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Principal Malcolm Wallace
sooon his heart relented
wards her, his life so late and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress,
Book X l.940.

Milton's repentation to his wife

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN SHARPE
MDCCXXXVI.
PARADISE LOST.

A Poem.

THE AUTHOR,

JOHN MILTON.

VOLUME THE SECOND.

LONDON:
PRINTED IN THE YEAR MDCCXVII.
He, with his consort, Eve
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd
With admiration and deep muse.

PARADISE LOST.
BOOK VII.

MACY ET AL. WESTALL, R.A. ENGRAVED BY CHARLES GENT.
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PARADISE LOST.
BOOK VII.

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

Descend from Heav'n, Urania, by that name
If rightly thou art call'd, whose voice divine
Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
Above the flight of Pegaséan wing!
The meaning, not the name, I call: for thou
Nor of the Muses nine, nor on the top
Of old Olympus dwell'st; but, heavenly-born,
Before the hills appear'd, or fountain flow'd,
Thou with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
In presence of the Almighty Father, pleas'd
With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presum'd,
An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
Thy tempering: with like safety guided down
Return me to my native element:
Lest from this flying steed unrein'd (as once
Bellerophon, though from a lower clime),
Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,
Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
Within the visible diurnal sphere;
Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchang'd
To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,
On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues;
In darkness, and with dangers compass'd round,
And solitude; yet not alone, while thou
Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
Purples the east: still govern thou my song,
Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
To rapture, till the savage clamour drown'd
Both harp and voice; nor could the Muse defend
Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores:
For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

Say, Goddess, what ensued when Raphaël,
The affable Arch-Angel, had forewarn'd
Adam, by dire example, to beware
Apostasy, by what befel in Heaven
To those apostates; lest the like befal
In Paradise to Adam or his race,
Charg'd not to touch the interdicted tree,  
If they transgress, and slight that sole command,  
So easily obey'd amid the choice  
Of all tastes else to please their appetite,  
Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve,  
The story heard attentive, and was fill'd  
With admiration and deep muse, to hear  
Of things so high and strange; things, to their thought  
So unimaginable, as hate in Heaven,  
And war so near the peace of God in bliss,  
With such confusion: but the evil, soon  
Driven back, redounded as a flood on those  
From whom it sprung; impossible to mix  
With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repea'ld  
The doubts that in his heart arose: and now  
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know  
What nearer might concern him, how this world  
Of Heaven and Earth conspicuous first began;  
When, and whereof created; for what cause;  
What within Eden, or without, was done  
Before his memory; as one whose drouth  
Yet scarce allay'd still eyes the current stream,  
Whose liquid murmur heard new thirst excites,  
Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest.  

Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,  
Far differing from this world, thou hast reveal'd,  
Divine interpreter! by favour sent  
Down from the empyr'ean, to forewarn  
Us timely of what might else have been our loss,  
Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach:
For which to the infinitely Good we owe
Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
Receive, with solemn purpose to observe
Immutably his sov'reign will, the end
Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsaf'd
Gently, for our instruction, to impart
Things above earthly thought, which yet concern'd
Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seem'd,
Deign to descend now lower, and relate
What may no less perhaps avail us known,
How first began this Heaven which we behold
Distant so high, with moving fires adorn'd
Innumerable; and this which yields or fills
All space, the ambient air wide interfus'd
Embracing round this florid Earth; what cause
Mov'd the Creator, in his holy rest
Through all eternity, so late to build
In Chaos; and the work begun, how soon
Absolv'd; if unforsid thou may'st unfold
What we, not to explore the secrets ask
Of his eternal empire, but the more
To magnify his works, the more we know.
And the great light of day yet wants to run
Much of his race though steep; suspense in Heaven,
Held by thy voice, thy potent voice, he hears,
And longer will delay to hear thee tell
His generation, and the rising birth
Of Nature from the unapparent Deep:
Or if the star of evening and the moon
Haste to thy audience, Night with her will bring
Silence; and Sleep, listening to thee, will watch;  
Or we can bid his absence, till thy song  
End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine.  
   Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought:  
And thus the Godlike Angel answer'd mild.  
This also thy request, with caution ask'd,  
Obtain; though to recount almighty works  
What words or tongue of Seraph can suffice,  
Or heart of man suffice to comprehend?  
Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve  
To glorify the Maker, and infer  
Thee also happier, shall not be withheld  
Thy hearing; such commission from above  
I have receiv'd, to answer thy desire  
Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain  
To ask; nor let thine own inventions hope  
Things not reveal'd, which the invisible King,  
Only Omniscient, hath suppress'd in night;  
To none communicable in Earth or Heaven:  
Enough is left besides to search and know.  
But knowledge is as food, and needs no less  
Her temperance over appetite, to know  
In measure what the mind may well contain;  
Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns  
Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.  
   Know then, that, after Lucifer from Heaven  
(So call him, brighter once amidst the host  
Of Angels, than that star the stars among),  
Fell with his flaming legions through the deep  
Into his place and the great Son return'd
Victorious with his Saints, the Omnipotent
Eternal Father from his throne beheld
Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake.

At least our envious Foe hath fail'd, who thought
All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
This inaccessible high strength, the seat
Of Deity supreme, us dispossess'd,
He trusted to have seiz'd, and into fraud
Drew many, whom their place knows here no more:
Yet far the greater part have kept, I see,
Their station; Heaven, yet populous, retains
Number sufficient to possess her realms
Though wide, and this high temple to frequent
With ministeries due, and solemn rites:
But, lest his heart exalt him in the harm
Already done, to have dispeopled Heaven,
My damage fondly deem'd, I can repair
That detriment, if such it be to lose
Self-lost; and in a moment will create
Another world, out of one man a race
Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
Not here: till, by degrees of merit rais'd,
They open to themselves at length the way
Up hither, under long obedience tried;
And Earth be chang'd to Heaven, and Heaven to Earth,
One kingdom, joy and union without end.
Mean while inhabit lax, ye Powers of Heaven;
And thou my Word, begotten Son, by thee
This I perform; speak thou, and be it done!
My overshadowing Spirit and Might with thee
I send along; ride forth, and bid the Deep
Within appointed bounds be Heaven and Earth;
Boundless the Deep, because I Am who fill
Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
Though I, uncircumscrib'd myself, retire,
And put not forth my goodness, which is free
To act or not, Necessity and Chance
Approach not me, and what I will is Fate.

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

So sang the Hierarchies: Mean while the Son
On his great expedition now appear'd,
Girt with Omnipotence, with radiance crown'd
Of Majesty Divine; sapience and love
Immense, and all his Father in him shone.

About his chariot numberless were pour'd
Cherub, and Seraph, Potentates, and Thrones,
And Virtues, winged Spirits, and chariots wing'd
From the armory of God; where stand of old
Myriads, between two brazen mountains lodg'd
Against a solemn day, harness'd at hand,
Celestial equipage; and now came forth
Spontaneous, for within them Spirit liv'd,
Attendant on their Lord: Heaven open'd wide
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,
On golden hinges moving, to let forth
The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
And Spirit, coming to create new worlds.
On heavenly ground they stood; and from the shore
They view'd the vast immeasurable abyss
Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
Up from the bottom turn'd by furious winds
And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
Heaven's highth, and with the centre mix the pole.

Silence, ye troubled Waves, and thou Deep, peace,
Said then the Omnific Word; your discord end!
Nor staid; but, on the wings of Cherubim
Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
For Chaos heard his voice: Him all his train
Follow'd in bright procession, to behold
Creation, and the wonders of his might.
Then staid the fervid wheels, and in his hand
He took the golden compasses, prepar'd
In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
This universe, and all created things:
One foot he center'd, and the other turn'd
Round through the vast profundity obscure;
And said, Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
This be thy just circumference, O World!
Thus God the Heaven created, thus the Earth,
Matter uniform'd and void: Darkness profound
Cover'd the abyss: but on the watery calm
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
And vital virtue infus'd, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass; but downward purg'd
The black tartarceous cold infernal dregs,
Adverse to life: then founded, then conglob'd
Like things to like; the rest to several place
Disparted, and between spun out the air;
And Earth self-balanc'd on her centre hung.

Let there be Light, said God; and forthwith Light
Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
Sprung from the deep; and from her native east
To journey through the aery gloom began,
Spher'd in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
Sojourn'd the while. God saw the light was good;
And light from darkness by the hemisphere
Divided: light the Day, and darkness Night,
He nam'd. Thus was the first day even and morn:
Nor past uncelebrated, nor unsung
By the celestial quires, when orient light
Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;
Birth-day of Heaven and Earth; with joy and shout
The hollow universal orb they fill'd,
And touch'd their golden harps, and hymning prais'd
God and his works; Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

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

The Earth was form'd, but, in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryo immature involv'd,
Appear'd not: over all the face of Earth
Main ocean flow'd, not idle; but, with warm
Prolific humour softening all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Satiate with genial moisture; when God said,
Be gather'd now ye waters under Heaven
Into one place, and let dry land appear.
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds; their tops ascend the sky:
So high as heav'd the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters. Thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uproll'd,
As drops on dust conglobing from the dry:
Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
For haste; such flight the great command impress'd
On the swift floods: As armies at the call
Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
Troop to their standard; so the watery throng,
Wave rolling after wave, where way they found,
If steep, with torrent rapture, if through plain,
Soft-ebbing; nor withstood them rock or hill;
But they, or under ground, or circuit wide
With serpent error wandering, found their way,
And on the washy ooze deep channels wore;
Easy, ere God had bid the ground be dry,
All but within those banks, where rivers now Stream, and perpetual draw their humid train.
The dry land, Earth; and the great receptacle
Of conglobated waters, he call'd Seas:
And saw that it was good; and said, Let the Earth
Put forth the verdant grass, herb yielding seed,
And fruit-tree yielding fruit after her kind,
Whose seed is in herself upon the Earth.
He scarce had said, when the bare Earth, till then Desert and bare, unsightly, unadorn'd,
Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
Her universal face with pleasant green;
Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flower'd
Opening their various colours, and made gay
Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,
Forth flourish'd thick the clustering vine, forth crept
The swelling gourd, up stood the corny reed
Embattled in her field, and the humble shrub,
And bush with frizzled hair implicit: Last
Rose, as in dance, the stately trees, and spread
Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemm'd
Their blossoms: With high woods the hills were
crown'd;
With tufts the valleys, and each fountain side;
With borders long the rivers: that Earth now
Seem'd like to Heaven, a seat where Gods might dwell,
Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rain'd
Upon the Earth, and man to till the ground
None was; but from the Earth a dewy mist
Went up, and water'd all the ground, and each
Plant of the field; which, ere it was in the Earth,
God made, and every herb, before it grew
On the green stem: God saw that it was good:
So even and morn recorded the third day.

Again the Almighty spake, Let there be lights
High in the expanse of Heaven, to divide
The day from night; and let them be for signs,
For seasons, and for days, and circling years;
And let them be for lights, as I ordain
Their office in the firmament of Heaven,
To give light on the Earth; and it was so.  
And God made two great lights, great for their use  
To Man, the greater to have rule by day,  
The less by night, altern; and made the stars,  
And set them in the firmament of Heaven  
To illuminate the Earth, and rule the day  
In their vicissitude, and rule the night,  
And light from darkness to divide. God saw,  
Surveying his great work, that it was good:  
For of celestial bodies first the sun  
A mighty sphere he fram'd, unlightsome first,  
Though of ethereal mould: then form'd the moon  
Globose, and every magnitude of stars,  
And sow'd with stars the Heaven, thick as a field:  
Of light by far the greater part he took,  
Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and plac'd  
In the sun's orb, made porous to receive  
And drink the liquid light; firm to retain  
Her gather'd beams, great palace now of light.  
Hither, as to their fountain, other stars  
Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,  
And hence the morning-planet gilds her horns;  
By tincture or reflection they augment  
Their small peculiar, though from human sight  
So far remote, with diminution seen.  
First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,  
Regent of day, and all the horizon round  
Invested with bright rays, jocund to run  
His longitude through Heaven's high road; the grey  
Dawn, and the Pleiades, before him dane'd,
Shedding sweet influence: Less bright the moon,
But opposite in levell'd west was set,
His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
From him; for other light she needed none
In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
Till night; then in the east her turn she shines,
Revolv'd on Heaven's great axle, and her reign
With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
With thousand thousand stars; that then appear'd
Spangling the hemisphere: Then first adorn'd
With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
Glad evening and glad morn crown'd the fourth day.

And God said, Let the waters generate
Reptile with spawn abundant, living soul:
And let fowl fly above the Earth, with wings
Display'd on the open firmament of Heaven.
And God created the great whales, and each
Soul living, each that crept, which plenteously
The waters generated by their kinds;
And every bird of wing after his kind;
And saw that it was good, and bless'd them, saying,
Be fruitful, multiply, and in the seas,
And lakes, and running streams, the waters fill;
And let the fowl be multiplied, on the Earth.
Forthwith the sounds and seas, each creek and bay,
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals
Of fish that with their fins, and shining scales,
Glide under the green wave, in sculls that oft
Bank the mid sea: part single, or with mate,
Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves
Of coral stray; or, sporting with quick glance,  
Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropt with gold;  
Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend  
Moist nutriment; or under rocks their food  
In jointed armour watch: on smooth the seal  
And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk  
Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,  
Tempest the ocean: there leviathan,  
Hugest of living creatures, on the deep  
Stretch'd like a promontory sleeps or swims,  
And seems a moving land; and at his gills  
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.  
Mean while the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,  
Their brood as numerous hatch, from the egg that soon  
Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclos'd  
Their callow young; but feather'd soon and fledge  
They summ'd their pens; and, soaring the air sublime,  
With clang despis'd the ground, under a cloud  
In prospect; there the eagle and the stork  
On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries build:  
Part loosely wing the region, part more wise  
In common, rang'd in figure, wedge their way,  
Intelligent of seasons, and set forth  
Their aery caravan, high over seas  
Flying, and over lands, with mutual wing  
Easing their flight; so steers the prudent crane  
Her annual voyage, borne on winds; the air  
Floats as they pass, fann'd with unnumber'd plumes:  
From branch to branch the smaller birds with song  
Solac'd the woods, and spread their painted wings
Till even; nor then the solemn nightingale
Ceas'd warbling, but all night tun'd her soft lays:
Others, on silver lakes and rivers, bath'd
Their downy breast; the swan with arched neck,
Between her white wings mantling proudly, rows
Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit
The dank, and, rising on stiff' pennons, tower
The mid aëreal sky: Others on ground
Walk'd firm; the crested cock whose clarion sounds
The silent hours, and the other whose gay train
Adorns him, colour'd with the florid hue
Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
With fish replenish'd, and the air with fowl,
Evening and morn solemniz'd the fifth day.
The sixth, and of creation last, arose
With evening harps and matin; when God said,
Let the Earth bring forth soul living in her kind,
Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the Earth,
Each in their kind. The Earth obey'd, and straight
Opening her fertile womb teem'd at a birth
Innumerous living creatures, perfect forms,
Limb'd and full grown: Out of the ground up rose,
As from his lair, the wild beast where he wons
In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den;
Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walk'd:
The cattle in the fields and meadows green:
Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
The grassy clods now calv'd; now half appear'd
The tawny lion, pawing to get free
His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
And rampant shakes his brinded mane; the ounce,
The libbard, and the tiger, as the mole
Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
In hillocks: The swift stag from under ground
Bore up his branching head: Scaree from his mould
Behemoth biggest born of earth upheav'd
His vastness: Fleec'd the flocks and bleating rose,
As plants: Ambiguous between sea and land
The river-horse, and scaly crocodile.
At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
Insect or worm: those wav'd their limber fans
For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
In all the liveries deck'd of summer's pride
With spots of gold and purple, azure and green:
These, as a line, their long dimension drew,
Streaking the ground with sinuous trace; not all
Minims of nature; some of serpent-kind,
Wondrous in length and corpulence, involv'd
Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
The parsimonious emmet, provident
Of future; in small room large heart enclos'd;
Pattern of just equality perhaps
Hereafter, join'd in her popular tribes
Of commonalty: Swarming next appear'd
The female bee, that feeds her husband drone
Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
With honey stor'd: The rest are numberless,
And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
Needless to thee repeated; nor unknown
The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,
Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

Now Heaven in all her glory shone, and roll'd
Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand
First wheel'd their course: Earth in her rich attire
Consummate lovely smil'd; air, water, earth,
By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd,
Frequent; and of the sixth day yet remain'd:
There wanted yet the master-work, the end
Of all yet done; a creature, who, not prone
And brute as other creatures, but endued
With sanctity of reason, might erect
His stature, and upright with front serene
Govern the rest, self-knowing; and from thence
Magnanimous to correspond with Heaven,
But grateful to acknowledge whence his good
Descends, thither with heart, and voice, and eyes
Directed in devotion, to adore
And worship God Supreme, who made him chief
Of all his works: therefore the Omnipotent
Eternal Father (for where is not he
Present?) thus to his Son audibly spake.

Let us make now Man in our image, Man
In our similitude, and let them rule
Over the fish and fowl of sea and air,
Beast of the field, and over all the Earth,
And every creeping thing that creeps the ground.
This said, he form'd thee, Adam, thee, O Man,
Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breath'd
The breath of life; in his own image he
Created thee, in the image of God
Express; and thou becam'st a living soul.
Male he created thee; but thy consort
Female, for race; then bless'd mankind, and said,
Be fruitful, multiply, and fill the Earth;
Subdue it, and throughout dominion hold
Over fish of the sea, and fowl of the air,
And every living thing that moves on the Earth.
Wherever thus created, for no place
Is yet distinct by name, thence, as thou know'st,
He brought thee into this delicious grove,
This garden, planted with the trees of God,
Delectable both to behold and taste;
And freely all their pleasant fruit for food
Gave thee; all sorts are here that all the Earth yields,
Variety without end; but of the tree,
Which, tasted, works knowledge of good and evil,
Thou may'st not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest;
Death is the penalty impos'd; beware,
And govern well thy appetite; lest Sin
Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.
Here finish'd he, and all that he had made
View'd, and behold all was entirely good;
So even and morn accomplish'd the sixth day:
Yet not till the Creator from his work
Desisting, though unwearied, up return'd,
Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his high abode;
Thence to behold this new created world,
The addition of his empire, how it show'd
In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
Answering his great idea. Up he rode
Follow'd with acclamation, and the sound
Symphonious of ten thousand harps, that tun'd
Angelic harmonics: The earth, the air
Resounded (thou remember'st, for thou heard'st),
The heavens and all the constellations rung,
The planets in their station listening stood,
While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
Open, ye everlasting gates! they sung;
Open, ye Heavens! your living doors; let in
The great Creator from his work return'd
Magnificent, his six days work, a World;
Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
To visit oft the dwellings of just men,
Delighted; and with frequent intercourse
Thither will send his winged messengers
On errands of supernal grace. So sung
The glorious train ascending: He through Heaven,
That open'd wide her blazing portals, led
To God's eternal house direct the way;
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly, as a circling zone, thou seest
Powder'd with stars. And now on Earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the cast came on,
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne
Of Godhead, fix'd for ever firm and sure,
The Filial Power arriv'd, and sat him down
With his great Father; for he also went
Invisible, yet staid (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence), and the work ordain'd,
Author and End of all things; and, from work
Now resting, bless'd and hallow'd the seventh day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept: the harp
Had work and rested not; the solemn pipe,
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
Temper'd soft tunings, intermix'd with voice
Choral or unison: of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censors, hid the mount.
Creation and the six days acts they sung:
Great are thy works, Jehovah! infinite
Thy power! what thought can measure thee, or tongue
Relate thee! Greater now in thy return
Than from the giant Angels: Thee that day
Thy thunders magnified; but to create
Is greater than created to destroy.
Who can impair thee, Mighty King, or bound
Thy empire! Easily the proud attempt
Of Spirits apostate, and their counsels vain,
Thou hast repell'd; while impiously they thought
Thee to diminish, and from thee withdraw
The number of thy worshippers. Who seeks
To lessen thee, against his purpose serves
To manifest the more thy might: his evil
Thou usest, and from thence creat'st more good.
Witness this new-made world, another Heaven
From Heaven-gate not far, founded in view
On the clear hyaline, the glassy sea;
Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
Of destin'd habitation; but thou know'st
Their seasons: among these the seat of Men,
Earth, with her nether ocean circumfus'd,
Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy Men,
And sons of Men, whom God hath thus advance'd!
Created in his image, there to dwell
And worship him; and in reward to rule
Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
And multiply a race of worshippers
Holy and just: Thrice happy, if they know
Their happiness, and persevere upright!
So sung they, and the empyréan rung
With hallelujahs: Thus was sabbath kept.
And thy request think now fulfill'd, that ask'd
How first this world and face of things began,
And what before thy memory was done
From the beginning; that posterity,
Inform'd by thee, might know: If else thou seek'st
Aught, not surpassing human measure, say.
Led by her heavenly Maker through her feet,
And guided by his voice.

PARADISE LOST

BOOK VIII.

DRAWN BY RICHARD WESTALL R.A. ENGRAVED BY WILLIAM FINDEN.
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Adam inquires concerning celestial motions; is doubtfully answered, and exhort to search rather things more worthy of knowledge: Adam assents: and, st desirons to detain Raphael, relates to him what he remembered since his own creation; his placing in Paradise; his talk with God concerning solitude and fit society; his first meeting and nuptials with Eve; his discourse with the Angel therupon; who, after admonitions repeated, departs.

The Angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he awhile
Thought him still speaking, still stood fix'd to hear;
Then, as new wak'd, thus gratefully replied.
What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal, have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allay'd
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsaf'd
This friendly condescension to relate
Things, else by me unsearchable; now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator! Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world,
Of Heaven and Earth consisting; and compute
Their magnitudes; this Earth, a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compar'd
And all her number'd stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal), merely to officiate light
Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night; in all her vast survey
Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,
How Nature wise and frugal could commit
Such disproportions, with superfluous hand
So many nobler bodies to create,
Greater so manifold, to this one use,
For aught appears, and on their orbs impose
Such restless revolution day by day
Repeated; while the sedentary Earth,
That better might with far less compass move,
Serv'd by more noble than herself, attains
Her end without least motion, and receives,
As tribute, such a sumless journey brought
Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails.

So spake our sire, and by his countenance seem'd
Entering on studious thoughts abstruse; which Eve
Perceiving, where she sat retir'd in sight,
With lowliness majestic from her seat,
And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
To visit how they prosper'd, bud and bloom,
Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
And, touch'd by her fair tendance, gladlier grew.
Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
Delighted, or not capable her car
Of what was high: such pleasure she reserv'd,
Adam relating, she sole auditress;
Her husband the relater she preferr'd
Before the Angel, and of him to ask
Chose rather; he, she knew, would intermix
Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
With conjugal caresses: from his lip
Not words alone pleas'd her. O! when meet now
Such pairs, in love and mutual honour join'd?
With Goddess-like demeanor forth she went,
Not unattended; for on her, as Queen,
A pomp of winning Graces waited still,
And from about her shot darts of desire
Into all eyes, to wish her still in sight.
And Raphael now, to Adam's doubt propos'd,
Benevolent and facile thus replied.
To ask or search, I blame thee not; for Heaven
Is as the book of God before thee set,
Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years:
This to attain, whether Heaven move or Earth,
Imports not, if thou reckon right; the rest
From Man or Angel the great Architect
Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
His secrets to be scann'd by them who ought
Rather admire; or, if they list to try
Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heavens
Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
Hereafter; when they come to model Heaven
And calculate the stars, how they will wield
The mighty frame; how build, unbuild, contrive
To save appearances; how gird the sphere
With centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,
Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb:
Already by thy reasoning this I guess,
Who art to lead thy offspring, and supposest
That bodies bright and greater should not serve
The less not bright, nor Heaven such journeys run
Earth sitting still, when she alone receives
The benefit: Consider first, that great
Or bright infers not excellence: the Earth,
Though, in comparison of Heaven, so small,
Nor glistering, may of solid good contain
More plenty than the sun that barren shines;
Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
But in the fruitful Earth; there first receiv'd,
His beams, unactive else, their vigour find.
Yet not to Earth are those bright luminaries
Officious; but to thee, Earth's habitant.
And for the Heaven's wide circuit, let it speak
The Maker's high magnificence, who built
So spacious, and his line stretched out so far;
That Man may know he dwells not in his own;
An edifice too large for him to fill,
Lodg'd in a small partition; and the rest
Ordain'd for uses to his Lord best known.
The swiftness of those circles attribute,
Though numberless, to his Omnipotence,
That to coporeal substances could add
Speed almost spiritual: Me thou think'st not slow,
Who since the morning-hour set out from Heaven
Where God resides, and ere mid-day arriv'd
In Eden; distance inexpressible
By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show
Invalid that which thee to doubt it mov'd;
Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
To thee who hast thy dwelling here on Earth.
God, to remove his ways from human sense,
Plac'd Heaven from Earth so far, that earthly sight,
If it presume, might err in things too high,
And no advantage gain. What if the sun
Be centre to the world; and other stars,
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wandering course now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest; and what if seventh to these
The planet earth, so stedfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move?
Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
Mov'd contrary with thwart obliquities;
Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed,
Invisible else above all stars, the wheel
Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
If earth, industrious of herself, fetch day
Travelling cast, and with her part averse
From the sun’s beam meet night, her other part
Still luminous by his ray. What if that light,
Sent from her through the wide transpicuous air,
To the terrestrial moon be as a star,
Enlightening her by day, as she by night
This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
Fields and inhabitants: Her spots thou seest
As clouds, and clouds may rain, and rain produce
Fruits in her soften’d soil for some to eat
Allotted there; and other suns perhaps,
With their attendant moons, thou wilt descry,
Communicating male and female light;
Which two great sexes animate the world,
Stor’d in each orb perhaps with some that live.
For such vast room in Nature unpossess’d
By living soul, desert and desolate,
Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
Each orb a glimpse of light, convey’d so far
Down to this habitable, which returns
Light back to them, is obvious to dispute.
But whether thus these things, or whether not;
Whether the sun, predominant in Heaven,
Rise on the earth; or earth rise on the sun;
He from the east his flaming road begin;
Or she from west her silent course advance,
With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
On her soft axle, while she paces even,
And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;
Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
Leave them to God above; him serve, and fear!
Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
Wherever plac'd, let him dispose; joy thou
In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high
To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
Think only what concerns thee, and thy being;
Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
Live, in what state, condition, or degree;
Contented that thus far hath been reveal'd
Not of Earth only, but of highest Heaven.

To whom thus Adam, clear'd of doubt, replied.
How fully hast thou satisfied me, pure
Intelligence of Heaven, Angel serene!
And, freed from intricacies, taught to live
The easiest way; nor with perplexing thoughts
To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
And not molest us; unless we ourselves
Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain.
But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
Uncheck'd, and of her roving is no end;
Till warn'd, or by experience taught, she learn,
That, not to know at large of things remote
From use, obscure and subtle; but, to know
That which before us lies in daily life,
Is the prime wisdom: What is more, is fume,
Or emptiness, or fond impertinence:
And renders us, in things that most concern,
Unpractis'd, unprepar'd, and still to seek.
Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
Useful; whence, haply, mention may arise
Of something not unseasonable to ask,
By sufferance, and thy wonted favour, deign'd.
Thee I have heard relating what was done
Ere my remembrance: now, hear me relate
My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
And day is not yet spent; till then thou seest
How subtly to detain thee I devise;
Inviting thee to hear while I relate;
Fond! were it not in hope of thy reply:
For, while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven;
And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
Of sweet repast; they satiate, and soon fill,
Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety.

To whom thus Raphael answer'd heavenly meek.
Nor are thy lips ungraceful, Sire of men,
Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
Abundantly his gifts hath also pour'd
Inward and outward both, his image fair:
Speaking, or mute, all comeliness and grace
Attends thee; and each word, each motion, forms;
Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on Earth
Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
Gladly into the ways of God with Man:
For God, we see, hath honour'd thee, and set
On Man his equal love: Say therefore on;
For I that day was absent, as befel,
Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell;
Squar'd in full legion (such command we had),
To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
Or enemy, while God was in his work;
Lest he, incens'd at such eruption bold,
Destruction with creation might have mix'd.
Not that they durst without his leave attempt;
But us he sends upon his high behests
For state, as Sov'reign King; and to inure
Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut,
The dismal gates, and barricado'd strong;
But long ere our approaching heard within
Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
Glad we return'd up to the coasts of light
Ere sabbath-evening: so we had in charge.
But thy relation now; for I attend,
Pleas'd with thy words no less than thou with mine.
So spake the Godlike Power, and thus our Sire.
For Man to tell how human life began
Is hard; for who himself beginning knew?
Desire with thee still longer to converse
Induc'd me. As new wak'd from soundest sleep,
Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid,
In balmy sweat; which with his beams the sun
Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turn'd,
And gaz'd awhile the ample sky; till, rais'd
By quick instinctive motion, up I sprung;
As thitherward endeavouring, and upright
Stood on my feet: about me round I saw
Hill, dale, and shady woods, and sunny plains,
And liquid lapse of murmuring streams; by these,
Creatures that liv'd and mov'd, and walk'd, or flew;
Birds on the branches warbling; all things smil'd;
With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflow'd.
Myself I then perus'd, and limb by limb
Survey'd, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
With supple joints, as lively vigour led:
But who I was, or where, or from what cause,
Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
My tongue obey'd, and readily could name
Whate'er I saw. Thou Sun, said I, fair light,
And thou enlighten'd Earth, so fresh and gay,
Ye Hills, and Dales, ye Rivers, Woods, and Plains,
And ye that live and move, fair Creatures, tell,
Tell, if ye saw, how I came thus, how here?—
Not of myself;—by some great Maker then,
In goodness and in power pre-eminent:
Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
From whom I have that thus I move and live,
And feel that I am happier than I know.—
While thus I call'd, and stray'd I knew not whither,
From where I first drew air, and first beheld
This happy light; when, answer none return'd,
On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
Pensive I sat me down: There gentle sleep
First found me, and with soft oppression seiz'd
My drowsied sense, untroubled, though I thought
I then was passing to my former state
Insensible, and forthwith to dissolve:
When suddenly stood at my head a dream,
Whose inward apparition gently mov'd
My fancy to believe I yet had being,
And liv'd: One came, methought, of shape divine,
And said, "Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise,
First Man, of men innumerable ordain'd
First Father! call'd by thee, I come thy guide
To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepar'd."
So saying, by the hand he took me rais'd,
And over fields and waters, as in air
Smooth-sliding without step, last led me up
A woody mountain; whose high top was plain,
A circuit wide, enclos'd with goodliest trees
Planted, with walks, and bowers; that what I saw
Of Earth before scarce pleasant seem'd. Each tree,
Loaden with fairest fruit that hung to the eye
Tempting, stirr'd in me sudden appetite
To pluck and eat; whereat I wak'd, and found
Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
Had lively shadow'd: Here had new begun
My wandering, had not he, who was my guide
Up hither, from among the trees appear'd,
Presence Divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
In adoration at his feet I fell [am,"
Submiss: He rear'd me, and "Whom thou sought'st I
Said mildly, "Author of all this thou seest
Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
This Paradise I give thee, count it thine
To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:
Of every tree that in the garden grows
Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
But of the tree whose operation brings
Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
Amid the garden by the tree of life,
Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
And shun the bitter consequence: for know,
The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
Transgress'd, inevitably thou shalt die,
From that day mortal; and this happy state
Shalt lose, expell'd from hence into a world
Of woe and sorrow." Sternly he pronounc'd
The rigid interdiction, which resounds
Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
Not to incur; but soon his clear aspect
Return'd, and gracious purpose thus renew'd.
"Not only these fair bounds, but all the Earth
To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
Possess it, and all things that therein live,
Or live in sea, or air; beast, fish, and fowl.
In sign whereof, each bird and beast behold
After their kinds; I bring them to receive
From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
With low subjection; understand the same
Of fish within their watery residence,
Not hither summon'd, since they cannot change
Their element, to draw the thinner air.”
As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
Approaching two and two; these cowering low
With blandishment; each bird stoop'd on his wing.
I nam'd them, as they pass'd, and understood
Their nature, with such knowledge God endued
My sudden apprehension: But in these
I found not what methought I wanted still;
And to the heavenly Vision thus presum'd.

O, by what name, for thou above all these,
Above mankind, or aught than mankind higher,
Surpassest far my naming; how may I
Adore thee, Author of this universe,
And all this good to man? for whose well being
So amply, and with hands so liberal,
Thou hast provided all things: But with me
I see not who partakes. In solitude
What happiness, who can enjoy alone,
Or, all enjoying, what contentment find?
Thus I presumptuous; and the Vision bright,
As with a smile more brighten'd, thus replied.

What call'st thou solitude? Is not the Earth
With various living creatures, and the air
Replenish'd, and all these at thy command
To come and play before thee? Know'st thou not
Their language and their ways? They also know,
And reason not contemptibly: With these
Find pastime, and bear rule; thy realm is large.
So spake the Universal Lord, and seem'd
So ordering: I, with leave of speech implor'd,
And humble deprecation, thus replied.
Let not my words offend thee, Heavenly Power;
My Maker, be propitious while I speak.
Hast thou not made me here thy substitute,
And these inferior far beneath me set?
Among unequals what society
Can sort, what harmony, or true delight?
Which must be mutual, in proportion due
Given and receiv'd; but, in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike: Of fellowship I speak
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight: wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort: They rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combin'd:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl
So well converse, nor with the ox the ape;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all.
Whereeto the Almighty answer'd, not displeas'd.
A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
Thou to thyself proposest, in the choice
Of thy associates, Adam! and wilt taste
No pleasure, though in pleasure, solitary.
What think'st thou then of me, and this my state?
Seem I to thee sufficiently possess'd
Of happiness, or not? who am alone
From all eternity; for none I know
Second to me or like, equal much less.
How have I then with whom to hold converse,
Save with the creatures which I made, and those
To me inferior, infinite descents
Beneath what other creatures are to thee?
He ceas'd; I lowly answer'd. To attain
The hight: and depth of thy eternal ways
All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!
Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
Is no deficience found: Not so is Man,
But in degree; the cause of his desire
By conversation with his like to help
Or solace his defects. No need that thou
Shouldst propagate, already Infinite;
And through all numbers absolute, though One:
But Man by number is to manifest
His single imperfection, and beget
Like of his like, his image multiplied,
In unity defective; which requires
Collateral love, and dearest amity.
Thou in thy secrery although alone,
Best with thyself accompanied, seek' st not
Social communication; yet, so pleas'd,
Canst raise thy creature to what hight: thou wilt
Of union or communion, deified:
I, by conversing, cannot these erect
From prone; nor in their ways complacence find.
Thus I embolden'd spake, and freedom us'd
Permissive, and acceptance found; which gain'd
This answer from the gracious Voice Divine.

Thus far to try thee, Adam, I was pleas'd;
And find thee knowing, not of beasts alone,
Which thou hast rightly nam'd, but of thyself;
Expressing well the spirit within thee free,
My image, not imparted to the brute;
Whose fellowship therefore unmeet for thee
Good reason was thou freely shouldst dislike;
And be so minded still: I, ere thou spak'st,
Knew it not good for Man to be alone;
And no such company as then thou saw'st
Intended thee; for trial only brought,
To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
What next I bring shall please thee, be assur'd,
Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.

He ended, or I heard no more; for now
My earthly by his heavenly overpower'd,
Which it had long stood under, strain'd to the hight.
In that celestial colloquy sublime,
As with an object that excels the sense
Dazzled and spent, sunk down; and sought repair
Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, call'd
By Nature as in aid, and clos'd mine eyes.
Mine eyes he clos'd, but open left the cell
Of fancy, my internal sight; by which,
Abstract as in a trance, methought I saw,
Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
Still glorious before whom awake I stood:
Who stooping open'd my left side, and took
From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
And life-blood streaming fresh; wide was the wound,
But suddenly with flesh fill'd up and heal'd:
The rib he form'd and fashion'd with his hands;
Under his forming hands a creature grew,
Man-like, but different sex; so lovely fair,
That what seem'd fair in all the world, seem'd now
Mean, or in her summ'd up, in her contain'd
And in her looks; which from that time infus'd
Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
And into all things from her air inspir'd
The spirit of love and amorous delight.
She disappear'd, and left me dark; I wak'd
To find her, or for ever to deplore
Her loss, and other pleasures all abjure:
When out of hope, behold her, not far off,
Such as I saw her in my dream, adorn'd
With what all Earth or Heaven could bestow
To make her amiable: On she came,
Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,
And guided by his voice; nor uninform'd
Of nuptial sanctity, and marriage rites:
Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.
I, overjoy'd, could not forbear aloud.
This turn hath made amends; thou hast fulfill'd
Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
Giver of all things fair! but fairest this
Of all thy gifts! nor enviest. I now see
Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, myself
Before me: Woman is her name; of Man
Extracted: for this cause he shall forego
Father and mother, and to his wife adhere;
And they shall be one flesh, one heart, one soul.

She heard me thus; and though divinely brought,
Yet innocence, and virgin modesty,
Her virtue, and the conscience of her worth,
That would be woo'd, and not unsought be won,
Not obvious, not obtrusive, but, retir'd,
The more desirable; or, to say all,
Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
Wrought in her so, that, seeing me, she turn'd:
I follow'd her; she what was honour knew,
And with obsequious majesty approv'd
My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
I led her blushing like the morn: All Heaven,
And happy constellations, on that hour
Shed their selectest influence; the Earth
Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill;
Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
Whisper'd it to the woods, and from their wings
Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening-star
On his hill top, to light the bridal lamp.
Thus have I told thee all my state, and brought
My story to the sum of earthly bliss,
Which I enjoy; and must confess to find
In all things else delight indeed, but such
As, us'd or not, works in the mind no change,
Nor vehement desire; these delicacies
I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
Walks, and the melody of birds: but here
Far otherwise, transported I behold,
Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
Commotion strange! in all enjoyments else
Superior and unmov'd; here only weak
Against the charm of Beauty's powerful glance.
Or Nature fail'd in me, and left some part
Not proof enough such object to sustain;
Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
More than enough; at least on her bestow'd
Too much of ornament, in outward show
Elaborate, of inward less exact.
For well I understand in the prime end
Of Nature her the inferior, in the mind
And inward faculties, which most excel;
In outward also her resembling less
His image who made both, and less expressing
The character of that dominion given
O'er other creatures: Yet when I approach
Her loveliness, so absolute she seems
And in herself complete, so well to know
Her own, that what she wills to do or say,
Seems wisest, virtuosest, discreetest, best;
All higher knowledge in her presence falls
Degraded; Wisdom in discourse with her
Loses discountenance'd, and like folly shows;
Authority and Reason on her wait,
As one intended first, not after made
Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
Greatness of mind and Nobleness their seat
Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
About her, as a guard angelic place'd.

To whom the Angel with contracted brow.
Accuse not Nature, she hath done her part;
Do thou but thine; and be not diffident
Of Wisdom; she deserts thee not, if thou
Dismiss not her, when most thou need'st her nigh,
By attributing overmuch to things
Less excellent, as thou thyself perceiv'st.
For, what admir'st thou, what transports thee so,
An outside? fair, no doubt, and worthy well
Thy cherishing, thy honouring, and thy love;
Not thy subjection; Weigh with her thyself;
Then value: Oft-times nothing profits more
Than self-esteem, grounded on just and right
Well manag'd; of that skill the more thou know'st,
The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
And to realities yield all her shows:
Made so adorn for thy delight the more,
So awful, that with honour thou may'st love
Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
But if the sense of touch, whereby mankind
Is propagated, seem such dear delight
Beyond all other; think the same vouchsaf'd
To cattle and each beast; which would not be
To them made common and divulg'd, if aught
Therein enjoy'd were worthy to subdue
The soul of man, or passion in him move.
What higher in her society thou find'st
Attractive, human, rational, love still;
In loving thou dost well, in passion not,
Wherein true love consists not: Love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious; is the scale
By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend,
Not sunk in carnal pleasure; for which cause,
Among the beasts no mate for thee was found.
   To whom thus, half abash'd, Adam replied.
Neither her outside form'd so fair, nor aught
In procreation common to all kinds
(Though higher of the genial bed by far,
And with mysterious reverence I deem),
So much delights me, as those graceful acts,
Those thousand decencies, that daily flow
From all her words and actions mix'd with love
And sweet compliance, which declare unfeign'd
Union of mind, or in us both one soul;
Harmony to behold in wedded pair
More grateful than harmonious sound to the ear.
Yet these subject not; I to thee disclose
What inward thence I feel, not therefore foil'd,
Who meet with various objects, from the sense
Variously representing; yet still free,
Approve the best, and follow what I approve.
To love, thou blam'st me not; for Love, thou say'st,
Leads up to Heaven, is both the way and guide;
Bear with me then, if lawful what I ask:
Love not the heavenly Spirits, and how their love
Express they? by looks only? or do they mix
Irradiance, virtual or immediate touch?

To whom the Angel, with a smile that glow'd
Celestial rosy red, Love's proper hue,
Answer'd. Let it suffice thee that thou know'st
Us happy, and without love no happiness.
Whatever pure thou in the body enjoy'est
(And pure thou wert created), we enjoy
In eminence; and obstacle find none
Of membrane, joint, or limb, exclusive bars;
Easier than air with air, if Spirits embrace,
Total they mix, union of pure with pure
Desiring, nor restrain'd conveyance need,
As flesh to mix with flesh, or soul with soul.
But I can now no more; the parting sun
Beyond the Earth's green Cape and verdant Isles
Hesperian sets, my signal to depart.
Be strong, live happy, and love! But, first of all,
Him, whom to love is to obey, and keep
His great command: take heed lest passion sway
Thy judgment to do aught, which else free will
Would not admit: thine, and of all thy sons,
The weal or woe in thee is plac'd; beware!
I in thy persevering shall rejoice,
And all the Blest: Stand fast; to stand or fall
Free in thine own arbitrement it lies.
Perfect within, no outward aid require;
And all temptation to transgress repel.

So saying, he rose; whom Adam thus
Follow'd with benediction. Since to part,
Go, heavenly guest, ethereal Messenger,
Sent from whose sovereign goodness I adore!
Gentle to me and affable hath been
Thy condescension, and shall be honour'd ever
With grateful memory: Thou to mankind
Be good and friendly still, and oft return!
So parted they; the Angel up to Heaven
From the thick shade, and Adam to his bower.
His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play.

PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

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PARADISE LOST.

BOOK IX.

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

No more of talk where God or Angel guest
With Man, as with his friend, familiar us’d,
To sit indulgent, and with him partake
Rural repast; permitting him the while
Venial discourse unblam’d. I now must change
Those notes to tragic; foul distrust, and breach
Disloyal on the part of Man, revolt,
And disobedience: on the part of Heaven,
Now alienated, distance and distaste,
Anger and just rebuke, and judgment given,
That brought into this world a world of woe,
Sin and her shadow Death, and Misery
Death's harbinger: Sad task! yet argument
Not less but more heroic than the wrath
Of stern Achilles on his foe pursued
Thrice fugitive about Troy wall; or rage
Of Turnus for Lavinia disespous'd;
Or Neptune's ire, or Juno's, that so long
Perplex'd the Greek, and Cytherea's son;
If answerable style I can obtain
Of my celestial patroness, who deigns
Her nightly visitation unimplor'd,
And dictates to me slumbering; or inspires
Easy my unpremeditated verse:
Since first this subject for heroic song
Pleas'd me long choosing, and beginning late;
Not sedulous by nature to indite
Wars, hitherto the only argument
Heroic deem'd; chief mastery to dissect
With long and tedious havoc fabled knights
In battles feign'd; the better fortitude
Of patience and heroic martyrdom
Unsung; or to describe races and games,
Or tilting furniture, imblazon'd shields,
Impresses quaint, caparisons and steeds,
Bases and tinsel trappings, gorgeous knights
At joust and tournament; then marshall'd feast
Serv'd up in hall with sewers and seneshals;
The skill of artifice or office mean,
Not that which justly gives heroic name
To person, or to poem. Me, of these
Nor skill'd nor studious, higher argument
Remains; sufficient of itself to raise
That name, unless an age too late, or cold
Climate, or years, damp my intended wing
Depress'd; and much they may, if all be mine,
Not hers, who brings it nightly to my ear.

The sun was sunk, and after him the star
Of Hesperus, whose office is to bring
Twilight upon the earth, short arbiter
'Twixt day and night, and now from end to end
Night's hemisphere had veil'd the horizon round:
When Satan, who late fled before the threats
Of Gabriel out of Eden, now improv'd
In meditated fraud and malice, bent
On Man's destruction, maugre what might hap
Of heavier on himself, fearless return'd.
By night he fled, and at midnight return'd
From compassing the earth; cautious of day,
Since Uriel, regent of the sun, descried
His entrance, and forewarn'd the Cherubim
That kept their watch; thence full of anguish driven,
The space of seven continued nights he rode
With darkness; thrice the equinoctial line
He circled; four times cross'd the car of night
From pole to pole, traversing each colure;
On the eighth return'd; and, on the coast averse
From entrance or Cherubic watch, by stealth
Found unsuspected way. There was a place,
Now not, though sin, not time, first wrought the change,
Where Tigris, at the foot of Paradise,
Into a gulf shot under ground, till part
Rose up a fountain by the tree of life;
In with the river sunk, and with it rose
Satan, involv'd in rising mist; then sought
Where to lie hid; sea he had search'd, and land,
From Eden over Pontus and the pool
Mæotis, up beyond the river Ob;
Downward as far antarctic; and in length,
West from Orontes to the ocean barr'd
At Darien; thence to the land where flows
Ganges and Indus: Thus the orb he roam'd
With narrow search; and with inspection deep
Consider'd every creature, which of all
Most opportune might serve his wiles; and found
The Serpent subllest beast of all the field.
Him after long debate, irresolute
Of thoughts revolv'd, his final sentence chose
Fit vessel, fittest imp of fraud, in whom
To enter, and his dark suggestions hide
From sharpest sight: for, in the wily snake
Whatever sleights, none would suspicious mark,
As from his wit and native subtlety
Proceeding; which, in other beasts observ'd,
Doubt might beget of diabolic power
Active within, beyond the sense of brute.
Thus he resolv'd, but first from inward grief
His bursting passion into plaints thus pour'd.

O Earth, how like to Heaven, if not preferr'd
More justly, seat worthier of Gods, as built
With second thoughts, reforming what was old!
For what God, after better, worse would build?
Terrestrial Heaven, danc'd round by other Heavens
That shine, yet bear their bright officious lamps,
Light above light, for thee alone, as seems,
In thee concentring all their precious beams
Of sacred influence! As God in Heaven
Is centre, yet extends to all; so thou,
Centring, receiv'st from all those orbs: in thee,
Not in themselves, all their known virtue appears
Productive in herb, plant, and nobler birth
Of creatures animate with gradual life
Of growth, sense, reason, all summ'd up in Man.
With what delight could I have walk'd thee round,
If I could joy in aught, sweet interchange
Of hill, and valley, rivers, woods, and plains,
Now land, now sea and shores with forest crown'd,
Rocks, dens, and caves! But I in none of these
Find place or refuge; and the more I see
Pleasures about me, so much more I feel
Torment within me, as from the hateful siege
Of contraries: all good to me becomes
Bane, and in Heaven much worse would be my state.
But neither here seek I, no nor in Heaven
To dwell, unless by mastering Heaven's Supreme;
Nor hope to be myself less miserable
By what I seek, but others to make such
As I, though thereby worse to me redound:
For only in destroying I find ease
To my relentless thoughts; and, him destroy’d,
Or won to what may work his utter loss,
For whom all this was made, all this will soon
Follow, as to him link’d in weal or woe;
In woe then; that destruction wide may range:
To me shall be the glory sole among
The infernal Powers, in one day to have marr’d
What he, Almighty styl’d, six nights and days
Continued making; and who knows how long
Before had been contriving? though perhaps
Not longer than since I, in one night, freed
From servitude inglorious well nigh half
The angelic name, and thinner left the throng
Of his adorers: He, to be aveng’d,
And to repair his numbers thus impair’d,
Whether such virtue spent of old now fail’d
More Angels to create, if they at least
Are his created, or, to spite us more,
Determin’d to advance into our room
A creature form’d of earth, and him endow,
Exalted from so base original,
With heavenly spoils, our spoils: What he decreed,
He effected; Man he made, and for him built
Magnificent this world, and earth his seat,
Him lord pronounce’d; and, O indignity!
Subjected to his service angel-wings,
And flaming ministers to watch and tend
Their earthly charge: Of these the vigilance
I dread; and, to elude, thus wrapt in mist
Of midnight vapour glide obscure, and pry
In every bush and brake, where hap may find
The serpent sleeping; in whose mazy folds
To hide me, and the dark intent I bring.
O foul descent! that I, who erst contended
With Gods to sit the highest, am now constrain'd
Into a beast; and, mix'd with bestial slime,
This essence to incarnate and imbrute,
That to the highth of Deity aspir'd!
But what will not ambition and revenge
Descend to? Who aspires, must down as low
As high he soar'd; obnoxious, first or last,
To basest things. Revenge, at first though sweet,
Bitter ere long, back on itself recoils:
Let it; Ireck not, so it light well aim'd,
Since higher I fall short, on him who next
Provokes my envy, this new favourite
Of Heaven, this man of clay, son of despite,
Whom, us the more to spite, his Maker rais'd
From dust: Spite then with spite is best repaid.

So saying, through each thicket dank or dry,
Like a black mist low-creeping, he held on
His midnight-search, where soonest he might find
The serpent; him fast-sleeping soon he found
In labyrinth of many a round self-roll'd,
His head the midst, well stor'd with subtile wiles:
Not yet in horrid shade or dismal den,
Nor nocent yet; but, on the grassy herb,
Fearless unfear'd he slept: in at his mouth
The Devil enter'd; and his brutal sense,
In heart or head, possessing, soon inspir'd
With act intelligential; but his sleep
Disturb'd not, waiting close the approach of morn.
Now, when as sacred light began to dawn
In Eden on the humid flowers, that breath'd
Their morning incense, when all things, that breathe,
From the Earth's great altar send up silent praise
To the Creator, and his nostrils fill
With grateful smell, forth came the human pair,
And join'd their vocal worship to the quire
Of creatures wanting voice; that done, partake
The season, prime for sweetest scents and airs:
Then commune, how that day they best may ply
Their growing work: for much their work outgrew
The hands' dispatch of two gardening so wide,
And Eve first to her husband thus began.

Adam, well may we labour still to dress
This garden, still to tend plant, herb, and flower,
Our pleasant task enjoin'd; but, till more hands
Aid us, the work under our labour grows,
Luxurious by restraint; what we by day
Lop overgrown, or prune, or prop, or bind,
One night or two with wanton growth derides
Tending to wild. Thou therefore now advise,
Or bear what to my mind first thoughts present:
Let us divide our labours; thou, where choice
Leads thee, or where most needs, whether to wind
The woodbine round this arbour, or direct
The clasping ivy where to climb; while I,
In yonder spring of roses intermix'd
With myrtle, find what to redress till noon;
For, while so near each other thus all day
Our task we choose, what wonder if so near
Looks intervene and smiles, or object new
Casual discourse draw on; which intermits
Our day's work, brought to little, though begun
Early, and the hour of supper comes unearn'd?
To whom mild answer Adam thus return'd.
Sole Eve, associate sole, to me beyond
Compare above all living creatures dear!
Well hast thou motion'd, well thy thoughts employ'd,
How we might best fulfil the work which here
God hath assign'd us; nor of me shalt pass
Unprais'd: for nothing lovelier can be found
In woman, than to study household good,
And good works in her husband to promote.
Yet not so strictly hath our Lord impos'd
Labour, as to debar us when we need
Refreshment, whether food, or talk between,
Food of the mind, or this sweet intercourse
Of looks and smiles; for smiles from reason flow,
To brute denied, and are of love the food;
Love, not the lowest end of human life.
For not to irksome toil, but to delight,
He made us, and delight to reason join'd.
These paths and bowers doubt not but our joint hands
Will keep from wilderness with ease, as wide
As we need walk, till younger hands ere long
Assist us: But, if much converse perhaps
Thee satiate, to short absence I could yield:
For solitude sometimes is best society,
And short retirement urges sweet return.
But other doubt possesses me, lest harm
Befall thee sever'd from me; for thou know'st
What hath been warn'd us, what malicious foe
Envying our happiness, and of his own
Despairing, seeks to work us woe and shame
By sly assault; and somewhere nigh at hand
Watches, no doubt, with greedy hope to find
His wish and best advantage, us asunder;
Hopeless to circumvent us join'd, where each
To other speedy aid might lend at need:
Whether his first design be to withdraw
Our fealty from God, or to disturb
Conjugal love, than which perhaps no bliss
Enjoy'd by us excites his envy more;
Or this, or worse, leave not the faithful side
That gave thee being, still shades thee, and protects.
The wife, where danger or dishonour lurks,
 Safest and seemliest by her husband stays,
 Who guards her, or with her the worst endures.
  To whom the virgin majesty of Eve,
As one who loves, and some unkindness meets,
With sweet austere composure thus replied.
  Offspring of Heaven and Earth, and all Earth's Lord!
That such an enemy we have, who seeks
Our ruin, both by thee inform'd I learn,
And from the parting Angel over-heard,
As in a shady nook I stood behind,
Just then return'd at shut of evening flowers.
But, that thou shouldst my firmness therefore doubt
To God or thee, because we have a foe
May tempt it, I expected not to hear.
His violence thou fear'st not, being such
As we, not capable of death or pain,
Can either not receive, or can repel.
His fraud is then thy fear; which plain infers
Thy equal fear, that my firm faith and love
Can by his fraud be shaken or seduce'd;
Thoughts, which how found they harbour in thy breast,
Adam, mis-thought of her to thee so dear?
    To whom with healing words Adam replied.
Daughter of God and Man, immortal Eve!
For such thou art; from sin and blame entire:
Not diffident of thee do I dissuade
Thy absence from my sight, but to avoid
The attempt itself, intended by our foe.
For he who tempts, though in vain, at least asperses
The tempted with dishonour foul; suppos'd
Not incorruptible of faith, not proof
Against temptation: Thou thyself with scorn
And anger wouldst resent the offer'd wrong,
Though ineffectual found; misdeem not then,
If such affront I labour to avert
From thee alone, which on us both at once
The enemy, though bold, will hardly dare;
Or daring, first on me the assault shall light.

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Nor thou his malice and false guile contemn;
Subtle he needs must be, who could seduce
Angels; nor think superfluous others aid.
I, from the influence of thy looks, receive
Access in every virtue; in thy sight
More wise, more watchful, stronger, if need were
Of outward strength; while shame, thou looking on,
Shame to be overcome or over-reach'd,
Would utmost vigour raise, and rais'd unite.
Why shouldst not thou like sense within thee feel
When I am present, and thy trial choose
With me, best witness of thy virtue tried?
So spake domestic Adam in his care
And matrimonial love; but Eve, who thought
Less attributed to her faith sincere,
Thus her reply with accent sweet renew'd.
If this be our condition, thus to dwell
In narrow circuit straiten'd by a foe,
Subtle or violent, we not endued
Single with like defence, wherever met;
How are we happy, still in fear of harm?
But harm precedes not sin: only our foe,
Tempting, affronts us with his foul esteem
Of our integrity: his foul esteem
Sticks no dishonour on our front, but turns
Foul on himself; then wherefore shunn'd or fear'd
By us? who rather double honour gain
From his surmise prov'd false; find peace within,
Favour from Heaven, our witness, from the event.
And what is faith, love, virtue, unassay'd
Alone, without exterior help sustain'd?  
Let us not then suspect our happy state  
Left so imperfect by the Maker wise,  
As not secure to single or combin'd:  
Frail is our happiness, if this be so,  
And Eden were no Eden, thus expos'd.  
To whom thus Adam fervently replied.  
O Woman, best are all things as the will  
Of God ordain'd them: His creating hand  
Nothing imperfect or deficient left  
Of all that he created, much less Man,  
Or aught that might his happy state secure,  
Secure from outward force; within himself  
The danger lies, yet lies within his power:  
Against his will he can receive no harm.  
But God left free the will; for what obeys  
Reason, is free; and Reason he made right,  
But bid her well be ware, and still erect;  
Lest, by some fair-appearing good surpris'd,  
She dictate false; and mis-inform the will  
To do what God expressly hath forbid.  
Not then mistrust, but tender love, enjoins,  
That I should mind thee oft; and mind thou me.  
Firm we subsist, yet possible to swerve;  
Since Reason not impossibly may meet  
Some specious object by the foe suborn'd,  
And fall into deception unaware,  
Not keeping strictest watch, as she was warn'd.  
Seek not temptation then, which to avoid  
Were better, and most likely if from me
Thou sever not: Trial will come unsought.
Wouldst thou approve thy constancy, approve
First thy obedience; the other who can know,
Not seeing thee attempted, who attest?
But, if thou think, trial unsought may find
Us both safer than thus warn'd thou seem'st,
Go; for thy stay, not free, absents thee more;
Go in thy native innocence, rely
On what thou hast of virtue; summon all!
For God towards thee hath done his part, do thine.

So spake the patriarch of mankind; but Eve
Persisted; yet submiss, though last, replied.

With thy permission then, and thus forewarn'd
Chiefly by what thy own last reasoning words
Touch'd only; that our trial, when least sought,
May find us both perhaps far less prepar'd,
The willinger I go, nor much expect
A foe so proud will first the weaker seek;
So bent, the more shall shame him his repulse.

Thus saying, from her husband's hand her hand
Soft she withdrew; and, like a Wood-Nymph light,
Orcad or Dryad, or of Delia's train,
Betook her to the groves; but Delia's self
In gait surpass'd, and Goddess-like deport,
Though not as she with bow and quiver arm'd,
But with such gardening tools as Art yet rude,
Guiltless of fire, had form'd, or Angels brought.
To Pales, or Pomona, thus adorn'd,
Likest she seem'd, Pomona when she fled
Vertumnus, or to Ceres in her prime,
Yet virgin of Proserpina from Jove.
Her long with ardent look his eye pursued
Delighted, but desiring more her stay.
Oft he to her his charge of quick return
Repeated; she to him as oft engag'd
To be return'd by noon amid the bower,
And all things in best order to invite
Noontide repast, or afternoon's repose.
O much deceiv'd, much failing, hapless Eve,
Of thy presum'd return! event perverse!
Thou never from that hour in Paradise
Found'st either sweet repast, or sound repose;
Such ambush, hid among sweet flowers and shades,
Waited with hellish rancour imminent
To intercept thy way, or send thee back
Despoil'd of innocence, of faith, of bliss!
For now, and since first break of dawn, the Fiend,
Mere serpent in appearance, forth was come;
And on his quest, where likeliest he might find
The only two of mankind, but in them
The whole included race, his purpos'd prey.
In bower and field he sought, where any tuft
Of grove or garden-plot more pleasant lay,
Their tendance, or plantation for delight;
By fountain or by shady rivulet
He sought them both, but wish'd his hap might find
Eve separate; he wish'd, but not with hope
Of what so seldom chanc'd; when to his wish,
Beyond his hope, Eve separate he spies,
Veil'd in a cloud of fragrance, where she stood,
Half spied, so thick the roses blushing round
About her glow’d, oft stooping to support
Each flower of slender stalk, whose head, though gay
Carnation, purple, azure, or speck’d with gold,
Hung drooping unsustain’d; them she upstays
Gently with myrtle band, mindless the while
Herself, though fairest unsupported flower,
From her best prop so far, and storm so nigh.
Nearer he drew, and many a walk travers’d
Of stateliest covert, cedar, pine, or palm;
Then voluble and bold, now hid, now seen,
Among thick-woven arborets, and flowers
Imborder’d on each bank, the hand of Eve:
Spot more delicious than those gardens feign’d
Or of reviv’d Adonis, or renown’d
Alcinous, host of old Laertes’ son;
Or that, not mystic, where the sapient king
Held dalliance with his fair Egyptian spouse.
Much be the place admir’d, the person more.
As one who long in populous city pent,
Where houses thick and sewers annoy the air,
Forth issuing on a summer’s morn, to breathe
Among the pleasant villages and farms
Adjoin’d, from each thing met conceives delight;
The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;
If chance, with nymph-like step, fair virgin pass,
What pleasing seem’d, for her now pleases more;
She most, and in her look sums all delight:
Such pleasure took the Serpent to behold
This flowery plat, the sweet recess of Eve
Thus early, thus alone: Her heavenly form
Angelic, but more soft, and feminine,
Her graceful innocence, her every air
Of gesture, or least action, overaw'd
His malice, and with rapine sweet bercav'd
His fierceness of the fierce intent it brought:
That space the Evil-one abstracted stood
From his own evil, and for the time remain'd
Stupidly good; of enmity disarm'd,
Of guile, of hate, of envy, of revenge:
But the hot Hell that always in him burns,
Though in mid Heaven, soon ended his delight,
And tortures him now more, the more he sees
Of pleasure, not for him ordain'd: then soon
Fierce hate he recollects, and all his thoughts
Of mischief, gratulating, thus excites.

Thoughts, whither have ye led me! with what sweet
Compulsion thus transported, to forget
What hither brought us! hate, not love; nor hope
Of Paradise for Hell, hope here to taste
Of pleasure; but all pleasure to destroy,
Save what is in destroying; other joy
To me is lost. Then, let me not let pass
Occasion which now smiles; behold alone
The woman, opportune to all attempts,
Her husband, for I view far round, not nigh,
Whose higher intellectual more I shun,
And strength, of courage haughty, and of limb
Heroic built, though of terrestrial mould;
Foe not formidable! exempt from wound,
I not; so much hath Hell debas'd, and pain
Enfeebled me, to what I was in Heaven.
She fair, divinely fair, fit love for Gods!
Not terrible, though terror be in love
And beauty, not approach'd by stronger hate,
Hate stronger, under show of love well feign'd;
The way which to her ruin now I tend.

So spake the enemy of mankind, enclos'd
In serpent, inmate bad! and toward Eve
Address'd his way: not with indented wave,
Prone on the ground, as since; but on his rear,
Circular base of rising folds, that tower'd
Fold above fold, a surging maze! his head
Crested aloft, and carbuncle his eyes;
With burnish'd neck of verdant gold, erect
Amidst his circling spires, that on the grass
Floatèd redundant: pleasing was his shape
And lovely; never since of serpent-kind
Lovelier, not those that in Illyria chang'd,
Hermione and Cadmus, or the god
In Epidaurus; nor to which transform'd
Ammonian Jove, or Capitoline, was seen;
He with Olympias; this with her who bore
Scipio, the highth of Rome. With tract oblique
At first, as one who sought access, but fear'd
To interrupt, side-long he works his way.
As when a ship, by skilful steersmen wrought
Nigh river's mouth or foreland, where the wind
Vears oft, as oft so steers, and shifts her sail:
So varied he, and of his tortuous train
Curl'd many a wanton wreath in sight of Eve,
To lure her eye; she, busied, heard the sound
Of rusling leaves, but minded not, as us'd
To such disport before her through the field,
From every beast; more duteous at her call,
Than at Circean call the herd disguis'd.
He, bolder now, uncall'd before her stood,
But as in gaze admiring: oft he bow'd
His turret crest, and sleek enamell'd neck,
Tawning; and lick'd the ground whereon she trod.
His gentle dumb expression turn'd at length
The eye of Eve to mark his play; he, glad
Of her attention gain'd, with serpent-tongue
Organic, or impulse of vocal air,
His fraudulent temptation thus began.

Wonder not, sov'reign Mistress, if perhaps
Thou canst, who art sole wonder! much less arm
Thy looks, the Heaven of mildness, with disdain,
Displeas'd that I approach thee thus, and gaze
Insatiate; I thus single; nor have fear'd
Thy awful brow, more awful thus retir'd.
Fairest resemblance of thy Maker fair,
Thee all things living gaze on, all things thine
By gift, and thy celestial beauty adore
With ravishment beheld! there best beheld,
Where universally admir'd; but here
In this enclosure wild, these beasts among,
Beholders rude, and shallow to discern
Half what in thee is fair, one man except,
Who sees thee? (and what is one?) who should be seen
A Goddess among Gods, ador'd and serv'd
By Angels numberless, thy daily train.

So gloz'd the Tempter, and his proem tun'd:
Into the heart of Eve his words made way,
Though at the voice much marvelling; at length,
Not unamaz'd, she thus in answer spake.

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

To whom the guileful Tempter thus replied.
Empress of this fair world, resplendent Eve!
Easy to me it is to tell thee all
What thou command'st; and right thou shouldst be
I was at first as other beasts that graze [obey'd:
The trodden herb, of abject thoughts and low,
As was my food; nor aught but food discern'd
Or sex, and apprehended nothing high:
Till, on a day roving the field, I chanc'd
A goodly tree far distant to behold
Loaden with fruit of fairest colours mix'd,
Ruddy and gold: I nearer drew to gaze;
When from the boughs a savoury odour blown,
Grateful to appetite, more pleas'd my sense
Than smell of sweetest fennel, or the teats
Of ewe or goat dropping with milk at even,
Unsuck'd of lamb or kid, that tend their play.
To satisfy the sharp desire I had
Of tasting those fair apples, I resolv'd
Not to defer; hunger and thirst at once,
Powerful persuaders, quicken'd at the scent
Of that alluring fruit, urg'd me so keen.
About the mossy trunk I wound me soon;
For, high from ground, the branches would require
Thy utmost reach or Adam's: Round the tree
All other beasts that saw, with like desire
Longing and envying stood, but could not reach.
Amid the tree now got, where plenty hung
Tempting so nigh, to pluck and eat my fill
I spar'd not; for, such pleasure till that hour,
At feed or fountain, never had I found.
Sated at length, ere long I might perceive
Strange alteration in me, to degree
Of reason in my inward powers; and speech
Wanted not long; though to this shape retain'd.
Thenceforth to speculations high or deep
I turn'd my thoughts, and with capacious mind
Consider'd all things visible in Heaven,
Or Earth, or Middle; all things fair and good:
But all that fair and good in thy divine
Semblance, and in thy beauty's heavenly ray,
United I beheld; no fair to thine
Equivalent or second! which compell'd
Me thus, though importune perhaps, to come
And gaze, and worship thee of right declar'd
Sov'reign of creatures, universal Dame!

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

Serpent, thy overpraising leaves in doubt
The virtue of that fruit, in thee first prov'd;
But say, where grows the tree? from hence how far?
For many are the trees of God that grow
In Paradise, and various, yet unknown
To us; in such abundance lies our choice,
As leaves a greater store of fruit untouch'd,
Still hanging incorruptible, till men
Grow up to their provision, and more hands
Help to disburden Nature of her birth.

To whom the wily Adder, blithe and glad.
Empress, the way is ready, and not long;
Beyond a row of myrtles, on a flat,
Fast by a fountain, one small thicket past
Of blowing myrrh and balm: if thou accept
My conduct, I can bring thee thither soon.

Lead then, said Eve. He, leading, swiftly roll'd
In tangles, and made intricate seem straight,
To mischief swift. Hope elevates, and joy
Brightens his crest; as when a wandering fire,
Compact of unctuous vapour, which the night
Condenses, and the cold environs round,
Kindled through agitation to a flame,
Which oft, they say, some evil Spirit attends,
Hovering and blazing with delusive light,
Misleads the amaz’d night-wanderer from his way
To bogs and mires, and oft through pond or pool;
There swallow’d up and lost, from succour far.
So glister’d the dire Snake, and into fraud
Led Eve, our credulous mother, to the tree
Of prohibition, root of all our woe;
Which when she saw, thus to her guide she spake.

Serpent, we might have spar’d our coming hither,
Fruitless to me, though fruit be here to excess,
The credit of whose virtue rest with thee;
Wondrous indeed, if cause of such effects.
But of this tree we may not taste nor touch;
God so commanded, and left that command
Sole daughter of his voice; the rest, we live
Law to ourselves; our reason is our law.

To whom the Tempter guilefully replied.
Indeed! hath God then said that of the fruit
Of all these garden-trees ye shall not eat,
Yet Lords declar’d of all in earth or air?
To whom thus Eve, yet sinless. Of the fruit
Of each tree in the garden we may eat;
But of the fruit of this fair tree amidst
The garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat
Thereof, nor shall ye touch it, lest ye die. [bold

She scarce had said, though brief, when now more
The Tempter, but with show of zeal and love
To Man, and indignation at his wrong,
New part puts on; and, as to passion mov'd,
Fluctuates disturb'd, yet comely and in act
Rais'd, as of some great matter to begin.
As when of old some orator renown'd,
In Athens or free Rome, where eloquence
Flourish'd, since mute! to some great cause address'd,
Stood in himself collected; while each part,
Motion, each act, won audience ere the tongue;
Sometimes in hight began, as no delay
Of preface brooking, through his zeal of right:
So standing, moving, or to hight up grown,
The Tempter, all impassion'd, thus began.

O sacred, wise, and wisdom-giving Plant,
Mother of science! now I feel thy power
Within me clear; not only to discern
Things in their causes, but to trace the ways
Of highest agents, deem'd however wise.
Queen of this universe! do not believe
Those rigid threats of death: ye shall not die:
How should you? by the fruit? it gives you life
To knowledge; by the threatener? look on me,
Me, who have touch'd and tasted; yet both live,
And life more perfect have attain'd than Fate
Meant me, by venturing higher than my lot.
Shall that be shut to Man, which to the Beast
Is open? or will God incense his ire
For such a petty trespass? and not praise
Rather your dauntless virtue, whom the pain
Of death denounc'd, whatever thing death be.
Deterr'd not from achieving what might lead
To happier life, knowledge of good and evil.
Of good, how just? of evil, if what is evil
Be real, why not known, since easier shunn'd?
God therefore cannot hurt ye, and be just;
Not just, not God; not fear'd then, nor obey'd:
Your fear itself of death removes the fear.
Why then was this forbid? Why, but to awe;
Why, but to keep ye low and ignorant,
His worshippers? He knows that in the day
Ye eat thereof, your eyes that seem so clear,
Yet are but dim, shall perfectly be then
Open'd and clear'd, and ye shall be as Gods,
Knowing both good and evil, as they know.
That ye shall be as Gods, since I as Man,
Internal Man, is but proportion meet;
I, of brute, human; ye, of human, Gods.
So ye shall die perhaps, by putting off
Human, to put on Gods; death to be wish'd,
Though threaten'd, which no worse than this can bring.
And what are Gods, that Man may not become
As they, participating God-like food?
The Gods are first, and that advantage use
On our belief, that all from them proceeds:
I question it; for this fair earth I see,
Warm'd by the sun, producing every kind;
Them, nothing: if they all things, who enclos'd
Knowledge of good and evil in this tree,
That whoso eats thereof, forthwith attains
Wisdom without their leave? and wherein lies
The offence, that Man should thus attain to know?
What can your knowledge hurt him, or this tree
Impart against his will, if all be his?
Or is it envy? and can envy dwell
In heavenly breasts?—These, these, and many more
Causes import your need of this fair fruit.
Goddess humane, reach then, and freely taste!
He ended; and his words, replete with guile,
Into her heart too easy entrance won:
Fix'd on the fruit she gaz'd, which to behold
Might tempt alone; and in her ears the sound
Yet rung of his persuasive words, impregn'd
With reason, to her seeming, and with truth:
Mean while the hour of noon drew on, and wak'd
An eager appetite, rais'd by the smell
So savoury of that fruit, which with desire,
Inclinable now grown to touch or taste,
Solicited her longing eye; yet first
Pausing awhile, thus to herself she mused.
Great are thy virtues, doubtless, best of fruits,
Though kept from man, and worthy to be admir'd;
Whose taste, too long forborn, at first assay
Gave elocution to the mute, and taught
The tongue not made for speech to speak thy praise:
Thy praise he also, who forbids thy use,
Conceals not from us, naming thee the tree
Of knowledge, knowledge both of good and evil;
Forbids us then to taste! but his forbidding
Commends thee more, while it infers the good
By thee communicated, and our want:
For good unknown sure is not had: or, had
And yet unknown, is as not had at all.
In plain then, what forbids he but to know,
Forbids us good, forbids us to be wise?
Such prohibitions bind not. But, if death
Bind us with after-bands, what profits then
Our inward freedom? In the day we eat
Of this fair fruit, our doom is, we shall die!
How dies the Serpent? he hath eaten and lives,
And knows, and speaks, and reasons, and discerns,
Irrational till then. For us alone
Was death invented? or to us denied
This intellectual food, for beasts reserv'd?
For beasts it seems: yet that one beast which first
Hath tasted envies not, but brings with joy
The good befallen him, author unsuspect,
Friendly to man, far from deceit or guile.
What fear I then? rather, what know to fear
Under this ignorance of good and evil,
Of God or death, of law or penalty?
Here grows the cure of all, this fruit divine,
Fair to the eye, inviting to the taste,
Of virtue to make wise: What hinders then
To reach, and feed at once both body and mind?
So saying, her rash hand in evil hour
Forth reaching to the fruit, she pluck'd, she eat!
Earth felt the wound; and Nature from her seat,
Sighing through all her works, gave signs of woe,
That all was lost. Back to the thicket slunk
The guilty Serpent; and well might; for Eve,
Intent now wholly on her taste, nought else
Regarded; such delight till then, as seem'd,
In fruit she never tasted, whether true
Or fancied so, through expectation high
Of knowledge; nor was Godhead from her thought.
Greedily she ingorg'd without restraint,
And knew not eating death: Satiate at length,
And highten'd as with wine, jocund and boon,
Thus to herself she pleasingly began.

O sov'reign, virtuous, precious of all trees
In Paradise! of operation blest
To sapience, hitherto obscur'd, infam'd,
And thy fair fruit let hang, as to no end
Created; but henceforth my early care,
Not without song, each morning, and due praise,
Shall tend thee, and the fertile burden ease
Of thy full branches offer'd free to all;
Till, dictated by thee, I grow mature
In knowledge, as the Gods, who all things know;
Though others envy what they cannot give:
For, had the gift been theirs, it had not here
Thus grown. Experience, next, to thee I owe,
Best guide; not following thee, I had remain'd
In ignorance; thou open'st wisdom's way,
And giv'st access, though secret she retire.
And I perhaps am secret: Heaven is high,
High, and remote to see from thence distinct
Each thing on Earth; and other care perhaps
May have diverted from continual watch
Our great Forbidder, safe with all his spies
About him. But to Adam in what sort
Shall I appear? shall I to him make known
As yet my change, and give him to partake
Full happiness with me, or rather not,
But keep the odds of knowledge in my power
Without copartner? so to add what wants
In female sex, the more to draw his love,
And render me more equal; and perhaps,
A thing not undesirable, sometime
Superior; for, inferior, who is free?
This may be well: But what if God have seen,
And death ensue? then I shall be no more!
And Adam, wedded to another Eve,
Shall live with her enjoying, I extinct;
A death to think! Confirm'd then I resolve,
Adam shall share with me in bliss or woe:
So dear I love him, that with him all deaths
I could endure, without him live no life.

So saying, from the tree her step she turn'd;
But first low reverence done, as to the Power
That dwelt within, whose presence had infus'd
Into the plant sciential sap, deriv'd
From nectar, drink of Gods. Adam the while,
Waiting desirous her return, had wove
Of choicest flowers a garland, to adorn
Her tresses, and her rural labours crown;
As reapers oft are wont their harvest-queen.
Great joy he promis'd to his thoughts, and new
Solace in her return, so long delay'd:
Yet oft his heart, divine of something ill,
Misgave him; he the faltering measure felt;  
And forth to meet her went, the way she took  
That morn when first they parted: by the tree  
Of knowledge he must pass; there he her met,  
Scarce from the tree returning; in her hand  
A bough of fairest fruit, that downy smil'd,  
New gather'd, and ambrosial smell diffus'd.  
To him she hasted; in her face excuse  
Came prologue and apology, too prompt;  
Which, with bland words at will, she thus address'd.  
Hast thou not wonder'd, Adam, at my stay?  
Thee I have miss'd, and thought it long, depriv'd  
Thy presence; agony of love till now  
Not felt, nor shall be twice; for never more  
Mean I to try, what rash untried I sought,  
The pain of absence from thy sight. But strange  
Hath been the cause, and wonderful to hear:  
This tree is not, as we are told, a tree  
Of danger tasted, nor to evil unknown  
Opening the way, but of divine effect  
To open eyes, and make them Gods who taste;  
And hath been tasted such: The serpent wise,  
Or not restrain'd as we, or not obeying,  
Hath eaten of the fruit; and is become,  
Not dead, as we are threaten'd, but thenceforth  
Endued with human voice and human sense,  
Reasoning to admiration; and with me  
Persuasively hath so prevail'd, that I  
Have also tasted, and have also found  
The effects to correspond; opener mine eyes,
Dim erst, dilated spirits, ampler heart,
And growing up to Godhead; which for thee
Chiefly I sought, without thee can despise.
For bliss, as thou hast part, to me is bliss;
Tedious, unshar'd with thee, and odious soon.
Thou therefore also taste, that equal lot
May join us, equal joy, as equal love;
Lest, thou not tasting, different degree
Disjoin us, and I then too late renounce
Deity for thee, when Fate will not permit.

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

O fairest of Creation, last and best
Of all God's works, Creature in whom excell'd
Whatever can to sight or thought be form'd,
Holy, divine, good, amiable, or sweet!
How art thou lost! how on a sudden lost,
Defac'd, deflower'd, and now to death devote!
Rather, how hast thou yielded to transgress
The strict forbiddance, how to violate
The sacred fruit forbidd'n! Some cursed fraud
Of enemy hath beguil'd thee, yet unknown,
And me with thee hath ruin'd; for with thee
Certain my resolution is to die:
How can I live without thee! how forego
Thy sweet converse, and love so dearly join'd,
To live again in these wild woods forlorn!
Should God create another Eve, and I
Another rib afford, yet loss of thee
Would never from my heart: no, no! I feel
The link of Nature draw me: flesh of flesh,
Bone of my bone thou art, and from thy state
Mine never shall be parted, bliss or woe.

So having said, as one from sad dismay
Re-comforted, and after thoughts disturb'd
Submitting to what seem'd remediless,
Thus in calm mood his words to Eve he turn'd.

Bold deed thou hast presum'd, adventurous Eve,
And peril great provok'd, who thus hast dar'd,
Had it been only coveting to eye
That sacred fruit, sacred to abstinence,
Much more to taste it under ban to touch.

But past who can recall, or done undo?
Not God Omnipotent, nor Fate; yet so
Perhaps thou shalt not die, perhaps the fact
Is not so heinous now, foretasted fruit,
Profan'd first by the serpent, by him first
Made common, and unhallow'd, ere our taste;
Nor yet on him found deadly; yet he lives;
Lives, as thou saidst, and gains to live, as Man,
Higher degree of life; inducement strong
To us, as likely tasting to attain
Proportional ascent; which cannot be
But to be Gods, or Angels, demi-Gods.
Nor can I think that God, Creator wise,
Though threatening, will in earnest so destroy
Us his prime creatures, dignified so high,
Set over all his works; which in our fall,
For us created, needs with us must fail,
Dependant made; so God shall uncreate,
Be frustrate, do, undo, and labour lose;
Not well conceiv'd of God, who, though his power
Creation could repeat, yet would be loth
Us to abolish, lest the Adversary
Triumph, and say; "Fickle their state whom God
Most favours; who can please him long? Me first
He ruin'd, now Mankind; whom will be next?"
Matter of scorn, not to be given the Foe.
However I with thee have fix'd my lot,
Certain to undergo like doom: If death
Consort with thee, death is to me as life;
So forcible within my heart I feel
The bond of Nature draw me to my own;
My own in thee, for what thou art is mine;
Our state cannot be sever'd; we are one,
One flesh; to lose thee were to lose myself.
  So Adam; and thus Eve to him replied.
O glorious trial of exceeding love,
Illustrious evidence, example high!
Engaging me to emulate; but, short
Of thy perfection, how shall I attain,
Adam, from whose dear side I boast me sprung,
And gladly of our union hear thee speak,
One heart, one soul in both; whereof good proof
This day affords, declaring thee resolv'd,
Rather than death, or aught than death more dread,
Shall separate us, link'd in love so dear,
To undergo with me one guilt, one crime,
If any be, of tasting this fair fruit;
Whose virtue (for of good still good proceeds,
Direct, or by occasion) hath presented
This happy trial of thy love, which else
So eminently never had been known?
Were it I thought death menac'd would ensue
This my attempt, I would sustain alone
The worst, and not persuade thee, rather die
Deserted, than oblige thee with a fact
Pernicious to thy peace; chiefly assur'd
Remarkably so late of thy so true,
So faithful, love unequall'd: but I feel
Far otherwise the event; not death, but life
Augmented, open'd eyes, new hopes, new joys,
Taste so divine, that what of sweet before
Hath touch'd my sense, flat seems to this, and harsh.
On my experience, Adam, freely taste,
And fear of death deliver to the winds.

So saying, she embrac'd him, and for joy
Tenderly wept; much won, that he his love
Had so ennobled, as of choice to incur
Divine displeasure for her sake, or death.
In recompense (for such compliance bad
Such recompense best merits) from the bough
She gave him of that fair enticing fruit
With liberal hand: he scrupled not to eat,
Against his better knowledge; not deceiv'd,
But fondly overcome with female charm.
Earth trembled from her entrails, as again
In pangs; and Nature gave a second groan;
Sky lour'd; and, muttering thunder, some sad drops
Wept at completing of the mortal sin
Original: while Adam took no thought,
Eating his fill; nor Eve to iterate
Her former trespass fear'd, the more to sooth
Him with her lov'd society; that now,
As with new wine intoxicated both,
They swim in mirth, and fancy that they feel
Divinity within them breeding wings,
Wherewith to scorn the earth: But that false fruit
Far other operation first display'd,
Carnal desire inflaming; he on Eve
Began to cast lascivious eyes; she him
As wantonly repaid; in lust they burn:
Till Adam thus 'gan Eve to dalliance move.

Eve, now I see thou art exact of taste,
And elegant, of sapience no small part;
Since to each meaning savour we apply,
And palate call judicious; I the praise
Yield thee, so well this day thou hast purvey'd.
Much pleasure we have lost, while we abstain'd
From this delightful fruit, nor known till now
True relish, tasting; if such pleasure be
In things to us forbid'd, it might be wish'd,
For this one tree had been forbidden ten.
But come, so well refresh'd, now let us play,
As meet is, after such delicious fare;
For never did thy beauty, since the day
I saw thee first and wedded thee, adorn'd
With all perfections, so inflame my sense
With ardour to enjoy thee, fairer now
Than ever; bounty of this virtuous tree!

So said he, and forbore not glance or toy
Of amorous intent; well understood
Of Eve, whose eye darted contagious fire.
Her hand he seiz'd; and to a shady bank,
Thick over-head with verdant roof imbower'd,
He led her nothing loth; flowers were the couch,
Pansies, and violets, and asphodel,
And hyacinth; Earth's freshest softest lap.
There they their fill of love and love's disport
Took largely, of their mutual guilt the seal,
The solace of their sin; till dewy sleep
Oppress'd them, wearied with their amorous play.
Soon as the force of that fallacious fruit,
That with exhilarating vapour bland
About their spirits had play'd, and inmost powers
Made err, was now exhal'd; and grosser sleep,
Bred of unkindly fumes, with conscious dreams
Incumber'd, now had left them; up they rose
As from unrest; and, each the other viewing,
Soon found their eyes how open'd, and their minds
How darken'd; innocence, that as a veil
Had shadow'd them from knowing ill, was gone;
Just confidence, and native righteousness,
And honour, from about them, naked left
To guilty Shame; he cover'd, but his robe
Uncover'd more. So rose the Danite strong,
Herculean Samson, from the harlot-lap
Of Philistéan Dalilah, and wak'd
Shorn of his strength, They destitute and bare
Of all their virtue: Silent, and in face
Confounded, long they sat, as strucken mute:
Till Adam, though not less than Eve abash'd,
At length gave utterance to these words constrain'd.

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

So counsell'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they chose
The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit renown'd,
But such as at this day, to Indians known,
In Malabar or Decan spreads her arms
Branching so broad and long, that in the ground
The bended twigs take root and daughters grow
About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
High over-arch'd, and echoing walks between:
There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning heat,
Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing herds
At loop-holes cut through thickest shade: Those leaves
They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe;
And, with what skill they had, together sew'd,
To gird their waist; vain covering, if to hide
Their guilt and dreaded shame! O, how unlike
To that first naked glory! Such of late
Columbus found the American, so girt
With feather'd cincture; naked else, and wild
Among the trees on isles and woody shores.
Thus fenc'd, and, as they thought, their shame in part
Cover'd, but not at rest or ease of mind,
They sat them down to weep; nor only tears
Rain'd at their eyes, but high winds worse within
Began to rise, high passions, anger, hate,
Mistrust, suspicion, discord; and shook sore
Their inward state of mind, calm region once
And full of peace, now tossed and turbulent:
For Understanding rul'd not, and the Will
Heard not her lore; both in subjection now
To sensual Appetite, who from beneath
Usurping over sov'reign Reason claim'd
Superior sway: From thus distemper'd breast,
Adam, estrang'd in look and alter'd style,
Speech intermitted thus to Eve renew'd.

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

To whom, soon mov'd with touch of blame, thus Eve.
What words have pass'd thy lips, Adam, severe!
Imput'st thou that to my default, or will
Of wand'ring, as thou call'st it, which who knows
But might as ill have happen'd thou being by,
Or to thyself perhaps? Hadst thou been there,
Or here the attempt, thou couldst not have discern'd
Fraud in the Serpent, speaking as he spake;
No ground of enmity between us known,
Why he should mean me ill, or seek to harm.
Was I to have never parted from thy side?
As good have grown there still a lifeless rib,
Being as I am, why didst not thou, the head,
Command me absolutely not to go,
Going into such danger, as thou saidst?
Too facile then, thou didst not much gainsay;
Nay, didst permit, approve, and fair dismiss.
Hadst thou been firm and fix'd in thy dissent,
Neither had I transgress'd, nor thou with me.

To whom, then first incens'd, Adam replied.
Is this the love, is this the recompense
Of mine to thee, ingratitude Eve! express'd
Immutable, when thou wert lost, not I;
Who might have liv'd, and joy'd immortal bliss,
Yet willingly chose rather death with thee?
And am I now upbraided as the cause
Of thy transgressing? Not enough severe,
It seems, in thy restraint: What could I more?
I warn'd thee, I admonish'd thee, foretold
The danger, and the lurking enemy
That lay in wait; beyond this, had been force;
And force upon free will hath here no place.
But confidence then bore thee on; secure
Either to meet no danger, or to find
Matter of glorious trial; and perhaps
I also err'd, in overmuch admiring
What seem'd in thee so perfect, that I thought
No evil durst attempt thee; but I rue
The error now, which is become my crime,
And thou the accuser. Thus it shall befall
Him, who, to worth in women overtrusting,
Lets her will rule: restraint she will not brook;
And, left to herself, if evil thence ensue,
She first his weak indulgence will accuse.
Thus they in mutual accusation spent
The fruitless hours, but neither self-condemning
And of their vain contest appear'd no end.
Soon his heart relented
Towards her his life so late and sole delight
Now at his feet submissive in distress.

L. 340.

PARADISE LOST

BOOK X.

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

Mean while the heinous and despiteful act Of Satan, done in Paradise; and how He, in the Serpent, had perverted Eve, Her husband she, to taste the fatal fruit,
Was known in Heav'n; for what can 'scape the eye 
Of God all-seeing, or deceive his heart 
Omniscient? who, in all things wise and just, 
Hinder'd not Satan to attempt the mind 
Of Man, with strength entire and free will arm'd, 
Complete to have discover'd and repuls'd 
Whatever wiles of foe or seeming friend. 
For still they knew, and ought t' have still remember'd, 
The high injunction, not to taste that fruit, 
Whoever tempted; which they not obeying, 
Incurr'd (what could they less?) the penalty; 
And, manifold in sin, deserv'd to fall. 
Up into Heaven from Paradise in haste 
The angelic guards ascended, mute and sad, 
For Man; for of his state by this they knew, 
Much wond'ring how the subtle Fiend had stol'n 
Enterance unseen. Soon as the unwelcome news 
From Earth arriv'd at Heaven-gate, displeas'd 
All were who heard; dim Sadness did not spare 
That time celestial visages, yet, mix'd 
With pity, violated not their bliss. 
About the new-arriv'd, in multitudes 
The ethereal people ran, to hear and know 
How all befell: They towards the throne supreme, 
Accountable, made haste, to make appear, 
With righteous plea, their utmost vigilance, 
And easily approv'd: when the Most High 
Eternal Father, from his secret cloud, 
Amidst in thunder utter'd thus his voice. 
Assembled Angels, and ye Powers return'd
From unsuccessful charge, be not dismay'd,
Nor troubled at these tidings from the earth,
Which your sincerest care could not prevent;
Foretold so lately what would come to pass,
When first this Tempter cross'd the gulf from Hell.
I told ye then he should prevail, and speed
On his bad errand; Man should be seduc'd,
And flatter'd out of all, believing lies
Against his Maker; no decree of mine
Concurring to necessitate his fall,
Or touch with lightest moment of impulse
His free will, to her own inclining left
In even scale. But fall'n he is; and now
What rests, but that the mortal sentence pass
On his transgression, death denounc'd that day?
Which he presumes already vain and void,
Because not yet inflicted, as he fear'd,
By some immediate stroke; but soon shall find
Forbearance no acquittance, ere day end.
Justice shall not return as bounty scorn'd.
But whom send I to judge them? whom but thee,
Vicegerent Son? To thee I have transferr'd
All judgment, whether in Heaven, or Earth, or Hell.
Easy it may be seen that I intend
Mercy colleague with Justice, sending thee,
Man's friend, his Mediator, his design'd
Both ransom and Redeemer voluntary,
And destin'd Man himself to judge Man fallen.

So spake the Father; and, unfolding bright
Toward the right hand his glory, on the Son
Blaz'd forth unclouded Deity: He full
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Express'd, and thus divinely answer'd mild.

Father Eternal, thine is to decree;
Mine, both in Heaven and Earth, to do thy will
Supreme; that thou in me, thy Son belov'd,
May'st ever rest well pleas'd. I go to judge
On earth these thy transgressors; but thou know'st,
Whoever judg'd, the worst on me must light,
When time shall be; for so I undertook
Before thee; and, not repenting, this obtain
Of right, that I may mitigate their doom
On me deriv'd; yet I shall temper so
Justice with mercy, as may illustrate most
Them fully satisfied, and thee appease.
Attendance none shall need, nor train, where none
Are to behold the judgment, but the judg'd,
Those two; the third best absent is condemn'd,
Convict by flight, and rebel to all law:
Conviction to the serpent none belongs.

Thus saying, from his radiant seat he rose
Of high collateral glory: Him Thrones, and Powers,
Prince edoms, and Dominations ministrant,
Accompanied to Heaven-gate; from whence
Eden, and all the coast, in prospect lay.
Down he descended straight; the speed of Gods
Time counts not, though with swiftest minutes wing'd.
Now was the sun in western cadence low
From noon, and gentle airs, due at their hour,
To fan the earth now wak'd, and usher in
The evening cool; when he, from wrath more cool,  
Came the mild Judge, and Intercessor both,  
To sentence Man: The voice of God they heard  
Now walking in the garden, by soft winds  
Brought to their ears, while day declin’d; they heard,  
And from his presence hid themselves among  
The thickest trees, both man and wife; till God,  
Approaching, thus to Adam call’d aloud.

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

He came; and with him Eve, more loth, though first  
To offend; discountenanced both, and discompos’d;  
Love was not in their looks, either to God,  
Or to each other; but apparent guilt,  
And shame, and perturbation, and despair,  
Anger, and obstinacy, and hate, and guile.  
Whence Adam, faltering long, thus answer’d brief.

I heard thee in the garden, and of thy voice  
Afraid, being naked, hid myself. To whom  
The gracious Judge without revile replied.  
My voice thou oft hast heard, and hast not fear’d,  
But still rejoice’d; how is it now become  
So dreadful to thee? That thou art naked, who  
Hath told thee? Hast thou eaten of the tree  
Whereof I gave thee charge thou shouldst not eat?  
To whom thus Adam sore beset replied.
O Heaven! in evil strait this day I stand
Before my Judge; either to undergo
Myself the total crime, or to accuse
My other self, the partner of my life;
Whose failing, while her faith to me remains,
I should conceal, and not expose to blame
By my complaint: but strict necessity
Subdues me, and calamitous constraint;
Lest on my head both sin and punishment,
However insupportable, be all
Devolv'd; though should I hold my peace, yet thou
Wouldst easily detect what I conceal.—
This Woman, whom thou mad'st to be my help,
And gav'st me as thy perfect gift, so good,
So fit, so acceptable, so divine,
That from her hand I could suspect no ill,
And what she did, whatever in itself,
Her doing seem'd to justify the deed;
She gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

To whom the Sov'reign Presence thus replied.
Was she thy God, that her thou didst obey
Before his voice? or was she made thy guide,
Superior, or but equal, that to her
Thou didst resign thy manhood, and the place
Wherein God set thee above her made of thee,
And for thee, whose perfection far excell'd
Hers in all real dignity? Adorn'd
She was indeed, and lovely, to attract
Thy love, not thy subjection; and her gifts
Were such, as under government well seem'd;
Unseemly to bear rule; which was thy part
And person, hadst thou known thyself aright.

So having said, he thus to Eve in few.
Say, Woman, what is this which thou hast done?
To whom sad Eve, with shame nigh overwhelm'd,
Confessing soon, yet not before her Judge
Bold or loquacious, thus abash'd replied.
The Serpent me beguil'd, and I did eat.
Which when the Lord God heard, without delay
To judgment he proceeded on the accus'd
Serpent, though brute; unable to transfer
The guilt on him, who made him instrument
Of mischief, and polluted from the end
Of his creation; justly then accurs'd,
As vitiated in nature: More to know
Concern'd not Man (since he no further knew).
Nor alter'd his offence; yet God at last
To Satan first in sin his doom applied,
Though in mysterious terms, judg'd as then best:
And on the Serpent thus his curse let fall.

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

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

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

On Adam last thus judgment he pronoune'd.
Because thou hast hearken'd to the voice of thy wife,
And eaten of the tree, concerning which
I charg'd thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat thereof:
Curs'd is the ground for thy sake; thou in sorrow
Shalt eat thereof, all the days of thy life;
Thorns also and thistles it shall bring thee forth
Unhid; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field;
In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread,
Till thou return unto the ground; for thou
Out of the ground wast taken, know thy birth,
For dust thou art, and shalt to dust return.

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

Mean while, ere thus was sin'n'd and judg'd on Earth,
Within the gates of Hell sat Sin and Death,
In counterview within the gates, that now
Stood open wide, belching outrageous flame
Far into Chaos, since the Fiend pass'd through,
Sin opening; who thus now to Death began.

O Son, why sit we here each other viewing
Idly, while Satan, our great author, thrives
In other worlds, and happier seat provides
For us, his offspring dear? It cannot be
But that success attends him; if mishap,
Ere this he had return'd, with fury driven
By his avengers; since no place like this
Can fit his punishment, or their revenge.
Methinks I feel new strength within me rise,
Wings growing, and dominion given me large
Beyond this deep; whatever draws me on,
Or sympathy, or some connatural force,
Powerful at greatest distance to unite,
With secret amity, things of like kind,
By secretest conveyance. Thou, my shade
Inseparable, must with me along:
For Death from Sin no power can separate.
But, lest the difficulty of passing back
Stay his return perhaps over this gulf
Impassable, impervious; let us try
Adventurous work, yet to thy power and mine
Not unagreeable, to found a path
Over this main from Hell to that new world,
Where Satan now prevails; a monument
Of merit high to all the infernal host,
Easing their passage hence, for intercourse,
Or transmigration, as their lot shall lead.
Nor can I miss the way, so strongly drawn
By this new-felt attraction and instinct.
    Whom thus the meagre Shadow answer'd soon.
Go, whither Fate, and inclination strong,
Leads thee; I shall not lag behind, nor err
The way, thou leading; such a scent I draw
Of carnage, prey innumerable, and taste
The savour of death from all things there that live:
Nor shall I to the work thou enterprisest
Be wanting, but afford thee equal aid.
    So saying, with delight he snuff'd the smell
Of mortal change on earth. As when a flock
Of ravenous fowl, though many a league remote,
Against the day of battle, to a field,
Where armies lie encamp'd, come flying, lur'd
With scent of living carcasses design'd
For death, the following day, in bloody fight:
So scented the grim Feature, and upturn'd
His nostril wide into the murky air;
Sagacious of his quarry from so far.
Then both from out Hell-gates, into the waste
Wide anarchy of Chaos, damp and dark,
Flew diverse; and with power (their power was great)
Hovering upon the waters, what they met
Solid or slimy, as in raging sea
Tost up and down, together crowded drove,
From each side shoaling towards the mouth of Hell:
As when two polar winds, blowing adverse
Upon the Cronian sea, together drive
Mountains of ice, that stop the imagin'd way
Beyond Petsora eastward, to the rich
Cathaian coast. The aggregated soil
Death with his mace petrific, cold and dry,
As with a trident, smote; and fix'd as firm
As Delos, floating once; the rest his look
Bound with Gorgonian rigour not to move;
And with Asphaltic slime, broad as the gate,
Deep to the roots of Hell the gather'd beach
They fasten'd, and the mole immense wrought on
Over the foaming deep high-arch'd, a bridge
Of length prodigious, joining to the wall
Immoveable of this now fenceless world,
Forfeit to Death; from hence a passage broad,
Smooth, easy, inoffensive, down to Hell.
So, if great things to small may be compar'd,
Xerxes, the liberty of Greece to yoke,
From Susa, his Memnonian palace high,
Came to the sea; and, over Hellespont
Bridging his way, Europe with Asia join'd,
And scourg'd with many a stroke the indignant waves.
Now had they brought the work by wondrous art
Pontifical, a ridge of pendant rock,
Over the vex'd abyss, following the track
Of Satan to the self-same place where he
First lighted from his wing, and landed safe
From out of Chaos, to the outside bare
Of this round world: With pins of adamant
And chains they made all fast, too fast they made
And durable! And now in little space
The confines met of empyræan Heaven,
And of this World; and, on the left hand, Hell
With long reach interpos'd; three several ways
In sight, to each of these three places led.
And now their way to Earth they had descried,
To Paradise first tending; when, behold!
Satan, in likeness of an Angel bright,
Betwixt the Centaur and the Scorpion steering
His zenith, while the sun in Aries rose:
Disguis'd he came; but those his children dear
Their parent soon discern'd, though in disguise.
He, after Eve sedue'd, unminded slunk
Into the wood fast by; and, changing shape,
To observe the sequel, saw his guileful act
By Eve, though all unweeting, seconded
Upon her husband; saw their shame that sought
Vain covertures; but when he saw descend
The Son of God to judge them, terrified
He fled; not hoping to escape, but shun
The present; fearing, guilty, what his wrath
Might suddenly inflict; that past, return'd
By night, and listening where the hapless pair
Sat in their sad discourse, and various plaint,
Thence gather'd his own doom; which understood
Not instant, but of future time, with joy
And tidings fraught, to Hell he now return'd;
And at the brink of Chaos, near the foot
Of this new wondrous pontifice, unhop'd
Met, who to meet him came, his offspring dear.
Great joy was at their meeting, and at sight
Of that stupendous bridge his joy increas'd.
Long he admiring stood, till Sin, his fair
Enchanting daughter, thus the silence broke.

O Parent, these are thy magnific deeds,
Thy trophies! which thou view'st as not thine own;
Thou art their author, and prime architect:
For I no sooner in my heart divin'd,
My heart, which by a secret harmony
Still moves with thine, join'd in connexion sweet,
That thou on earth hadst prosper'd, which thy looks
Now also evidence, but straight I felt,
Though distant from thee worlds between, yet felt,
That I must after thee, with this thy son;
Such fatal consequence unites us three!
Hell could no longer hold us in our bounds,
Nor this unvoyageable gulf obscure
Detain from following thy illustrious track.
Thou hast achiev'd our liberty, confin'd
Within Hell-gates till now; thou us impower'd
To fortify thus far, and overlay,
With this portentous bridge, the dark abyss.
Thine now is all this world; thy virtue hath won
What thy hands builded not; thy wisdom gain'd
With odds what war hath lost, and fully aveng'd
Our foil in Heaven; here thou shalt monarch reign,
There didst not; there let him still victor sway,
As battle hath adjudg'd; from this new world
Retiring, by his own doom alienated;
And henceforth monarchy with thee divide
Of all things, parted by the empyreal bounds,
His quadrature, from thy orbicular world;
Or try thee now more dangerous to his throne.

Whom thus the Prince of darkness answer'd glad.
Fair Daughter, and thou Son and Grandchild both;
High proof ye now have given to be the race
Of Satan (for I glory in the name,
Antagonist of Heaven's Almighty King),
Amply have merited of me, of all
The infernal empire, that so near Heaven's door
Triumphant with triumphal act have met,
Mine, with this glorious work; and made one realm,
Hell and this world, one realm, one continent
Of easy thoroughfare. Therefore, while I
Descend through darkness, on your road with ease,
To my associate Powers, them to acquaint
With these successes, and with them rejoice;
You two this way, among these numerous orbs,
All yours, right down to Paradise descend;
There dwell, and reign in bliss; thence on the earth
 Dominion exercise and in the air,
Chiefly on Man, sole lord of all declar’d;
Him first make sure your thrall, and lastly kill.
My substitutes I send ye, and create
 Plenipotent on earth, of matchless might
Issuing from me: on your joint vigour now
My hold of this new kingdom all depends,
Through Sin to Death expos’d by my exploit.
If your joint power prevail, the affairs of Hell
No detriment need fear; go, and be strong!
So saying he dismiss’d them; they with speed
Their course through thickest constellations held,
Spreading their bane; the blasted stars look’d wan,
And planets, planet-struck, real eclipse
Then suffer’d. The other way Satan went down
The causey to Hell-gate: On either side
Disparted Chaos overbuilt exclaim’d,
And with rebounding surge the bars assail’d,
That scorn’d his indignation: Through the gate,
Wide open and unguarded, Satan pass’d,
And all about found desolate; for those,
Appointed to sit there, had left their charge,
Flown to the upper world; the rest were all
Far to the inland retir’d, about the walls
Of Pandemonium; city and proud seat
Of Lucifer, so by allusion call'd
Of that bright star to Satan paragon'd;
There kept their watch the legions, while the Grand
In council sat, solicitous what chance
Might intercept their emperor sent; so he
Departing gave command, and they observ'd.

As when the Tartar from his Russian foe,
By Astracan, over the snowy plains,
Retires; or Bactrian Sophi, from the horns
Of Turkish crescent, leaves all waste beyond
The realm of Aladule, in his retreat
To Taurus or Casbeen: So these, the late
Heaven-banish'd host, left desert utmost Hell
Many a dark league, reduce'd in careful watch
Round their metropolis; and now expecting
Each hour their great adventurer, from the search
Of foreign worlds: He through the midst unmark'd,
In show plebeian Angel militant
Of lowest order, pass'd; and from the door
Of that Plutonian hall, invisible
Ascended his high throne; which, under state
Of richest texture spread, at the upper end
Was plac'd in regal lustre. Down awhile
He sat, and round about him saw unseen:
At last, as from a cloud, his fulgent head
And shape star-bright appear'd, or brighter; clad
With what permissive glory since his fall
Was left him, or false glitter: All amaz'd
At that so sudden blaze the Stygian throng
Bent their aspect, and whom they wish'd beheld,
Their mighty Chief return'd: loud was the acclaim:
Forth rush'd in haste the great consulting peers,
Rais'd from their dark Divan, and with like joy
Congratulant approach'd him; who with hand
Silence, and with these words attention won.

Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers;
For in possession such, not only of right,
I call ye, and declare ye now; return'd
Successful beyond hope, to lead ye forth
Triumphant out of this infernal pit
Abominable, accrues'd, the house of woe,
And dungeon of our tyrant: Now possess,
As Lords, a spacious world, to our native Heaven
Little inferior, by my adventure hard
With peril great achiev'd. Long were to tell
What I have done, what suffer'd; with what pain
Voyag'd th' unreal, vast, unbounded deep
Of horrible confusion; over which
By Sin and Death a broad way now is pav'd,
To expedite your glorious march; but I
Toil'd out my uncouth passage, forc'd to ride
The untractable abyss, plung'd in the womb
Of unoriginal Night and Chaos wild;
That, jealous of their secrets, fiercely oppos'd
My journey strange, with clamorous uproar'd
Protesting Fate supreme; thence how I found
The new created world, which fame in Heaven
Long had foretold, a fabric wonderful
Of absolute perfection! therein Man
Plac'd in a Paradise, by our exile

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Made happy: Him by fraud I have seduc'd
From his Creator; and, the more to increase
Your wonder, with an apple; he, thereat
Offended, worth your laughter! hath given up
Both his beloved Man, and all his world,
To Sin and Death a prey, and so to us,
Without our hazard, labour, or alarm;
To range in, and to dwell, and over Man
To rule, as over all he should have rul'd.
True is, me also he hath judg'd, or rather
Me not, but the brute serpent in whose shape
Man I deceiv'd: that which to me belongs,
Is enmity which he will put between
Me and mankind; I am to bruise his heel;
His seed (when is not set) shall bruise my head:
A world who would not purchase with a bruise,
Or much more grievous pain?—Ye have the account
Of my performance: What remains, ye Gods,
But up, and enter now into full bliss?

So having said, a while he stood, expecting
Their universal shout, and high applause,
To fill his ear; when, contrary, he hears
On all sides, from innumerable tongues,
A dismal universal hiss, the sound
Of public scorn; he wonder'd, but not long
Had leisure, wondering at himself now more;
His visage drawn he felt to sharp and spare;
His arms clung to his ribs; his legs entwining
Each other, till supplanted down he fell
A monstrous serpent on his belly prone,
Reluctant, but in vain; a greater power
Now rul'd him, punish'd in the shape he sinn'd,
According to his doom: he would have spoke,
But hiss for hiss return'd with forked tongue
To forked tongue; for now were all transform'd
Alike, to serpents all, as accessories
To his bold riot: Dreadful was the din
Of hissing through the hall, thick swarming now
With complicated monsters head and tail,
Scorpion, and Asp, and Amphisbaena dire,
Cerastes horn'd, Hydra, and Elops drear,
And Dipsas; (not so thick swarm'd once the soil
Bedropt with blood of Gorgon, or the isle
Ophiusa,) but still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Ingender'd in the Pythian vale or slime,
Huge Python, and his power no less he seem'd
Above the rest still to retain; they all
Him follow'd, issuing forth to the open field,
Where all yet left of that revolted rout,
Heaven-fallen, in station stood or just array;
Sublime with expectation when to see
In triumph issuing forth their glorious Chief;
They saw, but other sight instead! a crowd
Of ugly serpents; horror on them fell,
And horrid sympathy; for, what they saw,
They felt themselves, now changing; down their arms,
Down fell both spear and shield; down they as fast;
And the dire hiss renew'd, and the dire form
Catch'd, by contagion; like in punishment,
As in their crime. Thus was the applause they meant,  
Turn'd to exploding hiss, triumph to shame  
Cast on themselves from their own mouths. There stood  
A grove hard by, sprung up with this their change,  
His will who reigns above, to aggravate  
Their penance, laden with fair fruit, like that  
Which grew in Paradise, the bait of Eve  
Us'd by the Tempter: on that prospect strange  
Their earnest eyes they fix'd, imagining  
For one forbidden tree a multitude  
Now risen, to work them further woe or shame;  
Yet, parch'd with scalding thirst and hunger fierce,  
Though to delude them sent, could not abstain;  
But on they roll'd in heaps, and, up the trees  
Climbing, sat thicker than the snaky locks  
That curl'd Megæra: greedily they pluck'd  
The fruitage fair to sight, like that which grew  
Near that bituminous lake where Sodom flam'd;  
This, more delusive, not the touch, but taste  
Deceiv'd; they, fondly thinking to allay  
Their appetite with gust, instead of fruit  
Chew'd bitter ashes, which the offended taste  
With spattering noise rejected: oft they assay'd,  
Hunger and thirst constraining; drugg'd as oft,  
With hatefullest disrelish writh'd their jaws,  
With soot and cinders fill'd; so oft they fell  
Into the same illusion, not as Man [plagu'd  
Whom they triumph'd once laps'd. Thus were they  
And worn with famine, long and ceaseless hiss,  
Till their lost shape, permitted, they resum'd;
Yearly enjoin'd, some say, to undergo
This annual humbling certain number'd days,
To dash their pride and joy, for Man seduc'd.
However, some tradition they dispers'd
Among the Heathen, of their purchase got,
And fabled how the Serpent, whom they call'd
Ophiou, with Eurynome, the wide-
Encroaching Eve perhaps, had first the rule
Of high Olympus; thence by Saturn driven
And Ops, ere yet Dictæan Jove was born.

Mean while in Paradise the hellish pair
Too soon arriv'd; Sin, there in power before,
Once actual; now in body, and to dwell
Habitual habitant; behind her Death,
Close following pace for pace, not mounted yet
On his pale horse: to whom Sin thus began.

Second of Satan sprang, all-conquering Death!
What think'st thou of our empire now, though earn'd
With travel difficult, not better far
Than still at Hell's dark threshold to have set watch,
Unnam'd, undreaded, and thyself half starv'd?

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

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

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

See, with what heat these dogs of Hell advance
To waste and havoc yonder world, which I
So fair and good created; and had still
Kept in that state, had not the folly of Man
Let in these wasteful furies, who impute
Folly to me; so doth the Prince of Hell
And his adherents, that with so much ease
I suffer them to enter and possess
A place so heavenly; and, conniving, seem
To gratify my scornful enemies,
That laugh, as if, transported with some fit
Of passion, I to them had quitted all,
At random yielded up to their misrule;
And know not that I call'd, and drew them thither,
My Hell-hounds, to lick up the draf and filth
Which Man's polluting sin with taint hath shed
On what was pure; till, cramm'd and gorg'd, nigh burst,
With suck'd and glutted offal, at one sling
Of thy victorious arm, well-pleasing Son,
Both Sin, and Death, and yawning Grave, at last,  
Through Chaos hurl'd, obstruct the mouth of Hell  
For ever, and seal up his ravenous jaws.  
Then Heaven and Earth renew'd shall be made pure  
To sanctity, that shall receive no stain:  
Till then, the curse pronounc'd on both precedes.  

He ended, and the heavenly audience loud  
Sung Hallelujah, as the sound of seas,  
Through multitude that sung: Just are thy ways,  
Righteous are thy decrees on all thy works;  
Who can extenuate thee? Next, to the Son,  
Destin'd Restorer of mankind, by whom  
New Heaven and Earth shall to the ages rise,  
Or down from Heaven descend.—Such was their song;  
While the Creator, calling forth by name  
His mighty Angels, gave them several charge,  
As sorted best with present things. The sun  
Had first his precept so to move, so shine,  
As might affect the earth with cold and heat  
Scarce tolerable; and from the north to call  
Decrepit winter; from the south to bring  
Solstitial summer's heat. To the blar. moon  
Her office they prescribed; to the other five  
Their planetary motions, and aspects,  
In sextile, square, and trine, and opposite,  
Of noxious efficacy, and when to join  
In synod unbeneign; and taught the fix'd  
Their influence malignant when to shower,  
Which of them rising with the sun, or falling,  
Should prove tempestuous: To the winds they set
Their corners, when with bluster to confound
Sea, air, and shore; the thunder when to roll
With terror through the dark æreal hall.
Some say, he bid his Angels turn askance
The poles of earth, twice ten degrees and more,
From the sun's axle; they with labour push'd
Oblique the centric globe: Some say, the sun
Was bid turn reins from the equinoctial road,
Like distant breadth to Taurus with the seven
Atlantic Sisters, and the Spartan Twins,
Up to the Tropic Crab: thence down amain
By Leo, and the Virgin, and the Scales,
As deep as Capricorn; to bring in change
Of seasons to each clime; else had the spring
Perpetual smil'd on earth with verdant flowers,
Equal in days and nights, except to those
Beyond the polar circles; to them day
Had unbenighted shone, while the low sun,
To recompense his distance, in their sight
Had rounded still the horizon, and not known
Or east or west; which had forbid the snow
From cold Estotiland, and south as far
Beneath Magellan. At that tasted fruit
The sun, as from Thyéstean banquet, turn'd
His course intended; else how had the world
Inhabited, though sinless, more than now,
Avoided pinching cold and scorching heat?
These changes in the Heavens, though slow, produc'd
Like change on sea and land; sideral blast,
Vapour, and mist, and exhalation hot,
Corrupt and pestilent: Now from the north
Of Norumbega, and the Samoed shore,
Bursting their brazen dungeon, arm’d with ice,
And snow, and hail, and stormy gust and flaw,
Boreas, and Cæcias, and Argestes loud,
And Thrascias, rend the woods, and seas upturn;
With adverse blast upturns them from the south
Notus, and Afer black with thunderous clouds
From Serraliona; thwart of these, as fierce,
Forth rush the Levant and the Ponent winds,
Eurus and Zephyr, with their lateral noise,
Sirocco and Libeccchio. Thus began
Outrage from lifeless things; but Discord first,
Daughter of Sin, among the irrational
Death introduc’d, through fierce antipathy:
Beast now with beast ’gan war, and fowl with fowl,
And fish with fish; to graze the herb all leaving,
Devour’d each other; nor stood much in awe
Of Man, but fled him; or, with countenance grim,
Glar’d on him passing. These were from without
The growing miseries, which Adam saw
Already in part, though hid in gloomiest shade,
To sorrow abandon’d, but worse felt within;
And, in a troubled sea of passion tost,
Thus to disburden sought with sad complaint.
O miserable of happy! Is this the end
Of this new glorious world, and me so late
The glory of that glory, who now become
Accurs’d of blessed? hide me from the face
Of God, whom to behold was then my highth
Of happiness!—Yet well, if here would end
The misery; I deserve it, and would bear
My own deservings; but this will not serve:
All that I eat or drink, or shall beget,
Is propagated curse. O voice, once heard
Delightfully, Increase and multiply:
Now death to hear! for what can I increase,
Or multiply, but curses on my head?
Who of all ages to succeed, but, feeling
The evil on him brought by me, will curse
My head? Ill fare our ancestor impure,
For this we may thank Adam! but his thanks
Shall be the execration: so, besides
Mine own that bide upon me, all from me
Shall with a fierce reflux on me rebound;
On me, as on their natural centre, light
Heavy, though in their place. O fleeting joys
Of Paradise, dear bought with lasting woes!
Did I request thee, Maker, from my clay
To mould me Man? did I solicit thee
From darkness to promote me, or here place
In this delicious garden? As my will
Concurr'd not to my being, it were but right
And equal to reduce me to my dust;
Desirous to resign and render back
All I receiv'd; unable to perform
Thy terms too hard, by which I was to hold
The good I sought not. To the loss of that,
Sufficient penalty, why hast thou added
The sense of endless woes? Inexplicable
Thy justice seems; yet, to say truth, too late
I thus contest; then should have been refus'd
Those terms, whatever, when they were propos'd:
Thou didst accept them: wilt thou enjoy the good,
Then cavil the conditions? and, though God
Made thee without thy leave, what if thy son
Prove disobedient; and, reprov'd, retort,
"Wherefore didst thou beget me? I sought it not:"
Wouldst thou admit for his contempt of thee
That proud excuse? yet him not thy election,
But natural necessity, begot.
God made thee of choice his own, and of his own
To serve him; thy reward was of his grace;
Thy punishment then justly is at his will.
Be it so, for I submit; his doom is fair,
That dust I am, and shall to dust return:
O welcome hour whenever! Why delays
His hand to execute what his decree
Fix'd on this day? Why do I overlive?
Why am I mock'd with death, and lengthen'd out
To deathless pain? How gladly would I meet
Mortality my sentence, and be earth
Insensible! How glad would lay me down
As in my mother's lap! There I should rest,
And sleep secure; his dreadful voice no more
Would thunder in my ears; no fear of worse
To me, and to my offspring, would torment me
With cruel expectation. Yet one doubt
Pursues me still, lest all I cannot die;
Lest that pure breath of life, the spirit of Man
Which God inspir'd, cannot together perish
With this corporeal clod; then, in the grave,
Or in some other dismal place, who knows
But I shall die a living death? O thought
Horrid, if true! Yet why? It was but breath
Of life that sinn'd; what dies but what had life
And sin? The body properly had neither.
All of me then shall die: let this appease
The doubt, since human reach no further knows.
For though the Lord of all be infinite,
Is his wrath also? Be it, Man is not so,
But mortal doom'd. How can he exercise
Wrath without end on Man, whom death must end?
Can he make deathless death? That were to make
Strange contradiction, which to God himself
Impossible is held; as argument
Of weakness, not of power. Will he draw out,
For anger's sake, finite to infinite,
In punish'd Man, to satisfy his rigour,
Satisfied never? That were to extend
His sentence beyond dust and Nature's law;
By which all causes else, according still
To the reception of their matter, act;
Not to the extent of their own sphere. But say
That death be not one stroke, as I suppos'd,
Bereaving sense, but endless misery
From this day onward; which I feel begun
Both in me, and without me; and so last
To perpetuity;—Ay me! that fear
Comes thundering back with dreadful revolution
On my defenceless head; both Death and I
Am found eternal, and incorporate both;
Nor I on my part single; in me all
Posterity stands curs'd: Fair patrimony
That I must leave ye, Sons! O, were I able
To waste it all myself, and leave ye none!
So disinherited, how would you bless
Me, now your curse! Ah, why should all mankind,
For one man's fault, thus guiltless be condemn'd,
If guiltless? But from me what can proceed,
But all corrupt; both mind and will deprav'd
Not to do only, but to will the same
With me? How can they then acquitted stand
In sight of God? Him, after all disputes,
Forc'd I absolve: all my evasions vain,
And reasonings, though through mazes, lead me still
But to my own conviction: first and last
On me, me only, as the source and spring
Of all corruption, all the blame lights due;
So might the wrath! Fond wish! couldst thou support
That burden, heavier than the earth to bear;
Than all the world much heavier, though divided
With that bad Woman? Thus, what thou desir'st,
And what thou fear'st, alike destroys all hope
Of refuge, and concludes thee miserable
Beyond all past example and.future;
To Satan only like both crime and doom.
O Conscience! into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driven me; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plung'd!
Thus Adam to himself lamented loud,
Through the still night; not now, as ere Man fell,
Wholesome, and cool, and mild, but with black air
Accompanied; with damps, and dreadful gloom;
Which to his evil conscience represented
All things with double terror: On the ground
Outstretch'd he lay, on the cold ground; and oft
Curs'd his creation; Death as oft accus'd
Of tardy execution, since denounc'd
The day of his offence. Why comes not Death,
Said he, with one thrice-acceptable stroke
To end me? Shall Truth fail to keep her word,
Justice Divine not hasten to be just?
But Death comes not at call; Justice Divine
Mends not her slowest pace for prayers or cries.
O woods, O fountains, hillocks, dales, and bowers!
With other echo late I taught your shades
To answer, and resound far other song.—
Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld,
Desolate where she sat, approaching nigh,
Soft words to his fierce passion she assay'd;
But her with stern regard he thus repell'd.

Out of my sight, thou Serpent! That name best
Befits thee with him leagu'd, thyself as false
And hateful; nothing wants but that thy shape,
Like his, and colour serpentine, may show
Thy inward fraud; to warn all creatures from thee
Henceforth; lest that too heavenly form, pretended
To hellish falsehood, snare them! But for thee
I had persisted happy; had not thy pride
And wandering vanity, when least was safe,
Rejected my forewarning, and disdain'd
Not to be trusted; longing to be seen,
Though by the Devil himself; him overweening
To over-reach; but, with the serpent meeting,
Fool'd and beguil'd; by him thou, I by thee,
To trust thee from my side; imagin'd wise,
Constant, mature, proof against all assaults;
And understood not all was but a show,
Rather than solid virtue; all but a rib
Crooked by nature, bent, as now appears,
More to the part sinister, from me drawn;
Well if thrown out, as supernumerary
To my just number found. O! why did God,
Creator wise, that peopled highest Heaven
With Spirits masculine, create at last
This novelty on earth, this fair defect
Of nature, and not fill the world at once
With Men, as Angels, without feminine;
Or find some other way to generate
Mankind? This mischief had not been befallen,
And more that shall befall; innumerable
Disturbances on earth through female snares,
And strait conjunction with this sex: for either
He never shall find out fit mate, but such
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd
By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld
By parents; or his happiest choice too late
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock bound
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame:
Which infinite calamity shall cause
To human life, and household peace confound.
    He added not, and from her turn'd; but Eve,
Not so repuls'd, with tears that ceas'd not flowing;
And tresses all disorder'd, at his feet
Fell humble; and, embracing them, besought
His peace, and thus proceeded in her plaint.
    Forsake me not thus, Adam! witness, Heaven,
What love sincere, and reverence in my heart
I bear thee, and unweeding have offended,
Unhappily deceiv'd! Thy suppliant
I beg, and clasp thy knees; bereave me not,
Whereon I live, thy gentle looks, thy aid,
Thy counsel, in this uttermost distress,
My only strength and stay: Forlorn of thee,
Whither shall I betake me, where subsist?
While yet we live, scarce one short hour perhaps,
Between us two let there be peace; both joining,
As join'd in injuries, one enmity
Against a foe by doom express assign'd us,
That cruel Serpent: On me exercise not
Thy hatred for this misery befallen;
On me already lost, me than thyself
More miserable? Both have sinn'd; but thou
Against God only; I against God and thee;
And to the place of judgment will return,
There with my cries importune Heaven, that all
The sentence, from thy head remov'd, may light
On me, sole cause to thee of all this woe;
Me, me only, just object of his ire!

She ended weeping; and her lowly plight,
Immoveable, till peace obtain'd from fault
Acknowldg'd and deplor'd, in Adam wrought
Commiseration: Soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress;
Creature so fair his reconcilement seeking,
His counsel, whom she had displeas'd, his aid:
As one disarm'd, his anger all he lost,
And thus with peaceful words uprais'd her soon.

Unwary, and too desirous, as before,
So now of what thou know'st not, who desir'st
The punishment all on thyself; alas!
Bear thine own first, ill able to sustain
His full wrath, whose thou feel'st as yet least part,
And my displeasure bear'st so ill. If prayers
Could alter high decrees, I to that place
Would speed before thee, and be louder heard,
That on my head all might be visited;
Thy frailty and infirmer sex forgiven,
To me committed, and by me expos'd.

But rise;—let us no more contend, nor blame
Each other, blam'd enough elsewhere; but strive
In offices of love, how we may lighten
Each other's burden, in our share of woe;
Since this day's death denounc'd, if aught I see,
Will prove no sudden, but a slow-pac'd, evil;
A long day's dying, to augment our pain;
And to our seed (O hapless seed!) deriv'd.

To whom thus Eve, recovering heart, replied.

Adam, by sad experiment I know
How little weight my words with thee can find,
Found so erroneous; thence by just event
Found so unfortunate: Nevertheless,
Restor'd by thee, vile as I am, to place
Of new acceptance, hopeful to regain
Thy love, the sole contentment of my heart
Living or dying, from thee I will not hide
What thoughts in my unquiet breast are risen,
Tending to some relief of our extremes,
Or end; though sharp and sad, yet tolerable,
As in our evils, and of easier choice.
If care of our descent perplex us most,
Which must be born to certain woe, devour'd
By Death at last; and miserable it is
To be to others cause of misery,
Our own begotten, and of our loins to bring
Into this cursed world a woeful race,
That after wretched life must be at last
Food for so foul a monster; in thy power
It lies, yet ere conception to prevent
The race unblest, to being yet unbegot.
Childless thou art, childless remain: so Death
Shall be deceiv'd his glut, and with us two
Be forc'd to satisfy his ravenous maw.
But if thou judge it hard and difficult,
Conversing, looking, loving, to abstain
From love’s due rights, nuptial embraces sweet;
And with desire to languish without hope,
Before the present object languishing
With like desire; which would be misery
And torment less than none of what we dread;
Then, both ourselves and seed at once to free
From what we fear for both, let us make short,—
Let us seek Death;—or, he not found, supply
With our own hands his office on ourselves:
Why stand we longer shivering under fears,
That show no end but death, and have the power,
Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
Destruction with destruction to destroy?—

She ended here, or vehement despair
Broke off the rest; so much of death her thoughts
Had entertain’d, as dy’d her cheeks with pale,
But Adam, with such counsel nothing sway’d,
To better hopes his more attentive mind
Labouring had rais’d; and thus to Eve replied.

Eve, thy contempt of life and pleasure seems
To argue in thee something more sublime
And excellent, than what thy mind contemns;
But self-destruction therefore sought, refutes
That excellence thought in thee; and implies,
Not thy contempt, but anguish and regret
For loss of life and pleasure overlov’d.
Or if thou covet death, as utmost end
Of misery, so thinking to evade
The penalty pronounc’d; doubt not but God
Hath wiselier arm’d his vengeful ire, than so
To be forestall’d; much more I fear lest death,
So snatch’d, will not exempt us from the pain
We are by doom to pay; rather, such acts
Of contumacy will provoke the Highest
To make death in us live: Then let us seek
Some safer resolution, which methinks
I have in view, calling to mind with heed
Part of our sentence, that thy seed shall bruise
The Serpent’s head; piteous amends! unless
Be meant, whom I conjecture, our grand foe,
Satan; who, in the serpent, hath contriv’d
Against us this deceit: To crush his head
Would be revenge indeed! which will be lost
By death brought on ourselves, or childless days
Resolv’d, as thou proposesst; so our foe
Shall ’scape his punishment ordain’d, and we
Instead shall double ours upon our heads.
No more be mention’d then of violence
Against ourselves; and wilful barrenness,
That cuts us off from hope; and savours only
Rancour and pride, impatience and despite,
Reluctance against God and his just yoke
Laid on our necks. Remember with what mild
And gracious temper he both heard, and judg’d,
Without wrath or reviling; we expected
Immediate dissolution, which we thought
Was meant by death that day; when lo! to thee
Pains only in child-bearing were foretold,
And bringing forth; soon recompens’d with joy,
Fruit of thy womb: On me the curse aslope
Glanc’d on the ground; with labour I must earn
My bread; what harm? Idleness had been worse;
My labour will sustain me; and, lest cold
Or heat should injure us, his timely care
Hath, unbesought, provided; and his hands
Cloth’d us unworthy, pitying while he judg’d;
How much more, if we pray him, will his ear
Be open, and his heart to pity incline,
And teach us further by what means to shun
The inclement seasons, rain, ice, hail, and snow!
Which now the sky, with various face, begins
To show us in this mountain; while the winds
Blow moist and keen, shattering the graceful locks
Of these fair spreading trees; which bids us seek
Some better shroud, some better warmth to cherish
Our limbs benumb’d, ere this diurnal star
Leave cold the night, how we his gather’d beams
Reflected may with matter sere foment;
Or, by collision of two bodies, grind
The air attrite to fire; as late the clouds
Justling, or push’d with winds, rude in their shock,
Tine the slant lightning; whose thwart flame, driven
Kindles the gummy bark of fir or pine;
And sends a comfortable heat from far,
Which might supply the sun: Such fire to use,
And what may else be remedy or cure
To evils which our own misdeeds have wrought,
He will instruct us praying, and of grace
Beseeching him; so as we need not fear
To pass commodiously this life, sustain'd
By him with many comforts, till we end
In dust, our final rest and native home.
What better can we do, than, to the place
Repairing where he judg'd us, prostrate fall
Before him reverent; and there confess
Humbly our faults, and pardon beg; with tears
Watering the ground, and with our sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?
Undoubtedly he will relent, and turn
From his displeasure; in whose look serene,
When angry most he seem'd and most severe,
What else but favour, grace, and mercy, shone?
So spake our father penitent; nor Eve
Felt less remorse: they, forthwith to the place
Repairing where he judg'd them, prostrate fell
Before him reverent; and both confess'd
Humbly their faults, and pardon begg'd: with tears
Watering the ground, and with their sighs the air
Frequenting, sent from hearts contrite, in sign
Of sorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek.
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods
First hunter then pursued a gentle brace—
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind.
The Son of God presents to his Father the prayers of our first parents now repenting, and intercedes for them: God accepts them, but declares that they must no longer abide in Paradise; sends Michael with a band of Cherubim to dispossess them; but first to reveal to Adam future things: Michael's coming down. Adam shows to Eve certain ominous signs; he discerns Michael's approach; goes out to meet him; the Angel denounces their departure. Eve's Lamentation. Adam pleads, but submits: The Angel leads him up to a high hill; sets before him in vision what shall happen till the Flood.

Thus they, in lowliest plight, repentant stood
Praying; for from the mercy-seat above
Prevenient grace descending had remov'd
The stony from their hearts, and made new flesh
Regenerate grow instead; that sighs now breath'd
Unutterable; which the Spirit of prayer
Inspir'd, and wing'd for Heaven with speedier flight
Than loudest oratory: Yet their port
Not of mean suitors; nor important less
Seem'd their petition, than when the ancient pair
In fables old, less ancient yet than these,
Deucalion and chaste Pyrrha, to restore
The race of mankind drown'd, before the shrine,
Of Themis stood devout. To Heaven their prayers
Flew up, nor miss'd the way, by envious winds
Blown vagabond or frustrate: in they pass'd
Dimensionless through heavenly doors; then clad
With incense, where the golden altar fum'd,
By their great Intercessor, came in sight
Before the Father's throne: them the glad Son
Presenting, thus to intercede began.

See, Father, what first-fruits on earth are sprung
From thy implanted grace in Man; these sighs
And prayers, which in this golden censer, mix'd
With incense, I thy priest before thee bring;
Fruits of more pleasing savour, from thy seed
Sown with contrition in his heart, than those
Which, his own hand manuring, all the trees
Of Paradise could have produc'd, ere fallen
From innocence. Now, therefore, bend thine ear
To supplication; hear his sighs, though mute;
Unskilful with what words to pray, let me
Interpret for him; me, his advocate
And propitiation; all his works on me,
Good, or not good, ingraft; my merit those
Shall perfect, and for these my death shall pay.
Accept me; and, in me, from these receive
The smell of peace toward mankind: let him live
Before them reconcil'd, at least his days
Number'd, though sad; till death, his doom (which I
To mitigate thus plead, not to reverse),
To better life shall yield him: where with me
All my redeem'd may dwell in joy and bliss;
Made one with me, as I with thee am one.

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

He ended, and the Son gave signal high
To the bright minister that watch’d; he blew
His trumpet, heard in Oreb since perhaps

P 3
When God descended, and perhaps once more
To sound at general doom. The angelic blast
Fill'd all the regions: from their blissful bowers
Of amaranthe shade, fountain or spring,
By the waters of life, where'er they sat
In fellowships of joy, the sons of light
Hasted, resorting to the summons high;
And took their seats; till from his throne supreme
The Almighty thus pronoune'd his sov'reign will.

O Sons, like one of us Man is become
To know both good and evil, since his taste
Of that defended fruit; but let him boast
His knowledge of good lost, and evil got;
Happier! had it suffie'd him to have known
Good by itself, and evil not at all.
He sorrows now, repents, and prays contrite,
My motions in him; longer than they move,
His heart I know, how variable and vain,
Self-left. Lest therefore his now bolder hand
Reach also of the tree of life, and eat,
And live for ever, dream at least to live
For ever, to remove him I decree,
And send him from the garden forth to till
The ground whence he was taken, fitter soil.

Michael, this my behest have thou in charge:
Take to thee from among the Cherubim
Thy choice of flaming warriors, lest the Fiend,
Or in behalf of Man, or to invade
Vacant possession, some new trouble raise.
Haste thee, and from the Paradise of God
Without remorse drive out the sinful pair;
From hallow'd ground the unholy; and denounce
To them, and to their progeny, from thence
Perpetual banishment. Yet, lest they faint
At the sad sentence rigorously urg'd
(For I behold them soften'd, and with tears
Bewailing their excess), all terror hide.
If patiently thy bidding they obey,
Dismiss them not disconsolate; reveal
To Adam what shall come in future days,
As I shall thee enlighten; intermix
My covenant in the Woman's seed renew'd;
So send them forth, though sorrowing, yet in peace:
And on the east side of the garden place,
Where entrance up from Eden easiest climbs,
Cherubic watch; and of a sword the flame
Wide-waving; all approach far off to fright,
And guard all passage to the tree of life:
Lest Paradise a receptacle prove
To Spirits foul, and all my trees their prey:
With whose stolen fruit Man once more to delude.
He ceas'd; and the arch-angelic Power prepar'd
For swift descent; with him the cohort bright
Of watchful Cherubim: four faces each
Had, like a double Janus; all their shape
Spangled with eyes more numerous than those
Of Argus, and more wakeful than to drouse,
Charm'd with Arcadian pipe, the pastoral reed
Of Hermes, or his opiate rod. Mean while,
To re-salute the world with sacred light,
Leucothea wak’d; and with fresh dews imbalm’d
The earth; when Adam and first matron Eve
Had ended now their orisons, and found
Strength added from above; new hope to spring
Out of despair; joy, but with fear yet link’d;
Which thus to Eve his welcome words renew’d.

Eve, easily my faith admit, that all
The good which we enjoy from Heaven descends;
But, that from us aught should ascend to Heaven
So prevalent as to concern the mind
Of God high-blest, or to incline his will,
Hard to belief may seem; yet this will prayer
Or one short sigh of human breath, upborne
Even to the seat of God. For since I sought
By prayer the offended Deity to appease;
Kneel’d, and before him humbled all my heart;
Methought I saw him placable and mild,
Bending his ear; persuasion in me grew
That I was heard with favour; peace return’d
Home to my breast, and to my memory
His promise, that thy seed shall bruise our foe;
Which then not minded in dismay, yet now
Assures me that the bitterness of death
Is past, and we shall live. Whence hail to thee,
Eve rightly call’d, mother of all mankind,
Mother of all things living, since by thee
Man is to live; and all things live for Man.

To whom thus Eve with sad demeanour meek.
Ill-worthy I such title should belong
To me transgressor; who, for thee ordain'd
A help, became thy snare; to me reproach
Rather belongs, distrust, and all dispraise:
But infinite in pardon was my Judge,
That I, who first brought death on all, am grac'd
The source of life; next favourable thou,
Who highly thus to entitle me vouchsaf'st,
Far other name deserving. But the field
To labour calls us, now with sweat impos'd,
Though after sleepless night; for see! the morn,
All unconcern'd with our unrest, begins
Her rosy progress smiling; let us forth;
I never from thy side henceforth to stray,
Where'er our day's work lies, though now enjoin'd
Laborious, till day droop; while here we dwell,
What can be toilsome in these pleasant walks?
Here let us live, though in fallen state, content.
  So spake, so wish'd much-humbled Eve; but Fate
Subscrib'd not: Nature first gave signus, impress'd
On bird, beast, air; air suddenly eclips'd,
After short blush of morn; nigh in her sight
The bird of Jove, stoop'd from his aery tour,
Two birds of gayest plume before him drove;
Down from a hill the beast that reigns in woods,
First hunter then, pursued a gentle brace,
Goodliest of all the forest, hart and hind;
Direct to the eastern gate was bent their flight.
Adam observ'd, and with his eye the chase
Pursuing, not unmov'd, to Eve thus spake.
  O Eve, some further change awaits us ubig,
Which Heaven, by these mute signs in Nature, shows Forerunners of his purpose; or to warn Us, haply too secure, of our discharge From penalty, because from death releas'd Some days: how long, and what till then our life, Who knows? or more than this, that we are dust, And thither must return, and be no more? Why else this double object in our sight Of flight pursued in the air, and o'er the ground, One way the self-same hour? why in the east Darkness ere day's mid-course, and morning-light More orient in yon western cloud, that draws O'er the blue firmament a radiant white, And slow descends with something heavenly fraught? He err'd not; for by this the heavenly bands Down from a sky of jasper lighted now In Paradise, and on a hill made halt; A glorious apparition, had not doubt And carnal fear that day dimm'd Adam's eye. Not that more glorious, when the Angels met Jacob in Mahanaim, where he saw The field pavilion'd with his guardians bright; Nor that, which on the flaming mount appear'd In Dothan, cover'd with a camp of fire, Against the Syrian king, who to surprise One man, assassin-like, had levied war, War unproclaim'd. The princely Hierarch In their bright stand there left his Powers, to seize Possession of the garden; he alone, To find where Adam shelter'd, took his way,
Not unperceiv'd of Adam; who to Eve,  
While the great visitant approach'd, thus spake.  

Eve, now expect great tidings, which perhaps  
Of us will soon determine, or impose  
New laws to be observ'd; for I descry,  
From yonder blazing cloud that veils the hill,  
One of the heavenly host! and, by his gait,  
None of the meanest; some great Potentate  
Or of the Thrones above; such majesty  
Invests him coming! yet not terrible,  
That I should fear; nor sociably mild,  
As Raphaël, that I should much confide;  
But solemn and sublime; whom not to offend,  
With reverence I must meet, and thou retire.  

He ended: and the Arch-Angel soon drew nigh,  
Not in his shape celestial, but as man  
Clad to meet man; over his lucid arms  
A military vest of purple flow'd,  
Livelier than Melibœan, or the grain  
Of Sarra, worn by kings and heroes old  
In time of truce; Iris had dip't the woof;  
His starry helm unbuckled show'd him prime  
In manhood where youth ended; by his side,  
As in a glistening zodiac, hung the sword,  
Satan's dire dread; and in his hand the spear.  
Adam bow'd low; he, kingly, from his state  
Inclin'd not, but his coming thus declar'd.  

Adam, Heaven's high behest no preface needs:  
Sufficient that thy prayers are heard; and Death,  
Then due by sentence when thou didst transgress,
Defeated of his seizure many days
Given thee of grace; wherein thou may'st repent,
And one bad act with many deeds well done
May'st cover: Well may then thy Lord, appeas'd,
Redeem thee quite from Death's rapacious claim;
But longer in this Paradise to dwell
Permits not: to remove thee I am come,
And send thee from the garden forth to till
The ground whence thou wast taken, fitter soil.
He added not; for Adam at the news
Heart-struck with chilling gripe of sorrow stood,
That all his senses bound; Eve, who unseen
Yet all had heard, with audible lament
Discover'd soon the place of her retire.
O unexpected stroke, worse than of Death!
Must I thus leave thee, Paradise? thus leave
Thee, native soil! these happy walks and shades,
Fit haunt of Gods? where I had hope to spend,
Quiet though sad, the respite of that day
That must be mortal to us both. O flowers,
That never will in other climate grow,
My early visitation, and my last
At even, which I bred up with tender hand
From the first opening bud, and gave ye names!
Who now shall rear ye to the sun, or rank
Your tribes, and water from the ambrosial fount?
Thee lastly, nuptial bower! by me adorn'd
With what to sight or smell was sweet! from thee
How shall I part, and whither wander down
Into a lower world; to this obscure
And wild? how shall we breathe in other air
Less pure, accustom'd to immortal fruits?
Whom thus the Angel interrupted mild.
Lament not, Eve, but patiently resign
What justly thou hast lost, nor set thy heart,
Thus over-fond, on that which is not thine:
Thy going is not lonely; with thee goes
Thy husband; him to follow thou art bound;
Where he abides, think there thy native soil.

Adam, by this from the cold sudden damp
Recovering, and his scatter'd sprits return'd,
To Michael thus his humble words address'd.

Celestial, whether among the Thrones, or nam'd
Of them the highest; for such of shape may seem
Prince above princes! gently hast thou told
Thy message, which might else in telling wound,
And in performing end us; what besides
Of sorrow, and dejection, and despair,
Our frailty can sustain, thy tidings bring,
Departure from this happy place, our sweet
Recess, and only consolation left
Familiar to our eyes! all places else
Inhospitable appear, and desolate;
Nor knowing us, nor known: And, if by prayer
Incessant I could hope to change the will
Of Him who all things can, I would not cease
To weary him with my assiduous cries:
But prayer against his absolute decree
No more avails than breath against the wind,
Blown stifling back on him that breathes it forth:
Therefore to his great bidding I submit.
This most afflicts me, that, departing hence,
As from his face I shall be hid, depriv'd
His blessed countenance: Here I could frequent
With worship place by place where he vouchsaf'd
Presence Divine; and to my sons relate,
"On this mount he appear'd; under this tree
Stood visible; among these pines his voice
I heard; here with him at this fountain talk'd;"
So many grateful altars I would rear
Of grassy turf, and pile up every stone
Of lustre from the brook, in memory,
Or monument to ages; and thereon
Offer sweet-smelling gums, and fruits, and flowers;
In yonder nether world where shall I seek
His bright appearances, or foot-step trace?
For though I fled him angry, yet, recall'd
To life prolong'd and promis'd race, I now
Gladly behold though but his utmost skirts
Of glory; and far off his steps adore.

To whom thus Michael with regard benign.
Adam, thou know'st Heaven his, and all the Earth;
Not this rock only; his Omnipresence fills
Land, sea, and air, and every kind that lives,
Fomented by his virtual power and warm'd:
All the earth he gave thee to possess and rule,
No despicable gift; surmise not then
His presence to these narrow bounds confin'd
Of Paradise, or Eden: this had been
Perhaps thy capital seat, from whence had spread
All generations; and had hither come
From all the ends of the earth, to celebrate
And reverence thee, their great progenitor.
But this pre-eminence thou hast lost, brought down
To dwell on even ground now with thy sons:
Yet doubt not but in valley, and in plain,
God is, as here; and will be found alike
Present; and of his presence many a sign
Still following thee, still compassing thee round
With goodness and paternal love, his face
Express, and of his steps the track divine.
Which that thou may’st believe, and be confirm’d
Ere thou from hence depart; know, I am sent
To show thee what shall come in future days
To thee, and to thy offspring: good with bad
Expect to hear; supernal grace contending
With sinfulness of men; thereby to learn
True patience, and to temper joy with fear
And pious sorrow; equally inur’d
By moderation either state to bear,
Prosperous or adverse: so shalt thou lead
Safest thy life, and best prepar’d endure
Thy mortal passage when it comes.—Ascend
This hill; let Eve (for I have drench’d her eyes)
Here sleep below; while thou to foresight wak’st;
As once thou slept’st, while she to life was form’d.
To whom thus Adam gratefully replied.
Ascend; I follow thee, safe Guide, the path
Thou lead’st me; and to the hand of Heaven submit,
However chastening; to the evil turn
My obvious breast; arming to overcome
By suffering, and earn rest from labour won,
If so I may attain.—So both ascend
In the visions of God. It was a hill,
Of Paradise the highest; from whose top
The hemisphere of earth, in clearest ken,
Stretch'd out to the ampest reach of prospect lay.
Not higher than that hill, nor wider looking round,
Whereon, for different cause, the Tempter set
Our second Adam, in the wilderness;
To show him all Earth's kingdoms, and their glory.
His eye might there command wherever stood
City of old or modern fame, the seat
Of mightiest empire, from the destin'd wall
Of Cambaln, seat of Cathaian Can,
And Samarchand by Oxus, Temir's throne,
To Paquin of Sinæan kings; and thence
To Agra and Lahor of great Mogul,
Down to the golden Chersonese; or where
The Persian in Ecbatan sat, or since
In Hispahan; or where the Russian Ksar
In Mosco; or the Sultan in Bizance,
Turchestan-born; nor could his eye not ken
The empire of Negus to his utmost port
Ercoco, and the less maritime kings
Mombaza, and Quila, and Melind,
And Sofala, thought Ophir, to the realm
Of Congo, and Angola furthest south;
Or thence from Niger flood to Atlas mount
The kingdoms of Almansor, Fez and Sus,
Morocco, and Algiers, and Tremisen;
On Europe thence, and where Rome was to sway
The world: in spirit perhaps he also saw
Rich Mexico, the seat of Montezume,
And Cusco in Peru, the richer seat
Of Atabalipa; and yet unspoil'd
Guiana, whose great city Geryon's sons
Call El Dorado. But to nobler sights
Michael from Adam's eyes the film remov'd,
Which that false fruit that promis'd clearer sight
Had bred; then purg'd with euphrasy and rue
The visual nerve, for he had much to see;
And from the well of life three drops instill'd.
So deep the power of these ingredients pierce'd,
Even to the inmost seat of mental sight,
That Adam, now enforc'd to close his eyes,
Sunk down, and all his spirits became entranc'd;
But him the gentle Angel by the hand
Soon rais'd, and his attention thus recall'd.
    Adam, now ope thine eyes; and first behold
The effects, which thy original crime hath wrought
In some to spring from thee; who never touch'd
The excepted tree; nor with the snake conspir'd;
Nor sinn'd thy sin; yet from that sin derive
Corruption, to bring forth more violent deeds.
    His eyes he open'd, and beheld a field,
Part arable and tilth, whereon were sheaves
New reap'd; the other part sheep-walks and folds;
I'the midst an altar as the land-mark stood,
Rustic, of grassy sord; thither anon
A sweaty reaper from his tillage brought  
First fruits, the green ear, and the yellow sheaf,  
Uncull'd, as came to hand; a shepherd next,  
More meek, came with the firstlings of his flock,  
Choicest and best; then, sacrificing, laid  
The inwards and their fat, with incense strow'd,  
On the cleft wood, and all due rights perform'd:  
His offering soon propitious fire from Heaven  
Consum'd with nimble glance, and grateful steam;  
The other's not, for his was not sincere;  
Whereat he inly rag'd, and, as they talk'd,  
Smote him into the midriff with a stone  
That beat out life; he fell; and, deadly pale,  
Groan'd out his soul with gushing blood effus'd.  
Much at that sight was Adam in his heart  
Dismay'd, and thus in haste to the Angel cried.  
O Teacher, some great mischief hath befallen  
To that meek man, who well had sacrific'd;  
Is piety thus and pure devotion paid?  
To whom Michael thus, he also mov'd, replied.  
These two are brethren, Adam, and to come  
Out of thy loins; the unjust the just hath slain,  
For envy that his brother's offering found  
From Heaven acceptance; but the bloody fact  
Will be aveng'd: and the other's faith, approv'd,  
Lose no reward; though here thou see him die,  
Rolling in dust and gore. To which our sire.  
Alas! both for the deed, and for the cause!  
But have I now seen Death? Is this the way  
I must return to native dust? O sight
Of terror, foul and ugly to behold,
Horrid to think, how horrible to feel!

'To whom thus Michaël. Death thou hast seen
In his first shape on Man; but many shapes
Of Death, and many are the ways that lead
To his grim cave, all dismal; yet to sense
More terrible at the entrance, than within.
Some, as thou saw'st, by violent stroke shall die;
By fire, flood, famine, by intemperance more
In meats and drinks, which on the earth shall bring
Diseases dire, of which a monstrous crew
Before thee shall appear; that thou may'st know
What misery the inabstinence of Eve
Shall bring on Men. Immediately a place
Before his eyes appear'd, sad, noisome, dark;
A lazar-house it seem'd; wherein were laid
Numbers of all diseas'd; all maladies
Of ghastly spasm, or racking torture, qualms
Of heart-sick agony, all feverous kinds,
Convulsions, epilepsies, fierce catarrhs,
Intestine stone and ulcer, colic-pangs,
Demoniac phrensy, moping melancholy,
And moon-struck madness, pining atrophy,
Marasmus, and wide-wasting pestilence,

Dropsies, and asthmas, and joint-racking rheums.
Dire was the tossing, deep the groans; Despair
Tended the sick busiest from couch to couch;
And over them triumphant Death his dart
Shook, but delay'd to strike, though oft invok'd
With vows, as their chief good, and final hope.
Sight so deform what heart of rock could long
Dry-ey'd behold? Adam could not, but wept,
Though not of woman born; compassion quell'd
His best of man, and gave him up to tears
A space, till firmer thoughts restrain'd excess;
And, scarce recovering words, his plaint renew'd.

O miserable mankind, to what fall
Degraded, to what wretched state reserv'd!
Better end here unborn. Why is life given
To be thus wrested from us? rather, why
Obtruded on us thus? who, if we knew
What we receive, would either not accept
Life offer'd, or soon beg to lay it down;
Glad to be so dismiss'd in peace. Can thus
The image of God in Man, created once
So goodly and erect, though faulty since,
To such unsightly sufferings be debas'd
Under inhuman pains? Why should not Man,
Retaining still divine similitude
In part, from such deformities be free,
And, for his Maker's image sake, exempt?

Their Maker's image, answer'd Michael, then
Forsook them, when themselves they vilified
To serve ungovern'd Appetite; and took
His image whom they serv'd, a brutish vice,
Inductive mainly to the sin of Eve.
Therefore so abject is their punishment,
Disfiguring not God's likeness, but their own;
Or if his likeness, by themselves defac'd;
While they pervert pure Nature's healthful rules
To loathsome sickness; worthily, since they
God's image did not reverence in themselves.
  I yield it just, said Adam, and submit.
But is there yet no other way, besides
These painful passages, how we may come
to death, and mix with our connatural dust?
  There is, said Michael, if thou well observe
The rule of *Not too much*; by temperance taught,
in what thou eat'st and drink'st; seeking from thence
Due nourishment, not gluttonous delight,
till many years over thy head return:
So may'st thou live; till, like ripe fruit, thou drop
  into thy mother's lap; or be with ease
Gather'd, not harshly pluck'd; for death mature:
This is Old Age; but then, thou must outlive
Thy youth, thy strength, thy beauty; which will change
to wither'd, weak, and grey; thy senses then,
Obtuse, all taste of pleasure must forego,
to what thou hast; and, for the air of youth,
Hopeful and cheerful, in thy blood will reign
A melancholy damp of cold and dry
To weigh thy spirits down, and last consume
The balm of life. To whom our ancestor.
  Henceforth I fly not death, nor would prolong
Life much; bent rather, how I may be quit,
Fairest and easiest, of this cumbrous charge;
Which I must keep till my appointed day
Of rendering up, and patiently attend
My dissolution. Michaël replied.
  Nor love thy life, nor hate; but what thou liv'st
Live well; how long, or short, permit to Heaven:  
And now prepare thee for another sight.

He look’d, and saw a spacious plain, whereon  
Were tents of various hue; by some, were herds  
Of cattle grazing; others, whence the sound  
Of instruments, that made melodious chime,  
Was heard, of harp and organ; and, who mov’d  
Their stops and chords, was seen; his volant touch,  
Instinct through all proportions, low and high,  
Fled and pursued transverse the resonant fugue.  
In other part stood one who, at the forge  
Labouring, two massy clods of iron and brass  
Had melted, (whether found where casual fire  
Had wasted woods on mountain or in vale,  
Down to the veins of earth; thence gliding hot  
To some cave’s mouth; or whether wash’d by stream  
From underground;) the liquid ore he drain’d  
Into fit moulds prepar’d; from which he form’d  
First his own tools; then, what might else be wrought  
Fusil or graven in metal. After these,  
But on the hither side, a different sort  
From the high neighbouring hills, which was their seat,  
Down to the plain descended; by their guise  
Just men they seem’d, and all their study bent  
To worship God aright, and know his works  
Not hid; nor those things last, which might preserve  
Freedom and peace to Men; they on the plain  
Long had not walk’d, when from the tents, behold!  
A bevy of fair women, richly gay  
In gems and wanton dress; to the harp they sung
Soft amorous ditties, and in dance came on:
The men, though grave, ey'd them; and let their eyes
Rove without rein; till, in the amorous net
Fast caught, they lik'd; and each his liking chose;
And now of love they treat, till the evening-star,
Love's harbinger, appear'd; then, all in heat
They light the nuptial torch, and bid invoke
Hymen, then first to marriage rites invok'd:
With feast and music all the tents resound.
Such happy interview, and fair event
Of love and youth not lost, songs, garlands, flowers,
And charming symphonies, attach'd the heart
Of Adam, soon inclin'd to admit delight,
The bent of nature; which he thus express'd.

True opener of mine eyes, prime Angel blest;
Much better seems this vision, and more hope
Of peaceful days portends, than those two past;
Those were of hate and death, or pain much worse;
Here Nature seems fullfill'd in all her ends.
To whom thus Michael. Judge not what is best
By pleasure, though to nature seeming meet;
Created, as thou art, to nobler end
Holy and pure, conformity divine,
Those tents thou saw'st so pleasant, were the tents
Of wickedness, wherein shall dwell his race
Who slew his brother; studious they appear
Of arts that polish life, inventors rare;
Unmindful of their Maker, though his Spirit
Taught them; but they his gifts acknowledg'd none.
Yet they a beauteous offspring shall beget;
For that fair female troop thou saw'st, that seem'd
Of Goddesses, so blithe, so smooth, so gay,
Yet empty of all good wherein consists
Woman's domestic honour and chief praise;
Bred only and completed to the taste
Of lustful appetite, to sing, to dance,
To dress, and troll the tongue, and roll the eye:
To these that sober race of men, whose lives
Religious titled them the sons of God,
Shall yield up all their virtue, all their fame
Ignobly, to the trains and to the smiles
Of these fair atheists; and now swim in joy,
Erelong to swim at large; and laugh, for which
The world erelong a world of tears must weep.
To whom thus Adam, of short joy bereft.
O pity and shame, that they, who to live well
Enter'd so fair, should turn aside to tread
Paths indirect, or in the mid way faint!
But still I see the tenor of Man's woe
Holds on the same, from Woman to begin.
From Man's effeminate slackness it begins,
Said the Angel, who should better hold his place
By wisdom, and superior gifts receiv'd.
But now prepare thee for another scene.
He look'd, and saw wide territory spread
Before him, towns, and rural works between;
Cities of men with lofty gates and towers,
Concourse in arms, fierce faces threatening war,
Giants of mighty bone and bold emprise;
Part wield their arms, part curb the foaming steed,
Single or in array of battle rang'd  
Both horse and foot, nor idly mustering stood;  
One way a band select from forage drives  
A herd of beeves, fair oxen and fair kine,  
From a fat meadow ground; or fleezy flock,  
Ewes and their bleating lambs over the plain,  
Their booty; scarce with life the shepherds fly,  
But call in aid, which makes a bloody fray;  
With cruel tournament the squadrons join;  
Where cattle pastur'd late, now scatter'd lies  
With carcasses and arms the ensanguin'd field,  
Deserted: Others to a city strong  
Lay siege, encamp'd; by battery, scale, and mine,  
Assaulting; others from the wall defend  
With dart and javelin, stones, and sulphurous fire;  
On each hand slaughter, and gigantic deeds.  
In other part the scepter'd heralds call  
To council, in the city-gates; anon  
Grey-headed men and grave, with warriors mix'd,  
Assemble, and harangues are heard; but soon,  
In factious opposition; till at last,  
Of middle age one rising, eminent  
In wise deport, spake much of right and wrong,  
Of justice, of religion, truth, and peace,  
And judgment from above: him old and young  
Exploded, and had seiz'd with violent hands,  
Had not a cloud descending snatch'd him thence  
Unseen amid the throng; so violence  
Proceeded, and oppression, and sword-law,  
Through all the plain, and refuge none was found.
Adam was all in tears, and to his guide
Lamenting turn'd full sad; O! what are these,
Death's ministers, not men? who thus deal death
Inhumanly to men, and multiply
Ten thousandfold the sin of him who slew
His brother: for of whom such massacre
Make they, but of their brethren; men of men?
But who was that just man, whom had not Heaven
Rescued, had in his righteousness been lost?
To whom thus Michael. These are the product
Of those ill-mated marriages thou saw'st;
Where good with bad were match'd, who of themselves
Abhor to join; and, by imprudence mix'd,
Produce prodigious births of body or mind.
Such were these giants, men of high renown;
For in those days might only shall be admir'd,
And valour and heroic virtue call'd;
To overcome in battle, and subdue
Nations, and bring home spoils with infinite
Man-slaughter, shall be held the highest pitch
Of human glory; and for glory done
Of triumph, to be styl'd great conquerors,
Patrons of mankind, Gods, and sons of Gods;
Destroyers rightlier call'd, and plagues of men.
Thus fame shall be achiev'd, renown on earth;
And what most merits fame, in silence hid.
But he, the seventh from thee, whom thou beheldst
The only righteous in a world perverse,
And therefore hated, therefore so beset
With foes, for daring single to be just,
And utter odious truth, that God would come
To judge them with his Saints: him the Most High
Rapt in a balmy cloud with winged steeds
Did, as thou saw'st, receive, to walk with God
High in salvation and the climes of bliss,
Exempt from death; to show thee what reward
Awaits the good; the rest what punishment;
Which now direct thine eyes and soon behold.
He look'd, and saw the face of things quite chang'd;
The brazen throat of war had ceas'd to roar;
All now was turn'd to jollity and game,
To luxury and riot, feast and dance;
Marrying or prostituting, as befel,
Rape or adultery, where passing fair
Allur'd them; thence from cups to civil broils.
At length a reverend sire among them came,
And of their doings great dislike declar'd,
And testified against their ways; he oft
Frequented their assemblies, whereso met,
Triumphs or festivals; and to them preach'd
Conversion and repentance, as to souls
In prison, under judgments imminent:
But all in vain: which when he saw, he ceas'd
Contending, and remov'd his tents far off;
Then, from the mountain hewing timber tall,
Began to build a vessel of huge bulk;
Measur'd by cubit, length, and breadth, and hight;
Smear'd round with pitch; and in the side a door
Contriv'd; and of provisions laid in large,
For man and beast: when lo, a wonder strange!
Of every beast, and bird, and insect small,
Came sevens and pairs; and enter'd in as taught
Their order: last the sire and his three sons,
With their four wives; and God made fast the door.
Meanwhile the south-wind rose, and, with black wings
Wide-hovering, all the clouds together drove
From under Heaven; the hills to their supply
Vapour, and exhalation dusk and moist,
Sent up amain; and now the thicken'd sky,
Like a dark ceiling stood; down rush'd the rain
Impetuous; and continued, till the earth
No more was seen: the floating vessel swum
Uplifted, and secure with beaked prow
Rode tilting o'er the waves; all dwellings else
Flood overwhelm'd, and them with all their pomp
Deep under water roll'd; sea cover'd sea,
Sea without shore; and in their palaces,
Where luxury late reign'd, sea-monsters whelp'd
And stabled; of mankind, so numerous late,
All left in one small bottom swum embark'd.
How didst thou grieve then, Adam, to behold
The end of all thy offspring, end so sad,
Depopulation! Thee another flood,
Of tears and sorrow a flood, thee also drown'd
And sunk thee as thy sons; till, gently rear'd
By the Angel, on thy feet thou stood'st at last,
Though comfortless; as when a father mourns
His children, all in view destroy'd at once;
And scarce to the Angel utter'dst thus thy plaint.
   O visions ill foreseen! Better had I
Liv'd ignorant of future! so had borne
My part of evil only, each day's lot
Enough to bear; those now, that were dispens'd
The burden of many ages, on me light
At once, by my foreknowledge gaining birth
Abortive, to torment me ere their being,
With thought that they must be. Let no man seek
Henceforth to be foretold, what shall befal
Him or his children; evil he may be sure,
Which neither his foreknowing can prevent;
And he the future evil shall no less
In apprehension than in substance feel,
Grievous to bear: but that care now is past,
Man is not whom to warn: those few escap'd
Famine and anguish will at last consume,
Wandering that watery desert: I had hope,
When violence was ceas'd, and war on earth,
All would have then gone well; peace would have
With length of happy days the race of Man; [crown'd
But I was far deceiv'd; for now I see
Peace to corrupt no less than war to waste.
How comes it thus? unfold, celestial Guide,
And whether here the race of Man will end.
To whom thus Michael. Those, whom last thou
In triumph and luxurious wealth, are they [saw'st
First seen in acts of prowess eminent
And great exploits, but of true virtue void;
Who, having spilt much blood, and done much waste
Subduing nations, and achiev'd thereby
Fame in the world, high titles, and rich prey;
Shall change their course to pleasure, ease, and sloth,
Surfeit, and lust; till wantonness and pride
Raise out of friendship hostile deeds in peace.
The conquer'd also, and enslav'd by war,
Shall, with their freedom lost, all virtue lose
And fear of God; from whom their piety feign'd
In sharp contest of battle found no aid
Against invaders; therefore, cool'd in zeal,
Thenceforth shall practise how to live secure,
Worldly or dissolute, on what their lords
Shall leave them to enjoy; for the earth shall bear
More than enough, that temperance may be tried:
So all shall turn degenerate, all deprav'd;
Justice and temperance, truth and faith, forgot;
One man except, the only son of light
In a dark age, against example good,
Against allurement, custom, and a world
Offended: fearless of reproach and scorn,
Or violence, he of their wicked ways
Shall them admonish; and before them set
The paths of righteousness, how much more safe
And full of peace; denouncing wrath to come
On their impenitence; and shall return
Of them derided, but of God observ'd
The one just man alive; by his command
Shall build a wondrous ark, as thou beheld'st,
To save himself, and household, from amidst
A world devote to universal wrack.
No sooner he, with them of man and beast
Select for life, shall in the ark be lodg'd,
And shelter'd round; but all the cataracts
Of Heaven set open on the Earth shall pour
Rain, day and night; all fountains of the deep,
Broke up, shall heave the ocean to usurp
Beyond all bounds; till inundation rise
Above the highest hills: Then shall this mount
Of Paradise by might of waves be mov'd
Out of his place, push'd by the horned flood,
With all his verdure spoil'd, and trees adrift,
Down the great river to the opening gulf,
And there take root an island salt and bare,
The haunt of seals, and orcs, and sea-mews' clang:
To teach thee that God attributes to place
No sanctity, if none be thither brought
By men who there frequent, or therein dwell.
And now, what further shall ensue, behold.

He look'd, and saw the ark hull on the flood,
Which now abated; for the clouds were fled,
Driven by a keen north-wind, that, blowing dry,
Wrinkled the face of deluge, as decay'd;
And the clear sun on his wide watery glass
Gaz'd hot, and of the fresh wave largely drew,
As after thirst; which made their flowing shrink
From standing lake to tripping ebb, that stole
With soft foot towards the deep; who now had stopt
His sluices, as the Heaven his windows shut.
The ark no more now floats, but seems on ground,
Fast on the top of some high mountain fix'd.
And now the tops of hills, as rocks, appear;
With clamour thence the rapid currents drive,
Towards the retreating sea, their furious tide.
Forthwith from out the ark a raven flies,
And after him, the surer messenger,
A dove sent forth once and again to spy
Green tree or ground, whereon his foot may light:
The second time returning, in his bill
An olive-leaf he brings, pacific sign:
Anon dry ground appears, and from his ark
The ancient sire descends, with all his train;
Then with uplifted hands, and eyes devout,
Grateful to Heaven, over his head beholds
A dewy cloud, and in the cloud a bow
Conspicuous with three listed colours gay,
Betokening peace from God, and covenant new.
Whereat the heart of Adam, erst so sad,
Greatly rejoic'd; and thus his joy broke forth.

O thou, who future things canst represent
As present, heavenly Instructor! I revive
At this last sight; assur'd that Man shall live,
With all the creatures, and their seed preserve.
Far less I now lament for one whole world
Of wicked sons destroy'd, than I rejoice
For one man found so perfect, and so just,
That God vouchsafes to raise another world
From him, and all his anger to forget.
But say, what mean those colour'd streaks in Heaven
Distended, as the brow of God appeas'd?
Or serve they, as a flowery verge, to bind
The fluid skirts of that same watery cloud,
Lest it again dissolve, and shower the earth?
To whom the Arch-Angel. Dextrously thou aim’st:
So willingly doth God remit his ire,
Though late repenting him of Man deprav’d;
Griev’d at his heart, when looking down he saw
The whole earth fill’d with violence, and all flesh
Corrupting each their way; yet, those remov’d,
Such grace shall one just man find in his sight,
That he relents, not to blot out mankind;
And makes a covenant never to destroy
The earth again by flood; nor let the sea
Surpass his bounds; nor rain to drown the world,
With man therein or beast; but, when he brings
Over the earth a cloud, will therein set
His triple-coloured bow, whereon to look,
And call to mind his covenant: Day and night,
Seed-time and harvest, heat and hoary frost,
Shall hold their course; till fire purge all things new,
Both Heaven and Earth, wherein the just shall dwell.
They looking back, all the eternal bliss of Paradise, late their happy seat
Waved over by that flaming sword.

PANACEA LEE

MARK 13
The Angel Michael continues, from the Flood, to relate what shall succeed; then, in the mention of Abraham, comes by degrees to explain who that Seed of the Woman shall be, which was promised Adam and Eve in the Fall; his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension; the state of the church till his second coming. Adam, greatly satisfied and recomforted by these relations and promises, descends the hill with Michael; wakens Eve, who all this while had slept, but with gentle dreams composed to quietness of mind and submission. Michael in either hand leads them out of Paradise, the fiery sword waving behind them, and the Cherubim taking their stations to guard the place.

As one who in his journey bates at noon,
Though bent on speed; so here the Arch-Angel paus'd
Betwixt the world destroy'd and world restor'd,
If Adam aught perhaps might interpose;
Then, with transition sweet, new speech resumes.

Thus thou hast seen one world begin, and end;
And Man, as from a second stock, proceed.
Much thou hast yet to see; but I perceive
Thy mortal sight to fail; objects divine
Must needs impair and weary human sense:
Henceforth what is to come I will relate;
Thou therefore give due audience, and attend.

This second source of Men, while yet but few,
And while the dread of judgment past remains
Fresh in their minds, fearing the Deity,
With some regard to what is just and right
Shall lead their lives, and multiply apace;
Labouring the soil, and reaping plenteous crop,
Corn, wine, and oil; and, from the herd or flock,
Oft sacrificing bullock, lamb, or kid,
With large wine-offerings pour'd, and sacred feast,
Shall spend their days in joy unblam'd; and dwell
Long time in peace, by families and tribes,
Under paternal rule: till one shall rise
Of proud ambitious heart; who, not content
With fair equality, fraternal state,
Will arrogate dominion undeserv'd
Over his brethren, and quite dispossess
Concord and law of nature from the earth;
Hunting (and men not beasts shall be his game)
With war, and hostile snare, such as refuse
Subjection to his empire tyrannous:
A mighty hunter thence he shall be styl'd
Before the Lord; as in despite of Heaven,
Or from Heaven, claiming second sov'reignty;
And from rebellion shall derive his name,
Though of rebellion others he accuse.
He with a crew, whom like ambition joins
With him or under him to tyrannize,
Marching from Eden towards the west, shall find
The plain, wherein a black bituminousurge
Boils out from under ground, the mouth of Hell:
Of brick, and of that stuff, they cast to build
A city and tower, whose top may reach to Heaven; 
And get themselves a name; lest, far dispers'd 
In foreign lands, their memory be lost; 
Regardless whether good or evil fame. 
But God, who oft descends to visit men 
Unseen, and through their habitations walks 
To mark their doings, them beholding soon, 
Comes down to see their city, ere the tower 
Obstruct Heaven-towers; and in derision sets 
Upon their tongues a various spirit, to rase 
Quite out their native language; and, instead, 
To sow a jangling noise of words unknown: 
Forthwith a hideous gabble rises loud, 
Among the builders; each to other calls 
Not understood; till hoarse, and all in rage, 
As mock'd they storm: great laughter was in Heaven, 
And looking down, to see the hubbub strange, 
And hear the din: Thus was the building left 
Ridiculous, and the work *Confusion* nam'd. 

Where to thus Adam, fatherly displeas'd. 
O execrable son! so to aspire 
Above his brethren; to himself assuming 
Authority usurp'd, from God not given: 
He gave us only over beast, fish, fowl, 
Dominion absolute; that right we hold 
By his donation; but man over men 
He made not lord; such title to himself 
Reserving, human left from human free. 
But this usurper his encroachment proud 
Stays not on Man; to God his tower inteuds
Siege and defiance: Wretched man! what food
Will he convey up thither, to sustain
Himself and his rash army; where thin air
Above the clouds will pine his entrails gross,
And famish him of breath, if not of bread?
To whom thus Michael. Justly thou abhorr'st
That son, who on the quiet state of men
Such trouble brought, affecting to subdue
Rational liberty; yet know withal,
Since thy original lapse, true liberty
Is lost, which always with right reason dwells
Twinn'd, and from her hath no dividual being:
Reason in man obscur'd, or not obey'd,
Immediately inordinate desires,
And upstart passions, catch the government
From reason; and to servitude reduce
Man, till then free. Therefore, since he permits
Within himself unworthy powers to reign
Over free reason, God, in judgment just,
Subjects him from without to violent lords;
Who oft as undeservedly inthral
His outward freedom: Tyranny must be;
Though to the tyrant thereby no excuse.
Yet sometimes nations will decline so low
From virtue, which is reason, that no wrong,
But justice, and some fatal curse annex'd,
Deprives them of their outward liberty;
Their inward lost: Witness the irreverent son
Of him who built the ark; who, for the shame
Done to his father, heard this heavy curse,
Servant of servants, on his vicious race.
Thus will this latter, as the former world,
Still tend from bad to worse; till God at last,
Wearied with their iniquities, withdraw
His presence from amongst them, and avert
His holy eyes; resolving from thenceforth
To leave them to their own polluted ways;
And one peculiar nation to select
From all the rest, of whom to be invok'd,
A nation from one faithful man to spring:
Him on this side Euphrates yet residing,
Bred up in idol-worship: O, that men
(Canst thou believe?) should be so stupid grown,
While yet the patriarch liv'd, who 'scap'd the flood,
As to forsake the living God, and fall
To worship their own work in wood and stone
For Gods! Yet him God the Most High vouchsafes
To call by vision, from his father's house,
His kindred, and false Gods, into a land
Which he will show him; and from him will raise
A mighty nation; and upon him shower
His benediction so, that in his seed
All nations shall be blest: he straight obeys;
Not knowing to what land, yet firm believes:
I see him, but thou canst not, with what faith
He leaves his Gods, his friends, and native soil,
Ur of Chaldaea, passing now the ford
To Haran; after him a cumbrous train
Of herds and flocks, and numerous servitude;
Not wandering poor, but trusting all his wealth
With God, who call'd him, in a land unknown.
Canaan he now attains; I see his tents
Pitch'd about Sechem, and the neighbouring plain
Of Moreh; there by promise he receives
Gift to his progeny of all that land,
From Hamath northward to the Desert south;
(Things by their names I call, though yet unnam'd;
From Hermon cast to the great western Sea;
Mount Hermon, yonder sea; each place behold
In prospect, as I point them; on the shore
Mount Carmel; here, the double-founted stream,
Jordan, true limit eastward; but his sons
Shall dwell to Senir, that long ridge of hills.
This ponder, that all nations of the earth
Shall in his seed be blessed: By that seed
Is meant thy great Deliverer, who shall bruise
The Serpent's head; whereof to thee anon
Plainlier shall be reveal'd. This patriarch blest,
Whom faithful Abraham due time shall call,
A son, and of his son a grand-child, leaves;
Like him in faith, in wisdom, and renown:
The grand-child, with twelve sons increas'd, departs
From Canaan, to a land hereafter call'd
Egypt, divided by the river Nile;
See where it flows, disgorging at seven mouths
Into the sea: To sojourn in that land
He comes, invited by a younger son
In time of dearth; a son, whose worthy deeds
Raise him to be the second in that realm
Of Pharaoh: There he dies, and leaves his race
Growing into a nation, and now grown
Suspected to a sequent king, who seeks
To stop their overgrowth, as inmate guests
Too numerous; whence of guests he makes them slaves
In hospitably, and kills their infant males:
Till by two brethren (these two brethren call
Moses and Aaron) sent from God to claim
His people from in thrallment, they return,
With glory and spoil, back to their promised land.
But first, the lawless tyrant, who denies
To know their God, or message to regard,
Must be compell'd by signs and judgments dire;
To blood unshed the rivers must be turn'd;
Frogs, lice, and flies, must all his palace fill
With loath'd intrusion, and fill all the land;
His cattle must of rot and murrain die;
Botches and blains must all his flesh emboss,
And all his people; thunder mix'd with hail,
Hail mix'd with fire, must rend the Egyptian sky,
And wheel on the earth, devouring where it rolls;
What it devours not, herb, or fruit, or grain,
A darksome cloud of locusts swarming down
Must eat, and on the ground leave nothing green;
 Darkness must overshadow all his bounds,
 Palpable darkness, and blot out three days;
 Last, with one midnight stroke, all the first-born
 Of Egypt must lie dead. Thus with ten wounds
 The river-dragon tam'd at length submits
 To let his sojourners depart, and oft
 Humbles his stubborn heart; but still, as ice
More harden'd after thaw; till, in his rage
Pursuing whom he late dismiss'd, the sea
Swallows him with his host; but them lets pass,
As on dry land, between two crystal walls;
Aw'd by the rod of Moses so to stand
Divided, till his rescued gain their shore:
Such wondrous power God to his saint will lend,
Though present in his Angel; who shall go
Before them in a cloud, and pillar of fire;
By day a cloud, by night a pillar of fire;
To guide them in their journey, and remove
Behind them, while the obdurate king pursues:
All night he will pursue; but his approach
Darkness defends between till morning watch;
Then through the fiery pillar, and the cloud,
God looking forth will trouble all his host,
And craze their chariot-wheels: when by command
Moses once more his potent rod extends
Over the sea; the sea his rod obeys;
On their embattled ranks the waves return,
And overwhelm their war: The race elect
Safe towards Canaan from the shore advance
Through the wild Desert, not the readiest way;
Lest, entering on the Canaanite alarm'd,
War terrify them inexpert, and fear
Return them back to Egypt, choosing rather
Inglorious life with servitude; for life
To noble and ignoble is more sweet
Untrain'd in arms, where rashness leads not on.
This also shall they gain by their delay
In the wide wilderness; there they shall found
Their government, and their great senate choose
Through the twelve tribes, to rule by laws ordain'd:
God from the mount of Sinai, whose grey top
Shall tremble, he descending, will himself
In thunder, lightning, and loud trumpets' sound,
Ordain them laws; part, such as appertain
To civil justice; part, religious rites
Of sacrifice; informing them, by types
And shadows, of that destin'd Seed to bruise
The Serpent, by what means he shall achieve
Mankind's deliverance. But the voice of God
To mortal ear is dreadful: They beseech
That Moses might report to them his will,
And terror cease; he grants what they besought,
Instructed that to God is no access
Without Mediator, whose high office now
Moses in figure bears; to introduce
One greater, of whose day he shall foretell,
And all the prophets in their age the times
Of great Messiah shall sing. Thus, laws and rites
Establish'd, such delight hath God in Men
Obedient to his will, that he vouchsafes
Among them to set up his tabernacle;
The Holy One with mortal Men to dwell:
By his prescript a sanctuary is fram'd
Of cedar, overlaid with gold; therein
An ark, and in the ark his testimony,
The records of his covenant; over these
A mercy-seat of gold, between the wings
Of two bright Cherubim; before him burn
Seven lamps as in a zodiac representing
The heavenly fires; over the tent a cloud
Shall rest by day, a fiery gleam by night;
Save when they journey, and at length they come,
Conducted by his Angel, to the land
Promis'd to Abraham and his seed:—The rest
Were long to tell; how many battles fought;
How many kings destroy'd; and kingdoms won;
Or how the sun shall in mid Heaven stand still
A day entire, and night's due course adjourn,
Man's voice commanding, "Sun, in Gibeon stand,
And thou moon in the vale of Aialon,
Till Israel overcome!" so call the third
From Abraham, son of Isaac; and from him
His whole descent, who thus shall Canaan win.

Here Adam interpos'd. O sent from Heaven,
Enlightener of my darkness, gracious things
Thou hast reveal'd; those chiefly, which concern
Just Abraham and his seed: now first I find
Mine eyes true-opening, and my heart much eas'd;
Erewhile perplex'd with thoughts, what would become
Of me and all mankind: But now I see
His day, in whom all nations shall be blest;
Favour unmerited by me, who sought
Forbidden knowledge by forbidden means.
This yet I apprehend not, why to those
Among whom God will deign to dwell on earth
So many and so various laws are given;
So many laws argue so many sins
Among them; how can God with such reside?
To whom thus Michael. Doubt not but that sin
Will reign among them, as of thee begot;
And therefore was law given them, to evince
Their natural pravity, by stirring up
Sin against law to fight: that when they see
Law can discover sin, but not remove,
Save by those shadowy expiations weak,
The blood of bulls and goats, they may conclude
Some blood more precious must be paid for Man;
Just for unjust; that, in such righteousness
To them by faith imputed, they may find
Justification towards God, and peace
Of conscience; which the law by ceremonies
Cannot appease; nor Man the mortal part
Perform; and, not performing, cannot live.
So law appears imperfect; and but given
With purpose to resign them, in full time,
Up to a better covenant; disciplin'd
From shadowy types to truth; from flesh to spirit;
From imposition of strict laws to free
Acceptance of large grace; from servile fear
To filial; works of law to works of faith.
And therefore shall not Moses, though of God
Highly belov'd, being but the minister
Of law, his people into Canaan lead;
But Joshua, whom the Gentiles Jesus call,
His name and office bearing, who shall quell
The adversary—Serpent, and bring back
Through the world's wilderness long-wander'd Man
Safe to eternal Paradise of rest.
Mean while they, in their earthly Canaan plac'd,
Long time shall dwell and prosper; but when sins
National interrupt their public peace,
Provoking God to raise them enemies;
From whom as oft he saves them penitent
By judges first, then under Kings; of whom
The second, both for piety renown'd
And puissant deeds, a promise shall receive
Irrevocable, that his regal throne
For ever shall endure; the like shall sing
All Prophecy, that of the royal stock
Of David (so I name this king) shall rise
A Son, the Woman's seed to thee foretold,
Foretold to Abraham, as in whom shall trust
All nations; and to kings foretold, of kings
The last; for of his reign shall be no end.
But first, a long succession must ensue;
And his next son, for wealth and wisdom fam'd,
The clouded ark of God, till then in tents
Wandering, shall in a glorious temple enshrine,
Such follow him, as shall be registred
Part good, part bad; of bad the longer scroll;
Whose foul idolatries, and other faults
Heap'd to the popular sum, will so incense
God, as to leave them, and expose their land,
Their city, his temple, and his holy ark,
With all his sacred things, a scorn and prey
To that proud city, whose high walls thou saw'st
Left in confusion; Babylon thence call'd.
There in captivity he lets them dwell
The space of seventy years; then brings them back,
Remembering mercy, and his covenant sworn
To David, stablish'd as the days of Heaven.
Return'd from Babylon by leave of kings
Their lords, whom God dispos'd, the house of God
They first re-Edify: and for awhile
In mean estate live moderate; till, grown
In wealth and multitude, factions they grow;
But first among the priests dissension springs,
Men who attend the altar, and should most
Endeavour peace: their strife pollution brings
Upon the temple itself: at last they seize
The sceptre, and regard not David's sons;
Then lose it to a stranger, that the true
Anointed King Messiah might be born
Barr'd of his right; yet at his birth a star,
Unseen before in Heaven, proclaims him come;
And guides the eastern sages, who inquire
His place, to offer incense, myrrh, and gold:
His place of birth a solemn Angel tells
To simple shepherds, keeping watch by night;
They gladly thither haste, and by a quire
Of squadron'd Angels hear his carol sung.
A virgin is his mother, but his sire
The power of the Most High: He shall ascend
The throne hereditary, and bound his reign
With Earth's wide bounds, his glory with the Heavens.
He ceas'd, discerning Adam with such joy
Surcharg'd, as had like grief been dew'd in tears,
Without the vent of words; which these he breath'd.

O prophet of glad tidings, finisher
Of utmost hope! now clear I understand
What oft my steadiest thoughts have search'd in vain;
Why our great Expectation should be call'd
The seed of Woman: Virgin Mother, hail,
High in the love of Heaven; yet from my loins
Thou shalt proceed, and from thy womb the Son
Of God Most High: so God with Man unites!
Needs must the Serpent now his capital bruise
Expect with mortal pain: Say where and when
Their fight, what stroke shall bruise the victor's heel.

To whom thus Michael. Dream not of their fight,
As of a duel, or the local wounds
Of head or heel: Not therefore joins the Son
Manhood to Godhead, with more strength to foil
Thy enemy; nor so is overcome
Satan, whose fall from Heaven, a deadlier bruise,
Disabled, not to give thee thy death's wound:
Which he, who comes thy Saviour, shall reure,
Not by destroying Satan, but his works
In thee, and in thy seed: Nor can this be,
But by fulfilling that which thou didst want,
Obedience to the law of God, impos'd
On penalty of death, and suffering death;
The penalty to thy transgression due,
And due to theirs which out of thine will grow:
So only can high Justice rest appaid.
The law of God exact he shall fulfil
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfil the law; thy punishment
He shall endure, by coming in the flesh
To a reproachful life, and cursed death;
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption; and that his obedience,
Imputed, becomes theirs by faith; his merits
To save them, not their own, though legal, works.
For this he shall live hated, be blasphem’d,
Seiz’d on by force, judg’d, and to death condemn’d
A shameful and accurs’d, nail’d to the cross
By his own nation; slain for bringing life:
But to the cross he nails thy enemies,
The law that is against thee, and the sins
Of all mankind, with him there crucified,
Never to hurt them more who rightly trust
In this his satisfaction; so he dies,
But soon revives; Death over him no power
Shall long usurp; ere the third dawning light
Return, the stars of morn shall see him rise
Out of his grave, fresh as the dawning light,
Thy ransom paid, which Man from death redeems,
His death for Man, as many as offer’d life
Neglect not, and the benefit embrace
By faith not void of works: This God-like act
Annuls thy doom, the death thou shouldst have died,
In sin for ever lost from life; this act
Shall bruise the head of Satan, crush his strength,
Defeating Sin and Death, his two main arms;
And fix far deeper in his head their stings
Than temporal death shall bruise the victor's heel,
Or theirs whom he redeems; a death, like sleep,
A gentle wafting to immortal life.
Nor after resurrection shall he stay
Longer on earth, than certain times to appear
To his disciples, men who in his life
Still follow'd him; to them shall leave in charge
To teach all nations what of him they learn'd
And his salvation; them who shall believe
Baptizing in the profluent stream, the sign
Of washing them from guilt of sin to life
Pure, and in mind prepar'd, if so befall,
For death, like that which the Redeemer died.
All nations they shall teach; for, from that day
Not only to the sons of Abraham's loins
Salvation shall be preach'd, but to the sons
Of Abraham's faith wherever through the world;
So in his seed all nations shall be blest.
Then to the Heaven of Heavens he shall ascend
With victory, triumphing through the air
Over his foes and thine; there shall surprise
The Serpent, prince of air, and drag in chains
Through all his realm, and there confounded leave;
Then enter into glory, and resume
His seat at God's right hand, exalted high
Above all names in Heaven; and thence shall come,
When this world's dissolution shall be ripe,
With glory and power to judge both quick and dead;
To judge the unfaithful dead, but to reward
His faithful, and receive them into bliss,
Whether in Heaven or Earth; for then the Earth
Shall all be Paradise, far happier place
Than this of Eden, and far happier days.

So spake the Arch-Angel Michael; then paus'd,
As at the world's great period; and our sire,
Replete with joy and wonder, thus replied.

O Goodness infinite, Goodness immense!
That all this good of evil shall produce,
And evil turn to good; more wonderful
Than that which by creation first brought forth
Light out of darkness! Full of doubt I stand,
Whether I should repent me now of sin
By me done, and occasion'd; or rejoice
Much more, that much more good thereof shall spring;
To God more glory, more good-will to Men
From God, and over wrath grace shall abound.
But say, if our Deliverer up to Heaven
Must re-ascend, what will betide the few
His faithful, left among the unfaithful herd,
The enemies of truth? Who then shall guide
His people, who defend? Will they not deal
Worse with his followers than with him they dealt?

Be sure they will, said the Angel; but from Heaven
He to his own a Comforter will send,
The promise of the Father, who shall dwell
His Spirit within them; and the law of faith,
Working through love, upon their hearts shall write,
To guide them in all truth; and also arm
With spiritual armour, able to resist
Satan's assaults, and quench his fiery darts;
What man can do against them, not afraid,
Though to the death; against such cruelties
With inward consolations recompens'd,
And oft supported so as shall amaze
Their proudest persecutors: For the Spirit,
Pour'd first on his Apostles, whom he sends
To evangelize the nations, then on all
Baptiz'd, shall them with wondrous gifts endue
To speak all tongues, and do all miracles,
As did their Lord before them. Thus they win
Great numbers of each nation to receive
With joy the tidings brought from Heaven: At length
Their ministry perform'd, and race well run,
Their doctrine and their story written left,
They die; but in their room, as they forewarn,
Wolves shall succeed for teachers, grievous wolves,
Who all the sacred mysteries of Heaven
To their own vile advantages shall turn
Of lucre and ambition; and the truth
With superstitions and traditions taint,
Left only in those written records pure,
Though not but by the Spirit understood.
Then shall they seek to avail themselves of names,
Places, and titles, and with these to join
Secular power; though feigning still to act
By spiritual, to themselves appropriating
The Spirit of God, promis'd alike and given
To all believers; and, from that pretence,
Spiritual laws by carnal power shall force
On every conscience; laws which none shall find
Left them inroll'd, or what the Spirit within
Shall on the heart engrave. What will they then
But force the Spirit of Grace itself, and bind
His consort Liberty? what, but unbuild
His living temples, built by faith to stand,
Their own faith, not another's? for, on earth,
Who against faith and conscience can be heard
Infallible? yet many will presume:
Whence heavy persecution shall arise
On all, who in the worship persevere
Of spirit and truth; the rest, far greater part,
Will deem in outward rites and specious forms
Religion satisfied; Truth shall retire
Bestuck with slanderous darts, and works of faith
Rarely be found: So shall the world go on,
To good malignant, to bad men benign;
Under her own weight groaning; till the day
Appear of respiration to the just,
And vengeance to the wicked, at return
Of him so lately promised to thy aid,
The Woman's Seed; obscurely then foretold,
Now ampler known thy Saviour and thy Lord;
Last, in the clouds, from Heaven to be reveal'd
In glory of the Father, to dissolve
Satan with his perverted world; then raise
From the confflagrant mass, purg'd and refin'd,
New Heavens, new Earth, ages of endless date,
Founded in righteousness, and peace, and love;
To bring forth fruits, joy and eternal bliss.
He ended; and thus Adam last replied.
How soon hath thy prediction, Seer blest,
Measur'd this transient world, the race of time,
Till time stand fix'd! Beyond is all abyss,
Eternity, whose end no eye can reach.
Greatly instructed I shall hence depart;
Greatly in peace of thought; and have my fill
Of knowledge, what this vessel can contain;
Beyond which was my folly to aspire.
Henceforth I learn, that to obey is best,
And love with fear the only God; to walk
As in his presence; ever to observe
His providence; and on him sole depend,
Merciful over all his works, with good
Still overcoming evil, and by small
Accomplishing great things, by things deem'd weak
Subverting worldly strong, and worldly wise
By simply meek: that suffering for truth's sake
Is fortitude to highest victory,
And, to the faithful, death the gate of life;
Taught this by his example, whom I now
Acknowledge my Redeemer ever blest.

To whom thus also the Angel last replied.
This having learn'd, thou hast attain'd the sum
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knew'st by name, and all the ethereal powers,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
Or works of God in Heaven, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoy'dst,
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,  
Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,  
By name to come call'd charity, the soul  
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loth  
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess  
A Paradise within thee, happier far.—  
Let us descend now therefore from this top  
Of speculation; for the hour precise  
Exacts our parting hence; and see! the guards,  
By me encamp'd on yonder hill, expect  
Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,  
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round:  
We may no longer stay: go, waken Eve;  
Her also I with gentle dreams have calm'd  
Portending good, and all her spirits compos'd  
To meek submission: thou, at season fit,  
Let her with thee partake what thou hast heard;  
Chiefly what may concern her faith to know,  
The great deliverance by her seed to come  
(For by the Woman's seed) on all mankind:  
That ye may live, which will be many days,  
Both in one faith unanimous, though sad,  
With cause, for evils past; yet much more cheer'd  
With meditation on the happy end.  

He ended, and they both descend the hill;  
Descended, Adam to the bower, where Eve  
Lay sleeping, ran before; but found her wak'd;  
And thus with words not sad she him receiv'd.  
Whence thou return'st, and whither went'st, I know;  
For God is also in sleep; and dreams advise,
Which he hath sent propitious, some great good
Presaging, since with sorrow and heart's distress
Wearied I fell asleep: But now lead on;
In me is no delay; with thee to go,
Is to stay here; without thee here to stay,
Is to go hence unwilling; thou to me .
Art all things under Heaven, all places thou,
Who for my wilful crime art banish'd hence.
This further consolation yet secure
I carry hence; though all by me is lost,
Such favour I unworthy am vouchsaf'd,
By me the Promis'd Seed shall all restore.
So spake our mother Eve; and Adam heard
Well pleas'd, but answer'd not: For now, too nigh
The Arch-Angel stood; and, from the other hill
To their fix'd station, all in bright array
The Cherubim descended; on the ground
Gliding meteorous, as evening-mist
Risen from a river o'er the marish glides,
And gathers ground fast at the labourer's heel
Homeward returning. High in front advance'd,
The brandish'd sword of God before them blaz'd,
Fierce as a comet; which with torrid heat,
And vapour as the Libyan air adust,
Began to parch that temperate clime; whereat
In either hand the hastening Angel caught
Our lingering parents, and to the eastern gate
Led them direct, and down the cliff as fast
To the subjected plain; then disappear'd.
They, looking back, all the eastern side beheld
Of Paradise, so late their happy seat,
Wav'd over by that flaming brand; the gate
With dreadful faces throng'd, and fiery arms:
Some natural tears they dropt, but wip'd them soon;
The world was all before them, where to choose
Their place of rest, and Providence their guide:
They, hand in hand, with wandering steps and slow,
Through Eden took their solitary way.

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