

**John Milton**  
**Paradise Lost**  
**A poem**

**BOOK I**

Of Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit  
Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast  
Brought Death into the World, and all our woe,  
With loss of *Eden* , till one greater Man  
Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat,  
Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top  
Of *Oreb* , or of *Sinai* , didst inspire  
That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed,  
In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth  
Rose out of *Chaos* : Or if *Sion* Hill  
Delight thee more, and *Siloa's* Brook that

flow'd

Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence  
Invoke thy aid to my adventrous Song,  
That with no middle flight intends to soar  
Above th' *Aonian* Mount, while it pursues  
Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime.  
And chiefly Thou O Spirit, that dost prefer  
Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure,  
Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the

first

Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread  
Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss  
And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark  
Illumine, what is low raise and support;  
That to the highth of this great Argument  
I may assert th' Eternal Providence,  
And justifie the wayes of God to men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view  
Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause  
Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State,  
Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off  
From their Creator, and transgress his Will  
For one restraint, Lords of the World besides?  
Who first seduc'd them to that fowl revolt?  
Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile  
Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd  
The Mother of Mankinde, what time his Pride  
Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host  
Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring  
To set himself in Glory above his Peers,  
He trusted to have equal'd the most High,  
If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim  
Against the Throne and Monarchy of God  
Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud  
With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power  
Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie  
With hideous ruine and combustion down

To bottomless perdition, there to dwell  
In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire,  
Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms.  
Nine times the Space that measures Day and

Night

To mortal men, he with his horrid crew  
Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe  
Confounded though immortal: But his doom  
Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought  
Both of lost happiness and lasting pain  
Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes  
That witness'd huge affliction and dismay  
Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:  
At once as far as Angels kenn he views  
The dismal Situation waste and wilde,  
A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round  
As one great Furnace flam'd, yet from those

flames

No light, but rather darkness visible  
Serv'd only to discover sights of woe,  
Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace  
And rest can never dwell, hope never comes  
That comes to all; but torture without end  
Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed  
With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd:  
Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd  
For those rebellious, here their Prison ordain'd  
In utter darkness, and their portion set

As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n  
As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole.  
O how unlike the place from whence they fell!  
There the companions of his fall, o'whelm'd  
With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire,  
He soon discerns, and weltring by his side  
One next himself in power, and next in crime,  
Long after known in *Palestine* , and nam'd  
*Beelzebub* . To whom th' Arch-Enemy,  
And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold

words

Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd  
From him, who in the happy Realms of Light  
Cloth'd with transcendent brightnes didst

outshine

Myriads though bright: If he whom mutual  
league,

United thoughts and counsels, equal hope,  
And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize,  
Joynd with me once, now misery hath joynd  
In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest  
From what highth fal'n, so much the stronger

prov'd

He with his Thunder: and till then who knew  
The force of those dire Arms? yet not for those  
Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage

Can else inflict do I repent or change,  
Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind  
And high disdain, from sence of injur'd merit,  
That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend,  
And to the fierce contention brought along  
Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd  
That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring,  
His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd  
In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n,  
And shook his throne. What though the field be

lost?

All is not lost; the unconquerable Will,  
And study of revenge, immortal hate,  
And courage never to submit or yield:  
And what is else not to be overcome?  
That Glory never shall his wrath or might  
Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace  
With suppliant knee, and deifie his power  
Who from the terrour of this Arm so late  
Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed,  
That were an ignominy and shame beneath  
This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods  
And this Empyrean substance cannot fail,  
Since through experience of this great event  
In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't,  
We may with more successful hope resolve  
To wage by force or guile eternal Warr  
Irreconcilable, to our grand Foe,

Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy  
Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.

So spake th' Apostate Angel, though in pain,  
Vaunting aloud, but rackt with deep despare:  
And him thus answer'd soon his bold Compeer.

O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers,  
That led th' imbattelld Seraphim to Warr  
Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds  
Fearless, endanger'd Heav'ns perpetual King;  
And put to proof his high Supremacy,  
Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate,  
Too well I see and rue the dire event,  
That with sad overthrow and foul defeat  
Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty Host  
In horrible destruction laid thus low,  
As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences  
Can Perish: for the mind and spirit remains  
Invincible, and vigour soon returns,  
Though all our Glory extinct, and happy state  
Here swallow'd up in endless misery.  
But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now  
Of force believe Almighty, since no less  
Then such could hav orepow'rd such force as

ours)

Have left us this our spirit and strength intire  
Strongly to suffer and support our pains,

That we may so suffice his vengeful ire,  
Or do him mightier service as his thralls  
By right of Warr, what e're his business be  
Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire,  
Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep;  
What can it then avail though yet we feel  
Strength undiminisht, or eternal being  
To undergo eternal punishment?

Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend  
reply'd.

Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable  
Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure,  
To do ought good never will be our task,  
But ever to do ill our sole delight,  
As being the contrary to his high will  
Whom we resist. If then his Providence  
Out of our evil seek to bring forth good,  
Our labour must be to pervert that end,  
And out of good still to find means of evil;  
Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps  
Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb  
His inmost counsels from their destined aim.  
But see the angry Victor hath recall'd  
His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit  
Back to the Gates of Heav'n: The Sulphurous

Hail

Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid

The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice  
Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder,  
Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage,  
Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now  
To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep.  
Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn,  
Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe.  
Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde,  
The seat of desolation, voyd of light,  
Save what the glimmering of these livid flames  
Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend  
From off the tossing of these fiery waves,  
There rest, if any rest can harbour there,  
And reassembling our afflicted Powers,  
Consult how we may henceforth most offend  
Our Enemy, our own loss how repair,  
How overcome this dire Calamity,  
What reinforcement we may gain from Hope,  
If not what resolution from despare.

Thus Satan talking to his nearest Mate  
With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes  
That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides  
Prone on the Flood, extended long and large  
Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge  
As whom the Fables name of monstrous size,  
*Titanian* , or *Earth-born* , that warr'd on *Jove* ,  
*Briarios* or *Typhon* , whom the Den

By ancient *Tarsus* held, or that Sea-beast  
*Leviathan* , which God of all his works  
Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream:  
Him haply slumbring on the *Norway* foam  
The Pilot of some small night-founder'd Skiff,  
Deeming some Island, oft, as Sea-men tell,  
With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind  
Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night  
Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delays:  
So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay  
Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence  
Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will  
And high permission of all-ruling Heaven  
Left him at large to his own dark designs,  
That with reiterated crimes he might  
Heap on himself damnation, while he sought  
Evil to others, and enrag'd might see  
How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth  
Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn  
On Man by him seduc't, but on himself  
Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd.  
Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool  
His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames  
Drivn backward slope their pointing spires, rowld  
In billows, leave i'th' midst a horrid Vale.  
Then with expanded wings he steers his flight  
Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air  
That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land

He lights, if it were Land that ever burn'd  
With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire;  
And such appear'd in hue, as when the force  
Of subterranean wind transports a Hill  
Torn from *Pelorus* , or the shatter'd side  
Of thundring *Aetna* , whose combustible  
And fewel'd entrals thence conceiving Fire,  
Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds,  
And leave a singed bottom all involv'd  
With stench and smoak: Such resting found the

sole

Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate,  
Both glorying to have scap't the *Stygian* flood  
As Gods, and by their own recover'd strength,  
Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the Region, this the Soil, the Clime,  
Said then the lost Arch Angel, this the seat  
That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful

gloom

For that celestial light? Be it so, since hee  
Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid  
What shall be right: fardest from him is best  
Whom reason hath equald, force hath made

supream

Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields  
Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail  
Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell

Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings  
A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time.  
The mind is its own place, and in it self  
Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.  
What matter where, if I be still the same,  
And what I should be, all but less then hee  
Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least  
We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built  
Here for his envy, will not drive us hence:  
Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce  
To reign is worth ambition though in Hell:  
Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n.  
But wherefore let we then our faithful friends,  
Th' associates and copartners of our loss  
Lye thus astonisht on th' oblivious Pool,  
And call them not to share with us their part  
In this unhappy Mansion, or once more  
With rallied Arms to try what may be yet  
Regaind in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?

So *Satan* spake, and him *Beelzebub*  
Thus answer'd. Leader of those Armies bright,  
Which but th' Omnipotent none could have foyld,  
If once they hear that voyce, their liveliest pledge  
Of hope in fears and dangers, heard so oft  
In worst extreame, and on the perilous edge  
Of battel when it rag'd, in all assaults  
Their surest signal, they will soon resume

New courage and revive, though now they lye  
Groveling and prostrate on yon Lake of Fire,  
As we erewhile, astounded and amaz'd,  
No wonder, fall'n such a pernicious highth.

He scarce had ceas't when the superiour Fiend  
Was moving toward the shore; his ponderous  
shield

Ethereal temper, massy, large and round,  
Behind him cast; the broad circumference  
Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb  
Through Optic Glass the *Tuscan* Artist views  
At Ev'ning from the top of *Fesole* ,  
Or in *Valdarno* , to descry new Lands,  
Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe.  
His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine  
Hewn on *Norwegian* hills, to be the Mast  
Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand,  
He walkt with to support uneasie steps  
Over the burning Marle, not like those steps  
On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime  
Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire;  
Nathless he so endur'd, till on the Beach  
Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd  
His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans't  
Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks  
In *Vallombrosa* , where th' *Etrurian* shades  
High overarch't imbowr; or scatterd sedge

Afloat, when with fierce Winds *Orion* arm'd  
Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves  
orethrew

*Busiris* and his *Memphian* Chivalrie,  
VWhile with perfidious hatred they pursu'd  
The Sojourners of *Goshen* , who beheld  
From the safe shore their floating Carkases  
And broken Chariot Wheels, so thick bestrown  
Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood,  
Under amazement of their hideous change.  
He call'd so loud, that all the hollow Deep  
Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates,  
Warriers, the Flowr of Heav'n, once yours, now

lost,

If such astonishment as this can sieze  
Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place  
After the toyl of Battel to repose  
Your wearied vertue, for the ease you find  
To slumber here, as in the Vales of Heav'n?  
Or in this abject posture have ye sworn  
To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds  
Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood  
With scatter'd Arms and Ensigns, till anon  
His swift pursuers from Heav'n Gates discern  
Th' advantage, and descending tread us down  
Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts  
Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe.  
Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.

They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung  
Upon the wing, as when men went to watch  
On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread,  
Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake.  
Nor did they not perceave the evil plight  
In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel;  
Yet to their Generals Voyce they soon obeyd  
Innumerable. As when the potent Rod  
Of *Amrams* Son in *Egypt*s evill day  
Wav'd round the Coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud  
Of *Locusts* , warping on the Eastern Wind,  
That ore the Realm of impious *Pharoah* hung  
Like Night, and darken'd all the Land of *Nile* :  
So numberless were those bad Angels seen  
Hovering on wing under the Cope of Hell  
'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires;  
Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted Spear  
Of their great Sultan waving to direct  
Thir course, in even ballance down they light  
On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain;  
A multitude, like which the populous North  
Pour'd never from her frozen loyns, to pass  
*Rhene* or the *Danaw* , when her barbarous Sons  
Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread  
Beneath *Gibraltar* to the *Lybian* sands.  
Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band  
The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood

Their great Commander; Godlike shapes and  
forms

Excelling human, Princely Dignities,  
And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones;  
Though of their Names in heav'nly Records now  
Be no memorial, blotted out and ras'd  
By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life.  
Nor had they yet among the Sons of *Eve*  
Got them new Names, till wandring ore the Earth,  
Through Gods high sufferance for the tryal of

man,

By falsities and lyes the greatest part  
Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake  
God their Creator, and th' invisible  
Glory of him, that made them, to transform  
Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn'd  
With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold,  
And Devils to adore for Deities:

Then were they known to men by various Names,  
And various Idols through the Heathen World.  
Say, Muse, their Names then known, who first,  
who last,

Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery Couch,  
At thir great Emperors call, as next in worth  
Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,  
While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof?  
The chief were those who from the Pit of Hell  
Roaming to seek their prey on earth, durst fix

Their Seats long after next the Seat of God,  
Their Altars by his Altar, Gods ador'd  
Among the Nations round, and durst abide  
*Jehovah* thundring out of *Sion* , thron'd  
Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd  
Within his Sanctuary it self their Shrines,  
Abominations; and with cursed things  
His holy Rites, and solemn Feasts profan'd,  
And with their darkness durst affront his light.  
First *Moloch* , horrid King besmear'd with blood  
Of human sacrifice, and parents tears,  
Though for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels

loud

Their childrens cries unheard, that past through

fire

To his grim Idol. Him the *Ammonite*  
Worshipt in *Rabba* and her watry Plain,  
In *Argob* and in *Basan* , to the stream  
Of utmost *Arnon* . Nor content with such  
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart  
Of *Solomon* he led by fraud to build  
His Temple right against the Temple of God  
On that opprobrious Hill, and made his Grove  
The pleasant Vally of *Hinnom*, *Tophet* thence  
And black *Gehenna* call'd, the Type of Hell.  
Next *Chemos* , th' obscene dread of *Moabs*

Sons,

From *Aroer* to *Nebo* , and the wild

Of Southmost *Abarim* ; in *Hesebon*  
And *Heronaim*, *Seons* Realm, beyond  
The flowry Dale of *Sibma* clad with Vines,  
And *Eleale* to th' *Asphaltick* Pool.  
*Peor* his other Name, when he entic'd  
*Israel* in *Sittim* on their march from *Nile*  
To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe.  
Yet thence his lustful Orgies he enlarg'd  
Even to that Hill of scandal, by the Grove  
Of *Moloch* homicide, lust hard by hate;  
Till good *Josiah* drove them thence to Hell.  
With these came they, who from the bordring

flood

Of old *Euphrates* to the Brook that parts  
*Egypt* from *Syrian* ground, had general Names  
Of *Baalim* and *Ashtaroth* , those male,  
These Feminine. For Spirits when they please  
Can either Sex assume, or both; so soft  
And uncompounded is their Essence pure,  
Not ti'd or manacl'd with joynt or limb,  
Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones,  
Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they

choose

Dilated or condens't, bright or obscure,  
Can execute their aerie purposes,  
And works of love or enmity fulfill.  
For those the Race of *Israel* oft forsook  
Their living strength, and unfrequented left

His righteous Altar, bowing lowly down  
To bestial Gods; for which their heads as low  
Bow'd down in Battel, sunk before the Spear  
Of despicable foes. With these in troop  
Came *Astoreth* , whom the *Phoenicians* call'd  
*Astarte* , Queen of Heav'n, with crescent Horns;  
To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon  
*Sidonian* Virgins paid their Vows and Songs,  
In *Sion* also not unsung, where stood  
Her Temple on th' offensive Mountain, built  
By that uxorious King, whose heart though large,  
Beguil'd by fair Idolatresses, fell  
To Idols foul. *Thammuz* came next behind,  
Whose annual wound in *Lebanon* allur'd  
The *Syrian* Damsels to lament his fate  
In amorous dittyes all a Summers day,  
While smooth *Adonis* from his native Rock  
Ran purple to the Sea, suppos'd with blood  
Of *Thammuz* yearly wounded: the Love-tale  
Infected *Sions* daughters with like heat,  
Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch  
*Ezekiel* saw, when by the Vision led  
His eye survey'd the dark Idolatries  
Of alienated *Judah* . Next came one  
Who mourn'd in earnest, when the Captive Ark  
Maim'd his brute Image, head and hands lopt off  
In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge,  
Where he fell flat, and sham'd his Worshipers:

*Dagon* his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man  
And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high  
Rear'd in *Azotus* , dreaded through the Coast  
Of *Palestine* , in *Gath* and *Ascalon* ,  
And *Accaron* and *Gaza's* frontier bounds.  
Him follow'd *Rimmon* , whose delightful Seat  
Was fair *Damscus* , on the fertil Banks  
Of *Abbana* and *Pharphar* , lucid streams.  
He also against the house of God was bold:  
A Leper once he lost and gain'd a King,  
*Ahaz* his sottish Conquerour, whom he drew  
Gods Altar to disparage and displace  
For one of *Syrian* mode, whereon to burn  
His odious offrings, and adore the Gods  
Whom he had vanquisht. After these appear'd  
A crew who under Names of old Renown,  
*Osiris, Isis, Orus* and their Train  
With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd  
Fanatic *Egypt* and her Priests, to seek  
Thir wandring Gods disguis'd in brutish forms  
Rather than human. Nor did *Israel* scape  
Th' infection when their borrow'd Gold

compos'd

The Calf in *Oreb* : and the Rebel King  
Doubl'd that sin in *Bethel* and in *Dan* ,  
Lik'ning his Maker to the Grazed Ox,  
*Jehovah* , who in one Night when he pass'd  
From *Egypt* marching, equal'd with one stroke

Both her first born and all her bleating Gods.  
*Belial* came last, then whom a Spirit more lewd  
Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love  
Vice for it self: To him no Temple stood  
Or Altar smoak'd; yet who more oft then hee  
In Temples and at Altars, when the Priest  
Turns Atheist, as did *Ely's* Sons, who fill'd  
With lust and violence the house of God.  
In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns  
And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse  
Of riot ascends above thir loftiest Towrs,  
And injury and outrage: And when Night  
Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons  
Of *Belial*, flown with insolence and wine.  
Witness the Streets of *Sodom*, and that night  
In *Gibeah*, when hospitable Dores  
Yielded thir Matrons to prevent worse rape.  
These were the prime in order and in might;  
The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd,  
Th' *Ionian* Gods, of *Javans* Issue held  
Gods, yet confest later then Heav'n and Earth  
Thir boasted Parents; *Titian* Heav'ns first born  
With his enormous brood, and birthright seis'd  
By younger *Saturn*, he from mightier *Jove*  
His own and *Rhea's* Son like measure found;  
So *Jove* usurping reign'd: these first in *Creet*  
And *Ida* known, thence on the Snowy top  
Of cold *Olympus* rul'd the middle Air

Thir highest Heav'n; or on the *Delphian* Cliff,  
Or in *Dodona* , and through all the bounds  
Of *Doric* Land; or who with *Saturn* old  
Fled over *Adria* to th' *Hesperian* Fields,  
And ore the *Celtic* roam'd the utmost Isles.  
All these and more came flocking; but with looks  
Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd  
Obscure som glimps of joy, to have found thir

chief

Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost  
In loss it self; which on his count'nance cast  
Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride  
Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore  
Semblance of worth not substance, gently rais'd  
Their fainted courage, and dispel'd their fears.  
Then strait commands that at the warlike sound  
Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard  
His mighty Standard; that proud honour claim'd  
*Azazel* as his right, a Cherube tall:  
Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld  
Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't  
Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind  
With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz'd,  
Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while  
Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds:  
At which the universal Host upsent  
A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond  
Frighted the Reign of *Chaos* and old Night.

All in a moment through the gloom were seen  
Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air  
With Orient Colours waving: with them rose  
A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms  
Appear'd, and serried Shields in thick array  
Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move  
In perfect *Phalanx* to the Dorian mood  
Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais'd  
To highth of noblest temper Hero's old  
Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage  
Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd  
With dread of death to flight or foul retreat,  
Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage  
With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts, and

chase

Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain  
From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they  
Breathing united force with fixed thought  
Mov'd on in silence to soft Pipes that charm'd  
Thir painful steps o're the burnt soyle; and now  
Advanc't in view they stand, a horrid Front  
Of dreadful length and dazzling Arms, in guise  
Of Warriors old with order'd Spear and Shield,  
Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief  
Had to impose: He through the armed Files  
Darts his experienc't eye, and soon traverse  
The whole Battalion views, thir order due,  
Thir visages and stature as of Gods,

Thir number last he summs. And now his heart  
Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength  
Glories: For never since created man,  
Met such imbodyed force, as nam'd with these  
Could merit more then that small infantry  
Warr'd on by Cranes: though all the Giant brood  
Of *Phlegra* with th' Heroic Race were joyn'd  
That fought at *Theb's* and *Ilium*, on each side  
Mixt with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds  
In Fable or *Romance* of *Uthers* Son  
Begirt with *British* and *Armoric* Knights;  
And all who since, Baptiz'd or Infidel  
Jousted in *Aspramont* or *Montalban*,  
*Damasco*, or *Marocco*, or *Trebisond*,  
Or whom *Biserta* sent from *Afric* shore  
When *Charlemain* with all his Peerage fell  
By *Fontarabbia*. Thus far these beyond  
Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd  
Thir dread Commander: he above the rest  
In shape and gesture proudly eminent  
Stood like a Towr; his form had yet not lost  
All her Original brightness, nor appear'd  
Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th' excess  
Of Glory obscur'd: As when the Sun new ris'n  
Looks through the Horizontal misty Air  
Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon  
In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds  
On half the Nations, and with fear of change

Perplexes Monarchs. Dark'n'd so, yet shon  
Above them all th' Arch Angel: but his face  
Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care  
Sat on his faded cheek, but under Browes  
Of dauntless courage, and considerate Pride  
Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast  
Signs of remorse and passion to behold  
The fellows of his crime, the followers rather  
(Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd  
For ever now to have their lot in pain,  
Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc't  
Of Heav'n, and from Eternal Splendors flung  
For his revolt, yet faithfull how they stood,  
Thir Glory witherd. As when Heavens Fire  
Hath scath'd the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain

Pines,

With singed top their stately growth though bare  
Stands on the blasted Heath. He now prepar'd  
To speak; whereat their doubl'd Ranks they bend  
From Wing to Wing, and half enclose him round  
With all his Peers: attention held them mute.  
Thrice he assayd, and thrice in spite of scorn,  
Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last  
Words interwove with sighs found out their way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers  
Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife  
Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire,

As this place testifies, and this dire change  
Hateful to utter: but what power of mind  
Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth  
Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd,  
How such united force of Gods, how such  
As stood like these, could ever know repulse?  
For who can yet beleieve, though after loss,  
That all these puissant Legions, whose exile  
Hath emptied Heav'n, shall faile to re-ascend  
Self-rais'd, and repossess their native seat.  
For me, be witness all the Host of Heav'n,  
If counsels different, or danger shun'd  
By me, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns  
Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure  
Sat on his Throne, upheld by old repute,  
Consent or custome, and his Regal State  
Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd,  
Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall.  
Henceforth his might we know, and know our

own

So as not either to provoke, or dread  
New warr, provok't; our better part remains  
To work in close design, by fraud or guile  
What force effected not: that he no less  
At length from us may find, who overcomes  
By force, hath overcome but half his foe.  
Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife  
There went a fame in Heav'n that he ere long

Intended to create, and therein plant  
A generation, whom his choice regard  
Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven:  
Thither, if but to prieve, shall be perhaps  
Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere:  
For this Infernal Pit shall never hold  
Caelestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th' Abyesse  
Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts  
Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird,  
For who can think Submission? Warr then, Warr  
Open or understood must be resolv'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew  
Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the  
thighs

Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze  
Far round illumin'd hell: highly they rag'd  
Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped  
arm's

Clash'd on their sounding shields the din of war,  
Hurling defiance toward the vault of Heav'n.

There stood a Hill not far whose griesly top  
Belch'd fire and rowling smoak; the rest entire  
Shon with a glossie scurff, undoubted sign  
That in his womb was hid metallic Ore,  
The work of Sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed  
A numerous Brigad hasten'd. As when bands

Of Pioners with Spade and Pickaxe arm'd  
Forerun the Royal Camp, to trench a Field,  
Or cast a Rampart. *Mammon* led them on,  
*Mammon*, the least erected Spirit that fell  
From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks

thoughts

Were always downward bent, admiring more  
The riches of Heav'ns pavement, trod'n Gold,  
Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd  
In vision beatific: by him first  
Men also, and by his suggestion taught,  
Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands  
Rifl'd the bowels of thir mother Earth  
For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew  
Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound  
And dig'd out ribs of Gold. Let none admire  
That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best  
Deserve the pretious bane. And here let those  
Who boast in mortal things, and wondring tell  
Of *Babel*, and the works of *Memphian* Kings,  
Learn how thir greatest Monuments of Fame,  
And Strength and Art are easily outdone  
By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour  
What in an age they with incessant toyle  
And hands innumerable scarce perform  
Nigh on the Plain in many cells prepar'd,  
That underneath had veins of liquid fire  
Sluc'd from the Lake, a second multitude

With wondrous Art founded the massie Ore,  
Severing each kinde, and scum'd the Bullion  
dross:

A third as soon had form'd within the ground  
A various mould, and from the boyling cells  
By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook,  
As in an Organ from one blast of wind  
To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breaths.  
Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge  
Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound  
Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet,  
Built like a Temple, where *Pilasters* round  
Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid  
With Golden Architrave; nor did there want  
Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n,  
The Roof was fretted Gold. Not *Babilon* ,  
Nor great *Alcairo* such magnificence  
Equal'd in all thir glories, to inshrine  
*Belus* or *Serapis* thir Gods, or seat  
Thir Kings, when *Aegypt* with *Assyria* strove  
In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile  
Stood fixt her stately highth, and strait the dores  
Op'ning thir brazen foulds discover wide  
Within, her ample spaces, o're the smooth  
And level pavement: from the arched roof  
Pendant by suttle Magic many a row  
Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed  
With Naphtha and *Asphaltus* yeilded light

As from a sky. The hasty multitude  
Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise  
And some the Architect: his hand was known  
In Heav'n by many a Towred structure high,  
Where Scepter'd Angels held thir residence,  
And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King  
Exalted to such power, and gave to rule,  
Each in his Herarchie, the Orders bright.  
Nor was his name unheard or unador'd  
In ancient Greece; and in *Ausonian* land  
Men call'd him *Mulciber* ; and how he fell  
From Heav'n, they fabl'd, thrown by angry *Jove*  
Sheer o're the Chrystal Battlements: from Morn  
To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve,  
A Summers day; and with the setting Sun  
Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star,  
On *Lemnos* th' *Aegaeon* Ile: thus they relate,  
Erring; for he with this rebellious rout  
Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him now  
To have built in Heav'n high Towrs; nor did he

scape

By all his Engins, but was headlong sent  
With his industrious crew to build in hell.  
Mean while the winged Haralds by command  
Of Sovran power, with awful Ceremony  
And Trumpets sound throughout the Host

proclaim

A solemn Council forthwith to be held

At *Pandaemonium* , the high Capital  
Of Satan and his Peers: thir summons call'd  
From every and Band squared Regiment  
By place or choice the worthiest; they anon  
With hundreds and with thousands trooping came  
Attended: all access was throng'd, the Gates  
And Porches wide, but chief the spacious Hall  
(Though like a cover'd field, where Champions

bold

Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldans chair  
Defi'd the best of Panim chivalry  
To mortal combat or carreer with Lance)  
Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air,  
Brusht with the hiss of russling wings. As Bees  
In spring time, when the Sun with Taurus rides,  
Poure forth thir populous youth about the Hive  
In clusters; they among fresh dewes and flowers  
Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank,  
The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel,  
New rub'd with Baume, expatiate and confer  
Thir State affairs. So thick the aerie crowd  
Swarm'd and were straitn'd; till the Signal giv'n,  
Behold a wonder! they but now who seemd  
In bigness to surpass Earths Giant Sons  
Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room  
Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race  
Beyond the *Indian* Mount, or Faerie Elves,  
Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side

Or Fountain fume belated Peasant sees,  
Or dreams he sees, while over head the Moon  
Sits Arbitress, and neerer to the Earth  
Wheels her pale course, they on thir mirth dance  
Intent, with jocond Music charm his ear;  
At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds.  
Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms  
Reduc'd thir shapes immense, and were at large,  
Though without number still amidst the Hall  
Of that infernal Court. But far within  
And in thir own dimensions like themselves  
The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim  
In close recess and secret conclave sat  
A thousand Demy-Gods on golden seat's,  
Frequent and full. After short silence then  
And summons read, the great consult began.

## BOOK II

High on a Throne of Royal State, which far  
Outshon the wealth of *Ormuz* and of *Ind* ,  
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand  
Shows on her Kings *Barbaric* Pearl Gold,  
Satan exalted sat, by merit rais'd  
To that bad eminence; and from despair  
Thus high uplifted beyond hope, aspires

Beyond thus high, insatiate to pursue  
Vain Warr with Heav'n, and by success untaught  
His proud imaginations thus displaid.

Powers and Dominions, Deities of Heav'n,  
For since no deep within her gulf can hold  
Immortal vigor, though opprest and fall'n,  
I give not Heav'n for lost. From this descent  
Celestial vertues rising, will appear  
More glorious and more dread then from no fall,  
And trust themselves to fear no second fate:  
Mee though just right, and the fixt Laws of

Heav'n

Did first create your Leader, next, free choice,  
With what besides, in Counsel or in Fight,  
Hath bin achievd of merit, yet this loss  
Thus farr at least recover'd, hath much more  
Establisht in a safe unenvied Throne  
Yeilded with full consent. The happier state  
In Heav'n, which follows dignity, might draw  
Envy from each inferior; but who here  
Will envy whom the highest place exposes  
Formost to stand against the Thunderers aime  
Your bulwark, and condemns to greatest share  
Of endless pain? where there is then no good  
For which to strive, no strife can grow up there  
From Faction; for none sure will claim in hell  
Precedence, none, whose portion is so small

Of present pain, that with ambitious mind  
Will covet more. With this advantage then  
To union, and firm Faith, and firm accord,  
More then can be in Heav'n, we now return  
To claim our just inheritance of old,  
Surer to prosper then prosperity  
Could have assur'd us; and by what best way,  
Whether of open Warr or covert guile,  
We now debate; who can advise, may speak.

He ceas'd, and next him *Moloc*, Scepter'd King  
Stood up, the strongest and the fiercest Spirit  
That fought in Heav'n; now fiercer by despair:  
His trust was with th' Eternal to be deem'd  
Equal in strength, and rather then be less  
Car'd not to be at all; with that care lost  
Went all his fear: of God, or Hell, or worse  
He reckd not, and these words thereafter spake.

My sentence is for open Warr: Of Wiles,  
More unexpert, I boast not: them let those  
Contrive who need, or when they need, not now.  
For while they sit contriving, shall the rest,  
Millions that stand in Arms, and longing wait  
The Signal to ascend, sit lingring here  
Heav'ns fugitives, and for thir dwelling place  
Accept this dark opprobrious Den of shame,  
The Prison of his Tyranny who Reigns

By our delay? no, let us rather choose  
Arm'd with Hell flames and fury all at once  
O're Heav'ns high Towrs to force resistless way,  
Turning our Tortures into horrid Arms  
Against the Torturer; when to meet the noise  
Of his Almighty Engin he shall hear  
Infernal Thunder, and for Lightning see  
Black fire and horror shot with equal rage  
Among his Angels; and his Throne it self  
Mixt with *Tartarean* Sulphur, and strange fire,  
His own invented Torments. But perhaps  
The way seems difficult and steep to scale  
With upright wing against a higher foe.  
Let such bethink them, if the sleepy drench  
Of that forgetful Lake benumme not still,  
That in our proper motion we ascend  
Up to our native seat: descent and fall  
To us is adverse. Who but felt of late  
When the fierce Foe hung on our brok'n Rear  
Insulting, and pursu'd us through the Deep,  
With what compulsion and laborious flight  
We sunk thus low? Th' ascent is easie then;  
Th' event is fear'd; should we again provoke  
Our stronger, some worse way his wrath may find  
To our destruction: if there be in Hell  
Fear to be worse destroy'd: what can be worse  
Then to dwell here, driv'n out from bliss,

condemn'd

In this abhorred deep to utter woe;  
Where pain of unextinguishable fire  
Must exercise us without hope of end  
The Vassals of his anger, when the Scourge  
Inexorably, and the torturing hour  
Calls us to Penance? More destroy'd then thus  
We should be quite abolisht and expire.  
What fear we then? what doubt we to incense  
His utmost ire? which to the highth enrag'd,  
Will either quite consume us, and reduce  
To nothing this essential, happier farr  
Then miserable to have eternal being:  
Or if our substance be indeed Divine,  
And cannot cease to be, we are at worst  
On this side nothing; and by proof we feel  
Our power sufficient to disturb his Heav'n,  
And with perpetual inrodes to Allarme,  
Though inaccessible, his fatal Throne:  
Which if not Victory is yet Revenge.

He ended frowning, and his look denounc'd  
Desperate revenge, and Battel dangerous  
To less then Gods. On th' other side up rose  
*Belial* , in act more graceful and humane;  
A fairer person lost not Heav'n; he seemd  
For dignity compos'd and high exploit:  
But all was false and hollow; though his Tongue  
Dropt Manna, and could make the worse appear

The better reason, to perplex and dash  
Maturest Counsels: for his thoughts were low;  
To vice industrious, but to Nobler deeds  
Timorous and slothful: yet he pleas'd the eare,  
And with perswasive accent thus began.

I should be much for open Warr, O Peers,  
As not behind in hate; if what was urg'd  
Main reason to perswade immediate Warr,  
Did not dissuade me most, and seem to cast  
Ominous conjecture on the whole success:  
When he who most excels in fact of Arms,  
In what he counsels and in what excels  
Mistrustful, grounds his courage on despair  
And utter dissolution, as the scope  
Of all his aim, after some dire revenge.  
First, what Revenge? the Towrs of Heav'n are

fill'd

With Armed watch, that render all access  
Impregnable; oft on the bordering Deep  
Encamp thir Legions, or with obscure wing  
Scout farr and wide into the Realm of night,  
Scorning surprize. Or could we break our way  
By force, and at our heels all Hell should rise  
With blackest Insurrection, to confound  
Heav'ns purest Light, yet our great Enemy  
All incorruptible would on his Throne  
Sit unpolluted, and th' Ethereal mould

Incapable of stain would soon expel  
Her mischief, and purge off the baser fire  
Victorious. Thus repuls'd, our final hope  
Is flat despair: we must exasperate  
Th' Almighty Victor to spend all his rage,  
And that must end us, that must be our cure,  
To be no more; sad cure; for who would loose,  
Though full of pain, this intellectual being,  
Those thoughts that wander through Eternity,  
To perish rather, swallowd up and lost  
In the wide womb of uncreated night,  
Devoid of sense and motion? and who knows,  
Let this be good, whether our angry Foe  
Can give it, or will ever? how he can  
Is doubtful; that he never will is sure.  
Will he, so wise, let loose at once his ire,  
Belike through impotence, or unaware,  
To give his Enemies thir wish, and end  
Them in his anger, whom his anger saves  
To punish endless? wherefore cease we then?  
Say they who counsel Warr, we are decreed,  
Reserv'd and destin'd to Eternal woe;  
Whatever doing, what can we suffer more,  
What can we suffer worse? is this then worst,  
Thus sitting, thus consulting, thus in Arms?  
What when we fled amain, pursu'd and strook  
With Heav'ns afflicting Thunder, and besought  
The Deep to shelter us? this Hell then seem'd

A refuge from those wounds: or when we lay  
Chain'd on the burning Lake? that sure was  
worse.

What if the breath that kindl'd those grim fires  
Awak'd should blow them into sevenfold rage  
And plunge us in the Flames? or from above  
Should intermitted vengeance Arme again  
His red right hand to plague us? what if all  
Her stores were op'n'd, and this Firmament  
Of Hell should spout her Cataracts of Fire,  
Impendent horrors, threatning hideous fall  
One day upon our heads; while we perhaps  
Designing or exhorting glorious Warr,  
Caught in a fierie Tempest shall be hurl'd  
Each on his rock transfixt, the sport and prey  
Of racking whirlwinds, or for ever sunk  
Under yon boyling Ocean, wrapt in Chains;  
There to converse with everlasting groans,  
Unrespited, unpitied, unrepreevd,  
Ages of hopeless end; this would be worse.  
Warr therefore, open or conceal'd, alike  
My voice disswades; for what can force or guile  
With him, or who deceive his mind, whose eye  
Views all things at one view? he from heav'ns

highth

All these our motions vain, sees and derides;  
Not more Almighty to resist our might  
Then wise to frustrate all our plots and wiles.

Shall we then live thus vile, the race of Heav'n  
Thus traml'd, thus expell'd to suffer here  
Chains these Torments? better these then worse  
By my advice; since fate inevitable  
Subdues us, and Omnipotent Decree,  
The Victors will. To suffer, as to doe,  
Our strength is equal, nor the Law unjust  
That so ordains: this was at first resolv'd,  
If we were wise, against so great a foe  
Contending, and so doubtful what might fall.  
I laugh, when those who at the Spear are bold  
And vent'rous, if that fail them, shrink and fear  
What yet they know must follow, to endure  
Exile, or ignominy, or bonds, or pain,  
The sentence of thir Conquerour: This is now  
Our doom; which if we can sustain and bear,  
Our Supream Foe in time may much remit  
His anger, and perhaps thus farr remov'd  
Not mind us not offending, satisfi'd  
With what is punish't; whence these raging fires  
Will slack'n, if his breath stir not thir flames.  
Our purer essence then will overcome  
Thir noxious vapour, or enur'd not feel,  
Or chang'd at length, and to the place conformd  
In temper and in nature, will receive  
Familiar the fierce heat, and void of pain;  
This horror will grow milde, this darkness light,  
Besides what hope the never-ending flight

Of future days may bring, what chance, what  
change

Worth waiting, since our present lot appears  
For happy though but ill, for ill not worst,  
If we procure not to our selves more woe.

Thus *Belial* with words cloath'd in reasons garb  
Counsel'd ignoble ease, and peaceful sloath,  
Not peace: and after him thus *Mammon* spake.

Either to disenthroned the King of Heav'n  
We warr, if warr be best, or to regain  
Our own right lost: him to unthroned we then  
May hope, when everlasting Fate shall yeild  
To fickle Chance, and *Chaos* judge the strife:  
The former vain to hope argues as vain  
The latter: for what place can be for us  
Within Heav'ns bound, unless Heav'ns Lord  
supream

We overpower? Suppose he should relent  
And publish Grace to all, on promise made  
Of new Subjection; with what eyes could we  
Stand in his presence humble, and receive  
Strict Laws impos'd, to celebrate his Throne  
With warbl'd Hymns, and to his Godhead sing  
Forc't Halleluiah's; while he Lordly sits  
Our envied Sovran, and his Altar breathes  
Ambrosial Odours and Ambrosial Flowers,

Our servile offerings. This must be our task  
In Heav'n, this our delight; how wearisom  
Eternity so spent in worship paid  
To whom we hate. Let us not then pursue  
By force impossible, by leave obtain'd  
Unacceptable, though in Heav'n, our state  
Of splendid vassalage, but rather seek  
Our own good from our selves, and from our own  
Live to our selves, though in this vast recess,  
Free, and to none accountable, preferring  
Hard liberty before the easie yoke  
Of servile Pomp. Our greatness will appear  
Then most conspicuous, when great things of

small,

Useful of hurtful, prosperous of adverse  
We can create, and in what place so e're  
Thrive under evil, and work ease out of pain  
Through labour and endurance. This deep world  
Of darkness do we dread? How oft amidst  
Thick clouds and dark doth Heav'ns all-ruling

Sire

Choose to reside, his Glory unobscur'd,  
And with the Majesty of darkness round  
Covers his Throne; from whence deep thunders

roar

Must'ring thir rage, and Heav'n resembles Hell?  
As he our Darkness, cannot we his Light  
Imitate when we please? This Desart soile

Wants not her hidden lustre, Gemms and Gold;  
Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise  
Magnificence; and what can Heav'n shew more?  
Our torments also may in length of time  
Become our Elements, these piercing Fires  
As soft as now severe, our temper chang'd  
Into their temper; which must needs remove  
The sensible of pain. All things invite  
To peaceful Counsels, and the settl'd State  
Of order, how in safety best we may  
Compose our present evils, with regard  
Of what we are and where, dismissing quite  
All thoughts of Warr: ye have what I advise.

He scarce had finisht, when such murmur filld  
Th' Assembly, as when hollow Rocks retain  
The sound of blustering winds, which all night

long

Had rous'd the Sea, now with hoarse cadence lull  
Sea-faring men orewatcht, whose Bark by chance  
Or Pinnace anchors in a craggy Bay  
After the Tempest: Such applause was heard  
As *Mammon* ended, and his Sentence pleas'd,  
Advising peace: for such another Field  
They dreaded worse then Hell: so much the fear  
Of Thunder and the Sword of *Michael*  
Wrought still within them; and no less desire  
To found this nether Empire, which might rise

By pollicy, and long process of time,  
In emulation opposite to Heav'n.  
Which when *Beelzebub* perceiv'd, then whom,  
*Satan* except, none higher sat, with grave  
Aspect he rose, and in his rising seem'd  
A Pillar of State; deep on his Front engraven  
Deliberation sat and publick care;  
And Princely counsel in his face yet shon,  
Majestick though in ruin: sage he stood  
With *Atlantean* shoulders fit to bear  
The weight of mightiest Monarchies; his look  
Drew audience and attention still as Night  
Or Summers Noon-tide air, while thus he spake.

Thrones and imperial Powers, off-spring of  
heav'n,  
Ethereal Vertues; or these Titles now  
Must we renounce, and changing stile be call'd  
Princes of Hell? for so the popular vote  
Inclines, here to continue, and build up here  
A growing Empire; doubtless; while we dream,  
And know not that the King of Heav'n hath  
doom'd

This place our dungeon, not our safe retreat  
Beyond his Potent arm, to live exempt  
From Heav'n's high jurisdiction, in new League  
Banded against his Throne, but to remaine  
In strictest bondage, though thus far remov'd,

Under th' inevitable curb, reserv'd  
His captive multitude: For he, be sure,  
In highth or depth, still first and last will Reign  
Sole King, and of his Kingdom loose no part  
By our revolt, but over Hell extend  
His Empire, and with Iron Scepter rule  
Us here, as with his Golden those in Heav'n.  
What sit we then projecting Peace and Warr?  
Warr hath determin'd us, and foild with loss  
Irreparable; tearms of peace yet none  
Voutsaf't or sought; for what peace will be giv'n  
To us enslav'd, but custody severe,  
And stripes, and arbitrary punishment  
Inflicted? and what peace can we return,  
But to our power hostility and hate,  
Untam'd reluctance, and revenge though slow,  
Yet ever plotting how the Conquerour least  
May reap his conquest, and may least rejoyce  
In doing what we most in suffering feel?  
Nor will occasion want, nor shall we need  
With dangerous expedition to invade  
Heav'n, whose high walls fear no assault or

Siege,

Or ambush from the Deep. What if we find  
Some easier enterprize? There is a place  
(If ancient and prophetic fame in Heav'n  
Err not) another World, the happy seat  
Of som new Race call'd *Man* , about this time

To be created like to us, though less  
In power and excellence, but favour'd more  
Of him who rules above; so was his will  
Pronounc'd among the Gods, and by an Oath,  
That shook Heav'ns whol circumference,  
confirm'd.

Thither let us bend all our thoughts, to learn  
What creatures there inhabit, of what mould,  
Or substance, how endu'd, and what thir Power,  
And where thir weakness, how attempted best,  
By force or suttlety: Though Heav'n be shut,  
And Heav'ns high Arbitrator sit secure  
In his own strength, this place may lye expos'd  
The utmost border of his Kingdom, left  
To their defence who hold it: here perhaps  
Som advantagious act may be achiev'd  
By sudden onset, either with Hell fire  
To waste his whole Creation, or possess  
All as our own, and drive as we were driven,  
The punie habitants, or if not drive,  
Seduce them to our Party, that thir God  
May prove thir foe, and with repenting hand  
Abolish his own works. This would surpass  
Common revenge, and interrupt his joy  
In our Confusion, and our Joy upraise  
In his disturbance; when his darling Sons  
Hurl'd headlong to partake with us, shall curse  
Thir frail Originals, and faded bliss,

Faded so soon. Advise if this be worth  
Attempting, or to sit in darkness here  
Hatching vain Empires. Thus *Beelzebub*  
Pleaded his devilish Counsel, first devis'd  
By *Satan* , and in part propos'd: for whence,  
But from the Author of all ill could Spring  
So deep a malice, to confound the race  
Of mankind in one root, and Earth with Hell  
To mingle and involve, done all to spite  
The great Creatour? But thir spite still serves  
His glory to augment. The bold design  
Pleas'd highly those infernal States, and joy  
Sparkl'd in all thir eyes; with full assent  
They vote: whereat his speech he thus renews.

Well have ye judg'd, well ended long debate,  
Synod of Gods, and like to what ye are,  
Great things resolv'd; which from the lowest deep  
Will once more lift us up, in spight of Fate,  
Neerer our ancient Seat; perhaps in view  
Of those bright confines, whence with  
neighbouring Arms

And opportune excursion we may chauce  
Re-enter Heav'n; or else in some milde Zone  
Dwell not unvisited of Heav'ns fair Light  
Secure, and at the brightning Orient beam  
Purge off this gloom; the soft delicious Air,  
To heal the scarr of these corrosive Fires

Shall breath her balme. But first whom shall we  
send

In search of this new world, whom shall we find  
Sufficient? who shall tempt with wandring feet  
The dark unbottom'd infinite Abyss  
And through the palpable obscure find out  
His uncouth way, or spread his aerie flight  
Upborn with indefatigable wings  
Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive  
The happy Ile; what strength, what art can then  
Suffice, or what evasion bear him safe  
Through the strict Senteries and Stations thick  
Of Angels watching round? Here he had need  
All circumspection, and we now no less  
Choice in our suffrage; for on whom we send,  
The weight of all and our last hope relies.

This said, he sat; and expectation held  
His look suspence, awaiting who appear'd  
To second, or oppose, or undertake  
The perilous attempt: but all sat mute,  
Pondering the danger with deep thoughts; each  
In others count'nance red his own dismay  
Astonisht: none among the choice and prime  
Of those Heav'n-warring Champions could be  
found

So hardie as to proffer or accept  
Alone the dreadful voyage; till at last

*Satan* , whom now transcendent glory rais'd  
Above his fellows, with Monarchal pride  
Conscious of highest worth, unmov'd thus spake.

O Progeny of Heav'n, Empyrean Thrones,  
With reason hath deep silence and demurr  
Seis'd us, though undismaid: long is the way  
And hard, that out of Hell leads up to Light;  
Our prison strong, this huge convex of Fire,  
Outrageous to devour, immures us round  
Ninefold, and gates of burning Adamant  
Barr'd over us prohibit all egress.

These past, if any pass, the void profound  
Of unessential Night receives him next  
Wide gaping, and with utter loss of being  
Threatens him, plung'd in that abortive gulf.  
If thence he scape into what ever world,  
Or unknown Region, what remains him less  
Then unknown dangers and as hard escape.  
But I should ill become this Throne, O Peers,  
And this Imperial Sov'ranty, adorn'd  
With splendor, arm'd with power, if aught

propos'd

And judg'd of public moment, in the shape  
Of difficulty or danger could deterre  
Me from attempting. Wherefore do I assume  
These Royalties, and not refuse to Reign,  
Refusing to accept as great a share

Of hazard as of honour, due alike  
To him who Reigns, and so much to him due  
Of hazard more, as he above the rest  
High honourd sits? Go therefore mighty powers,  
Terror of Heav'n, though fall'n; intend at home,  
While here shall be our home, what best may ease  
The present misery, and render Hell  
More tollerable; if there be cure or charm  
To respite or deceive, or slack the pain  
Of this ill Mansion: intermit no watch  
Against a wakeful Foe, while I abroad  
Through all the coasts of dark destruction seek  
Deliverance for us all: this enterprize  
None shall partake with me. Thus saying rose  
The Monarch, and prevented all reply,  
Prudent, least from his resolution rais'd  
Others among the chief might offer now  
(Certain to be refus'd) what erst they feard;  
And so refus'd might in opinion stand  
His rivals, winning cheap the high repute  
Which he through hazard huge must earn. But

they

Dreaded not more th' adventure than his voice  
Forbidding; and at once with him they rose;  
Thir rising all at once was as the sound  
Of Thunder heard remote. Towards him they

bend

With awful reverence prone; and as a God

Extoll him equal to the highest in Heav'n:  
Nor fail'd they to express how much they prais'd,  
That for the general safety he despis'd  
His own: for neither do the Spirits damn'd  
Loose all thir vertue; least bad men should boast  
Thir specious deeds on earth, which glory excites,  
Or close ambition varnisht o're with zeal.  
Thus they thir doubtful consultations dark  
Ended rejoicing in thir matchless Chief:  
As when from mountain tops the dusky clouds  
Ascending, while the North wind sleeps,  
o'respread

Heav'ns chearful face, the lowring Element  
Scowls ore the dark'nd lantskip Snow, or showre;  
If chance the radiant Sun with farewell sweet  
Extend his ev'ning beam, the fields revive,  
The birds thir notes renew, and bleating herds  
Attest thir joy, that hill and valley rings.  
O shame to men! Devil with Devil damn'd  
Firm concord holds, men onely disagree  
Of Creatures rational, though under hope  
Of heavenly Grace: and God proclaiming peace,  
Yet live in hatred, enmitie, and strife  
Among themselves, and levie cruel warres,  
Wasting the Earth, each other to destroy:  
As if (which might induce us to accord)  
Man had not hellish foes anow besides,  
That day and night for his destruction waite.

The *Stygian* Council thus dissolv'd; and forth  
In order came the grand infernal Peers,  
Midst came thir mighty Paramount, and seemd  
Alone th' Antagonist of Heav'n, nor less  
Then Hells dread Emperour with pomp Supream,  
And God-like imitated State; him round  
A Globe of fierie Seraphim inclos'd  
With bright imblazonrie, and horrent Arms.  
Then of thir Session ended they bid cry  
With Trumpets regal sound the great result:  
Toward the four winds four speedy Cherubim  
Put to thir mouths the sounding Alchymie  
By Haralds voice explain'd: the hollow Abyss  
Heard farr and wide, and all the host of Hell  
With deafning shout, return'd them loud acclaim.  
Thence more at ease thir minds and somewhat

rais'd

By false presumptuous hope, the ranged powers  
Disband, and wandring, each his several way  
Pursues, as inclination or sad choice  
Leads him perplext, where he may likeliest find  
Truce to his restless thoughts, and entertain  
The irksome hours, till his great Chief return.  
Part on the Plain, or in the Air sublime  
Upon the wing, or in swift race contend,  
As at th' Olympian Games or *Pythian* fields;  
Part curb thir fierie Steeds, or shun the Goal

With rapid wheels, or fronted Brigads form.  
As when to warn proud Cities warr appears  
Wag'd in the troubl'd Skie, and Armies rush  
To Battel in the Clouds, before each Van  
Pric forth the Aerie Knights, and couch thir  
spears

Till thickest Legions close; with feats of Arms  
From either end of Heav'n the welkin burns.  
Others with vast *Typhoean* rage more fell  
Rend up both Rocks and Hills, and ride the Air  
In whirlwind; Hell scarce holds the wilde uproar.  
As when *Alcides* from *Oealia* Crown'd  
With conquest, felt th' envenom'd robe, and tore  
Through pain up by the roots *Thessalian* Pines,  
And *Lichas* from the top of *Oeta* threw  
Into th' *Euboic* Sea. Others more milde,  
Retreated in a silent valley, sing  
With notes Angelical to many a Harp  
Thir own Heroic deeds and hapless fall  
By doom of Battel; and complain that Fate  
Free Vertue should enthrall to Force or Chance.  
Thir song was partial, but the harmony  
(What could it less when Spirits immortal sing?)  
Suspended Hell, and took with ravishment  
The thronging audience. In discourse more sweet  
(For Eloquence the Soul, Song charms the  
Sense,)  
Others apart sat on a Hill retir'd,

In thoughts more elevate, and reason'd high  
Of Providence, Foreknowledge, Will, and Fate,  
Fixt Fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,  
And found no end, in wandring mazes lost.  
Of good and evil much they argu'd then,  
Of happiness and final misery,  
Passion and Apathie, and glory and shame,  
Vain wisdom all, and false Philosophie:  
Yet with a pleasing sorcerie could charm  
Pain for a while or anguish, and excite  
Fallacious hope, or arm th' obdured brest  
With stubborn patience as with triple steel.  
Another part in Squadrons and gross Bands,  
On bold adventure to discover wide  
That dismal world, if any Clime perhaps  
Might yeild them easier habitation, bend  
Four ways thir flying March, along the Banks  
Of four infernal Rivers that disgorge  
Into the burning Lake thir baleful streams;  
Abhorred *Styx* the flood of deadly hate,  
Sad *Acheron* of sorrow, black and deep;  
*Cocytus* , nam'd of lamentation loud  
Heard on the ruful stream; fierce *Phlegeton*  
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.  
Farr off from these a slow and silent stream,  
*Lethe* the River of Oblivion roules  
Her watrie Labyrinth, whereof who drinks,  
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,

Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain.  
Beyond this flood a frozen Continent  
Lies dark and wilde, beat with perpetual storms  
Of Whirlwind and dire Hail, which on firm land  
Thaws not, but gathers heap, and ruin seems  
Of ancient pile; all else deep snow and ice,  
A gulf profound as that *Serbonian* Bog  
Betwixt *Damiata* and mount *Casius* old,  
Where Armies whole have sunk: the parching Air  
Burns froze, and cold performs th' effect of Fire.  
Thither by harpy-footed Furies hail'd,  
At certain revolutions all the damn'd  
Are brought: and feel by turns the bitter change  
Of fierce extreams, extreams by change more

fierce,

From Beds of raging Fire to starve in Ice  
Thir soft Ethereal warmth, and there to pine  
Immovable, infixt, and frozen round,  
Periods of time, thence hurried back to fire.  
They ferry over this *Lethean* Sound  
Both to and fro, thir sorrow to augment,  
And wish and struggle, as they pass, to reach  
The tempting stream, with one small drop to

loose

In sweet forgetfulness all pain and woe,  
All in one moment, and so neer the brink;  
But fate withstands, and to oppose th' attempt  
*Medusa* with *Gorgonian* terror guards

The Ford, and of it self the water flies  
All taste of living wight, as once it fled  
The lip of *Tantalus* . Thus roving on  
In confus'd march forlorn, th' adventrous Bands  
With shuddring horror pale, and eyes agast  
View'd first thir lamentable lot, and found  
No rest: through many a dark and drearie Vaile  
They pass'd, and many a Region dolorous,  
O're many a Frozen, many a Fierie Alpe,  
Rocks, Caves, Lakes, Fens, Bogs, Dens, and  
shades of death,

A Universe of death, which God by curse  
Created evil, for evil only good,  
Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds,  
Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,  
Abominable, inutterable, and worse  
Then Fables yet have feign'd, or fear conceiv'd,  
*Gorgons* and *Hydra's* , and *Chimera's* dire.

Mean while the Adversary of God and Man,  
*Satan* with thoughts inflam'd of highest design,  
Puts on swift wings, and toward the Gates of Hell  
Explores his solitary flight; som times  
He scours the right hand coast, som times the left,  
Now shaves with level wing the Deep, then  
soares

Up to the fiery concave touring high.  
As when farr off at Sea a Fleet descri'd

Hangs in the Clouds, by *Aequinoctial* Winds  
Close sailing from *Bengala*, or the Iles  
Of *Ternate* and *Tidore*, whence Merchants

bring

Thir spicie Drugs: they on the trading Flood  
Through the wide *Ethiopian* to the Cape  
Ply stemming nightly toward the Pole. So seem'd  
Farr off the flying Fiend: at last appear  
Hell bounds high reaching to the horrid Roof,  
And thrice threefold the Gates; three folds were

Brass

Three Iron, three of Adamantine Rock,  
Impenitrable, impal'd with circling fire,  
Yet unconsum'd. Before the Gates there sat  
On either side a formidable shape;  
The one seem'd Woman to the waste, and fair,  
But ended foul in many a scaly fould  
Voluminous and vast, a Serpent arm'd  
With mortal sting: about her middle round  
A cry of Hell Hounds never ceasing bark'd  
With wide *Cerberean* mouths full loud, and

rung

A hideous Peal: yet, when they list, would creep,  
If aught disturb'd thir noyse, into her woomb,  
And kennel there, yet there still bark'd and

howl'd

Within unseen. Farr less abhorrd then these  
Vex'd *Scylla* bathing in the Sea that parts

*Calabria* from the hoarce *Trinacrian* shore:  
Nor uglier follow the Night-Hag, when call'd  
In secret, riding through the Air she comes  
Lur'd with the smell of infant blood, to dance  
With *Lapland* Witches, while the labouring

Moon

Eclipses at thir charms. The other shape,  
If shape it might be call'd that shape had none  
Distinguishable in member, joynt, or limb,  
Or substance might be call'd that shadow seem'd,  
For each seem'd either; black it stood as Night,  
Fierce as ten Furies, terrible as Hell,  
And shook a dreadful Dart; what seem'd his head  
The likeness of a Kingly Crown had on.  
*Satan* was now at hand, and from his seat  
The Monster moving onward came as fast,  
With horrid strides, Hell trembled as he strode.  
Th' undaunted Fiend what this might be admir'd,  
Admir'd, not fear'd; God and his Son except,  
Created thing naught vallu'd he nor shun'd;  
And with disdainful look thus first began.

Whence and what art thou, execrable shape,  
That dar'st, though grim and terrible, advance  
Thy miscreated Front athwart my way  
To yonder Gates? through them I mean to pass,  
That be assur'd, without leave askt of thee:  
Retire, or taste thy folly, and learn by proof,

Hell-born, not to contend with Spirits of Heav'n.

To whom the Goblin full of wrauth reply'd,  
Art thou that Traitor Angel, art thou hee,  
Who first broke peace in Heav'n and Faith, till

then

Unbrok'n, and in proud rebellious Arms  
Drew after him the third part of Heav'ns Sons  
Conjur'd against the highest, for which both Thou  
And they outcast from God, are here condemn'd  
To waste Eternal daies in woe and pain?  
And reck'n'st thou thy self with Spirits of

Heav'n,

Hell-doomd, and breath'st defiance here and

scorn,

Where I reign King, and to enrage thee more,  
Thy King and Lord? Back to thy punishment,  
False fugitive, and to thy speed add wings,  
Least with a whip of Scorpions I pursue  
Thy lingring, or with one stroke of this Dart  
Strange horror seise thee, and pangs unfelt before.

So spake the grieslie terrour, and in shape,  
So speaking and so threatning, grew ten fold  
More dreadful and deform: on th' other side  
Incenc't with indignation *Satan* stood  
Unterrifi'd, and like a Comet burn'd,  
That fires the length of *Ophiucus* huge

In th' Artick Sky, and from his horrid hair  
Shakes Pestilence and Warr. Each at the Head  
Level'd his deadly aime; thir fatall hands  
No second stroke intend, and such a frown  
Each cast at th' other, as when two black Clouds  
With Heav'ns Artillery fraught, come rattling on  
Over the *Caspian* , then stand front to front  
Hov'ring a space, till Winds the signal blow  
To joyn thir dark Encounter in mid air:  
So frownd the mighty Combatants, that Hell  
Grew darker at thir frown, so matcht they stood;  
For never but once more was either like  
To meet so great a foe: and now great deeds  
Had been achiev'd, whereof all Hell had rung,  
Had not the Snakie Sorceress that sat  
Fast by Hell Gate, and kept the fatal Key,  
Ris'n, and with hideous outcry rush'd between.

O Father, what intends thy hand, she cry'd,  
Against thy only Son? What fury O Son,  
Possesses thee to bend that mortal Dart  
Against thy Fathers head? and know'st for whom;  
For him who sits above and laughs the while  
At thee ordain'd his drudge, to execute  
What e're his wrath, which he calls Justice, bids,  
His wrath which one day will destroy ye both.

She spake, and at her words the hellish Pest

Forbore, then these to her *Satan* return'd:

So strange thy outcry, and thy words so strange  
Thou interposest, that my sudden hand  
Prevented spares to tell thee yet by deeds  
What it intends; till first I know of thee,  
What thing thou art, thus double-form'd, and why  
In this infernal Vaile first met thou call'st  
Me Father, and that Fantasm call'st my Son?  
I know thee not, nor ever saw till now  
Sight more detestable then him and thee.

T' whom thus the Portress of Hell Gate reply'd;  
Hast thou forgot me then, and do I seem  
Now in thine eye so foul, once deemd so fair  
In Heav'n, when at th' Assembly, and in sight  
Of all the Seraphim with thee combin'd  
In bold conspiracy against Heav'ns King,  
All on a sudden miserable pain  
Surpris'd thee, dim thine eyes, and dizzie swumm  
In darkness, while thy head flames thick and fast  
Threw forth, till on the left side op'ning wide,  
Likest to thee in shape and count'nance bright,  
Then shining heav'nly fair, a Goddess arm'd  
Out of thy head I sprung: amazement seis'd  
All th' Host of Heav'n; back they recoild affraid  
At first, and call'd me *Sin* , and for a Sign  
Portentous held me; but familiar grown,

I pleas'd, and with attractive graces won  
The most averse, thee chiefly, who full oft  
Thy self in me thy perfect image viewing  
Becam'st enamour'd, and such joy thou took'st  
With me in secret, that my womb conceiv'd  
A growing burden. Mean while Warr arose,  
And fields were fought in Heav'n; wherein  
remaind

(For what could else) to our Almighty Foe  
Clear Victory, to our part loss and rout  
Through all the Empyrean: down they fell  
Driv'n headlong from the Pitch of Heaven, down  
Into this Deep, and in the general fall  
I also; at which time this powerful Key  
Into my hand was giv'n, with charge to keep  
These Gates for ever shut, which none can pass  
Without my op'ning. Pensive here I sat  
Alone, but long I sat not, till my womb  
Pregnant by thee, and now excessive grown  
Prodigious motion felt and rueful throes.  
At last this odious offspring whom thou seest  
Thine own begotten, breaking violent way  
Tore through my entrails, that with fear and pain  
Distorted, all my nether shape thus grew  
Transform'd: but he my inbred enemie  
Forth issu'd, brandishing his fatal Dart  
Made to destroy: I fled, and cry'd out *Death* ;  
Hell trembl'd at the hideous Name, and sigh'd

From all her Caves, and back resounded *Death* .  
I fled, but he pursu'd (though more, it seems,  
Inflam'd with lust then rage) and swifter far,  
Me overtook his mother all dismaid,  
And in embraces forcible and foule  
Ingendring with me, of that rape begot  
These yelling Monsters that with ceaseless cry  
Surround me, as thou sawst, hourly conceiv'd  
And hourly born, with sorrow infinite  
To me, for when they list into the womb  
That bred them they return, and howle and gnaw  
My Bowels, their repast; then bursting forth  
Afresh with conscious terrours vex me round,  
That rest or intermission none I find.  
Before mine eyes in opposition sits  
Grim *Death* my Son and foe, who sets them on,  
And me his Parent would full soon devour  
For want of other prey, but that he knows  
His end with mine involvd; and knows that I  
Should prove a bitter Morsel, and his bane,  
When ever that shall be; so Fate pronounc'd.  
But thou O Father, I forewarn thee, shun  
His deadly arrow; neither vainly hope  
To be invulnerable in those bright Arms,  
Though temper'd heav'nly, for that mortal dint,  
Save he who reigns above, none can resist.

She finish'd, and the suttel Fiend his lore

Soon learn'd, now milder, and thus answer'd  
smooth.

Dear Daughter, since thou claim'st me for thy  
Sire,

And my fair Son here showst me, the dear pledge  
Of dalliance had with thee in Heav'n, and joys  
Then sweet, now sad to mention, through dire  
change

Befalln us unforeseen, unthought of, know  
I come no enemy, but to set free  
From out this dark and dismal house of pain,  
Both him and thee, and all the heav'nly Host  
Of Spirits that in our just pretenses arm'd  
Fell with us from on high: from them I go  
This uncouth errand sole, and one for all  
My self expose, with lonely steps to tread  
Th' unfounded deep, through the void immense  
To search with wandering quest a place foretold  
Should be, and, by concurring signs, ere now  
Created vast and round, a place of bliss  
In the Pourlieues of Heav'n, and therein plac't  
A race of upstart Creatures, to supply  
Perhaps our vacant room, though more remov'd,  
Least Heav'n surcharg'd with potent multitude  
Might hap to move new broiles: Be this or aught  
Then this more secret now design'd, I haste  
To know, and this once known, shall soon return,  
And bring ye to the place where Thou and Death

Shall dwell at ease, and up and down unseen  
Wing silently the buxom Air, imbalm'd  
With odours; there ye shall be fed and fill'd  
Immeasurably, all things shall be your prey.  
He ceas'd, for both seemd highly pleas'd, and

## Death

Grinnd horrible a gastly smile, to hear  
His famine should be fill'd, and blest his mawe  
Destin'd to that good hour: no less rejoyc'd  
His mother bad, and thus bespake her Sire.

The key of this infernal Pit by due,  
And by command of Heav'ns all-powerful King  
I keep, by him forbidden to unlock  
These Adamantine Gates; against all force  
Death ready stands to interpose his dart,  
Fearless to be o'rematcht by living might.  
But what ow I to his commands above  
Who hates me, and hath hither thrust me down  
Into this gloom of *Tartarus* profound,  
To sit in hateful Office here confin'd,  
Inhabitant of Heav'n, and heav'nlie-born,  
Here in perpetual agonie and pain,  
With terrors and with clamors compasst round  
Of mine own brood, that on my bowels feed:  
Thou art my Father, thou my Author, thou  
My being gav'st me; whom should I obey  
But thee, whom follow? thou wilt bring me soon

To that new world of light and bliss, among  
The Gods who live at ease, where I shall Reign  
At thy right hand voluptuous, as beseems  
Thy daughter and thy darling, without end.

Thus saying, from her side the fatal Key,  
Sad instrument of all our woe, she took;  
And towards the Gate rouling her bestial train,  
Forthwith the huge Porcullis high up drew,  
Which but her self not all the *Stygian* powers  
Could once have mov'd; then in the key-hole

turns

Th' intricate wards, and every Bolt and Bar  
Of massie Iron or sollid Rock with ease  
Unfast'ns: on a sudden op'n flie  
With impetuouse recoile and jarring sound  
Th' infernal dores, and on thir hinges great  
Harsh Thunder, that the lowest bottom shook  
Of *Erebus* . She op'nd, but to shut  
Excel'd her power; the Gates wide op'n stood,  
That with extended wings a Bannerd Host  
Under spread Ensigns marching might pass

through

With Horse and Chariots rankt in loose array;  
So wide they stood, and like a Furnace mouth  
Cast forth redounding smoak and ruddy flame.  
Before thir eyes in sudden view appear  
The secrets of the hoarie deep, a dark

Illimitable Ocean without bound,  
Without dimension, where length, breadth, and  
highth,

And time and place are lost; where eldest Night  
And *Chaos*, Ancestors of Nature, hold  
Eternal *Anarchie*, amidst the noise  
Of endless warrs and by confusion stand.

For hot, cold, moist, and dry, four Champions  
fierce

Strive here for Maistrie, and to Battel bring  
Thir embryon Atoms; they around the flag  
Of each his faction, in thir several Clanns,  
Light-arm'd or heavy, sharp, smooth, swift or

slow,

Swarm populous, unnumber'd as the Sands  
Of *Barca* or *Cyrene's* torrid soil,  
Levied to side with warring Winds, and poise  
Thir lighter wings. To whom these most adhere,  
Hee rules a moment; *Chaos* Umpire sits,  
And by decision more imbroiles the fray  
By which he Reigns: next him high Arbiter  
*Chance* governs all. Into this wilde Abyss,  
The Womb of nature and perhaps her Grave,  
Of neither Sea, nor Shore, nor Air, nor Fire,  
But all these in thir pregnant causes mixt  
Confus'dly, and which thus must ever fight,  
Unless th' Almighty Maker them ordain  
His dark materials to create more Worlds,

Into this wilde Abyss the warie fiend  
Stood on the brink of Hell and look'd a while,  
Pondering his Voyage; for no narrow frith  
He had to cross. Nor was his eare less peal'd  
With noises loud and ruinous (to compare  
Great things with small) then when *Bellona*

storms,

With all her battering Engines bent to rase  
Som Capital City, or less then if this frame  
Of Heav'n were falling, and these Elements  
In mutinie had from her Axle torn  
The stedfast Earth. At last his Sail-broad Vannes  
He spreads for flight, and in the surging smoak  
Uplifted spurns the ground, thence many a

League

As in a cloudy Chair ascending rides  
Audacious, but that seat soon failing, meets  
A vast vacuitie: all unawares  
Fluttring his pennons vain plumb down he drops  
Ten thousand fadom deep, and to this hour  
Down had been falling, had not by ill chance  
The strong rebuff of som tumultuous cloud  
Instinct with Fire and Nitre hurried him  
As many miles aloft: that furie stay'd,  
Quencht in a Boggie *Syrtris* , neither Sea,  
Nor good dry Land: nigh founderd on he fares,  
Treading the crude consistence, half on foot,  
Half flying; behoves him now both Oare and

Saile.

As when a Gryfon through the Wilderness  
With winged course ore Hill or moarie Dale,  
Pursues the *Arimaspian* , who by stelth  
Had from his wakeful custody purloind  
The guarded Gold: So eagerly the fiend  
Ore bog or steep, through strait, rough, dense, or

rare,

With head, hands, wings, or feet pursues his way,  
And swims or sinks, or wades, or creeps, or flies:  
At length a universal hubbub wilde  
Of stunning sounds and voices all confus'd  
Born through the hollow dark assaults his eare  
With loudest vehemence: thither he plyes,  
Undaunted to meet there what ever power  
Or Spirit of the nethermost Abyss  
Might in that noise reside, of whom to ask  
Which way the neerest coast of darkness lyes  
Bordering on light; when strait behold the Throne  
Of *Chaos* , and his dark Pavilion spread  
Wide on the wasteful Deep; with him Enthron'd  
Sat Sable-vested Night, eldest of things,  
The consort of his Reign; and by them stood  
*Orcus* and *Ades* , and the dreaded name  
Of *Demogorgon* ; Rumor next and Chance,  
And Tumult and Confusion all imbroidl,  
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

T' whom *Satan* turning boldly, thus. Ye Powers  
And Spirits of this nethermost Abyss,  
*Chaos* and *Ancient Night*, I come no Spie,  
With purpose to explore or to disturb  
The secrets of your Realm, but by constraint  
Wandering this darksome desert, as my way  
Lies through your spacious Empire up to light,  
Alone, and without guide, half lost, I seek  
What readiest path leads where your gloomie

bounds

Confine with Heav'n; or if som other place  
From your Dominion won, th' Ethereal King  
Possesses lately, thither to arrive  
I travel this profound, direct my course;  
Directed, no mean recompence it brings  
To your behoof, if I that Region lost,  
All usurpation thence expell'd, reduce  
To her original darkness and your sway  
(Which is my present journey) and once more  
Erect the Standerd there of *Ancient Night* ;  
Yours be th' advantage all, mine the revenge.

Thus *Satan* ; and him thus the Anarch old  
With faultring speech and visage incompos'd  
Answer'd. I know thee, stranger, who thou art,  
That mighty leading Angel, who of late  
Made head against Heav'ns King, though  
overthrown.

I saw and heard, for such a numerous host  
Fled not in silence through the frightened deep  
With ruin upon ruin, rout on rout,  
Confusion worse confounded; and Heav'n Gates  
Poured out by millions her victorious Bands  
Pursuing. I upon my Frontieres here  
Keep residence; if all I can will serve,  
That little which is left so to defend  
Encroacht on still through our intestine broiles  
Weakning the Scepter of old Night: first Hell  
Your dungeon stretching far and wide beneath;  
Now lately Heaven and Earth, another World  
Hung ore my Realm, link'd in a golden Chain  
To that side Heav'n from whence your Legions

fell:

If that way be your walk, you have not farr;  
So much the neerer danger; goe and speed;  
Havock and spoil and ruin are my gain.

He ceas'd; and *Satan* staid not to reply,  
But glad that now his Sea should find a shore,  
With fresh alacritie and force renew'd  
Springs upward like a Pyramid of fire  
Into the wilde expanse, and through the shock  
Of fighting Elements, on all sides round  
Environ'd wins his way; harder beset  
And more endanger'd, then when *Argo* pass'd  
Through *Bosporus* betwixt the justling Rocks:

Or when *Ulysses* on the Larbord shunn'd  
*Charybdis* , and by th' other whirlpool steard.  
So he with difficulty and labour hard  
Mov'd on, with difficulty and labour hee;  
But hee once past, soon after when man fell,  
Strange alteration! Sin and Death amain  
Following his track, such was the will of Heav'n,  
Pav'd after him a broad and beat'n way  
Over the dark Abyss, whose boiling Gulf  
Tameley endur'd a Bridge of wondrous length  
From Hell continu'd reaching th' utmost Orbe  
Of this frail World; by which the Spirits perverse  
With easie intercourse pass to and fro  
To tempt or punish mortals, except whom  
God and good Angels guard by special grace.  
But now at last the sacred influence  
Of light appears, and from the walls of Heav'n  
Shoots farr into the bosom of dim Night  
A glimmering dawn; here Nature first begins  
Her fardest verge, and *Chaos* to retire  
As from her outmost works a brok'n foe  
With tumult less and with less hostile din,  
That *Satan* with less toil, and now with ease  
Wafts on the calmer wave by dubious light  
And like a weather-beaten Vessel holds  
Gladly the Port, though Shrouds and Tackle torn;  
Or in the emptier waste, resembling Air,  
Weighs his spread wings, at leasure to behold

Farr off th' Empyreal Heav'n, extended wide  
In circuit, undetermind square or round,  
With Opal Towrs and Battlements adorn'd  
Of living Saphire, once his native Seat;  
And fast by hanging in a golden Chain  
This pendant world, in bigness as a Starr  
Of smallest Magnitude close by the Moon.  
Thither full fraught with mischievous revenge,  
Accurst, and in a cursed hour he hies.

### BOOK III

Hail holy light, ofspring of Heav'n first-born,  
Or of th' Eternal Coeternal beam  
May I express thee unblam'd? since God is light,  
And never but in unapproach'd light  
Dwelt from Eternitie, dwelt then in thee,  
Bright effluence of bright essence increate.  
Or hear'st thou rather pure Ethereal stream,  
Whose Fountain who shall tell? before the Sun,  
Before the Heavens thou wert, and at the voice  
Of God, as with a Mantle didst invest  
The rising world of waters dark and deep,  
Won from the void and formless infinite.  
Thee I re-visit now with bolder wing,  
Escap't the *Stygian* Pool, though long detain'd

In that obscure sojourn, while in my flight  
Through utter and through middle darkness borne  
With other notes then to th' *Orphean* Lyre  
I sung of *Chaos* and *Eternal Night* ,  
Taught by the heav'nly Muse to venture down  
The dark descent, and up to reascend,  
Though hard and rare: thee I revisit safe,  
And feel thy sovran vital Lamp; but thou  
Revisit'st not these eyes, that rowle in vain  
To find thy piercing ray, and find no dawn;  
So thick a drop serene hath quencht thir Orbs,  
Or dim suffusion veild. Yet not the more  
Cease I to wander where the Muses haunt  
Cleer Spring, or shadie Grove, or Sunnie Hill,  
Smit with the love of sacred song; but chief  
Thee *Sion* and the flowrie Brooks beneath  
That wash thy hallowd feet, and warbling flow,  
Nightly I visit: nor somtimes forget  
Those other two equal'd with me in Fate,  
So were I equal'd with them in renown,  
Blind *Thamyris* and blind *Maeonides* ,  
And *Tiresias* and *Phineus* Prophets old.  
Then feed on thoughts, that voluntarie move  
Harmonious numbers; as the wakeful Bird  
Sings darkling, and in shadiest Covert hid  
Tunes her nocturnal Note. Thus with the Year  
Seasons return, but not to me returns  
Day, or the sweet approach of Ev'n or Morn,

Or sight of vernal bloom, or Summers Rose,  
Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine;  
But cloud in stead, and ever-during dark  
Surrounds me, from the chearful waies of men  
Cut off, and for the book of knowledg fair  
Presented with a Universal blanc  
Of Natures works to mee expung'd and ras'd,  
And wisdom at one entrance quite shut out.  
So much the rather thou Celestial light  
Shine inward, and the mind through all her

powers

Irradiate, there plant eyes, all mist from thence  
Purge and disperse, that I may see and tell  
Of things invisible to mortal sight.

Now had the Almighty Father from above,  
From the pure Empyrean where he sits  
High Thron'd above all highth, bent down his

eye,

His own works and their works at once to view:  
About him all the Sanctities of Heaven  
Stood thick as Starrs, and from his sight receiv'd  
Beatitude past utterance; on his right  
The radiant image of his Glory sat,  
His onely Son; On Earth he first beheld  
Our two first Parents, yet the onely two  
Of mankind, in the happie Garden plac't,  
Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,

Uninterrupted joy, unrivald love  
In blissful solitude; he then survey'd  
Hell and the Gulf between, and *Satan* there  
Coasting the wall of Heav'n on this side Night  
In the dun Air sublime, and ready now  
To stoop with wearied wings, and willing feet  
On the bare outside of this World, that seem'd  
Firm land imbosom'd without Firmament,  
Uncertain which, in Ocean or in Air.  
Him God beholding from his prospect high,  
Wherein past, present, future he beholds,  
Thus to his onely Son foreseeing spake.

Onely begotten Son, seest thou what rage  
Transports our adversarie, whom no bounds  
Prescrib'd, no barrs of Hell, nor all the chains  
Heapt on him there, nor yet the main Abyss  
Wide interrupt can hold; so bent he seems  
On desperat revenge, that shall redound  
Upon his own rebellious head. And now  
Through all restraint broke loose he wings his

way

Not farr off Heav'n, in the Precincts of light,  
Directly towards the new created World,  
And Man there plac't, with purpose to assay  
If him by force he can destroy, or worse,  
By som false guile pervert; and shall pervert;  
For man will heark'n to his glozing lyes,

And easily transgress the sole Command,  
Sole pledge of his obedience: So will fall  
Hee and his faithless Progenie: whose fault?  
Whose but his own? ingrate, he had of mee  
All he could have; I made him just and right,  
Sufficient to have stood, though free to fall.  
Such I created all th' Ethereal Powers  
And Spirits, both them who stood them who  
faild;

Freely they stood who stood, and fell who fell.  
Not free, what proof could they have givn sincere  
Of true allegiance, constant Faith or Love,  
Where onely what they needs must do, appeard,  
Not what they would? what praise could they  
receive?

What pleasure I from such obedience paid,  
When Will and Reason (Reason also is choice)  
Useless and vain, of freedom both despoild,  
Made passive both, had servd necessitie,  
Not mee. They therefore as to right belongd,  
So were created, nor can justly accuse  
Thir maker, or thir making, or thir Fate;  
As if Predestination over-rul'd  
Thir will, dispos'd by absolute Decree  
Or high foreknowledge; they themselves decreed  
Thir own revolt, not I: if I foreknew,  
Foreknowledge had no influence on their fault,  
Which had no less prov'd certain unforeknown.

So without least impulse or shadow of Fate,  
Or aught by me immutable foreseen,  
They trespass, Authors to themselves in all  
Both what they judge and what they choose; for

so

I form'd them free, and free they must remain,  
Till they enthrall themselves: I else must change  
Thir nature, and revoke the high Decree  
Unchangeable, Eternal, which ordain'd  
Thir freedom, they themselves ordain'd thir fall.  
The first sort by thir own suggestion fell,  
Self-tempted, self-deprav'd: Man falls deceiv'd  
By the other first: Man therefore shall find grace,  
The other none: in Mercy and Justice both,  
Through Heav'n and Earth, so shall my glorie

excel,

But Mercy first and last shall brightest shine.

Thus while God spake, ambrosial fragrance fill'd  
All Heav'n, and in the blessed Spirits elect  
Sense of new joy ineffable diffus'd:  
Beyond compare the Son of God was seen  
Most glorious, in him all his Father shon  
Substantially express'd, and in his face  
Divine compassion visibly appeerd,  
Love without end, and without measure Grace,  
Which uttering thus he to his Father spake.