook  
 Their Living Strength, and unfrequented left  
 His righteous altar, bowing lowly down  
 To bestial gods; for which their heads, as low 435  
 Bowed down in battle, sunk before the spear  
 Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
 Came *Astoreth*, whom the Phoenicians called  
 Astarte, queen of heaven, with crescent horns;  
 To whose bright image nightly by the moon 440  
 Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs;  
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood  
 Her temple on the offensive mountain, built  
 By that uxorious king whose heart, though large,  
 Beguiled by fair idolatresses, fell 445  
 To idols foul. *Thammuz* came next behind,  
 Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured  
 The Syrian damsels to lament his fate  
 In amorous ditties all a summer's day,  
 While smooth Adonis from his native rock 450  
 Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood  
 Of *Thammuz* yearly wounded: the love-tale  
 Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,  
 Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch  
 Ezekiel saw, when, by the vision led, 455  
 His eye surveyed the dark idolatries  
 Of alienated Judah. Next came one  
 Who mourned in earnest, when the captive Ark  
 Maimed his brute image, head and hands lopt off,  
 In his own temple, on the grunsel-edge, 460  
 Where he fell flat and shamed his worshipers:  
*Dagon* his name, sea-monster, upward man  
 And downward fish; yet had his temple high  
 Reared in Azotus, dreaded through the coast  
 Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon, 465  
 And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds.  
 Him followed *Rimmon*, whose delightful seat  
 Was fair Damascus, on the fertile banks  
 Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.  
 He also against the house of God was bold: 470  
 A leper once he lost, and gained a king—  
 Ahaz, his sottish conqueror, whom he drew  
 God's altar to disparage and displace  
 For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn

His odious offerings, and adore the gods 475  
 Whom he had vanquished. After these appeared  
 A crew who, under names of old renown—  
*Osiris, Isis, Orus*, and their train—  
 With monstrous shapes and sorceries abused  
 Fanatic Egypt and her priests to seek 480  
 Their wandering gods disguised in brutish forms  
 Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape  
 The infection, when their borrowed gold composed  
 The calf in Oreb; and the rebel king  
 Doubled that sin in Bethel and in Dan, 485  
 Likening his Maker to the grazèd ox—  
 Jehovah, who, in one night, when he passed  
 From Egypt marching, equalled with one stroke  
 Both her first-born and all her bleating gods.  
*Belial* came last; than whom a Spirit more lewd 490  
 Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love,  
 Vice for itself. To him no temple stood  
 Or altar smoked; yet who more oft than he  
 In temples and at altars, when the priest  
 Turns atheist, as did Eli's sons, who filled 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  
 Exposed a matron, to avoid worse rape. 505  
 These were the prime in order and in might:  
 The rest were long to tell; though far renowned  
 The Ionian gods—of Javan's issue held  
 Gods, yet confessed later than Heaven and Earth,  
 Their boasted parents;—*Titan*, Heaven's first-born, 510  
 With his enormous brood, and birthright seized  
 By younger *Saturn*: he from mightier *Jove*,  
 His own and *Rhea*'s son, like measure found;  
 So *Jove* usurping reigned. These, first in Crete  
 And *Ida* known, thence on the snowy top 515  
 Of cold *Olympus* ruled the middle air,  
 Their highest heaven; or on the *Delphian* cliff,  
 Or in *Dodona*, and through all the bounds  
 Of *Doric* land; or who with *Saturn* old  
 Fled over *Adria* to the *Hesperian* fields, 520

And o'er the Celtic roamed the utmost Isles.  
 All these and more came flocking; but with looks  
 Downcast and damp; yet such wherein appeared  
 Obscure some glimpse of joy to have found their Chief  
 Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost 525  
 In loss itself; which on his countenance cast  
 Like doubtful hue. But he, his wonted pride  
 Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
 Semblance of worth, nor substance, gently raised  
 Their fainting courage, and dispelled their fears: 530  
 Then straight commands that, at the war-like sound  
 Of trumpets loud and clarions, be upreared  
 His mighty standard. That proud honour claimed  
 Azazel as his right, a Cherub tall:  
 Who forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled 535  
 The imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,  
 Shon like a meteor streaming to the wind,  
 With gems and golden lustre rich imblazed,  
 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  
 Appeared, and serried shields in thick array  
 Of depth immeasurable. Anon they move  
 In perfect phalanx to the Dorian mood 550  
 Of flutes and soft recorders—such as raised  
 To highth of noblest temper heroes old  
 Arming to battle, and instead of rage  
 Deliberate valour breathed, firm, and unmoved  
 With dread of death to flight or foul retreat; 555  
 Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage  
 With solemn touches troubled thoughts, and chase  
 Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain  
 From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they,  
 Breathing united force with fixed thought, 560  
 Moved on in silence to soft pipes that charmed  
 Their painful steps o'er the burnt soil. And now  
 Advanced in view they stand—a horrid front  
 Of dreadful length and dazzling arms, in guise  
 Of warriors old, with ordered spear and shield, 565  
 Awaiting what command their mighty Chief

Had to impose. He through the armed files  
 Darts his experienced eye, and soon traverse  
 The whole battalion views—their order due,  
 Their visages and stature as of Gods; 570  
 Their number last he sums. And now his heart  
 Distends with pride, and, hardening in his strength,  
 Glories: for never, since created Man,  
 Met such imbodyed force as, named with these,  
 Could merit more than that small infantry 575  
 Warred on by cranes—though all the giant brood  
 Of Phlegra with the heroic race were joined  
 That fought at Thebes and Ilium, on each side  
 Mixed with auxiliar gods; and what resounds  
 In fable or romance of Uther's son, 580  
 Begirt with British and Armoric knights;  
 And all who since, baptized or infidel,  
 Jousted in Aspramont, or Montalban,  
 Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde,  
 Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore 585  
 When Charlemain with all his peerage fell  
 By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond  
 Compare of mortal prowess, yet observed  
 Their dread Commander. He, above the rest  
 In shape and gesture proudly eminent, 590  
 Stood like a tower. His form had yet not lost  
 All her original brightness, nor appeared  
 Less than Archangel ruined, and the excess  
 Of glory obscured: as when the sun new-risen  
 Looks through the horizontal misty air 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. Darkened so, yet shon  
 Above them all the Archangel: but his face 600  
 Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care  
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows  
 Of dauntless courage, and considerate pride  
 Waiting revenge. Cruel his eye, but cast  
 Signs of remorse and passion, to behold 605  
 The fellows of his crime, the followers rather  
 (Far other once beheld in bliss), condemned  
 For ever now to have their lot in pain—  
 Millions of Spirits for his fault amerced  
 Of Heaven, and from eternal splendours flung 610  
 For his revolt—yet faithful how they stood,  
 Their glory withered; as, when heaven's fire

Hath scathed the forest oaks or mountain pines,  
 With singèd top their stately growth, though bare,  
 Stands on the blasted heath. He now prepared 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 assayed, 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 the Almighty!—and that strife  
 Was not inglorious, though the event was dire,  
 As this place testifies, and this dire change, 625  
 Hateful to utter. But what power of mind,  
 Foreseeing or presaging, from the depth  
 Of knowledge past or present, could have feared  
 How such united force of gods, how such  
 As stood like these, could ever know repulse? 630  
 For who can yet believe, though after loss,  
 That all these puissant legions, whose exile  
 Hath emptied Heaven, shall fail to reascend,  
 Self-raised, and re-possess their native seat?  
 For me, be witness all the host of Heaven, 635  
 If counsels different, or danger shunned  
 By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns  
 Monarch in Heaven till then as one secure  
 Sat on his throne, upheld by old repute,  
 Consent or custom, and his regal state 640  
 Put forth at full, but still his strength concealed—  
 Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.  
 Henceforth his might we know, and know our own,  
 So as not either to provoke, or dread  
 New war provoked: our better part remains 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 Heaven that He ere long  
 Intended to create, and therein plant  
 A generation whom his choice regard  
 Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven.  
 Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps 655  
 Our first eruption—thither, or elsewhere;  
 For this infernal pit shall never hold  
 Cælestial Spirits in bondage, nor the Abyss

Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
 Full counsel must mature. Peace is despaired; 660  
 For who can think submission? War, then, war  
 Open or understood, must be resolved.”  
 He spake; and, to confirm his words, out-flew  
 Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs  
 Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze 665  
 Far around illumined Hell. Highly they raged  
 Again the Highest and fierce with grasped arms  
 Clashed on their sounding shields the din of war,  
 Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heaven.  
 There stood a hill not far, whose griesly top 670  
 Belched fire and rowling smoke; the rest entire  
 Shown with a glossy scurf—undoubted sign  
 That in his womb was hid metallic ore,  
 The work of sulphur. Thither, winged with speed,  
 A numerous brigad hastened: as when bands 675  
 Of pioners, with spade and pickaxe armed,  
 Forerun the royal camp, to trench a field,  
 Or cast a rampart. Mammon led them on—  
 Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell  
 From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts 680  
 Were always downward bent, admiring more  
 The riches of Heaven’s pavement, trodden gold,  
 Than aught divine or holy else enjoyed  
 In vision beatific. By him first  
 Men also, and by suggestion taught 685  
 Ransacked the Centre, and with impious hands  
 Rifled the bowels of their mother Earth  
 For treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
 Opened into the hill a spacious wound,  
 And digged out ribs of gold. Let none admire 690  
 That riches grow in Hell: that soil may best  
 Deserve the pretious bane. And here let those  
 Who boast in mortal things, and wondering tell  
 Of Babel and the works of Memphian kings,  
 Learn how their greatest monuments of fame, 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 prepared, 700  
 That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
 Sluiced from the lake, a second multitude  
 With wondrous art founded the massy ore,  
 Severing each kind, and scummed the bullion-dross.



A third as soon had formed within the ground 705  
 A various mould, and from the boiling cells  
 By strange conveyance filled each hollow nook;  
 As in an organ, from one blast of wind,  
 To many a row of pipes the sound-board breathes.  
 Anon out of the earth a fabric huge 710  
 Rose like an exhalation, with the sound  
 Of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet—  
 Built like a temple, where pilasters round  
 Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid 715  
 With golden architrave; nor did there want  
 Cornice or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven:  
 The roof was fretted gold. Not Babilon  
 Nor great Alcairo such magnificence  
 Equalled in all their glories, to inshrine 720  
 Belus or Serapis their gods, or seat  
 Their kings, when Ægypt with Assyria strove  
 In wealth and luxury. The ascending pile  
 Stood fixed her stately highth; and straight the doors  
 Opening their brazen folds, discover, wide 725  
 Within, her ample spaces o'er the smooth  
 And level pavement: from the arched roof,  
 Pendent by subtle magic, many a row  
 Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed  
 With naphtha and asphaltus, yielded light  
 As from a sky. The hasty multitude 730  
 Admiring entered; and the work some praise,  
 And some the Architect. His hand was known  
 In Heaven by many a towered structure high,  
 Where sceptred Angels held their residence,  
 And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King 735  
 Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
 Each in his hierarchy, the Orders bright.  
 Nor was his name unheard or unadored  
 In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land  
 Men called him Mulciber; and how he fell 740  
 From Heaven they fabled, thrown by angry Jove  
 Sheer o'er the crystal battlements: from morn  
 To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,  
 A summer's day, and with the setting sun  
 Dropt from the zenith, like a falling star, 745  
 On Lemnos, the Ægæan isle. Thus they relate,  
 Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
 Fell long before; nor aught availed him now  
 To have built in Heaven high towers; nor did he scape  
 By all his engines, but was headlong sent, 750

With his industrious crew, to build in Hell.  
 Meanwhile the wingèd Haralds, by command  
 Of sovran power, with awful ceremony  
 And trumpet's sound, throughout the host proclaim  
 A solemn council forthwith to be held 755  
 At Pandæmonium, the high capital  
 Of Satan and his peers. Their summons called  
 From every band and squarèd regiment  
 By place or choice the worthiest: they anon  
 With hundreds and with thousands trooping came 760  
 Attended. All access was thronged; the gates  
 And porches wide, but chief the spacious hall  
 (Though like a covered field, where champions bold  
 Wont ride in armed, and at the Soldan's chair  
 Defied the best of Panim chivalry 765  
 To mortal combat, or career with lance),  
 Thick swarmed, both on the ground and in the air,  
 Brushed with the hiss of rustling wings. As bees  
 In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,  
 Pour forth their populous youth about the hive 770  
 In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers  
 Fly to and fro, or on the smoothèd plank,  
 The suburb of their straw-built citadel,  
 New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer  
 Their state-affairs: so thick the aerie crowd 775  
 Swarmed and were straitened; till, the signal given,  
 Behold a wonder! They but now who seemed  
 In bigness to surpass Earth's giant sons,  
 Now less than smallest dwarfs, in narrow room  
 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 overhead the Moon  
 Sits arbitress, and nearer to the Earth 785  
 Wheels her pale course: they, on their mirth and dance  
 Intent, with jocond music charm his ear;  
 At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
 Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms  
 Reduced their shapes immense, and were at large, 790  
 Though without number still, amidst the hall  
 Of that infernal court. But far within,  
 And in their own dimensions like themselves,  
 The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim  
 In close recess and secret conclave sat, 795  
 A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,

Frequent and full. After short silence then,  
And summons read, the great consult began.

### **Paradise Lost: The Second Book**

THE ARGUMENT.—The consultation begun, Satan debates whether another battle is 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.

### **Paradise Lost: The Third Book**

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

finds there Uriel, the regent of that orb, but first changes himself into the shape of a meaner Angel, and, pretending a zealous desire to behold the new Creation, and Man whom God had placed here, inquires of him the place of his habitation, and is directed: Alights first on Mount Niphates.

## Paradise Lost: The Fourth Book

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

O FOR that warning voice, which he who saw  
 The Apocalypse heard cry in Heaven aloud,  
 Then when the Dragon, put to second rout,  
 Came furious down to be revenged on men,  
*Woe to the inhabitants on Earth!* that now, 5  
 While time was, our first parents had been warned  
 The coming of their secret Foe, and scaped,  
 Haply so scaped, his mortal snare! For now  
 Satan, now first inflamed with rage, came down,  
 The tempter, ere the accuser, of mankind, 10  
 To wreak on innocent frail Man his loss  
 Of that first battle, and his flight to Hell.  
 Yet not rejoicing in his speed, though bold

Far off and fearless, nor with cause to boast,  
 Begins his dire attempt; which, nigh the birth 15  
 Now rowling, 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 slumbered; 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 grieved look he fixes sad;  
 Sometimes towards Heaven 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 crowned,  
 Look’st from thy sole dominion like the god  
 Of this new World—at whose sight all the stars  
 Hide their diminished heads—to thee I call, 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 Heaven against Heaven’s matchless King!  
 Ah, wherefore? He deserved no such return  
 From me, whom he created what I was  
 In that bright eminence, and with his good  
 Upbraided none; nor was his service hard. 45  
 What could be less than to afford him praise,  
 The easiest recompense, and pay him thanks,  
 How due? Yet all his good proved ill in me,  
 And wrought but malice. Lifted up so high,  
 I ’sdained subjection, and thought one step higher 50  
 Would set me highest, and in a moment quit  
 The debt immense of endless gratitude,  
 So burthensome, still paying, still to owe;  
 Forgetful what from him I still received;  
 And understood not that a grateful mind 55  
 By owing owes not, but still pays, at once  
 Indebted and discharged—what burden then?  
 Oh, had his powerful destiny ordained  
 Me some inferior Angel, I had stood

Then happy; no unbounded hope had raised 60  
 Ambition. Yet why not? Some other Power  
 As great might have aspired, and me, though mean,  
 Drawn to his part. But other Powers as great  
 Fell not, but stand unshaken, from within  
 Or from without to all temptations armed! 65  
 Hadst thou the same free will and power to stand?  
 Thou hadst. Whom has thou then, or what, to accuse,  
 But Heaven's free love dealt equally to all?  
 Be then his love accursed, since, love or hate,  
 To me alike it deals eternal woe. 70  
 Nay, cursed be thou; since against his thy will  
 Chose freely what it now so justly rues.  
 Me miserable! which way shall I fly  
 Infinite wrauth and infinite despair?  
 Which way I fly is Hell; myself am Hell; 75  
 And, in the lowest deep, a lower deep  
 Still threatening to devour me opens wide,  
 To which the Hell I suffer seems a Heaven.  
 O, then, at last relent! Is there no place  
 Left for repentance, none for pardon left? 80  
 None left but by submission; and that word  
 Disdain forbids me, and my dread of shame  
 Among the Spirits beneath, whom I seduced  
 With other promises and other vaunts  
 Than to submit, boasting I could subdue 85  
 The Omnipotent. Aye me! they little know  
 How dearly I abide that boast so vain,  
 Under what torments inwardly I groan.  
 While they adore me on the throne of Hell,  
 With diadem and sceptre high advanced, 90  
 The lower still I fall, only supreme  
 In misery: such joy ambition finds!  
 But say I could repent, and could obtain,  
 By act of grace, my former state; how soon  
 Would highth recal high thoughts, how soon unsay 95  
 What feigned submission swore! Ease would recant  
 Vows made in pain, as violent and void  
 (For never can true reconcilment grow  
 Where wounds of deadly hate have pierced so deep)  
 Which would but lead me to a worse relapse 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, outcast, exiled, his new delight,  
 Mankind, created, and for him this World!  
 So farewell hope, and, with hope, farewell fear,  
 Farewell remorse! All good to me is lost;  
 Evil, be thou my Good: by thee at least 110  
 Divided empire with Heaven's King I hold,  
 By thee, and more than half perhaps will reign;  
 As Man ere long, and this new World, shall know."  
 Thus while he spake, each passion dimmed his face,  
 Thrice changed with pale—ire, envy, and despair; 115  
 Which marred his borrowed visage, and betrayed  
 Him counterfeit, if any eye beheld:  
 For Heavenly minds from such distempers foul  
 Are ever clear. Whereof he soon aware 120  
 Each perturbation smoothed with outward calm,  
 Artificer of fraud; and was the first  
 That practised falsehood under saintly shew,  
 Deep malice to conceal, couched with revenge:  
 Yet not enough had practised to deceive  
 Uriel, once warned; whose eye pursued him down 125  
 The way he went, and on the Assyrian mount  
 Saw him disfigured, more than could befall  
 Spirit of happy sort: his gestures fierce  
 He marked and mad demeanour, then alone,  
 As he supposed, all unobserved, unseen. 130  
 So on he fares, and to the border comes  
 Of Eden, where delicious Paradise,  
 Now nearer, crowns with her enclosure green,  
 As with a rural mound, the champain head 135  
 Of a steep wilderness whose hairy sides  
 With thicket overgrown, grotesque and wild.  
 Access denied; and overhead up-grew  
 Insuperable highth of loftiest shade,  
 Cedar, and pine, and fir, and branching palm,  
 A sylvan scene, and, as the ranks ascend 140  
 Shade above shade, a woody theatre  
 Of stateliest view. Yet higher than their tops  
 The verdurous wall of Paradise up-sprung;  
 Which to our general Sire gave prospect large  
 Into his nether empire neighbouring round. 145  
 And higher than that wall a circling row  
 Of goodliest trees, loaden with fairest fruit,  
 Blossoms and fruits at once of golden hue,  
 Appeared, with gay enamelled colours mixed;  
 On which the sun more glad impressed his beams 150  
 Than in fair evening cloud, or humid bow,

When God hath showered the earth; so lovely seemed  
 That lantskip. 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  
 Sabeian odours from the spicy shore  
 Of Araby the Blest, with such delay  
 Well pleased they slack their course, and many a league  
 Cheered with the grateful smell old Ocean smiles; 165  
 So entertained those odorous sweets the Fiend  
 Who came their bane, though with them better pleased  
 Than Asmodeus with the fishy fume  
 That drove him, though enamoured, from the spouse  
 Of Tobit's son, and with a vengeance sent 170  
 From Media post to Ægypt, there fast bound.  
 Now to the ascent of that steep savage hill  
 Satan had journeyed on, pensive and slow;  
 But further way found none; so thick entwined, 175  
 As one continued brake, the undergrowth  
 Of shrubs and tangling bushes had perplexed  
 All path of man or beast that passed that way.  
 One gate there only was, and that looked east  
 On the other side. Which when the Arch-Felon saw,  
 Due entrance he disdained, and, in contempt, 180  
 At one slight bound high overleaped all bound  
 Of hill or highest wall, and sheer within  
 Lights on his feet. As when a prowling wolf,  
 Whom hunger drives to seek new haunt for prey,  
 Watching where shepherds pen their flocks at eve, 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-barred and bolted fast, fear no assault, 190  
 In at the window climbs, or o'er the tiles;  
 So climb 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 regained, but sat devising death



To them who lived; nor on the virtue thought  
 Of that life-giving plant, but only used  
 For prospect what, well used, had been the pledge 200  
 Of immortality. So little knows  
 Any, but God alone, to value right  
 The good before him, but perverts best things  
 To worst abuse, or to their meanest use.  
 Beneath him, with new wonder, now he views, 205  
 To all delight of human sense exposed,  
 In narrow room Nature's whole wealth; yea, more—  
 A Heaven on Earth: for blissful Paradise  
 Of God the garden was, by him in the east  
 Of Eden planted. Eden stretched her line 210  
 From Auran eastward to the royal towers  
 Of great Seleucia, built by Grecian kings,  
 Or where the sons of Eden long before  
 Dwelt in Telassar. In this pleasant soil  
 His far more pleasant garden God ordained. 215  
 Out of the fertile ground he caused to grow  
 All trees of noblest kind for sight, smell, taste;  
 And all amid them stood the Tree of Life,  
 High eminent, blooming ambrosial fruit  
 Of vegetable gold; and next to life, 220  
 Our death, the Tree of Knowledge, grew fast by—  
 Knowledge of good, bought dear by knowing ill.  
 Southward through Eden went a river large,  
 Nor changed his course, but through the shaggy hill  
 Passed underneath ingulfed; for God had thrown 225  
 That mountain, as his garden-mould, high raised  
 Upon the rapid current, which, through veins  
 Of porous earth with kindly thirst updrawn,  
 Rose a fresh fountain, and with many a rill  
 Watered the garden; thence united fell 230  
 Down the steep glade, and met the nether flood,  
 Which from his darksome passage now appears,  
 And now, divided into four main streams,  
 Runs diverse, wandering many a famous realm  
 And country whereof here needs no account; 235  
 But rather to tell how, if Art could tell  
 How, from that sapphire fount the crisped brooks,  
 Rowling on orient pearl and sands of gold,  
 With mazy error under pendant shades  
 Ran nectar, visiting each plant, and fed 240  
 Flowers worthy of Paradise, which not nice Art  
 In beds and curious knots, but Nature boon  
 Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,

Both where the morning sun first warmly smote  
 The open field, and where the unpierced shade 245  
 Imbrowned the noontide bowers. Thus was this place,  
 A happy rural seat of various view:  
 Groves whose rich trees wept odorous gums and balm,  
 Others whose fruit, burnished with golden rind,  
 Hung amiable—Hesperian fables true, 250  
 If true, here only—and of delicious taste.  
 Betwixt them lawns, or level downs, and flocks  
 Grazing the tender herb, were interposed,  
 Or palmy hillock; or the flowery lap  
 Of some irriguous valley spread her store, 255  
 Flowers of all hue, and without thorn the rose.  
 Another side, umbrageous grots and caves  
 Of cool recess, o'er which the mantling vine  
 Lays forth her purple grape, and gently creeps  
 Luxuriant; meanwhile murmuring waters fall 260  
 Down the slope hills dispersed, or in a lake,  
 That to the fringed bank with myrtle crowned  
 Her crystal mirror holds, unite their streams.  
 The birds their quire apply; airs, vernal airs,  
 Breathing the smell of field and grove, attune 265  
 The trembling leaves, while universal Pan,  
 Knit with the Graces and the Hours in dance,  
 Led on the eternal Spring. Not that fair field  
 Of Enna, where Proserpin gathering flowers,  
 Herself a fairer flower, by gloomy Dis 270  
 Was gathered—which cost Ceres all that pain  
 To seek her through the world—nor that sweet grove  
 Of Daphne, by Orontes and the inspired  
 Castalian spring, might with this Paradise  
 Of Eden strive; nor that Nyseian isle, 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 supposed  
 True Paradise) under the Ethiop line  
 By Nilus' head, enclosed with shining rock,  
 A whole day's journey high, but wide remote  
 From this Assyrian garden, where the Fiend 285  
 Saw undelighted all delight, all kind  
 Of living creatures, new to sight and strange.  
 Two of far nobler shape, erect and tall,  
 God—like erect, with native honour clad

In naked majesty, seemed lords of all, 290  
 And worthy seemed; for in their looks divine  
 The image of their glorious Maker shon,  
 Truth, wisdom, sanctitude severe and pure—  
 Severe, but in true filial freedom placed,  
 Whence true authority in men: though both 295  
 Not equal, as their sex not equal seemed;  
 For contemplation he and valour formed,  
 For softness she and sweet attractive grace;  
 He for God only, she for God in him.  
 His fair large front and eye sublime declared 300  
 Absolute rule; and Hyacinthin locks  
 Round from his parted forelock manly hung  
 Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad:  
 She, as a veil down to the slender waist,  
 Her unadornèd golden tresses wore 305  
 Dishevelled, but in wanton ringlets waved  
 As the vine curls her tendrils—which implied  
 Subjection, but required with gentle sway,  
 And by her yielded, by him best received—  
 Yielded, with coy submission, modest pride, 310  
 And sweet, reluctant, amorous delay.  
 Nor those mysterious parts were then concealed:  
 Then was not guilty shame. Dishonest shame  
 Of Nature's works, honour dishonourable,  
 Sin-bred, how have ye troubled all mankind 315  
 With shews instead, mere shews of seeming pure  
 And banished from man's life his happiest life,  
 Simplicity and spotless innocence!  
 So passed they naked on, nor shunned the sight  
 Of God or Angel; for they thought no ill: 320  
 So hand in hand they passed, the loveliest pair  
 That ever since in love's embraces met—  
 Adam the goodliest man of men since born  
 His sons; the fairest of her daughters Eve.  
 Under a tuft of shade that on a green 325  
 Stood whispering soft, by a fresh fountain—side.  
 They sat them down; and, after no more toil  
 Of their sweet gardening labour than sufficed  
 To recommend cool Zephyr, and make ease  
 More easy, wholesome thirst and appetite 330  
 More grateful, to their supper-fruits they fell—  
 Nectarine fruits, which the complaint boughs  
 Yielded them, sidelong as they sat recline  
 On the soft downy bank damasked with flowers.  
 The savoury pulp they chew, and in the rind, 335

Still as they thirsted, scoop the brimming stream  
 Nor gentle purpose, nor endearing smiles  
 Wanted, nor youthful dalliance, as beseems  
 Fair couple linked in happy nuptial league,  
 Alone as they. About them frisking played 340  
 All beasts of the earth, since wild, and of all chase  
 In wood or wilderness, forest or den.  
 Sporting the lion ramped, and in his paw  
 Dandled the kid; bears, tigers, ounces, pards,  
 Gambolled before them; the unwieldy elephant, 345  
 To make them mirth, used all his might, and wreathed  
 His lithe proboscis; close the serpent sly,  
 Insinuating, wove with Gordian twine  
 His breaded train, and of his fatal guile  
 Gave proof unheeded. Others on the grass 350  
 Couch'd, and, now filled with pasture, gazing sat,  
 Or bedward ruminating; for the sun,  
 Declined, was hastening now with prone career  
 To the Ocean Isles, and in the ascending scale  
 Of Heaven the stars that usher evening rose: 355  
 When Satan, still in gaze as first he stood,  
 Scarce thus at length failed speech recovered sad:—  
 “O Hell! what do mine eyes with grief behold?  
 Into our room of bliss thus high advanced  
 Creatures of other mould—Earth-born perhaps, 360  
 Not Spirits, yet to Heavenly Spirits bright  
 Little inferior—whom my thoughts pursue  
 With wonder, and could love; so lively shines  
 In them divine resemblance, and such grace  
 The hand that formed them on their shape hath poured. 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 secured 370  
 Long to continue, and this high seat, your Heaven,  
 Ill fenced for Heaven to keep out such a foe  
 As now is entered; yet no purposed foe  
 To you, whom I could pity thus forlorn,  
 Though I unpitied. League with you I seek, 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, loath, to this revenge  
 On you, who wrong me not, for him who wronged.  
 And, should I at your harmless innocence  
 Melt, as I do, yet public reason just—  
 Honour and empire with revenge enlarged 390  
 By conquering this new World—compels me now  
 To do what else, though damned, I should abhor.”  
 So spake the Fiend, and with necessity,  
 The tyrant’s plea, excused 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 served best his end  
 Nearer to view his prey, and, unespied,  
 To mark what of their state he more might learn 400  
 By word or action marked. About them round  
 A lion now he stalks with fiery glare;  
 Then as a tiger, who by chance hath spied  
 In some purlieu two gentle fawns at play,  
 Straight crouches close; then rising, changes oft 405  
 His couchant watch, as one who chose his ground,  
 Whence rushing he might surest seize them both  
 Griped in each paw: when Adam, first of men.  
 To first of women, Eve, thus moving speech,  
 Turned him all ear to hear new utterance flow:— 410  
 “Sole partner and sole part of all these joys,  
 Dearer thyself than all, needs must the Power  
 That made us, and for us this ample World,  
 Be infinitely good, and of his good  
 As liberal and free as infinite; 415  
 That raised us from the dust, and placed us here  
 In all this happiness, who at this 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 pronounced it Death to taste that Tree:

The only sign of our obedience left  
 Among so many signs of power and rule  
 Conferred upon us, and dominion given 430  
 Over all other creatures that possess  
 Earth, Air, and Sea. Then let us not think hard  
 One easy prohibition, who enjoy  
 Free leave so large to all things else, and choice  
 Unlimited of manifold delights; 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 formed flesh of thy flesh,  
 And without whom am to no end, my guide  
 And head! what thou hast said is just and right.  
 For we to him, indeed, all praises owe,  
 And daily thanks—I chiefly, who enjoy 445  
 So far the happier lot, enjoying thee  
 Pre-eminent by so much odds, while thou  
 Like consort to thyself canst nowhere find.  
 That day I oft remember, when from sleep  
 I first awaked, and found myself reposed, 450  
 Under a shade, on flowers, much wondering where  
 And what I was, whence thither brought, and how.  
 Not distant far from thence a murmuring sound  
 Of waters issued from a cave, and spread  
 Into a liquid plain; then stood unmoved, 455  
 Pure as the expanse of Heaven. I thither went  
 With unexperienced thought, and laid me down  
 On the green bank, to look into the clear  
 Smooth lake, that to me seemed another sky.  
 As I bent down to look, just opposite 460  
 A Shape within the watery gleam appeared,  
 Bending to look on me. I started back,  
 It started back; but pleased I soon returned  
 Pleased it returned as soon with answering looks  
 Of sympathy and love. There I had fixed 465  
 Mine eyes till now, and pined with vain desire,  
 Had not a voice thus warned me: ‘What thou seest,  
 What there thou seest, fair creature, is thyself;  
 With thee it came and goes: but follow me,  
 And I will bring thee where no shadow stays 470  
 Thy coming, and thy soft embraces—he  
 Whose image thou art; him thou shalt enjoy  
 Inseparably thine; to him shalt bear

Multitudes like thyself, and thence be called  
 Mother of human race.' What could I do, 475  
 But follow straight, invisibly thus led?  
 Till I espied thee, fair, indeed, and tall,  
 Under a platan; yet methought less fair,  
 Less winning soft, less amiably mild,  
 That that smooth watery image. Back I turned; 480  
 Thou, following, cried'st aloud, 'Return, fair Eve;  
 Whom fliest thou? Whom thou fliest, of him thou art,  
 His flesh, his bone, to give thee being I lent  
 Out of my side to thee, nearest my heart,  
 Substantial life, to have thee by my side 485  
 Henceforth an individual solace dear:  
 Part of my soul I seek thee, and thee claim  
 My other half.' With that thy gentle hand  
 Seized mine: I yielded, and from that time see  
 How beauty is excelled by manly grace 490  
 And wisdom, which alone is truly fair."  
 So spake our general mother, and, with eyes  
 Of conjugal attraction unreprieved,  
 And meek surrender, half-embracing leaned  
 On our first father; half her swelling breast 495  
 Naked met his, under the flowing gold  
 Of her loose tresses hid. He, in delight  
 Both of her beauty and submissive charms,  
 Smiled with superior love, as Jupiter  
 On Juno smiles when he impregns the clouds 500  
 That shed May flowers, and pressed her matron lip  
 With kisses pure. Aside the Devil turned  
 For envy; yet with jealous leer malign  
 Eyed them askance, and to himself thus plained:—  
 "Sight hateful, sight tormenting! Thus these two, 505  
 Imparadised in one another's arms,  
 The happier Eden, shall enjoy their fill  
 Of bliss on bliss; while I to Hell am thrust,  
 Where neither joy nor love, but fierce desire,  
 Among our other torments not the least, 510  
 Still unfulfilled, with pain of longing pines!  
 Yet let me not forget what I have gained  
 From their own mouths. All is not theirs, it seems;  
 One fatal tree there stands, of Knowledge called,  
 Forbidden them to taste. Knowledge forbidden? 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 wandering Spirit of Heaven, by fountain-side,  
 Or in thick shade retired, from him to draw  
 What further would be learned. Live while ye may,  
 Yet happy pair; enjoy, till I return,  
 Short pleasures; for long woes are to succeed!" 535  
 So saying, his proud step he scornful turned,  
 But with sly circumspection, and began  
 Through wood, through waste, o'er hill, o'er dale, his roam.  
 Meanwhile in utmost longitude, where Heaven  
 With Earth and Ocean meets, the setting Sun 540  
 Slowly descended, and with right aspect  
 Against the eastern gate of Paradise  
 Levelled his evening rays. It was a rock  
 Of alabaster, piled up to the clouds,  
 Conspicuous far, winding with one ascent 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 the angelic guards, awaiting night; 550  
 About him exercised heroic games  
 The unarmed youth of Heaven; but nigh at hand  
 Celestial armoury, shields, helms, and spears,  
 Hung high, with diamond flaming and with gold.  
 Thither came Uriel, gliding through the even 555  
 On a sunbeam, swift as a shooting star  
 In autumn thwarts the night, when vapours fired  
 Impress the air, and shews 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 seemed, to know 565



More of the Almighty's works, and chiefly Man,  
 God's latest image. I described his way  
 Bent all on speed, and marked his aerie gait,  
 But in the mount that lies from Eden north,  
 Where he first lighted, soon discerned his looks 570  
 Alien from Heaven, with passions foul obscured.  
 Mine eye pursued him still, but under shade  
 Lost sight of him. One of the banished crew,  
 I fear, hath ventured from the Deep, to raise  
 New troubles; him thy care must be to find." 575  
 To whom the wingèd Warrior thus returned:—  
 "Uriel, no wonder if thy perfect sight,  
 Amid the Sun's bright circle where thou sitt'st,  
 See far and wide. In at this gate none pass  
 The vigilance here placed, but such as come 580  
 Well known from Heaven; since meridian hour  
 No creature thence. If Spirit of other sort,  
 So minded, have o'erleaped these earthly 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 promised he; and Uriel to his charge  
 Returned on that bright beam, whose point now raised 590  
 Bore him slope downward to the Sun, now fallen  
 Beneath the Azores; whether the Prime Orb,  
 Incredible how swift, had thither rowled  
 Diurnal, or this less volúbil Earth  
 By shorter flight to the 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 longer her amorous descant sung:  
 Silence was pleased. Now glowed the firmament  
 With living Saphirs; Hesperus, that led 605  
 The starry host, rode brightest, till the Moon,  
 Rising in clouded majesty, at length  
 Apparent queen, unveiled her peerless light,  
 And o'er the dark her silver mantle threw;  
 When Adam thus to Eve:—"Fair consort, the hour 610  
 Of night, and all things now retired to rest

Mind us of like repose; since God hath set  
 Labour and rest, as day and night, to men  
 Successive, and the timely dew of sleep,  
 Now falling with soft slumberous weight, inclines *615*  
 Our eye-lids. Other creatures all day long  
 Rove idle, unemployed, and less need rest;  
 Man hath his daily work of body or mind  
 Appointed, which declares his dignity,  
 And the regard of Heaven on all his ways; *620*  
 While other animals unactive range,  
 And of their doings God takes no account.  
 To—morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east  
 With first approach of light, we must be risen,  
 And at our pleasant labour, to reform *625*  
 Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,  
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,  
 That mock our scant manuring, and require  
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth.  
 Those blossoms also, and those dropping gums, *630*  
 That lie bestrown, unsightly and unsmooth,  
 Ask riddance, if we mean to tread with ease.  
 Meanwhile, as Nature wills, Night bids us rest.”  
 To whom thus Eve, with perfect beauty adorned:—  
 “My author and disposer, what thou bidd’st *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,  
 Glistering with dew; fragrant the fertile Earth *645*  
 After soft showers; and sweet the coming on  
 Of grateful Evening mild; then silent Night,  
 With this her solemn bird, and this fair Moon,  
 And these the gems of Heaven, her starry train:  
 But neither breath of Morn, when she ascends *650*  
 With charm of earliest birds; nor rising Sun  
 On this delightful land; nor herb, fruit, flower,  
 Glistering with dew; nor fragrance after showers;  
 Nor grateful Evening mild; nor silent Night,  
 With her solemn bird; nor walk by moon, *655*  
 Or glittering star-light, without thee is sweet.  
 But wherefore all night long shine these? for whom

This glorious sight, when sleep hath shut all eyes?"  
 To whom our general ancestor replied:—  
 “Daughter of God and Man, accomplished Eve, 660  
 Those have their course to finish round the Earth  
 By morrow evening, and from land to land  
 In order, though to nations yet unborn,  
 Ministering light prepared, they set and rise;  
 Lest total Darkness should by night regain 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 Heaven would want spectators, God want praise.  
 Millions of spiritual creatures walk the Earth  
 Unseen, both when we wake, and when we sleep:  
 All these with ceaseless praise his works behold  
 Both day and night. How often, from the steep 680  
 Of echoing hill or thicket, have we heard  
 Celestial voices to the midnight air,  
 Sole, or responsive each to other’s note,  
 Singing their great Creator! Oft in bands  
 While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk, 685  
 With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds  
 In full harmonic number joined, their songs  
 Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to Heaven.”  
 Thus talking, hand in hand along they passed  
 On to their blissful bower. It was a place 690  
 Chosen by the sovran Planter, when he framed  
 All things to Man’s delightful use. The roof  
 Of thickest covert was inwoven shade,  
 Laurel and myrtle, and what higher grew  
 Of firm and fragrant leaf; on either side 695  
 Acanthus, and each odorous bushy shrub,  
 Fenced up the verdant wall; each beauteous flower,  
 Iris all hues, roses, and gessamin,  
 Reared high their flourished heads between, and wrought  
 Mosaic; under foot the violet, 700  
 Crocus, and hyacinth, with rich inlay  
 Broidered the ground, more coloured than with stone  
 Of costliest emblem. Other creature here,

Beast, bird, insect, or worm, durst enter none;  
 Such was their awe of Man. In shadier bower 705  
 More sacred and sequestered, though but feigned,  
 Pan or Sylvanus never slept, nor Nymph  
 For Faunus haunted. Here, in close recess,  
 With flowers, garlands, and sweet—smelling hearbs  
 Espousèd Eve decked first her nuptial bed, 710  
 And heavenly choirs the hymenæan sung,  
 What day the genial Angel to our Sire  
 Brought her, in naked beauty more adorned,  
 More lovely, than Pandora, whom the gods  
 Endowed with all their gifts; and, O! too like 715  
 In sad event, when, to the unwiser son  
 Of Japhet brought by Hermes, she ensnared  
 Mankind with her fair looks, to be avenged  
 On him who had stole Jove's authentic fire.  
 Thus at their shady lodge arrived, both stood, 720  
 Both turned, and under open sky adored  
 The God that made both Sky, Air, Earth, and Heaven,  
 Which they beheld, the Moon's resplendent globe,  
 And starry Pole:—"Thou also madest the Night,  
 Maker Omnipotent; and thou the Day, 725  
 Which we, in our appointed work employed,  
 Have finished, happy in our mutual help  
 And mutual love, the crown of all our bliss  
 Ordained by thee; and this delicious place,  
 For us too large, where thy abundance wants 730  
 Partakers, and uncropt falls to the ground.  
 But thou hast promised from us two a race  
 To fill the Earth, who shall with us extol  
 Thy goodness infinite, both when we wake,  
 And when we seek, as now, thy gift of sleep." 735  
 This said unanimous, and other rites  
 Observing none, but adoration pure,  
 Which God likes best, into their inmost bower  
 Handed they went, and, eased the putting-off  
 These troublesome disguises which we wear, 740  
 Straight side by side were laid; nor turned, I ween,  
 Adam from his fair spouse, nor Eve the rites  
 Mysterious of connubial love refused:  
 Whatever hypocrites austerely 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 adulterous lust was driven 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 undefiled and chaste pronounced,  
 Present, or past, as saints and patriarchs used.  
 Here Love his golden shafts imploys, here lights  
 His constant lamp, and waves his purple wings,  
 Reigns here and revels; not in the bought smile 765  
 Of harlots—loveless, joyless, unindeared,  
 Casual fruition; nor in court amours,  
 Mixed dance, or wanton mask, or midnight bal,  
 Or serenate, which the starved lover sings  
 To his proud fair, best quitted with disdain. 770  
 These, lulled by nightingales, imbracing slept,  
 And on their naked limbs the flowery roof  
 Showered roses, which the morn repaired. Sleep on,  
 Blest pair! and, O! yet happiest, if ye seek  
 No happier state, and know to know no more! 775  
 Now had Night measured with her shadowy cone  
 Half-way up-hill this vast sublunar vault,  
 And from their ivory port the Cherubim  
 Forth issuing, at the accustomed hour, stood armed  
 To their night-watches in warlike parade; 780  
 When Gabriel to his next in power thus spake:—  
 “Uzziel, half these draw off, and coast the south  
 With strictest watch; these other wheel the north:  
 Our circuit meets full west.” As flame they part,  
 Half wheeling to the shield, half to the spear. 785  
 From these, two strong and subtle Spirits he called  
 That near him stood, and gave them thus in charge:—  
 “Ithuriel and Zephon, with winged speed  
 Search through this Garden; leave unsearched no nook;  
 But chiefly where those two fair creatures lodge, 790  
 Now laid perhaps asleep, secure of harm.  
 This evening from the Sun’s decline arrived  
 Who tells of some infernal Spirit seen  
 Hitherward bent (who could have thought?), escaped  
 The bars of Hell, on errand bad, no doubt: 795

Such, where ye find, seize fast, and hither bring.”  
 So saying, on he led his radiant files,  
 Dazzling the moon; these to the bower direct  
 In search of whom they sought. Him there they found  
 Squat like a toad, close at the ear of Eve, 800  
 Assaying by his devilish art to reach  
 The organs of her fancy, and with them forge  
 Illusions as he list, phantasms and dreams;  
 Or if, inspiring venom, he might taint  
 The animal spirits, that from pure blood arise 805  
 Like gentle breaths from rivers pure, thence raise,  
 At least distempered, discontented thoughts,  
 Vain hopes, vain aims, inordinate desires,  
 Blown up with high conceits ingendering pride.  
 Him thus intent Ithuriel with his spear 810  
 Touched lightly; for no falsehood can endure  
 Touch of celestial temper, but returns  
 Of force to its own likeness. Up he starts,  
 Discovered and surprised. As, when a spark  
 Lights on a heap of nitrous powder, laid 815  
 Fit for the tun, some magazine to store  
 Against a rumoured war, the smutty grain,  
 With sudden blaze diffused, inflames the air;  
 So started up, in his own shape, the Fiend.  
 Back stept those two fair Angels, half amazed 820  
 So sudden to behold the griesly King;  
 Yet thus, unmoved with fear, accost him soon:—  
 “Which of those rebel Spirits adjudged to Hell  
 Com’st thou, escaped thy prison? and, transformed,  
 Why satt’st thou like an enemy in wait, 825  
 Here watching at the head of these that sleep?”  
 “Know ye not, then,” said Satan, filled with scorn,  
 “Know ye not me? Ye knew me once no mate  
 For you, there sitting where ye durst not soar!  
 Not to know me argues yourselves unknown, 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, answering scorn with scorn:—  
 “Think not, revolted Spirit, thy shape the same, 835  
 Or undiminished brightness, to be known  
 As when thou stood’st in Heaven upright and pure.  
 That glory then, when thou no more wast good,  
 Departed from thee; and thou resemblest now  
 Thy sin and place of doom obscure and foul. 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. Abashed the Devil stood,  
 And felt how awful goodness is, and saw  
 Virtue in her shape how lovely—saw, and pined  
 His loss; but chiefly to find here observed  
 His lustre visibly impaired; yet seemed 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 reined, went haughty on,  
 Chaumping his iron curb. To strive or fly  
 He held it vain; awe from above had quelled 860  
 His heart, not else dismayed. Now drew they nigh  
 The western point, where those half—rounding guards  
 Just met, and, closing, stood in squadron joined,  
 Awaiting next command. To whom their chief,  
 Gabriel, from the front thus called aloud:— 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 contest’.  
 Stand firm, for in his look defiance lours.”  
 He scarce had ended, when those two approached,  
 And brief related whom they brought, where found, 875  
 How busied, in what form and posture couched.  
 To whom, with stern regard, thus Gabriel spake:—  
 “Why hast thou, Satan, broke the bounds prescribed  
 To thy transgressions, and disturbed the charge  
 Of others, who approve not to transgress 880  
 By thy example, but have power and right  
 To question thy bold entrance on this place;  
 Employed, it seems to violate sleep, and those  
 Whose dwelling God hath planted here in bliss?”  
 To whom thus Satan, with contemptuous brow:— 885  
 “Gabriel, thou hadst in Heaven the esteem of wise;  
 And such I held thee; but this question asked

Puts me in doubt. Lives there who loves his pain?  
 Who would not, finding way, break loose from Hell,  
 Though thither doomed? Thou wouldst thyself, no doubt, 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 bound us? Let him surer bar  
 His iron gates, if he intends our stay  
 In that dark durance. Thus much what was asked:  
 The rest is true; they found me where they say; 900  
 But that implies not violence or harm.”  
 Thus he in scorn. The warlike Angel moved,  
 Disdainfully half smiling, thus replied:—  
 “O loss of one in Heaven to judge of wise,  
 Since Satan fell, whom folly overthrew, 905  
 And now returns him from his prison scaped,  
 Gravely in doubt whether to hold them wise  
 Or not who ask what boldness brought him hither  
 Unlicensed from his bounds in Hell prescribed!  
 So wise he judges it to fly from pain 910  
 However, and to scape his punishment!  
 So judge thou still, presumptuous, till the wrauth,  
 Which thou incurr'st by flying, meet thy flight  
 Sevenfold, and scourge that wisdom back to Hell,  
 Which taught thee yet no better that no pain 915  
 Can equal anger infinite provoked.  
 But wherefore thou alone? Wherefore with thee  
 Came not all Hell broke loose? Is pain to them  
 Less pain, less to be fled? or thou than they  
 Less hardy to endure? Courageous chief, 920  
 The first in flight from pain, hadst thou alleged  
 To thy deserted host this cause of flight,  
 Thou surely hadst not come sole fugitive.”  
 To which the Fiend thus answered, frowning stern:—  
 “Not that I less endure, or shrink from pain, 925  
 Insulting Angel! well thou know'st I stood  
 Thy fiercest, when in battle to thy aid  
 The blasting volleyed thunder made all speed  
 And seconded thy else not dreaded spear.  
 But still thy words at random, as before, 930  
 Argue thy inexperience what behoves,  
 From hard assays and ill successes past,  
 A faithful leader—not to hazard all



Through ways of danger by himself untried.  
 I, therefore, I alone, first undertook 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 where to serve their Lord  
 High up in Heaven, with songs to hymn his throne,  
 And practiced 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 to spy,  
 Argues no leader, but a liar traced,  
 Satan; and couldst thou ‘faithful’ add? O name, 950  
 O sacred name of faithfulness profaned!  
 Faithful to whom? to thy rebellious crew?  
 Army of fiends, fit body to fit head!  
 Was this your discipline and faith ingaged,  
 Your military obedience, to dissolve 955  
 Allegiance to the acknowledged Power Supreme?  
 And thou, sly hypocrite, who now wouldst seem  
 Patron of liberty, who more than thou  
 Once fawned, and cringed, and servilely adored  
 Heaven’s awful Monarch? wherefore, but in hope 960  
 To dispossess him, and thyself to reign?  
 But mark what I areed thee now: Avaunt!  
 Fly thither whence thou fledd’st. If from this hour  
 Within these hallowed limits thou appear,  
 Back to the Infernal Pit I drag thee chained, 965  
 And seal thee so as henceforth not to scorn  
 The facile gates of Hell too slightly barred.”  
 So threatened he; but Satan to no threats  
 Gave heed, but waxing more in rage, replied:—  
 “Then, when I am thy captive, talk of chains, 970  
 Proud liminary Cherub! but ere then  
 Far heavier load thyself expect to feel  
 From my prevailing arm, though Heaven’s King  
 Ride on thy wings, and thou with thy Compeers,  
 Used to the yoke, draw’st his triumphant wheels 975  
 In progress through the road of Heaven star—paved.”  
 While thus he spake, the angelic squadron bright  
 Turned fiery red, sharpening 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 the other side, Satan, alarmed, 985  
 Collecting all his might, dilated stood,  
 Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved:  
 His stature reached the sky, and on his crest  
 Sat Horror plumed; nor wanted in his grasp  
 What seemed both spear and shield. Now dreadful deeds 990  
 Might have ensued; nor only Paradise,  
 In this commotion, but the starry cope  
 Of Heaven perhaps, or all the Elements  
 At least, had gone to wrack, disturbed and torn  
 With violence of this conflict, had not soon 995  
 The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,  
 Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen  
 Betwixt Astræa and the Scorpion sign,  
 Wherein all things created first he weighed,  
 The pendulous round Earth with balanced air 1000  
 In counterpoise, now ponders all events,  
 Battles and realms. In these he put two weights,  
 The sequel each of parting and of fight:  
 The latter quick up flew, and kicked the beam;  
 Which Gabriel spying thus bespake the Fiend: 1005  
 “Satan, I know thy strength, and thou know’st mine,  
 Neither our own, but given; what folly then  
 To boast what arms can do! since thine no more  
 Than Heaven permits, nor mine, though doubled now  
 To trample thee as mire. For proof look up, 1010  
 And read thy lot in yon celestial sign,  
 Where thou art weighed, and shown how light, how weak  
 If thou resist.” The Fiend looked up, and knew  
 His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled  
 Murmuring; and with him fled the shades of Night. 1015