

No ingrateful food:¹ and food alike those pure
 Intelligential substances require,
 As doth your rational; and both contain
 Within them every lower faculty
 Of sense, whereby they hear, see, smell, touch, taste,
 Tasting concoct, digest, assimilate,
 And corporeal to incorporeal turn.
 For know, whatever was created, needs
 To be sustained and fed; of elements
 The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
 Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
 Ethereal, and, as lowest, first the moon;
 Whence in her visage round those spots, unpurged
 Vapours not yet into her substance turned.²
 Nor doth the moon no nourishment exhale
 From her moist continent to higher orbs.
 The sun, that light imparts to all, receives
 From all his alimantal recompense
 In humid exhalations, and at ever
 Sups with the ocean. Though in Heaven the trees
 Of life ambrosial fruitage bear, and vines³
 Yield nectar; though from off the boughs each morn
 We brush mellifluous dews, and find the ground
 Covered with pearly grain: yet God hath here
 Varied his bounty so with new delights,
 As may compare with Heaven; and to taste,
 Think not I shall be nice." So down they sat,
 And to their viands fell; nor seemingly
 The angel, nor in mist, the common gloss
 Of theologians;⁴ but with keen despatch

¹ There being mention made in Scripture of "angel's food," Psal. lxxviii. 25, that is foundation enough for a poet to build upon, and advance these notions of the angels eating.—*Newton*.

² We must, throughout these passages, charitably bear in mind the fact that Milton was a poet, not a philosopher.

³ In mentioning "trees of life," and "vines" in Heaven, he is justified by Scripture. See Rev. xxii. 2; Matt. xxvi. 29. As in speaking afterwards of "mellifluous dews" and "pearly grain," he manifestly alludes to manna, which is called "the bread of heaven," Psal. cv. 40; "And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground," Exod. xvi. 14; "and it was like coriander-seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey," ver. 31.—*Newton*.

⁴ The usual comment and exposition of divines. For several of the fathers were of opinion that the angels did not really eat, but only seemed so to do.—*Newton*.

Of real hunger, and concoctive heat
 To transubstantiate: what redounds, transpires
 Through spirits with ease; nor wonder, if by fire
 Of sooty coal the empiric alchemist
 Can turn, or holds it possible to turn,
 Metals of drossiest ore to perfect gold,
 As from the mine. Meanwhile at table, Eve
 Ministered naked, and their flowing cups
 With pleasant liquors crowned:¹ O innocence
 Deserving Paradise! If ever, then,
 Then had the sons of God excuse to have been
 Enamoured² at that sight; but in those hearts
 Love unlibidinous reigned, nor jealousy
 Was understood, the injured lover's hell.

Thus when with meats and drinks they had sufficed,
 Not burdened nature, sudden mind arose
 In Adam, not to let the occasion pass,
 Given him by this great conference, to know
 Of things above his world, and of their being
 Who dwell in Heaven, whose excellence he saw
 Transcend his own so far, whose radiant forms,
 Divine effulgence, whose high power, so far
 Exceeded human; and his wary³ speech
 Thus to the empyreal minister he framed.

“ Inhabitant with God, now know I well
 Thy favour, in this honour done to man,
 Under whose lowly roof thou hast vouchsafed
 To enter, and these earthly fruits to taste,
 Food not of angels, yet accepted so,
 As that more willingly thou couldst not seen.
 At Heaven's high feasts to have fed: yet what compare?⁴”

To whom the wingéd hierarch replied:
 “ O Adam, one Almighty is, from whom
 All things proceed, and up to him return,
 If not depraved from good, created all
 Such to perfection,⁴ one first matter all,
 Endued with various forms, various degrees
 Of substance, and in things that live, of life;
 But more refined, more spirituous, and pure,

¹ *i. e.* filled to the brim.

² An allusion to Genes. vi. 2.

³ He was afraid to ask such questions directly, and therefore tempered his speech with caution and modesty.

⁴ *i. e.* not absolutely good, but perfect in their different kinds and degrees.

As nearer to him placed or nearer tending,¹
 Each in their several active spheres assigned,
 Till body up to spirit work, in bounds
 Proportioned to each kind. So from the root
 Springs lighter the green stalk, from thence the leaves
 More airy, last the bright consummate flower
 Spirits odorous breathes: flowers and their fruit,
 Man's nourishment, by gradual scale sublimed,
 To vital spirits aspire, to animal,
 To intellectual; give both life and sense,
 Fancy and understanding; whence the soul
 Reason receives, and reason is her being,
 Discursive,² or intuitive; discourse
 Is ofttest yours, the latter most is ours,
 Differing but in degree, of kind the same
 Wonder not, then, what God for you saw good,
 If I refuse not, but convert, as you,
 To proper substance: time may come, when men
 With angels may participate, and find
 No inconvenient diet, nor too light fare;
 And from these corporal nutriments, perhaps,
 Your bodies may at last turn all to spirit,
 Improved by tract of time, and winged ascend
 Ethereal, as we; or may, at choice,
 Here or in heavenly Paradises dwell;
 If ye be found obedient, and retain
 Unalterably firm his love entire,
 Whose progeny you are.³ Meanwhile, enjoy
 Your fill what happiness this happy state
 Can comprehend, incapable of more."

To whom the patriarch of mankind replied:
 "O favourable spirit, propitious guest,
 Well hast thou taught the way that might direct
 Our knowledge, and the scale of nature set
 From centre to circumference, whereon,
 In contemplation of created things,

² So Spenser, in his "Hymn of Heavenly Beauty," speaking of the earth, the air, and above that the pure crystalline—

"By view whereof it plainly may appear,
 That still as everything doth upward tend,
 And farther is from earth, so still more clear
 And fair it grows," &c.

Thy

¹ i. e. inferential, argumentative.

³ Acts xvii. 28 "For we are also his offsprings, from Aratus.

By steps we may ascend to God. But say,
 What meant that caution joined, 'if ye be found
 Obedient?' Can we want obedience then
 To him, or possibly his love desert,
 Who formed us from the dust, and placed us here,
 Full to the utmost measure of what bliss
 Human desires can seek or apprehend?"

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

To whom our great progenitor: "Thy words
 attentive, and with more delighted ear,
 Divine instructor, I have heard, than when
 Cherubic songs by night from neighbouring hills
 Aërial music send: nor knew I not
 To be both will and deed created free;
 Yet that we never shall forget to love
 Our Maker, and obey him, whose command
 Single is yet so just, my constant thoughts
 Assured me, and still assure: though what thou tell'st
 Hath passed in Heaven, some doubt within me move.
 But more desire to hear, if thou consent

The full relation, which must needs be strange,
 Worthy of sacred silence to be heard;
 And we have yet large day, for scarce the sun
 Hath finished half his journey, and scarce begun
 His other half in the great zone of Heaven."

Thus Adam made request; and Raphaël,
 After short pause assenting, thus began:

"High matter thou enjoin'st me, O prime of men,
 Sad task and hard; for how shall I relate
 To human sense the invisible exploits
 Of warring spirits? how, without remorse,
 The ruin of so many glorious once
 And perfect while they stood? how last unfold
 The secrets of another world, perhaps
 Not lawful to reveal? yet for thy good
 This is dispensed; and what surmounts the reach
 Of human sense, I shall delineate so,
 By likening spiritual to corporal forms,
 As may express them best; though what if earth
 Be but the shadow of Heaven, and things therein
 Each to other like, more than on earth is thought?"

"As yet this world was not, and Chaos wild [rests
 Reign'd where these Heavens now roll, where earth now
 Upon her centre poised; when on a day
 (For time, though in eternity, applied
 To motion, measures all things durable
 By present, past, and future), on such day
 As Heaven's great year¹ brings forth the empyreal host
 Of angels, by imperial summons called,
 Innumerable before the Almighty's throne
 Forthwith from all the ends of Heaven appeared
 Under their hierarchs in orders bright;
 Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced.
 Standards and gonfalons² 'twixt van and rear
 Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
 Of hierarchies, of orders, and degrees;³

¹ Plato's great year of the heavens is the revolution of all the spheres. Everything returns to where it set out when their motion first began.—*Richardson*.

² A kind of streamer.

³ That there were different grades of angels in Heaven seems sufficiently evident from Scripture, although the speculations of the Fathers (especially of the Pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita on the subject) are of little value.

Or in their glittering tissues bear emblazed
 Holy memorials, acts of zeal and love
 Recorded eminent. Thus when in orbs
 Of circuit inexpressible they stood,
 Orb within orb, the Father infinite,
 By whom in bliss embosomed sat the Son,
 Amidst as from a flaming mount, whose top
 Brightness had made invisible,¹ thus spake.

“ ‘Hear all ye angels, progeny of light.
 Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers,
 Hear my decree, which unrevoked shall stand.
 This day I have begot² whom I declare
 My only Son, and on this holy hill
 Him have anointed, whom ye now behold
 At my right hand; your head I him appoint,
 And by myself have sworn to him shall bow
 All knees in Heaven, and shall confess him Lord.
 Under his great vicegerent reign abide
 United as one individual soul,
 For ever happy: him who disobeys,
 Me disobeys, breaks union, and that day,
 Cast out from God and blessed vision, falls
 Into utter darkness, deep engulfed, his place
 Ordained without redemption, without end.’

“ So spake the Omnipotent, and with his words
 All seemed well pleased; all seemed, but were not all
 That day, as other solemn days, they spent
 In song and dance about the sacred hill;
 Mystical dance, which yonder starry sphere
 Of planets and of fixed in all her wheels
 Resembles nearest, mazes intricate,
 Eccentric, intervolved, yet regular
 Then most, when most irregular they seem,
 And in their motions harmony divine
 So smoothes her charming tones, that God's own ear
 Listens delighted. Evening now approached
 (For we have also our evening and our morn,
 We ours for change delectable, not need);
 Forthwith from dance to sweet repast they turn
 Desirous; all in circles as they stood,
 Tables are set, and on a sudden piled
 With angels' food, and rubied nectar flows

¹ Cf. vi. 380.

² Ps. ii. 6, sq.; Genes. xxii. 16; Phil. ii. 10, sq.

In pearl, in diamond, and massy gold,
 Fruit of delicious vines, the growth of Heaven.
 On flowers reposed, and with fresh flowerets crowned,
 They eat, they drink, and in communion sweet
 Quaff immortality and joy, secure
 Of surfeit where full measure only bounds
 Excess, before the all-bounteous King, who showered
 With copious hand, rejoicing in their joy.
 Now when ambrosial night, with clouds exhaled
 From that high mount of God, whence light and shade
 Spring both, the face of brightest Heaven had changed
 To grateful twilight (for night comes not there
 In darker veil), and roseate dews disposed
 All but the unsleeping eyes of God to rest;
 Wide over all the plain, and wider far
 Than all this globous earth in plain outspread
 (Such are the courts of God), the angelic throng,
 Dispersed in bands and files, their camp extend
 By living streams among the trees of life,
 Pavilions numberless, and sudden reared,
 Celestial tabernacles, where they slept,
 Fanned with cool winds; save those who in their course
 Melodious hymns about the sovereign throne
 Alternate all night long: but not so waked
 Satan; so call him now, his former name
 Is heard no more in Heaven; he of the first,
 If not the first archangel, great in power,
 In favour and pre-eminence, yet fraught
 With envy against the Son of God, that day
 Honoured by his great Father, and proclaimed
 Messiah King anointed, could not bear
 Through pride that sight, and thought himself impaired
 Deep malice thence conceiving and disdain,
 Soon as midnight brought on the dusky hour
 Friendliest to sleep and silence, he resolved
 With all his legions to dislodge, and leave
 Unworshipped, unobeyed, the throne supreme,
 Contemptuous; and his next subordinate
 Awakening, thus to him in secret spake:
 "Sleep'st thou,¹ companion dear? What sleep can close
 Thy eye-lids, and rememberest what decree
 Of yesterday, so late hath passed the lips
 Of Heaven's Almighty? Thou to me thy thoughts

¹ From Homer, Il. ii 23.

Wast wont. I mine to thee was wont to impart;
 Both waking we were one; how then can now
 Thy sleep dissent? New laws thou seest imposed;
 New laws from him who reigns, new minds may raise
 In us who serve, new counsels, to debate
 What doubtful may ensue: more in this place
 To utter is not safe. Assemble thou
 Of all those myriads which we lead the chief;
 Tell them that by command, ere yet dim night
 Her shadowy cloud withdraws, I am to haste,
 And all who under me their banners wave,
 Homeward with flying march where we possess
 The quarters of the north; there to prepare
 Fit entertainment to receive our King,
 The great Messiah, and his new commands,
 Who speedily through all the hierarchies
 Intends to pass triumphant, and give laws.'

"So spake the false archangel, and infused
 Bad influence into the unwary breast
 Of his associate: he together calls,
 Or several one by one, the regent powers,
 Under him regent; tells, as he was taught,
 That the Most High commanding, now ere night
 Now ere dim night had disencumbered Heaven,
 The great hierarchal standard was to move,
 Tells the suggested cause, and casts between
 Ambiguous words and jealousies, to sound
 Or taint integrity: but all obeyed
 The wonted signal, and superior voice
 Of their great potentate; for great indeed
 His name, and high was his degree in Heaven,
 His countenance, as the morning-star that guides
 The starry flock, allured them, and with lies
 Drew after him the third part¹ of Heaven's host
 Meanwhile the eternal eye, whose sight discerns
 Abstrusest thoughts, from forth his holy mount,
 And from within the golden lamps that burn
 Nightly before him; saw without their light
 Rebellion rising; saw in whom, how spread
 Among the sons of morn, what multitudes
 Were banded to oppose his high decree;
 And, smiling,² to his only Son thus said:

"Son, thou in whom my glory I behold

Rev. xii. 3, sq

² Cf. Ps. ii. 1. uqq.

In full resplendence, heir of all my might,
 Nearly it now concerns us to be sure
 Of our omnipotence, and with what arms
 We mean to hold what anciently we claim
 Of deity or empire; such a foe
 Is rising, who intends to erect his throne
 Equal to ours, throughout the spacious north,
 Nor so content, hath in his thought to try
 In battle, what our power is, or our right.
 Let us advise, and to this hazard draw
 With speed what force is left, and all employ
 In our defence, lest unawares we lose
 This our high place, our sanctuary, our hill.'

"To whom the Son, with calm aspect and clear,
 Lightning divine,¹ ineffable, serene,
 Made answer: 'Mighty Father, thou thy foes
 Justly hast in derision, and secure
 Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain,
 Matter to me of glory, whom their hate
 Illustrates, when they see all regal power
 Given me to quell their pride, and in event
 Know whether I be dexterous to subdue
 Thy rebels, or be found the worst in Heaven'

"So spake the Son; but Satan with his powers
 Far was advanced on wingéd speed, an host
 Innumerable as the stars of night,
 Or stars of morning, dew-drops, which the sun
 Impearls on every leaf and every flower.
 Regions they passed, the mighty regencies
 Of seraphim, and potentates, and thrones,
 In their triple degrees; regions to which
 All thy dominion, Adam, is no more
 Than what this garden is to all the earth,
 And all the sea, from one entire globose
 Stretched into longitude; which having passed,
 At length into the limits of the north
 They came, and Satan to his royal seat,
 High on a hill, far blazing, as a mount
 Raised on a mount, with pyramids and towers,
 From diamond quarries hewn, and rocks of gold;
 The palace of great Lucifer (so call
 That structure in the dialect of men
 Interpreted), which not long after, he

¹ *i. e.* bright, clear as lightning. Cf. Dan. x. 6; Matt. xxviii. 3

Affecting all equality with God,
 In imitation of that mount whereon
 Messiah was declared in sight of Heaven,
 The Mountain of the Congregation¹ called;
 For thither he assembled all his train,
 Pretending so commanded to consult
 About the great reception of their King
 Thither to come, and with calumnious art
 Of counterfeited truth thus held their ears:

“ ‘Thrones, dominations, principedoms, virtues, powers
 If these magnificent titles yet remain
 Not merely titular, since by decree
 Another now hath to himself engrossed
 All power, and us eclipsed, under the name
 Of King anointed, for whom all this haste
 Of midnight march, and hurried meeting here,
 This only to consult; how we may best,
 With what may be devised of honours new,
 Receive him coming to receive from us
 Knee-tribute yet unpaid, prostration vile,
 Too much to one, but double how endured,
 To one and to his image now proclaimed?
 But what if better counsels might erect
 Our minds, and teach us to cast off this yoke?
 Will ye submit your necks, and choose to bend
 The supple knee? Ye will not, if I trust
 To know ye right, or if ye know yourselves,
 Natives and sons of Heaven, possessed before
 By none, and if not equal all, yet free,
 Equally free; for orders and degrees
 Jar not with liberty, but well consist.²
 Who can in reason then, or right, assume³
 Monarchy over such as live by right
 His equals, if in power and splendour less,
 In freedom equal? or can introduce
 Law and edict on us, who, without law,
 Err not? much less for this to be our Lord,
 And look for adoration, to the abuse

Isa. xiv. 13.

² *i. e.* agree.

i. e. who can assume monarchy, &c., much less can any one introduce law . . . or that this one (*i. e.* the Messiah, as in v. 775, 777) to be our Lord, and seek adoration by the abuse of these titles, &c. The passage is, however, far from satisfactory, and has given rise to much discussion.

Of those imperial titles, which assert
Our being ordained to govern, not to serve.'

“ Thus far his bold discourse without control
Had audience, when among the seraphim
Abdiel, than whom none with more zeal adored
The Deity, and divine commands obeyed,
Stood up, and in a flame of zeal severe,
The current of his fury thus opposed :

“ ‘ Oh, argument blasphemous, false and proud !
Words which no ear ever to hear in Heaven
Expected, least of all from thee, ingrate,
In place thyself so high above thy peers.
Canst thou with impious obloquy condemn
The just decree of God, pronounced and sworn,
That to his only Son, by right endued
With regal sceptre, every soul in Heaven
Shall bend the knee, and in that honour due
Confess him rightful King? unjust, thou sayest,
Flatly unjust, to bind with laws the free,
And equal over equals to let reign,
One over all with unsucceeded power.
Shalt thou give law to God? shalt thou dispute
With him the points of liberty, who made
Thee what thou art, and formed the powers of Heaven
Such as he pleased, and circumscribed their being?
Yet, by experience taught, we know how good,
And of our good and of our dignity
How provident he is, how far from thought
To make us less, bent rather to exalt
Our happy state under one head more near
United. But to grant it thee unjust,
That equal over equals monarch reign :
Thyself, though great and glorious, dost thou count,
Or all angelic nature joined in one,
Equal to him begotten Son? by whom,
As by his Word, the mighty Father made
All things, even thee; and all the spirits of Heaven
By him created in their bright degrees,
Crowned them with glory, and to their glory named
Thrones, dominations, principdoms, virtues, powers,
Essential powers; nor by his reign obscured,
But more illustrious made; since he the head,
One of our number thus reduced becomes;
His laws our laws; all honour to him done

Returns our own. Cease then this impious rage,
 And tempt not these, but hasten to appease
 The incensed Father, and the incensed Son,
 While pardon may be found in time besought.

“ So spake the fervent angel; but his zeal
 None seconded, as out of season judged,
 Or singular and rash; whereat rejoiced
 The apostate, and more haughty thus replied:

“ ‘ That we were formed then, sayest thou? and the work
 Of secondary hands, by task transferred
 From Father to his Son? strange point and new!
 Doctrine which we would know whence learned: who saw
 When this creation was? rememberest thou
 Thy making, while the Maker gave thee being?
 We know no time when we were not as now;
 Know none before us, self-begot, self-raised
 By our own quickening power, when fatal course
 Had circled his full orb, the birth mature
 Of this our native Heaven, ethereal sons.
 Our puissance is our own; our own right hand
 Shall teach us highest deeds, by proof to try
 Who is our equal: then thou shalt behold
 Whether by supplication we intend
 Address, and to begirt the almighty throne
 Beseeching or besieging. This report,
 These tidings carry to the anointed King;
 And fly, ere evil intercept thy flight.’

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

“ ‘ O alienate from God, O spirit accursed,
 Forsaken of all good! I see thy fall
 Determined, and thy hapless crew involved
 In this perfidious fraud, contagion spread
 Both of thy crime and punishment: henceforth
 No more be troubled how to quit the yoke
 Of God's Messiah; those indulgent laws
 Will not be now vouchsafed; other decrees
 Against thee are gone forth without recall;
 That golden sceptre, which thou didst reject,
 Is now an iron rod to bruise and break
 Thy disobedience. Well thou didst advise;

Yet not for thy advice or threats I fly
These wicked tents devcted, lest ^d the wrath
Impendent, raging into sudden flame,
Distinguish not; for soon expect to feel
His thunder on thy head, devouring fire
Then who created thee lamenting learn,
When who can uncreate thee thou shalt know.'

“So spake the seraph Abdiel, faithful found
Among the faithless, faithful only he;
Among innumerable false, unmoved,
Unshaken, unseduced, untterrified,
His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal;
Nor number, nor example, with him wrought
To swerve from truth, or change his constant mind,
Though single From amidst them forth he passed,
Long way through hostile scorn, which he sustained
Superior, nor of violence feared aught;
And with retorted scorn his back he turned
On those proud towers to swift destruction doomed

BOOK VI.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

“ALL night the dreadless angei, unpursued,
Through Heaven's wide champain held his way; till morn,
Waked by the circling hours,¹ with rosy hand
Unbarred the gates of light. There is a cave
Within the mount of God, fast by his throne,
Where light and darkness in perpetual round
Lodge and dislodge by turns, which makes through Heaven
Grateful vicissitudes like day and night;
Light issues forth, and at the other door
Obsequious darkness enters, till her hour

Homer, Il. v. :—

“Heaven's golden gates, kept by the wingéd hours
Commissioned in alternate watch they stand,
The sun's bright portals and the skies command
Involve in clouds the eternal gates of day,
Or the dark barrier roll with ease away.”

Æneid.

To veil the heaven, though darkness there might well
 Seem twilight here; and now went forth the morn,
 Such as in highest Heaven, arrayed in gold
 Empyrean; from before her vanished night,
 Shot through with orient beams; when all the plain,
 Covered with thick embattled squadrons bright,
 Chariots and flaming arms, and fiery steeds,
 Reflecting blaze on blaze, first met his view:
 War he perceived, war in procinct,¹ and found
 Already known what he for news had thought
 To have reported: gladly then he mixed
 Among those friendly powers, whom him received
 With joy and acclamations loud, that one,
 That of so many myriads fallen, yet one
 Returned not lost. On to the sacred hill
 They led him high applauded, and present
 Before the seat supreme; from whence a voice,
 From midst a golden cloud thus mild was heard:

“ ‘ Servant of God, well done! well hast thou fought
 The better fight, who single hast maintained
 Against revolted multitudes the cause
 Of truth, in word mightier than they in arms;
 And for the testimony of truth hast borne
 Universal reproach, far worse to bear
 Than violence; for this was all thy care,
 To stand approved in sight of God, though worlds
 Judged thee perverse: the easier conquest now
 Remains thee, aided by this host of friends,
 Back on thy foes more glorious to return
 Than scorned thou didst depart; and to subdue
 By force, who reason for their law refuse;
 Right reason for their law, and for their King
 Messiah, who by right of merit reigns.
 Go, Michael,² of celestial armies prince,
 And thou in military prowess next,

¹ *In procinctu*, i. e. girt, ready for action.

² As this battle of the angels is founded principally on Rev. xii 7, 8, Michael is rightly made by Milton the leader of the heavenly armies, and the name in Hebrew signifies the “power of God.” But it may be censured perhaps as a piece of wrong conduct in the poem, that the commission here given is not executed; they are ordered to “drive” the rebel angels “out from God and bliss,” but this is effected at last by the Messiah alone. Some reasons for it are assigned in the speech of God, ver. 680, and in that of the Messiah ver. 801, in this book.—*Newt.*

Gabriel, lead forth to battle these my sons
 Invincible, lead forth my arméd saints
 By thousands and by millions ranged for fight,
 Equal in number to that godless crew
 Rebellious; them with fire and hostile arms
 Fearless assault, and to the brow of Heaven
 Pursuing, drive them out from God and bliss
 Into their place of punishment, the gulf
 Of Tartarus, which ready opens wide
 His fiery chaos¹ to receive their fall.'

"So spake the sovran voice, and clouds began
 To darken all the hill,² and smoke to roll
 In dusky wreaths, reluctant flames, the sign
 Of wrath awaked; nor with less dread the loud
 Ethereal trumpet from on high 'gan blow:
 At which command the powers militant,
 That stood for Heaven, in mighty quadrate joined
 Of union irresistible, moved on
 In silence their bright legions, to the sound
 Of instrumental harmony, that breathed
 Heroic ardour to adventurous deeds
 Under their godlike leaders, in the cause
 Of God and his Messiah. On they move
 Indissolubly firm; nor obvious hill,
 Nor straitening vale, nor wood, nor stream, divides
 Their perfect ranks; for high above the ground³
 Their march was, and the passive air upbore
 Their nimble tread: as when the total kind
 Of birds, in orderly array on wing,
 Came summoned over Eden to receive
 Their names of thee; so over many a tract
 Of Heaven they marched, and many a province wide
 Tenfold the length of this terrene: at last,
 Far in the horizon to the north appeared
 From skirt to skirt a fiery region, stretched

¹ "Chaos" may mean any place of confusion; but if we take it strictly, Tartarus, or Hell, was built in Chaos (ii. 1,002), and therefore that part of it, being stored with fire, may not improperly be called "a fiery chaos."—*Newton*.

² Cf. Exod. xix. 16, sqq.

³ Our author attributes the same kind of motion to the angels as the ancients did to their gods; which was gliding through the air without ever touching the ground with their feet, or as Milton elsewhere elegantly expresses it (b. viii. 302), "smooth-sliding without step."—*Newton*.

In battailous aspect, and nearer view
 Bristled with upright beams innumerable
 Of rigid spears, and helmets thronged, and shields
 Various, with boastful argument portrayed,
 The banded powers of Satan hasting on
 With furious expedition; for they weened
 That self-same day by fight, or by surprise,
 To win the mount of God, and on his throne
 To set the envier of his state, the proud
 Aspirer; but their thoughts proved fond and vain
 In the midway: though strange to us it seemed
 At first, that angel should with angel war,
 And in fierce hosting¹ meet, who wont to meet
 So oft in festivals of joy and love
 Unanimous, as sons of one great Sire,
 Hymning the eternal Father. But the shout
 Of battle now began, and rushing sound
 Of onset, ended soon each milder thought
 High in the midst, exalted as a god,
 The apostate in his sun-bright chariot sat,
 Idol² of majesty divine, enclosed
 With flaming cherubim and golden shields,
 Then lighted from his gorgeous throne; for now,
 'Twixt host and host, but narrow space was left,
 A dreadful interval, and front to front
 Presented stood in terrible array
 Of hideous length: before the cloudy van,
 On the rough edge³ of battle ere it joined,
 Satan, with vast and haughty strides advanced,
 Came towering, armed in adamant and gold;
 Abdiel that sight endured not, where he stood
 Among the mightiest, bent on highest deeds,
 And thus his own undaunted heart explores:⁴

“O Heaven! that such resemblance of the Highest
 Should yet remain, where faith and realty⁵

¹ This word “hosting,” seems to have been first coined by our author. It is a very expressive word, and plainly formed from the substantive host. And if ever it is right to make new words, it is when the occasion is so new and extraordinary.—*Newton*.

² *i. e.* resemblance, but in a bad sense.

³ See. i. 276.

⁴ Homer, Il. xxii. :—

“He stood, and questioned thus his mighty mind.”

⁵ Loyalty. See Pearce.

Remain not! wherefore should not strength and might
 There fail where virtue fails, or weakest prove
 Where boldest, though to sight unconquerable?
 His puissance, trusting in the Almighty's aid,
 I mean to try, whose reason I have tried
 Unsound and false; nor is it aught but just.
 That he who in debate of truth hath won,
 Should win in arms, in both disputes alike
 Victor; though brutish that contest and foul,
 When reason hath to deal with force, yet so
 Most reason is that reason overcome.'

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

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

"Whom the grand foe, with scornful eye askance,
 Thus answered: 'Ill for thee, but in wished hour
 Of my revenge, first sought for, thou return'st
 From flight, seditious angel! to receive
 Thy merited reward, the first assay
 Of this right hand provoked, since first that tongue,
 Inspired with contradiction, durst oppose
 A third part of the gods, in synod met
 Their deities to assert; who, while they feel
 Vigour divine within them, can allow
 Omnipotence to none But well thou com'st

Before thy fellows, ambitious to win
 From me some plume, that thy success may show
 Destruction to the rest: this pause between
 (Unanswered lest thou boast) to let thee know,
 At first I thought that liberty and Heaven
 To heavenly souls had been all one; but now
 I see that most through sloth had rather serve,
 Ministering spirits, trained up in feast and song,
 Such hast thou armed, the minstrelsy of Heaven:
 Servility with freedom to contend,
 As both their deeds compared this day shall prove.

“To whom in brief thus Abdiel stern replied:
 ‘Apostate! still thou err’st, nor end wilt find
 Of erring, from the path of truth remote:
 Unjustly thou deprav’st it with the name
 Of servitude, to serve whom God ordains,
 Or nature; God and nature bid the same,
 When he who rules is worthiest, and excels
 Them whom he governs. This is servitude,
 To serve the unwise, or him who hath rebelled
 Against his worthier, as thine now serve thee,
 Thyself not free, but to thyself enthralled;
 Yet lewdly dar’st our ministering upbraid.
 Reign thou in Hell thy kingdom; let me serve
 In Heaven God ever blest, and his divine
 Behests obey, worthiest to be obeyed;
 Yet chains in Hell, not realms, expect: meanwhile
 From me returned, as erst thou saidst, from flight,
 This greeting on thy impious crest receive’

“So saying, a noble stroke he lifted high,
 Which hung not, but so swift with tempest fell
 On the proud crest of Satan, that no sight,
 Nor motion of swift thought, less could his shield,
 Such ruin intercept: ten paces huge
 He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee
 His massy spear upstayed; as if on earth
 Winds under ground, or waters forcing way
 Sidelong, had pushed a mountain from his seat,
 Half sunk with all his pines. Amazement seized
 The rebel thrones, but greater rage to see
 Thus foiled their mightiest; ours joy filled, and shout,
 Presage of victory, and fierce desire
 Of battle: whereat Michaël bid sound
 The archangel trumpet; through the vast of Heaven

It sounded, and the faithful armies rung
 Hosanna to the Highest; nor stood at gaze
 The adverse legions; nor less hideous joined
 The horrid shock. Now storming fury rose,
 And clamour such as heard in Heaven till now
 Was never; arms on armour clashing brayed
 Horrible discord, and the madding wheels
 Of brazen chariots raged; dire was the noise
 Of conflict; overhead the dismal hiss
 Of fiery darts¹ in flaming volleys flew,
 And flying vaulted either host with fire
 So under fiery cope together rushed
 Both battles main, with ruinous assault
 And inextinguishable rage. All Heaven
 Resounded, and had earth been then, all earth
 Had to her centre shook. What wonder, when
 Millions of fierce encountering angels fought
 On either side, the least of whom could wield
 These elements, and arm him with the force
 Of all their regions? How much more of power,
 Army against army numberless to raise
 Dreadful combustion warring, and disturb,
 Though not destroy, their happy native seat;
 Had not the eternal King omnipotent,
 From his strong hold of Heaven, high over-ruled
 And limited their might; though numbered such
 As each divided legion might have seemed
 A numerous host; in strength each armed hand
 A legion; led in fight, yet leader seemed
 Each warrior, single as in chief, expert
 When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
 Of battle, open when, and when to close
 The ridges² of grim war: no thought of flight;
 None of retreat; no unbecoming deed
 That argued fear; each on himself relied,
 As only in his arm the moment lay
 Of victory. Deeds of eternal fame
 Were done, but infinite; for wide was spread
 That war and various; sometimes on firm ground
 A standing fight, then soaring on main wing
 Tormented all the air; all air seemed then
 Conflicting fire. Long time in even scale

¹ *i. e.* the hissing darts flew.

² Ranks, a metaphor taken from a ploughed field

The battle hung ;¹ till Satan, who that day
 Prodigious power had shown, and met in arms
 No equal, ranging through the dire attack
 Of fighting seraphim confused, at length
 Saw where the sword of Michael smote, and felled
 Squadrons at once ; with huge two-handed sway²
 Brandished aloft, the horrid edge came down
 Wide wasting : such destruction to withstand
 He hasted, and opposed the rocky orb
 Of tenfold adamant, his ample shield,
 A vast circumference. At his approach
 The great archangel from his warlike toil
 Surceased, and glad, as hoping here to end
 Intestine war in Heaven, the arch foe subdued,
 Or captive dragged in chains, with hostile frown
 And visage all inflamed, first thus began :

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

“ So spake the prince of angels : to whom thus

¹ Homer, Il. xii. :—

“ As when two scales are charged with doubtful loads,
 So stood the war, till Hector’s matchless might
 With fates prevailing turned the scale of fight.” *Pope.*

² It shows how entirely the ideas of chivalry and romance had possessed Milton to make Michael fight with a two-handed sword.—
Warburto

The adversary;¹ 'Nor think thou with wind
 Of airy threats to awe, whom yet with deeds
 Thou canst not. Hast thou turned the least of these
 To flight, or if to fall, but that they rise
 Unvanquished, easier to transact with me
 That thou shouldst hope, imperious, and with threats
 To chase me hence? Err not² that so shall end
 The strife which thou call'st evil, but we style
 The strife of glory; which we mean to win,
 Or turn this Heaven itself into the Hell
 Thou fablest; here, however, to dwell free,
 If not to reign: meanwhile thy utmost force,
 And join him named Almighty to thy aid;
 I fly not, but have sought thee, far and nigh.'

"They ended parle, and both addressed for fight
 Unspeakable; for **who**, though with the tongue
 Of angels, can relate, or to what things
 Liken on earth conspicuous, that may lift
 Human imagination to such height
 Of godlike power? for likest gods they seemed,
 Stood they or moved, in statue, motion, arms,
 Fit to decide the empire of great Heaven.
 Now waved their fiery swords, and in the air
 Made horrid circles; two broad suns their shields
 Blazed opposite, while expectation stood
 In horror: from each hand with speed retired,
 Where erst was thickest fight, the angelic throng,
 And left large field, unsafe within the wind
 Of such commotion: such as (to set forth
 Great things by small) if, nature's concord broke,
 Among the constellations war were sprung,
 Two planets, rushing from aspect malign
 Of fiercest opposition, in mid sky
 Should combat, and their jarring spheres confound
 Together both, with next to almighty arm,
 Uplifted imminent; one stroke they aimed
 That might determine, and not need repeat,
 As not of power at once; nor odds appeared
 In might or swift prevention: but the sword
 Of Michael, from the armoury of God
 Was given him tempered so, that neither keen
 Nor solid might resist that edge: it met

¹ The enemy, *par excellence*, the devil.

² Mistake not, think not.

The sword of Satan with steep force to smite
 Descending, and in half cut sheer; nor stayed,
 But with swift wheel reverse, deep entering, shared
 All his right side: then Satan first knew pain,
 And writhed him to and fro convolved; so sore
 The griding sword with discontinuous wound
 Passed through him: but the ethereal substance closed
 Not long divisible, and from the gash
 A stream of nectarous humour issuing flowed
 Sanguine,¹ such as celestial spirits may bleed,
 And all his armour stained, erewhile so bright.
 Forthwith on all sides to his aid was run
 By angels many and strong, who interposed
 Defence, while others bore him on their shields
 Back to his chariot, where it stood retired
 From off the files of war; there they him laid,
 Gnashing for anguish and despite and shame,
 To find himself not matchless, and his pride
 Humbled by such rebuke, so far beneath
 His confidence to equal God in power.
 Yet soon he healed; for spirits that live throughout
 Vital in every part, not as frail man
 In entrails, heart or head, liver or reins,
 Cannot but by annihilating die;
 Nor in their liquid texture mortal wound
 Receive, no more than can the fluid air
 All heart they live, all head, all eye, all ear,
 All intellect, all sense; and, as they please,
 They limb themselves, and colour, shape or size
 Assume, as likes them best, condense or rare.²

“ Meanwhile in other parts, like deeds deserved
 Memorial, where the might of Gabriel fought,

¹ *i. e.* a stream of nectarous humour converted into such liquor as spirits bleed. The same idea is expressed by the Homeric *ichor*, Cf. II. v.—

“ From the clear vein a stream immortal flowed,
 Such stream as issues from a wounded god;
 Pure emanation! uncorrupted flood;
 Unlike our gross, diseased, terrestrial blood;
 For not the bread of man their life sustains,
 Nor wine’s inflaming juice supplies their veins.” *Pope.*

The whole passage, as indeed all Milton, abounds with Homeric citations.

² Thin, transparent.

And with fierce ensigns pierced the deep array
 Of Moloch, furious king, who him defied,
 And at his chariot wheels to drag him bound
 Threatened, nor from the Holy One of Heaven
 Refrained his tongue blasphemous; but anon,
 Down cloven to the waist, with shattered arms
 And uncouth¹ pain fled bellowing. On each wing
 Uriel and Raphaël his vaunting foe,
 Though huge, and in a rock of diamond armed,
 Vanquished Adramelech,² and Asmadai,³
 Two potent thrones, that to be less than gods
 Disdained, but meaner thoughts learned in their flight,
 Mangled with ghastly wounds through plate and mail
 Nor stood unmindful Abdiel to annoy
 The atheist crew, but with redoubled blow
 Ariel⁴ and Arioch,⁵ and the violence
 Of Ramiel,⁶ scorched and blasted, overthrew.
 I might relate of thousands, and their names
 Eternize here on earth; but those elect
 Angels, contented with their fame in Heaven,
 Seek not the praise of men: the other sort,
 In might though wondrous and in acts of war,
 Nor of renown less eager, yet by doom
 Cancelled from Heaven and sacred memory,
 Nameless in dark oblivion let them dwell.
 For strength from truth divided, and from just,
 Illaudable,⁷ nought merits but dispraise
 And ignominy, yet to glory aspires
 Vain-glorious, and through infamy seeks fame:
 Therefore eternal silence be their doom.

“And now, their mightiest quelled, the battle swerved,⁸
 With many an inroad gored; deformed rout
 Entered, and foul disorder; all the ground
 With shivered armour strown, and on a heap
 Chariot and charioteer lay overturned,

¹ Uncouth, *i. e.* unusual. See Tyrwhitt's Gl. to Chaucer, p. 638 ed. 4to; cf. Spenser, F. Q. i. 11, 20:—

“The piercing steel there wrought a wound full wide,
 That with the *uncouth* pain the monster loudly cried.”

² *Mighty magnificent king*, one of the idols of Sepharvaim, worshipped by them in Samaria, 2 Kings xvii. 31.

³ Same as Asmodeus, Tobit iii. 8.

⁴ *Lions of God.*

⁵ *A fierce lion.*

⁶ *One that exalts himself against God.* ⁷ Worthless. ⁸ Gave way.

And fiery foaming steeds; what¹ stood, recoiled
 O'er-wearied, through the faint Satanic host
 Defensive scarce, or with pale fear surprised,
 Then first with fear surprised and sense of pain,
 Fled ignominious, to such evil brought
 By sin of disobedience, till that hour
 Not liable to fear, or flight, or pain.
 Far otherwise the inviolable saints,
 In cubic² phalanx firm advanced entire,
 Invulnerable, impenetrably armed;
 Such high advantages their innocence
 Gave them above their foes, not to have sinned,
 Not to have disobeyed; in sight they stood
 Unwearied, unobnoxious to be pained
 By wound, though from their place by violence moved.

“ Now night her course began, and, over Heaven
 Inducing darkness, grateful truce imposed,
 And silence on the odious din of war:
 Under her cloudy covert both retired,
 Victor and vanquished: on the foughten field
 Michaël and his angels prevalent
 Encamping, placed in guard their watches round,
 Cherubic waving fires: on the other part
 Satan with his rebellious disappeared,
 Far in the dark dislodged; and, void of rest,
 His potentates to council called by night;
 And in the midst thus undismayed began:

“ O now in danger tried, now known in arms
 Not to be overpowered, companions dear,
 Found worthy not of liberty alone,
 Too mean pretence, but what we more affect,
 Honour, dominion, glory, and renown;
 Who have sustained one day in doubtful fight
 (And if one day, why not eternal days?)
 What Heaven's Lord had powerfulest to send
 Against us from about his throne, and judged
 Sufficient to subdue us to his will,
 But proves not so: then fallible, it seems,
 Of future we may deem him, though till now
 Omniscient thought. True is,³ less firmly armed,
 Some disadvantage we endured, and pain,

¹ Those who.

² This epithet must be taken rather as denoting the compactness than the form of the phalanx.

³ True it is.

Till now not known, but, known, as soon contemned ;
 Since now we find this our empyreal form
 Incapable of mortal injury,
 Imperishable, and though pierced with wound,
 Soon closing, and by native vigour healed
 Of evil then so small as easy think
 The remedy ; perhaps more valid arms,
 Weapons more violent, when next we meet,
 May serve to better us, and worse our foes,
 Or equal what between us made the odds,
 In nature none ; if other hidden cause
 Left them superior, while we can preserve
 Unhurt our minds and understanding sound,
 Due search and consultation will disclose.'

" He sat: and in the assembly next upstood
 Nisroch,¹ of principalities the prime ;
 As one he stood escaped from cruel fight,
 Sore toiled, his riven arms to havoc hewn,
 And cloudy in aspect thus answering spake :

" ' Deliverer from new lords, leader to free
 Enjoyment of our right as gods ; yet hard
 For gods, and too unequal work we find,
 Against unequal arms to fight in pain,
 Against unpained, impassive ; from which evil
 Ruin must needs ensue ; for what avails
 Valour or strength, though matchless, quelled with pain
 Which all subdues, and makes remiss the hands
 Of mightiest ? Sense of pleasure we may well
 Spare out of life, perhaps, and not repine,
 But live content, which is the calmest life :
 But pain is perfect misery, the worst
 Of evils,² and, excessive, overturns
 All patience. He who therefore can invent
 With what more forcible we may offend
 Our yet unwounded enemies, or arm
 Ourselves with like defence, to me³ deserves
 No less than for deliverance what we owe.'

¹ *Great eagle*, an idol of the Ninevites, represented in their sculptures with a hawk's head. See Layard's *Nineveh*.

² Nisroch is made to talk agreeably to the sentiments of Hieronymus, and those philosophers who maintained that pain was the greatest of evils ; there might be a possibility of living without pleasure, but there was no living in pain. A notion suitable enough to a deity of the effeminate Assyrians.—*Newton*. ³ In my opinion.

“ Whereto, with look composed, Satan replied :
 ‘ Not uninvented that, which thou aright
 Believ’st so main to our success, I bring.
 Which of us who beholds the bright surface
 Of this ethereous mould whereon we stand,
 This continent of spacious Heaven, adorned
 With plant, fruit, flower ambrosial, gems and gold ;
 Whose eye so superficially surveys
 These things, as not to mind from whence they grow
 Deep under ground, materials dark and crude,
 Of spirituous and fiery spume, till touched
 With Heaven’s ray, and tempered, they shoot forth
 So beauteous, opening to the ambient light ?
 These, in their dark nativity, the deep¹
 Shall yield us, pregnant with infernal flame ;
 Which into hollow engines² long and round
 Thick-rammed, at the other bore with touch of fire
 Dilated and infuriate, shall send forth
 From far, with thundering noise, among our foes,
 Such implements of mischief, as shall dash
 To pieces, and o’erwhelm whatever stands
 Adverse, that they shall fear we have disarmed
 The Thunderer of his only dreaded bolt.
 Nor long shall be our labour ; yet, ere dawn,
 Effect shall end our wish. Meanwhile revive ;
 Abandon fear ; to strength and counsel joined
 Think nothing hard, much less to be despaired.’

“ He ended, and his words their drooping cheer
 Enlightened, and their languished hope revived.
 The invention all admired, and each, how he
 To be the inventor missed ; so easy it seemed
 Once found, which yet unfound most would have thought
 Impossible : yet haply of thy race
 In future days, if malice should abound,
 Some one intent on mischief, or inspired
 With devilish machination, might devise
 Like instrument to plague the sons of men
 For sin, on war and mutual slaughter bent.
 Forthwith from council to the work they flew ;

¹ *i. e.* the space below the surface of the ground.

² Great guns, the first invention whereof is very properly ascribed to the author of all evil. And Ariosto has described them in the same manner in his Orlando Furioso, cant. 9, st. 28, and attributes the invention to the devil.

None arguing stood; innumerable hands
 Were ready; in a moment up they turned
 Wide the celestial soil, and saw beneath
 The originals of nature in their crude
 Conception; sulphurous and nitrous foam¹
 They found, they mingled, and, with subtle art
 Concocted and adjusted, they reduced
 To blackest grain, and into store conveyed:
 Part hidden veins digged up (nor hath this earth
 Entrails unlike) of mineral and stone,
 Whereof to found their engines and their balls
 Of missive ruin; part incentive reed
 Provide, pernicious² with one touch to fire.
 So all ere day-spring, under conscious night,
 Secret they finished, and in order set,
 With silent circumspection, unespied.

“Now when fair morn orient in Heaven appeared,
 Up rose the victor angels, and to arms
 The matin trumpet sung: in arms they stood
 Of golden panoply, refulgent host,
 Soon banded; others from the dawning hills
 Looked round, and scouts each coast light-armed scour,
 Each quarter, to descry the distant foe,
 Where lodged, or whither fled, or if for fight,
 In motion or in halt: him soon they met
 Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
 But firm battalion; back with speediest sail
 Zophiel,³ of cherubim the swiftest wing,
 Came flying, and in mid air aloud thus cried:
 “Arm, warriors, arm for fight! the foe at hand,
 Whom fled we thought, will save us long pursuit
 This day; fear not his flight; so thick a cloud

¹ Bentley observes that only two materials are here mentioned, and these without charcoal can never make gunpowder. This is rue; but is it necessary that a poet should be as exact as a writer about arts and sciences? If so, not only Milton but Spenser must be blamed, who has done the same thing as Milton has done; for in his *Faërie Queen*, b. i. c. vii. s. 13, describing a cannon charged with gunpowder, he says—

“With windy *nitre* and quick *sulphur* fraught,”

where it is observable that he takes no notice of charcoal, though gunpowder cannot be without it.—*Pearce*.

² *Pernix*, i. e. mischievously ready.

³ *The spy of God*.

He comes, and settled in his face I see
 Sad resolution and secure: let each
 His adamantine coat gird well, and each
 Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orbéd shield,
 Borne even or high; for this day will pour down,
 If I conjecture aught, no drizzling shower,
 But rattling storm of arrows barbed with fire.¹

“ So warned he them, aware themselves, and soon
 In order, quit of all impediment,
 Instant without disturb they took alarm,
 And onward moved embattled: when, behold,
 Not distant far, with heavy pace, the foe
 Approaching gross and huge, in hollow cube
 Training his devilish enginery, impaled
 On every side with shadowing squadrons deep,
 To hide the fraud. At interview both stood
 Awhile; but suddenly at head appeared
 Satan, and thus was heard commanding loud:

“ “ Vanguard, to right and left the front unfold;
 That all may see who hate us, how we seek
 Peace and composure, and with open breast
 Stand ready to receive them, if they like
 Our overture, and turn not back perverse;
 But that I doubt; however, witness Heaven,
 Heaven witness thou anon, while we *discharge*²
 Freely our part; ye who appointed stand,
 Do as you have in *charge*, and briefly *touch*
 What we propound, and loud, that all may hear.’

“ So scoffing, in ambiguous words, he scarce
 Had ended, when to right and left the front
 Divided, and to either flank retired:
 Which to our eyes discovered, new and strange,
 A triple mounted row of pillars laid
 On wheels (for like to pillars most they seemed,
 Or hollowed bodies made of oak or fir,
 With branches lopped, in wood or mountain felled)
 Brass, iron, stony mould,² had not their mouths
 With hideous orifice gaped on us wide,
 Portending hollow³ truce: at each behind

¹ Some of the *puns* (if such they be) are as discreditable to Milton's taste as to poetry. I have ventured to italicise them, lest they should perish unperceived.

² Substance, mass.

³ Another vile pun, scarcely sufficient to tempt an angel into so vile a habit.

A seraph stood, and in his hand a reed
 Stood waving, tipped with fire: while we, suspense,
 Collected stood within our thoughts amused,
 Not long; for sudden all at once their reeds
 Put forth, and to a narrow vent applied
 With nicest touch. Immediate in a flame,
 But soon obscured with smoke, all Heaven appeared,
 From those deep-throated engines¹ belched, whose rout
 Embowelled with outrageous noise the air,
 And all her entrails tore, disgorging foul
 Their devilish glut, chained thunderbolts and hail
 Of iron globes; which, on the victor host
 Levelled, with such impetuous fury smote,
 That whom they hit, none on their feet might stand,
 Though standing else as rocks, but down they fell
 By thousands, angel on archangel rolled,
 The sooner for their arms: unarmed they might
 Have easily, as spirits, evaded swift
 By quick contraction or remove; but now
 Foul dissipation followed, and forced rout;
 Nor served it to relax their serried² files.
 What should they do? if on they rushed, repulse
 Repeated, and indecent overthrow
 Doubled, would render them yet more despised,
 And to their foes a laughter; for in view
 Stood ranked of seraphim another row,
 In posture to displode their second tire
 Of thunder: back defeated to return
 They worse abhorred. Satan beheld their plight,
 And to his mates thus in derision called:

“O friends, why come not on these victors proud?
 Erewhile they fierce were coming; and when we,
 To entertain them fair with open front
 And breast (what could we more?) propounded terms
 Of composition, straight they changed their minds,
 Flew off, and into strange vagaries fell,
 As they would dance; yet for a dance they seemed
 Somewhat extravagant and wild, perhaps
 For joy of offered peace: but I suppose,

¹ So Shakespeare, in *Othello*, act iii. :—

“And oh, you mortal engines, whose rude throats
 The immortal Jove's dread clamours counterfeit.”

Newton

² Close, compact, from the Italian *serrato*.

If our proposals once again were heard,
We should compel them to a quick result.'

"To whom thus Belial, in like gamesome mood:
'Leader, the terms we sent were terms of weight,
Of hard contents, and full of force urged home,
Such as we might perceive amused them all,
And stumbled many; who receives them right,
Had need from head to foot well understand;
Not understood, this gift they have besides,
They show us when our foes walk not upright.'

"So they among themselves, in pleasant vein,
Stood scoffing, heightened in their thoughts beyond
All doubt of victory; eternal might
To match with their inventions they presumed
So easy, and of his thunder made a scorn,
And all his host derided, while they stood
Awhile in trouble: but they stood not long;
Rage prompted them at length, and found them arms
Against such hellish mischief fit to oppose.
Forthwith (behold the excellence, the power,
Which God hath in his mighty angels placed)
Their arms away they threw, and to the hills
(For earth hath this variety from Heaven
Of pleasure situate in hill and dale)
Light as the lightning glimpse they ran, they flew,
From their foundations loosening to and fro
They plucked the seated hills with all their load,
Rocks, waters, woods, and by the shaggy tops
Uplifting bore them in their hands: amaze,
Be sure, and terror, seized the rebel host,
When coming towards them so dread they saw
The bottom of the mountains upward turned;
Till on those curséd engines' triple row
They saw them whelmed, and all their confidence
Under the weight of mountains buried deep;
Themselves invaded next, and on their heads
Main promontories flung, which in the air
Came shadowing, and oppressed whole legions armed;
Their armour helped their harm,¹ crushed in and bruised
Into their substance pent, which wrought them pain
Implacable, and many a dolorous groan,

¹ Newton compares Spenser, F. Q. i. 2 27—

"That erst him goodly armed, now most of all him harmed."

Long struggling underneath, ere they could wind
 Out of such prison, though spirits of purest light
 Purest at first, now gross by sinning grown.
 The rest in imitation to like arms
 Betook them, and the neighbouring hills uptore;
 So hills amid the air encountered hills
 Hurl'd to and fro with jaculation dire,
 That under ground they fought in dismal shade;
 Infernal noise! war seemed a civil game
 To this uproar; horrid confusion heaped
 Upon confusion rose: and now all Heaven
 Had gone to wrack, with ruin overspread,
 Had not the Almighty Father, where he sits
 Shrined in his sanctuary of Heaven secure,
 Consulting on the sum of things, foreseen
 This tumult, and permitted all, advised:
 That his great purpose he might so fulfil,
 To honour his anointed Son avenged
 Upon his enemies, and to declare
 All power on him transferred: whence to his Son,
 The assessor of his throne, he thus began:
 "Effulgence of my glory, Son beloved,
 Son in whose face invisible is beheld
 Visibly, what by deity I am,
 And in whose hand what by decree I do,
 Second Omnipotence! two days are past,
 Two days, as we compute the days of Heaven,
 Since Michael and his powers went forth to tame
 These disobedient; sore hath been their fight,
 As likeliest was, when two such foes met armed;
 For to themselves I left them; and thou knowest
 Equal in their creation they were formed,
 Save what sin hath impaired, which yet hath wrought
 Insensibly, for I suspend their doom;
 Whence in perpetual fight they needs must last
 Endless, and no solution will be found:
 War wearied hath performed what war can do,
 And to disordered rage let loose the reins,
 With mountains as with weapons armed, which makes
 Wild work in Heaven, and dangerous to the main
 Two days are therefore past, the third is thine;
 For thee I have ordained it, and thus far
 Have suffered, that the glory may be thine
 Of ending this great war, since none but thou

Can end it. Into thee such virtue and grace
Immense I have transfused, that all may know
In Heaven and Hell thy power above compare;
And, this perverse commotion governed thus,
To manifest thee worthiest to be Heir
Of all things, to be Heir and to be King
By sacred unction, thy deserved right.
Go then, thou mightiest, in thy Father's might,
Ascend my chariot, guide the rapid wheels
That shake Heaven's basis, bring forth all my war,
My bow and thunder, my almighty arms
Gird on, and sword upon thy puissant thigh;
Pursue these sons of darkness, drive them out
From all Heaven's bounds into the utter deep;
There let them learn, as likes them, to despise
God and Messiah his anointed King.'

"He said, and on his Son with rays direct
Shone full; he all his Father full expressed
Ineffably into his face received;
And thus the filial Godhead answering spake:

"O Father, O Supreme of heavenly thrones,
First, highest, holiest, best! thou always seek'st
To glorify thy Son, I always thee,
As is most just; this I my glory account,
My exaltation, and my whole delight,
That thou in me, well pleased, declar'st thy will
Fulfilled, which to fulfil is all my bliss.
Sceptre and power, thy giving, I assume,
And gladlier shall resign, when in the end
Thou shalt be all in all, and I in thee
For ever, and in me all whom thou lov'st:
But whom thou hat'st, I hate, and can put on
Thy terrors, as I put thy mildness on,
Image of thee in all things, and shall soon,
Armed with thy might, rid Heaven of these rebelled,
To their prepared ill mansion driven down,
To chains of darkness, and the undying worm,
That from thy just obedience could revolt,
Whom to obey is happiness entire.
Then shall thy saints unmixed, and from the impure
Far separate, circling thy holy mount,
Unfeignéd hallelujahs to thee sing,
Hymns of high praise, and I among them chief.'

"So said, he, o'er his sceptre bowing, rose

From the right hand of glory where he sat;
 And the third sacred morn began to shine, [sound
 Dawning through Heaven: forth rushed with whirlwind
 The chariot of paternal Deity,
 Flashing thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
 Itself instinct with spirit, but convoyed
 By four cherubic shapes; four faces each
 Had wondrous; as with stars their bodies all
 And wings were set with eyes, with eyes the wheels
 Of beryl, and careering fires between;
 Over their heads a crystal firmament,
 Whereon a sapphire throne, inlaid with pure
 Amber, and colours of the showery arch.¹
 He, in celestial panoply² all armed
 Of radiant Urim, work divinely wrought,
 Ascended; at his right hand victory
 Sat eagle-winged; beside him hung his bow
 And quiver with three-bolted thunder stored,
 And from about him fierce effusion rolled
 Of smoke, and bickering flame, and sparkles dire:
 Attended with ten thousand thousand saints,³
 He onward came; far off his coming shone;
 And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
 Chariots of God, half on each hand, were seen:
 He on the wings of cherub rode sublime
 On the crystalline sky, in sapphire throned,
 Illustrious far and wide, but by his own
 First seen; them unexpected joy surprised,
 When the great ensign of Messiah blazed
 Aloft by angels borne, his sign in Heaven,
 Under whose conduct Michael soon reduced
 His army, circumfused on either wing,
 Under their Head embodied all in one.
 Before him power divine his way prepared;
 At his command the uprooted hills retired
 Each to his place; they heard his voice, and went
 Obsequious; Heaven his wonted face renewed,
 And with fresh flowerets hill and valley smiled
 This saw his hapless foes, but stood obdured,
 And to rebellious fight rallied their powers
 Insensate, hope conceiving from despair.

¹ Cf. Ezek. i. 4; Is. lxvi. 15; Ezek. i., 5, 16, 19, 20; i. 6; π 13; i. 16, 13; i. 22, 26, 27, 28.—Newton.

² Cf. Eph. vi. 11.

³ Jude 14.

In heavenly spirits could such perverseness dwell?
 But to convince the proud what signs avail,
 Or wonders move the obdurate to relent?
 They, hardened more by what might most reclaim,
 Grieving to see his glory, at the sight
 Took envy; and, aspiring to his height,
 Stood re-embattled fierce, by force or fraud
 Weening to prosper, and at length prevail
 Against God and Messiah, or to fall
 In universal ruin last; and now
 To final battle drew, disdaining flight,
 Or faint retreat; when the great Son of God
 To all his host on either hand thus spake:

“Stand still in bright array, ye saints; here stand
 Ye angels armed; this day from battle rest.
 Faithful hath been your warfare, and of God
 Accepted, fearless in his righteous cause;
 And as ye have received, so have ye done
 Invincibly: but of this curséd crew
 The punishment to other hand belongs;
 Vengeance is his,¹ or whose he sole appoints.
 Number to this day's work is not ordained,
 Nor multitude; stand only and behold
 God's indignation on these godless poured
 By me; not you, but me, they have despised,
 Yet envied; against me is all their rage,
 Because the Father, to whom in Heaven supreme
 Kingdom, and power, and glory, appertains,
 Hath honoured me according to his will.
 Therefore to me their doom he hath assigned,
 That they may have their wish, to try with me
 In battle which the stronger proves, they all,
 Or I alone against them, since by strength
 They measure all, of other excellence
 Not emulous, nor care who them excels;
 Nor other strife with them do I vouchsafe.’

“So spake the Son, and into terror changed
 His countenance too severe to be beheld,
 And full of wrath bent on his enemies.
 At once the four spread out their starry wings
 With dreadful shade contiguous, and the orbs
 Of his fierce chariot rolled, as with the sound
 Of torrent floods, or of a numerous host.

¹ Deut. xxxii. 35; Rom. xii. 9.

He on his impious foes right onward drove,
 Gloomy as night;¹ under his burning wheels
 The stedfast empyréan shook throughout,
 All but the throne itself of God. Full soon
 Among them he arrived, in his right hand
 Grasping ten thousand thunders, which he sent
 Before him, such as in their souls infixed
 Plagues; they, astonished, all resistance lost,
 All courage; down their idle weapons dropped;
 O'er shields, and helms, and helméd heads, he rode
 Of thrones and mighty seraphim prostrate,
 That wished the mountains² now might be again
 Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire.
 Nor less on either side tempestuous fell
 His arrows, from the fourfold-visaged four
 Distinct with eyes, and from the living wheels
 Distinct alike with multitude of eyes;
 One spirit in them ruled, and every eye
 Glared lightning, and shot forth pernicious fire
 Among the accursed, that withered all their strength,
 And of their wonted vigour left them drained,
 Exhausted, spiritless, afflicted, fallen.
 Yet half his strength he put not forth, but checked
 His thunder in mid volley; for he meant
 Not to destroy, but root them out of Heaven:
 The overthrown he raised, and, as a herd
 Of goats or timorous flock together thronged,
 Drove them before him thunderstruck, pursued
 With terrors and with furies to the bounds
 And crystal wall of Heaven; which, opening wide,
 Rolled inward, and a spacious gap disclosed
 Into the wasteful deep; the monstrous sight
 Struck them with horror backward, but far worse
 Urged them behind; headlong themselves they threw
 Down from the verge of Heaven; eternal wrath
 Burnt after them to the bottomless pit.

"Hell heard the unsufferable noise; Hell saw
 Heaven ruining³ from Heaven, and would have fled
 Affrighted; but strict fate had cast too deep
 Her dark foundations, and too fast had bound

¹ Homer, II. i. —

"Breathing revenge, a sudden night be spread,
 And gloomy darkness rolled about his head."—*Hope*.

² Rev. vi. 16.

³ *i. e.* rushing, falling down into destruction.

Nine days they fell; confounded Chaos roared,
 And felt tenfold confusion in their fall
 Through his wild anarchy, so huge a rout
 Encumbered him with ruin: Hell at last
 Yawning received them whole, and on them closed
 Hell, their fit habitation, fraught with fire
 Unquenchable, the house of woe and pain.
 Disburdened Heaven rejoiced,¹ and soon repaired
 Her mural breach, returning whence it rolled.
 Sole victor, from the expulsion of his foes,
 Messiah his triumphal chariot turned:
 To meet him all his saints, who silent stood
 Eye-witnesses of his almighty acts,
 With jubilee advanced; and as they went,
 Shaded with branching palm, each order bright
 Sung triumph, and him sung victorious King,
 Son, Heir, and Lord, to him dominion given,
 Worthiest to reign: he celebrated rode
 Triumphant through mid Heaven, into the courts
 And temple of his mighty Father throned
 On high; who into glory him received,
 Where now he sits at the right hand of bliss.

“ Thus measuring things in Heaven by things on earth,
 At thy request, and that thou mayst beware
 By what is past, to thee I have revealed
 What might have else to human race been hid;
 The discord which befell, and war in Heaven
 Among the angelic powers, and the deep fall
 Of those too high aspiring, who rebelled
 With Satan; he who envies now thy state,
 Who now is plotting how he may seduce
 Thee also from obedience, that with him
 Bereaved of happiness thou mayst partake
 His punishment, eternal misery;
 Which would be all his solace and revenge,
 As a despite done against the most High,
 Thee once to gain companion of his woe.
 But listen not to his temptations; warn
 Thy weaker; let it profit thee to have heard
 By terrible example the reward
 Of disobedience; firm they might have stood,
 Yet fell; remember, and fear to transgress.”

¹ So Tasso, *Gier. Lib. cant. 9, st. 66*:—

“ The earth, delivered from so foul annoy
 Recalled her beauty, and resumed her joy.” *Fairfax.—Tiger.*

BOOK VII.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

DESCEND from Heaven, Urania, by that name
 If rightly thou art called, whose voice divine
 Following, above the Olympian hill I soar,
 Above the flight of 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 hills¹ appeared, or fountain flowed,
 Thou² with eternal Wisdom didst converse,
 Wisdom thy sister, and with her didst play
 In presence of the almighty Father, pleased
 With thy celestial song. Up led by thee
 Into the Heaven of Heavens I have presumed,
 An earthly guest, and drawn empyreal air,
 Thy tempering: with like safety guided down,
 Return me to my native element;
 Lest from this flying steed unreined (as once
 Bellerophon, though from a lower clime)
 Dismounted, on the Aleian field I fall,³

¹ Prov. viii. 24-30.

² Bentley proposes "thee."

³ Bellerophon was a beautiful and valiant youth, son of Glaucus, who refusing the amorous applications of Antea, wife of Prætus, king of Argos was by her false suggestions, like those of Joseph's

Erroneous there to wander, and forlorn.
 Half yet remains unsung, but narrower bound
 Within the visible diurnal sphere ;
 Standing on earth, not rapt above the pole,
 More safe I sing with mortal voice, unchanged
 To hoarse or mute, though fallen on evil days,
 On evil days though fallen, and evil tongues ;
 In darkness, and with dangers compassed round,
 And solitude ; yet not alone, while thou
 Visit'st my slumbers nightly, or when morn
 Purples the east : still govern thou my song,
 Urania, and fit audience find, though few.
 But drive far off the barbarous dissonance
 Of Bacchus and his revellers, the race
 Of that wild rout that tore the Thracian bard
 In Rhodope, where woods and rocks had ears
 To rapture, till the savage clamour drowned
 Both harp and voice ; nor could the Muse defend
 Her son. So fail not thou, who thee implores :
 For thou art heavenly, she an empty dream.

Say, goddess, what ensued when Raphaël,
 The affable archangel, had forewarned
 Adam by dire example to beware
 Apostacy, by what befell in Heaven
 To those apostates, lest the like befall
 In Paradise to Adam or his race,
 Charged not to touch the interdicted tree.
 If they transgress, and slight that sole command.
 So easily obeyed amid the choice
 Of all tastes else to please their appetite,
 Though wandering. He, with his consorted Eve,
 The story heard attentive, and was filled
 With admiration and deep muse, to hear
 Of things so high and strange, things to their thought
 So unimaginable as hate in Heaven,
 And war so near the peace of God in bliss,
 With such confusion ; but the evil, soon
 Driven back, redounded as a flood on those

mistress to her husband, sent into Lycia with letters desiring his destruction, where he was put on several enterprises full of hazard, in which, however, he came off conqueror ; but, attempting vain-gloriously to mount up to Heaven on the winged horse Pegasus, he fell and wandered in the Aleian plains till he died.—*Hume and Richardson.*

From whom it sprung, impossible to mix
 With blessedness. Whence Adam soon repealed
 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 drouth¹
 Yet scarce allayed, still eyes the current stream,
 Whose liquid murmur heard, new thirst excites,
 Proceeded thus to ask his heavenly guest:

“Great things, and full of wonder in our ears,
 Far differing from this world, thou hast revealed,
 Divine interpreter, by favour sent
 Down from the empyréan to forewarn
 Us timely of what might else have been our loss,
 Unknown, which human knowledge could not reach:
 For which to the infinitely Good we owe
 Immortal thanks, and his admonishment
 Receive with solemn purpose to observe
 Immutably his sovereign will, the end
 Of what we are. But since thou hast vouchsafed
 Gently for our instruction to impart
 Things above earthly thought, which yet concerned
 Our knowing, as to highest wisdom seemed,
 Deign to descend now lower, and relate
 What may no less, perhaps, avail us known,
 How first began this Heaven which we behold
 Distant so high, with moving fires adorned
 Innumerable, and this which yields or fills
 All space, the ambient air wide interfused,
 Embracing round this florid earth; what cause
 Moved the Creator, in his holy rest
 Through all eternity, so late to build
 In Chaos; and, the work begun, how soon
 Absolved; if unforbid thou mayst 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,

¹ Thirst.

And longer will delay to hear thee tell
 His generation, and the rising birth
 Of nature from the unapparent deep :
 Or if the star of evening and the moon
 Haste to thy audience, night with her will bring
 Silence, and sleep listening to thee will watch,
 Or we can bid his absence, till thy song
 End, and dismiss thee ere the morning shine."

Thus Adam his illustrious guest besought;
 And thus the godlike angel answered mild :
 " This also thy request, with caution asked,
 Obtain: though to recount almighty works
 What words or tongue of seraph can suffice,
 Or heart of man suffice to comprehend ?
 Yet what thou canst attain, which best may serve
 To glorify the Maker, and infer
 Thee also happier, shall not be withheld
 Thy hearing: such commission from above
 I have received, to answer thy desire
 Of knowledge within bounds; beyond, abstain
 To ask, nor let thine own inventions¹ hope
 Things not revealed, which the invisible King,
 Only omniscient, hath suppressed in night,
 To none communicable in earth or Heaven:
 Enough is left besides to search and know.
 But knowledge is as food, and needs no less
 Her temperance over appetite, to know
 In measure what the mind may well contain,
 Oppresses else with surfeit, and soon turns
 Wisdom to folly, as nourishment to wind.

" 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,² and the great Son returned
 Victorious with his saints, the omnipotent
 Eternal Father from his throne beheld
 Their multitude, and to his Son thus spake :

" ' At least³ our envious foe hath failed, who though.

¹ This word is here used to denote that unlawful curiosity by which men seek to know more than is given to them. Newton compares this scriptural use of the term in Psalm cvi. 29, 38.

² As Judas is said to go "to his own place," Acts i. 25.

³ "At last" is proposed by Thyer.

All like himself rebellious, by whose aid
 This inaccessible high strength, the seat
 Of Deity supreme, us dispossessed,
 He trusted to have seized, and into fraud
 Drew many, whom their place knows here no more;¹
 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 deemed, I can repair
 That detriment, if such it be to lose
 Self-lost, and in a moment will create
 Another world, out of one man a race
 Of men innumerable, there to dwell,
 Not here, till by degrees of merit raised
 They open to themselves at length the way
 Up hither, under long obedience tried,
 And earth be changed to Heaven, and Heaven to earth,²
 One kingdom, joy and union without end.
 Meanwhile inhabit lax,³ 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,⁴ because I am who fill
 Infinitude, nor vacuous the space.
 Though I, uncircumscribed 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.'

¹ A scripture phrase.—See Job vii. 10, Ps. ciii. 16.

² Milton's meaning seems to have been this: that earth would be so happy in being inhabited by *obedient* creatures, that it would be changed to, *i. e.* resemble, Heaven; and Heaven, by receiving those creatures, would in this resemble earth, that it would be stocked with men for its inhabitants.—*Pearce.*

³ Dwell more at large.

⁴ "Boundless the deep," &c. The sense is, the deep is boundless; but the space contained in it is not vacuous and empty, because there is an infinitude, and I fill it. Though I, who am myself uncircumscribed, set bounds to my goodness, and do not exert it everywhere, yet neither necessity nor chance influence my actions, &c.—*Pearce.*

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

"So sang the hierarchies: meanwhile the Son
 On his great expedition now appeared,
 Girt with omnipotence, with radiance crowned
 Of majesty divine; sapience and love
 Immense, and all his Father in him shone
 About his chariot numberless were poured
 Cherub and seraph, potentates and thrones,
 And virtues, winged spirits, and chariots winged
 From the armoury of God, where stand of old
 Myriads between two brazen mountains lodged
 Against a solemn day, harnessed at hand,
 Celestial equipage; and now came forth
 Spontaneous, for within them spirit lived,
 Attendant on their Lord; Heaven opened wide
 Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound
 On golden hinges moving, to let forth
 The King of Glory, in his powerful Word
 And Spirit, coming to create new worlds
 On heavenly ground they stood, and from the shore
 They viewed the vast immeasurable abyss
 Outrageous as a sea, dark, wasteful, wild,
 Up from the bottom turned by furious winds
 And surging waves, as mountains, to assault
 Heaven's height, and with the centre mix the pole.

"Silence, ye troubled waves! and thou deep, peace!
 Said then the omnific Word: 'your discord end!'

Nor stayed, but, on the wings of cherubim
 Uplifted, in paternal glory rode
 Far into Chaos, and the world unborn;
 For Chaos heard his voice: him all his train
 Followed in bright procession, to behold
 Creation, and the wonders of his might.
 Then stayed the fervid wheels, and in his hand
 He took the golden compasses,¹ prepared
 In God's eternal store, to circumscribe
 This universe, and all created things:
 One foot he centred, and the other turned
 Round through the vast profundity obscure,
 And said: 'Thus far extend, thus far thy bounds,
 This be thy just circumference, O world.'
 Thus God the Heaven created, thus the earth,
 Matter unformed and void: darkness profound
 Covered the abyss: but on the watery calm
 His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
 And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth
 Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged
 The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,
 Adverse to life: then founded, then conglobed
 Like things to like, the rest to several place
 Disparted, and between spun out the air,
 And earth self-balanced on her centre hung.
 "Let there be light!" said God, and forthwith light
 Ethereal, first of things, quintessence pure,
 Sprung from the deep, and from her native east
 To journey through the airy gloom began,
 Sphered in a radiant cloud, for yet the sun
 Was not; she in a cloudy tabernacle
 Sojourned the while. God saw the light was good
 And light from darkness by the hemisphere
 Divided: light the day, and darkness night
 He named. Thus was the first day even and morn:
 Nor passed uncelebrated, nor unsung
 By the celestial quires, when orient light
 Exhaling first from darkness they beheld;
 Birth-day of Heaven and earth; with joy and shout
 The hollow universal orb they filled,
 And touched their golden harps, and hymning praised

¹ Prov. viii. 27: "When he prepared the heavens, I was there; when he set a compass upon the face of the deep."

God and his works; Creator him they sung,
Both when first evening was, and when first morn.

“ Again, God said, ‘ Let there be firmament,¹
Amid the waters, and let it divide
The waters from the waters !’ and God made
The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent, elemental air, diffused
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round ; partition firm and sure,
The waters underneath from those above
Dividing : for as earth, so he the world
Built on circumfluous waters calm, in wide
Crystalline ocean ; and the loud misrule
Of Chaos far removed, lest fierce extremes
Contiguous might distemper the whole frame :
And Heaven he named the firmament : so even
And morning chorus sung the second day.

“ The earth was formed, but in the womb as yet
Of waters, embryo immature involved,
Appeared not : over all the face of earth
Main ocean flowed, not idle, but, with warm
Prolific humour softening all her globe,
Fermented the great mother to conceive,
Sate with genial moisture, when God said,
‘ Be gathered now, ye waters under Heaven,
Into one place, and let dry land appear !’
Immediately the mountains huge appear
Emergent, and their broad bare backs upheave
Into the clouds ; their tops ascend the sky :
So high as heaved the tumid hills, so low
Down sunk a hollow bottom broad and deep,
Capacious bed of waters : thither they
Hasted with glad precipitance, uprolled

¹ They who understand the “firmament” to be the vast air, expanded and stretched out on all sides to the starry heavens, esteem the waters above it to be those generated, in the middle region of the air, of vapours exhaled and drawn up thither from the steaming earth and nether waters, which descend again in such vast showers and mighty floods of rain, that not only rivers but seas may be imaginable above, as appeared when the “cataracts” came down in a deluge, “and the flood-gates of Heaven were opened,” Gen. vii. 2. Others, and those many, by these “waters above,” understand the crystalline heaven (by Gassendus made double), by our author better named “crystalline ocean,” by its clearness resembling water : “who layeth the beams of his chambers in the water,” Psalm civ. 3.

As drops on dust conglobing from the dry;
 Part rise in crystal wall, or ridge direct,
 For haste; such flight the great command impressed
 On the swift floods; as armies at the call
 Of trumpet (for of armies thou hast heard)
 Troop to 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 congregated waters he called 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, unadorned,
 Brought forth the tender grass, whose verdure clad
 Her universal face with pleasant green;
 Then herbs of every leaf, that sudden flowered
 Opening their various colours, and made gay
 Her bosom, smelling sweet: and, these scarce blown,
 Forth flourished thick the clustering vine, forth crept
 The smelling¹ gourd, up stood the corny reed²
 Embattled in her field; and the humble shrub,
 And bush with frizzled hair implicit;³ last
 Rose as in dance the stately trees, and spread
 Their branches hung with copious fruit, or gemmed⁴
 Their blossoms; with high woods the hills were crowned,

¹ We must obviously read "swelling," with Bentley.

² The horny reeds stood upright among the undergrowths of nature, like a grove of spears, or a battalion with its pikes aloft. *Corneus* (Latin), of or like horn. Virg. *Æn.* iii. 22.

³ "Hair," *coma* in Latin, is used for leaves, twigs, and branches; and "implicit" signifies entangled. The subject is low, and therefore he is forced to raise the expression.

⁴ Put forth their blossoms, of *gemmae* (Latin) to bud forth.—

With tufts the valleys and each fountain side,
 With borders long the rivers; that earth now
 Seemed like to Heaven, a seat where gods might dwell,
 Or wander with delight, and love to haunt
 Her sacred shades: though God had yet not rained¹
 Upon the earth, and man to till the ground
 None was, but from the earth a dewy mist
 Went up and watered all the ground, and each
 Plant of the field, which, ere it was in the earth
 God made, and every herb, before it grew
 On the green stem; God saw that it was good.
 So even and morn recorded² 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 framed, unlightsome first,
 Though of ethereal mould: then formed the moon
 Globose, and every magnitude of stars,
 And sowed with stars the Heaven thick as a field:
 Of light by far the greater part he took,
 Transplanted from her cloudy shrine, and placed
 In the sun’s orb, made porous³ to receive

¹ This idea is woven in from Gen. ii. 4-6.

² Celebrated, caused to be remembered. This was done by the “even and morning chorus” (ver. 275), with “evening harps and matin” (ver. 450). What is done by the voices and instruments is poetically ascribed to the time in which they were employed.—*Richardson.*

³ Porous, yet firm. Milton seems to have taken this thought from what is said of the Bologna stone, which, being placed in the light, will imbibe and for some time retain it so as to enlighten a dark place.—*Richardson.*

And drink the liquid light, firm to retain
 Her gathered beams, great palace now of light
 Hither, as to their fountain, other stars
 Repairing, in their golden urns draw light,
 And hence the morning planet gilds her horns;
 By tincture or reflection they augment
 Their small peculiar, though from human sight
 So far remote, with diminution seen.
 First in his east the glorious lamp was seen,
 Regent of day, and all the horizon round
 Invested with bright rays, jocund to run
 His longitude through Heaven's high road; the gray
 Dawn and the Pleiades before him danced,¹
 Shedding sweet influence: less bright the moon,
 But opposite in levelled west was set,
 His mirror, with full face borrowing her light
 From him, for other light she needed none
 In that aspect, and still that distance keeps
 Till night, then in the east her turn she shines,
 Revolved on Heaven's great axle, and her reign
 With thousand lesser lights dividual holds,
 With thousand thousand stars, that then appeared
 Spangling the hemisphere: then first adorned
 With their bright luminaries that set and rose,
 Glad evening and glad morn crowned the fourth day.

"And God said: 'Let the waters generate
 Reptile² with spawn abundant, living soul:
 And let fowl fly above the earth, with wings
 Displayed on the open firmament of Heaven!
 And God created the great whales, and each

¹ These are beautiful images, and very much resemble the famous picture of "The Morning," by Guido, where the sun is represented in his chariot, with the Aurora flying before him shedding flowers, and seven beautiful nymph-like figures dancing before and about his chariot, which are commonly taken for the hours, but possibly may be the Pleiades, as they are seven in number, and it is not easy to assign a reason why the hours should be signified by that number particularly. The Pleiades are seven stars in the neck of the constellation Taurus, which, rising about the time of the vernal equinox, are called by the Latins *Vergiliæ*.—*Newton*.

² But by "reptile" or "creeping thing" here, Milton means all such creatures as move in the waters (see Le Clerc's note on Gen. i. 20); and by "creeping thing," mentioned in the sixth day's creation, he means "creeping things of the earth;" for so, both in Milton's account, ver. 452, and in Gen. i. 24, the words "of the earth" are to be joined in construction to "creeping thing."—*Pearce*.

Soul living, each that crept, which plenteousiv
 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 sculls¹ that oft
 Bank the mid sea; part single, or with mate,
 Graze the sea-weed their pasture, and through groves
 Of coral stray, or sporting with quick glance
 Show to the sun their waved coats dropt with gold,
 Or, in their pearly shells at ease, attend
 Moist nutriment, or under rocks their food
 In jointed armour watch; on smooth the sea
 And bended dolphins play: part huge of bulk
 Wallowing unwieldy, enormous in their gait,
 Tempest the ocean; there leviathan,²
 Hugest of living creatures, on the deep
 Stretched like a promontory, sleeps or swims,
 And seems a moving land, and at his gills
 Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.
 Meanwhile the tepid caves, and fens, and shores,
 Their brood as numerous hatch, from the egg that soon
 Bursting with kindly rupture forth disclosed
 Their callow young; but feathered soon and fledge,
 They summed their pens,³ and, soaring the air sublime,
 With clang despised the ground, under a cloud
 In prospect; there the eagle and the stork
 On cliffs and cedar tops their eyries⁴ build:
 Part loosely wing the region, part more wise

¹ Multitudes, from the Saxon *sceole*, an assembly. But Newton would prefer reading "and sculls," I think rightly.

² See i. 290.

"Pens," from *penna*, a feather. "Summed" is a term in falconry: a hawk is said to be "full summed," when his feathers are grown to their full strength. So Par. Reg. i. 14:—

"With prosperous wing full summed." *Richardson.*

⁴ Nests.—Cf. Job xxxix. 27, sq.

In common, ranged in figure, wedge¹ their way.
 Intelligent of seasons, and set forth
 Their airy 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, fanned with unnumbered plumes
 From branch to branch the smaller birds with song
 Solaced the woods, and spread their painted wings
 Till even, nor then the solemn nightingale
 Ceased warbling, but all night tuned her soft lays;
 Others on silver lakes and rivers bathed
 Their downy breast; the swan with archéd neck
 Between her² white wings mantling proudly, rows
 Her state with oary feet; yet oft they quit
 The dank, and, rising on stiff pennons, tower
 The mid aërial sky: others on ground
 Walked firm; the crested cock, whose clarion sounds
 The silent hours, and the other whose gay train
 Adorns him, coloured with the florid hue
 Of rainbows and starry eyes. The waters thus
 With fish replenished, and the air with fowl,
 Evening and morn solemnized the fifth day
 "The sixth, and of creation last, arose
 With evening harps and matin, when God said:
 'Let the earth bring forth soul living in her kind,

¹ This is well illustrated by a passage quoted by Newton from the "Spectacle de la Nature," which says upon this occasion, Dial. xi.—
 "As to wild ducks and cranes, both the one and the other, at the approach of winter, fly in quest of more favourable climates. They all assemble at a certain day, like swallows and quails. They decamp at the same time, and it is very agreeable to observe their flight. They generally range themselves in a long column, like an I, or in two lines united in a point, like 'a V reversed.'" And so, as Milton says,—

"ranged in figure, 'wedge their way.'"

"The duck or quail who forms the point, cuts the air, and facilitates passage to those who follow; but he is charged with this commission only for a certain time, at the conclusion of which he wheels into the rear, and another takes his post." And thus, as Milton says,—

"with mutual wing
 Easing their flight."

² Poets generally make the swan masculine. Milton probably took a contrary course to avoid the disagreeable sound of "his state," iv v. 440.

Cattle, and creeping things, and beast of the earth,
 Each in their kind !' The earth obeyed, and straight¹
 Opening her fertile womb, teemed at a birth
 Innumerable living creatures, perfect forms,
 Limbed and full grown : out of the ground up rose,
 As from his lair, the wild beast, where he wons¹
 In forest wild, in thicket, brake, or den ;
 Among the trees in pairs they rose, they walked :
 The cattle in the fields and meadows green :
 Those rare and solitary, these in flocks
 Pasturing at once, and in broad herds upsprung.
 The grassy clods now calved,² now half appeared
 The tawny lion, pawing to get free
 His hinder parts, then springs as broke from bonds,
 And rampant shakes his brinded mane ; the ounce,
 The libbard,³ and the tiger, as the mole
 Rising, the crumbled earth above them threw
 In hillocks : the swift stag from underground
 Bore up his branching head : scarce from his mould
 Behemoth, biggest born of earth, upheaved
 His vastness : fleeced the flocks and bleating rose,
 As plants : ambiguous between sea and land
 The river-horse and scaly crocodile.
 At once came forth whatever creeps the ground,
 Insect or worm : those waved their limber fans
 For wings, and smallest lineaments exact
 In all the liveries decked of summer's pride
 With spots of gold and purple, azure and green ;
 These as a line their long dimension drew,
 Streaking the ground with sinuous trace ; not all
 Minims of nature : some of serpent kind,
 Wondrous in length and corpulence, involved
 Their snaky folds, and added wings. First crept
 The parsimonious emmet, provident
 Of future, in small room large heart enclosed ;
 Pattern of just equality perhaps
 Hereafter, joined in her popular tribes
 Of commonalty : swarming next appeared
 The female bee, that feeds her husband drone

¹ Saxon for "inhabits, dwells."

² To "calve" (from the Belgic word *kalven*) signifies to bring forth. it is a general word, and does not relate to cows only ; for hinds are said to "calve" in Job xxxix. 1, and Psalm xxix. 9.—*Newton*.

³ Leopard.

Deliciously, and builds her waxen cells
 With honey stored : the rest are numberless,
 And thou their natures know'st, and gav'st them names,
 Needless to thee repeated ; nor unknown
 The serpent, subtlest beast of all the field,
 Of huge extent sometimes, with brazen eyes
 And hairy mane terrific, though to thee
 Not noxious, but obedient at thy call.

“ Now Heaven in all her glory shone, and rolled
 Her motions, as the great first Mover's hand
 First wheeled their course ; earth in her rich attire
 Consummate lovely smiled ; air, water, earth,
 By fowl, fish, beast, was flown, was swum, was walked
 Frequent ; and of the sixth day yet remained :
 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 formed thee, Adam ; thee, O man,
 Dust of the ground, and in thy nostrils breathed
 The breath of life ; in his own image he
 Created thee, in the image of God
 Express, and thou becam'st a living soul.
 Male he created thee, but thy consort
 Female, for race ; then 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 mayst not; in the day thou eat'st, thou diest:
 Death is the penalty imposed: beware,
 And govern well thy appetite; lest Sin
 Surprise thee, and her black attendant Death.

“Here finished he, and all that he had made
 Viewed, and behold all was entirely good;
 So even and morn accomplished the sixth day.
 Yet not till the Creator, from his work
 Desisting, though unwearied, up returned,
 Up to the Heaven of Heavens, his high abode,
 Thence to behold this new-created world,
 The addition of his empire, how it showed
 In prospect from his throne, how good, how fair,
 Answering his great idea. Up he rode,
 Followed with acclamation, and the sound
 Symphonious of ten thousand harps that tuned
 Angelic harmonies: the earth, the air,
 Resounded (thou rememberest, for thou heard'st)
 The Heavens and all the constellations rung,
 The planets in their station¹ listening stood,
 While the bright pomp ascended jubilant.
 ‘Open, ye everlasting gates!’ they sung;
 ‘Open, ye Heavens, your living doors; let in
 The great Creator from his work returned
 Magnificent, his six days’ work, a world;
 Open, and henceforth oft; for God will deign
 To visit oft the dwellings of just men
 Delighted, and with frequent intercourse
 Thither will send his wingéd messengers
 On errands of supernal grace.’ So sung
 The glorious train ascending: He through Heaven,

¹ The “station” of a planet is a term used in art, when the planet appears neither to go backwards nor forwards, but to stand still and keep the same place in its orbit.—Newton.

That opened wide her blazing portals, led
To God's eternal house direct the way;
A broad and ample road, whose dust is gold,
And pavement stars, as stars to thee appear,
Seen in the galaxy, that milky way,
Which nightly as a circling zone thou seest
Powdered with stars. And now on earth the seventh
Evening arose in Eden, for the sun
Was set, and twilight from the east came on,
Forerunning night; when at the holy mount
Of Heaven's high-seated top, the imperial throne
Of Godhead, fixed for ever firm and sure,
The Filial Power arrived, and sat him down
With his great Father; for he also went
Invisible, yet stayed (such privilege
Hath Omnipresence), and the work ordained,
Author and end of all things, and from work
Now resting, blessed and hallowed the seventh day,
As resting on that day from all his work,
But not in silence holy kept; the harp
Had work, and rested not; the solemn pipe,
And dulcimer, all organs of sweet stop,
All sounds on fret by string or golden wire,
Tempered soft tunings, intermixed with voice
Choral or unison; of incense clouds,
Fuming from golden censers, hid the mount.
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 repelled, 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,¹ the glassy sea ;
 Of amplitude almost immense, with stars
 Numerous, and every star perhaps a world
 Of destined habitation ; but thou know'st
 Their seasons : among these the seat of men,
 Earth, with her nether ocean circumfused,
 Their pleasant dwelling-place. Thrice happy men,
 And sons of men, whom God hath thus advanced,
 Created in his image, there to dwell
 And worship him, and in reward to rule
 Over his works, on earth, in sea, or air,
 And multiply a race of worshippers
 Holy and just ; thrice happy if they know
 Their happiness, and persevere upright !'

“ So sung they, and the empyrean rung
 With hallelujahs : thus was sabbath kept.
 And thy request think now fulfilled, that asked
 How first this world and face of things began,
 And what before thy memory was done
 From the beginning, that posterity
 Informed by thee might know : if else thou seek'st
 A light, not surpassing human measure, say

¹ Glassy substance.

END OF THE SEVENTH BOOK

BOOK VIII.

THE ARGUMENT.

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

THE angel ended, and in Adam's ear
So charming left his voice, that he a while
Thought him still speaking, still stood¹ fixed to hear.
Then, as new waked, thus gratefully replied :

“ What thanks sufficient, or what recompense
Equal have I to render thee, divine
Historian, who thus largely hast allayed
The thirst I had of knowledge, and vouchsafed
This friendly condescension to relate
Things else by me unsearchable, now heard
With wonder, but delight, and, as is due,
With glory attributed to the high
Creator? Something yet of doubt remains,
Which only thy solution can resolve.
When I behold this goodly frame, this world
Of Heaven and earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this earth a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compared
And all her numbered² stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal), merely to officiate³ light

¹ *i. e.* continued.² Numerous.³ Furnish.

Round this opacous¹ earth, this punctual spot.
 One day and night, in all their vast survey
 Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,
 How nature, wise and frugal, could commit
 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,
 Served by more noble than herself, attains
 Her end without least motion, and receives,
 As tribute, such a sunless journey brought
 Of incorporeal speed, her warmth and light;
 Speed, to describe whose swiftness number fails."

So spake our sire, and by his countenance seemed
 Entering on studious thoughts abstruse, which Eve
 Perceiving, where she sat retired in sight,
 With lowliness majestic from her seat,
 And grace that won who saw to wish her stay,
 Rose, and went forth among her fruits and flowers,
 To visit how they prospered, bud and bloom,
 Her nursery; they at her coming sprung,
 And, touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew
 Yet went she not, as not with such discourse
 Delighted, or not capable her ear
 Of what was high; such pleasure she reserved,
 Adam relating, she sole auditress:
 Her husband the relater she preferred
 Before the angel, and of him to ask
 Chose rather: he, she knew, would intermix
 Grateful digressions, and solve high dispute
 With conjugal caresses; from his lip
 Not words alone pleased her. Oh! when meet now

¹ Dense, not transparent.

² He had called this earth "a spot" in ver. 17; he calls it here "this punctual spot," a spot no bigger than a point, compared with the firmament and fixed stars. Dr. Bentley says that the author designed "punctal;" but "punctual" is derived from *punctum*, a point; and as the English language was before in possession of the word "punctual" we may suppose that he chose to make use of this word rather than to coin a new one, especially since this signifies the same as the other.—*Newton*.

Such pairs, in love and mutual honour joined?
 With goddess-like demeanour 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 proposed,
 Benevolent and facile thus replied :

“ To ask or search I blame thee not, for Heaven
 Is as the book of God before thee set,
 Wherein to read his wondrous works, and learn
 His seasons, hours, or days, or months, or years :
 This to attain, whether Heaven move or earth,
 Imports not, if thou reckon right ; the rest
 From man or angel the great Architect
 Did wisely to conceal, and not divulge
 His secrets to be scanned by them who ought
 Rather admire ; or if they list to try
 Conjecture, he his fabric of the Heavens
 Hath left to their disputes, perhaps to move
 His laughter at their quaint opinions wide
 Hereafter, when they come to model Heaven
 And calculate the stars, how they will wield
 The mighty frame ; how build, unbuild, contrive
 To save appearances ; how gird the sphere
 With centric and eccentric¹ 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 glistening, may of solid good contain
 More plenty than the sun that barren shines,
 Whose virtue on itself works no effect,
 But in the fruitful earth ; there first received,

¹ “ Cycle ” or “ concentric ” are such spheres whose centre is the same with, and “ eccentric ” such whose centres are different from, that of the earth. “ Cycle ” is a circle ; “ epicycle ” is a circle upon another circle. Expedients of the Ptolemaics to solve the apparent difficulties in their system.—*Richardson*

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,
 Lodged in a small partition, and the rest
 Ordained for uses to his Lord best known.
 The swiftness of those circles attribute,
 Though numberless, to his omnipotence,
 That to corporeal substances could add
 Speed almost spiritual : me thou think'st not slow,
 Who since the morning hour set out from Heaven,
 Where God resides, and ere mid-day arrived
 In Eden, distance inexpressible
 By numbers that have name. But this I urge,
 Admitting motion in the Heavens, to show
 Invalid that which thee to doubt it moved ;
 Not that I so affirm, though so it seem
 To thee who hast thy dwelling here on earth.
 God, to remove his ways from human sense,
 Placed Heaven from earth so far, that earthly sight,
 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 ;¹ and what if seventh to these

¹ In the "moon," and the "five other wandering fires," as they are called, v. 177. Their motions are evident ; and what if the earth should be a seventh planet, and move three different motions, though to the insensible ? The "three different motions" which the Copernicans attribute to the earth are—the "diurnal," round her own axis ; the "annual," round the sun ; and the "motion of libration," as it is called, whereby the earth so proceeds in her orbit as that her axis is constantly parallel to the axis of the world.

"Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe," &c.

You must either ascribe these motions to several spheres crossing and thwarting one another with crooked and indirect turnings and windings ; or you must attribute them to the earth, and "save the sun

The planet earth, so stedfast though she seem,
 Insensibly three different motions move?
 Which else to several spheres thou must ascribe,
 Moved contrary with thwart obliquities,
 Or save the sun his labour, and that swift
 Nocturnal and diurnal rhomb supposed
 Invisible else, above all stars, the wheel
 Of day and night; which needs not thy belief,
 If earth industrious of herself fetch day
 Travelling east, and with her part averse
 From the sun's beam meet night, her other part
 Still luminous by his ray. What if that light,
 Sent from her through the wide transpicious air,
 To the terrestrial moon be as a star
 Enlightening her by day, as she by night
 This earth? reciprocal, if land be there,
 Fields and inhabitants: her spots thou seest
 As clouds,¹ and clouds may rain, and rain produce
 Fruits in her softened soil, for some to eat
 Allotted there; and other suns, perhaps,
 With their attendant moons thou wilt descry,
 Communicating male and female light,²

his labour," and the *primum mobile* too, "that swift nocturnal and diurnal rhomb." It may be observed, that when Milton uses a Greek word, he frequently subjoins the English of it, as he does here, "the wheel of day and night." So he calls the *primum mobile*; and this *primum mobile* in the ancient astronomy was an imaginary sphere above those of the planets and fixed stars, and therefore said by our author to be "supposed" and "invisible above all stars." This was conceived to be the first mover, and to carry all the lower spheres round along with it; by its rapidity communicating to them a motion whereby they revolved in twenty-four hours. "Which needs not thy belief, if earth," &c. But there is no need to believe this, if the earth, by revolving round on her own axis from west to east in twenty-four hours ("travelling east"), enjoys day in that half of her globe which is turned towards the sun, and is covered with night in the other half which is turned away from the sun.—*Newton*.

¹ It seems by this and by another passage, v. 419, as if our author thought that the spots in the moon were clouds and vapours; but the most probable opinion is that they are her seas and waters, which reflect only part of the sun's rays, and absorb the rest.

² The suns communicate male, and the moons female light. And thus Pliny mentions it as a tradition, that the sun is a masculine star, drying all things; on the contrary, the moon is a soft and feminine star, dissolving humours; and so the balance of nature is preserved, some of the stars binding the elements, and others loosing them.—*Newton*.

Which two great sexes animate the world,
 Stored in each orb, perhaps, with some that live.
 For such vast room in nature unpossessed
 By living soul, desert and desolate,
 Only to shine, yet scarce to contribute
 Each orb a glimpse of light, conveyed so far
 Down to this habitable,¹ 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 sleeps²
 On her soft axle, while she paces even,
 And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;
 Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid;
 Leave them to God above, him serve and fear:
 Of other creatures, as him pleases best,
 Wherever placed, let him dispose: joy thou
 In what he gives to thee, this Paradise
 And thy fair Eve; Heaven is for thee too high
 To know what passes there; be lowly wise:
 Think only what concerns thee and thy being;
 Dream not of other worlds, what creatures there
 Live, in what state, condition, or degree,
 Contented that thus far hath been revealed
 Not of earth only, but of highest Heaven.

To whom thus Adam, cleared of doubt, replied:

“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

¹ Supply *globe, or earth.*

² Metaphors taken from a top, of which Virgil makes a whole simile, *Æn.* vii. 378. It is an objection to the Copernican system that if the earth moved round on her axle in twenty-four hours, we should be sensible of the rapidity and violence of the motion; and therefore to obviate this objection, it is not only said that “she advances her silent course—

“With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
 On her soft axle;”

but it is further added to explain it still more—

“while she paces even,

And bears thee soft with the smooth air along;”

for the air, the atmosphere, moves as well as the earth.—*Newton.*

To interrupt the sweet of life, from which
 God hath bid dwell far off all anxious cares,
 And not molest us, unless we ourselves
 Seek them with wandering thoughts, and notions vain
 But apt the mind or fancy is to rove
 Unchecked, and of her roving is no end;
 Till warned, or by experience taught, she learn,
 That not to know at large of things remote
 From use, obscure and subtle, but to know
 That which before us lies in daily life,
 Is the prime wisdom; what is more, is fume
 Or emptiness, or fond impertinence,
 And renders us in things that most concern
 Unpractised, unprepared, and still to seek.
 Therefore from this high pitch let us descend
 A lower flight, and speak of things at hand
 Useful, whence haply mention may arise
 Of something not unseasonable to ask
 By sufferance, and thy wonted favour deigned.
 Thee I have heard relating what was done
 Ere my remembrance: now hear me relate
 My story, which perhaps thou hast not heard;
 And day is yet not spent; till then thou seest
 How subtly to detain thee I devise,
 Inviting thee to hear while I relate,
 Fond, were it not in hope of thy reply:
 For while I sit with thee, I seem in Heaven.
 And sweeter thy discourse is to my ear
 Than fruits of palm-tree pleasantest to thirst
 And hunger both, from labour, at the hour
 Of sweet repast: they satiate, and soon fill,
 Though pleasant; but thy words, with grace divine
 Imbued, bring to their sweetness no satiety."

To whom thus Raphael answered heavenly meek
 "Nor are thy lips ungraceful, sire of men,
 Nor tongue ineloquent; for God on thee
 Abundantly his gifts hath also poured
 Inward and outward both, his image fair;
 Speaking or mute all comeliness and grace
 Attends thee, and each word, each motion forms;
 Nor less think we in Heaven of thee on earth
 Than of our fellow-servant, and inquire
 Gladly into the ways of God with man:
 For God we see hath honoured thee, and set

On man his equal love ; say therefore on,
 For I that day was absent, as befell,
 Bound on a voyage uncouth and obscure,
 Far on excursion toward the gates of Hell ;
 Squared in full legion (such command we had)
 To see that none thence issued forth a spy,
 Or enemy, while God was in his work ;
 Lest he, incensed at such eruption bold,
 Destruction with creation might have mixed.
 Not that they durst without his leave attempt,
 But us he sends upon his high behests
 For state, as sovran King, and to inure
 Our prompt obedience. Fast we found, fast shut
 The dismal gates, and barricadoed strong ;
 But long ere our approaching heard within
 Noise, other than the sound of dance or song,
 Torment, and loud lament, and furious rage.
 Glad we returned up to the coasts of light
 Ere sabbath evening : so we had in charge.
 But thy relation now ; for I attend,
 Pleased with thy words no less than thou with mine."

So spake the godlike power, and thus our sire :
 " For man to tell how human life began
 Is hard ; for who himself beginning knew ?
 Desire with thee still longer to converse
 Induced me. As new waked from soundest sleep,
 Soft on the flowery herb I found me laid
 In balmy sweat, which with his beams the sun
 Soon dried, and on the reeking moisture fed.
 Straight toward Heaven my wondering eyes I turned
 And gazed¹ a while the ample sky ; till, raised
 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 lived, and moved, and walked, or flew,
 Birds on the branches warbling ; all things smiled ;
 With fragrance and with joy my heart o'erflowed.
 Myself I then perused, and limb by limb
 Surveyed, and sometimes went, and sometimes ran
 With supple joints, as lively vigour led :
 But who I was, or where, or from what cause,

¹ Gazed at.

Knew not; to speak I tried, and forthwith spake;
 My tongue obeyed, and readily could name
 Whate'er I saw.¹ 'Thou sun,' said I, 'fair light,
 And thou enlightened earth, so fresh and gay,
 Ye hills and dales, ye rivers, woods, and plains,
 And ye that live and move, fair creatures, tell,
 Tell, if ye saw, how came I thus, how here?
 Not of myself; by some great Maker, then,
 In goodness and in power pre-eminent;
 Tell me, how may I know him, how adore,
 From whom I have that thus I move and live,
 And feel that I am happier than I know?'
 While thus I called, and strayed I knew not whither,
 From where I first drew air, and first beheld
 This happy light, when answer none returned,
 On a green shady bank, profuse of flowers,
 Pensive I sat me down; there gentle sleep
 First found me, and with soft oppression seized
 My 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 moved
 My fancy to believe I yet had being,
 And lived: One came, methought, of shape divine,
 And said, 'Thy mansion wants thee, Adam; rise.
 First man, of men innumerable ordained
 First father! called by thee, I come thy guide
 To the garden of bliss, thy seat prepared.'
 So saying, by the hand he took me raised,
 And over fields and waters, as in air
 Smooth sliding without step, last led me up
 A woody mountain, whose high top was plain,
 A circuit wide, enclosed, with goodliest trees
 Planted, with walks, and bowers, that what I saw
 Of earth before scarce pleasant seemed. Each tree
 Loaden with fairest fruit, that hung to the eye
 Tempting, stirred in me sudden appetite
 To pluck and eat; whereat I waked, and found
 Before mine eyes all real, as the dream
 Had lively shadowed: here had new begun
 My wandering, had not he who was my guide
 Up hither, from among the trees appeared,

But in ver. 352, Adam ascribes this capability to the gift of God.

Presence divine. Rejoicing, but with awe,
 In adoration at his feet I fell
 Submiss' he reared me, and 'Whom thou sought'st I am,
 Said mildly, 'Author of all this thou seest
 Above, or round about thee, or beneath.
 This Paradise I give thee; count it thine
 To till and keep, and of the fruit to eat:
 Of every tree that in the garden grows
 Eat freely with glad heart; fear here no dearth:
 But of the tree whose operation brings
 Knowledge of good and ill, which I have set
 The pledge of thy obedience and thy faith,
 Amid the garden by the tree of life,
 Remember what I warn thee, shun to taste,
 And shun the bitter consequence; for know,
 The day thou eat'st thereof, my sole command
 Transgressed, inevitably thou shalt die,
 From that day mortal; and this happy state
 Shalt lose, expelled from hence into a world
 Of woe and sorrow.' Sternly he pronounced
 The rigid interdiction, which resounds
 Yet dreadful in mine ear, though in my choice
 Not to incur, but soon his clear aspect
 Returned, and gracious purpose thus renewed:
 'Not only these fair bounds, but all the earth,
 To thee and to thy race I give; as lords
 Possess it, and all things that therein live,
 Or live in sea, or air, beast, fish, and fowl.
 In sign whereof each bird and beast behold
 After their kinds. I bring them to receive
 From thee their names, and pay thee fealty
 With low subjection: understand the same
 Of fish within their watery residence,
 Not hither summoned, since they cannot change
 Their element to draw the thinner air.'

"As thus he spake, each bird and beast behold
 Approaching two and two; these cowering low
 With blandishment; each bird stooped on his wing
 I named them,¹ as they passed, and understood
 Their nature, with such knowledge God endued

¹ Wonderful was the knowledge God bestowed on Adam, nor that least
 which concerned the naming of things aright, as Cicero agrees with
 Pythagoras: "Qui primus, quod summæ sapientiæ Pythagoræ visum est,
 omnibus rebus nomina imposuit." *Tusc. Disp. lib. i. sect. 25.*—*HALL.*

My sudden apprehension: but in these
I found not what methought I wanted still;
And to the heavenly vision thus presumed:

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

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

“ ‘ Let not my words offend thee, heavenly Powers,
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 received; but in disparity
The one intense, the other still remiss,
Cannot well suit with either, but soon prove
Tedious alike. Of fellowship I speak,
Such as I seek, fit to participate
All rational delight, wherein the brute
Cannot be human consort: they rejoice
Each with their kind, lion with lioness;
So fitly them in pairs thou hast combined:
Much less can bird with beast, or fish with fowl,
So well converse; nor with the ox the ape;
Worse then can man with beast, and least of all’

“ Whereto the Almighty answered, not displeas'd :
 ‘ A nice and subtle happiness, I see,
 Thou to thyself propos'st, 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 height and depth of thy eternal ways
 All human thoughts come short, Supreme of things!
 Thou in thyself art perfect, and in thee
 Is no deficiency found; not so is man,
 But in degree; the cause of his desire
 By conversation with his like to help,
 Or solace his defects. No need that thou
 Shouldst propagate, already infinite,
 And through all numbers absolute,¹ though one;
 But man by number is to manifest
 His single imperfection,² and beget
 Like of his like, his image multiplied,
 In unity defective, which requires
 Collateral love, and dearest amity
 Thou in thy secrecy although alone,
 Best with thyself accompanied. seek'st not
 Social communication, yet so pleas'd
 Canst raise thy creature to what height 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,

¹ A Latin term, “omnibus numeris absolutus,” to denote great and complete perfection.

² i. e. the imperfection of him single.

And find thee knowing not of beasts alone,
 Which thou hast rightly named; 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,¹
 And no such company as then thou sawest
 Intended thee, for trial only brought,
 To see how thou couldst judge of fit and meet:
 What next I bring shall please thee, be assured,
 Thy likeness, thy fit help, thy other self,
 Thy wish exactly to thy heart's desire.'

"He ended, or I heard no more, for now
 My earthly by his heavenly overpowered,²
 Which it had long stood under, strained to the height
 In that celestial colloquy sublime,
 As with an object that excels the sense
 Dazzled and spent, sunk down, and sought repair
 Of sleep, which instantly fell on me, called
 By nature as in aid, and closed mine eyes.
 Mine eyes he closed, but open left the cell
 Of fancy, my internal sight, by which
 Abstract as in a trance methought I saw,
 Though sleeping, where I lay, and saw the shape
 Still glorious before whom awake I stood;
 Who, stooping, opened my left side, and took
 From thence a rib, with cordial spirits warm,
 And life-blood streaming fresh: wide was the wound,
 But suddenly with flesh filled up and healed:
 The rib he formed and fashioned with his hands;
 Under his forming hands a creature grew,
 Manlike, but different sex, so lovely fair,
 That what seemed fair in all the world, seemed new

¹ Cf. Genesis ii. 18.

² The scripture says only, that "the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam" (Gen. ii. 21), and our author endeavours to give some account how it was effected. Adam was overpowered by conversing with so superior a being, his faculties having been all strained and exerted to the highest; and now he sunk down quite dazzled and spent, and sought repair of sleep, which instantly fell on him, and closed his eyes. "Mine eyes he closed," says he again, turning the words, and making sleep a person, as the ancient poets often do.—*Newton.*

Mean ; or in her summed up, in her contained,
 And in her looks, which from that time infused
 Sweetness into my heart, unfelt before,
 And into all things from her air inspired
 The spirit of love and amorous delight.
 She disappeared, and left me dark ;¹ I waked
 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, adorned
 With what all earth or Heaven could bestow
 To make her amiable. On she came,
 Led by her heavenly Maker, though unseen,
 And guided by his voice, nor uninformed
 Of nuptial sanctity and marriage rites :
 Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
 In every gesture dignity and love.
 I, overjoyed, could not forbear aloud :

“ ‘ This turn hath made amends : thou hast fulfilled
 Thy words, Creator bounteous and benign,
 Giver of all things fair ! but fairest this
 Of all thy gifts ! nor enviest. I now see
 Bone of my bone, flesh of my flesh, 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 wooed, and not unsought be won,
 Not obvious, not obtrusive, but retired,
 The more desirable ; or, to say all,
 Nature herself, though pure of sinful thought,
 Wrought in her so, that seeing me she turned :
 I followed her ; she what was honour knew,
 And with obsequious majesty approved ”

¹ She that was my light vanished, and left me dark and comfortless. For “light” is, in almost all languages, a metaphor for “joy” and “comfort,” and “darkness” for the contrary. As Dr. Pearce observes it is something of the same way of thinking that Milton uses in his sonnet on his deceased wife. After having described her as appearing to him, he says—

“ She fled, and day brought back my night.” *Newton.*

My pleaded reason. To the nuptial bower
 I led her blushing like the morn: all Heaven
 And happy constellations on that hour
 Shed their selectest influence; the earth
 Gave sign of gratulation, and each hill,
 Joyous the birds; fresh gales and gentle airs
 Whispered it to the woods, and from their wings
 Flung rose, flung odours from the spicy shrub,
 Disporting, till the amorous bird of night
 Sung spousal, and bid haste the evening star
 On his hill top,¹ 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, used or not, works in the mind no change,
 Nor vehement desire: these delicacies
 I mean of taste, sight, smell, herbs, fruits, and flowers,
 Walks, and the melody of birds; but here
 Far otherwise: transported I behold,
 Transported touch; here passion first I felt,
 Commotion strange, in all enjoyments else
 Superior and unmoved, here only weak
 Against the charm of beauty's powerful glance.
 Or nature tailed in me, and left some part
 Not proof enough such object to sustain
 Or, from my side subducting, took perhaps
 More than enough; at least, on her bestowed
 Too much of ornament, in outward show
 Elaborate, of inward less exact.
 For well I understand in the prime end
 Of nature her the inferior, in the mind
 And inward faculties, which most excel,
 In outward also her resembling less

¹ The “evening star” is said to “light the bridal lamp,” in allusion to the ancient custom of conducting the bride home to her bridegroom by torchlight. “On his hill top” also refers to a classic notion, it being supposed that when this star appeared eastward in the morning, it rose on mount Ida. Compare Spenser, *F. Q. i. 2. 1*:—

“Phœbus' fiery car
 In haste was climbing up the eastern hill.”

And Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, act ii.:—

“Now is the sun upon the highmost hill
 Of this day's journey.”

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 absolute¹ she seems,
 And in herself complete, so well to know
 Her own, that what she wills to do or say
 Seems wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best;
 All higher knowledge in her presence falls
 Degraded; wisdom in discourse with her
 Loses discountenanced, and like folly shows;
 Authority and reason on her wait,
 As one intended first, not after made
 Occasionally; and, to consummate all,
 Greatness of mind and nobleness their seat
 Build in her loveliest, and create an awe
 About her, as a guard angelic placed."

To whom the angel, with contracted brow:
 "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 managed; of that skill the more thou know'st,
 The more she will acknowledge thee her head,
 And to realities yield all her shows:
 Made so adorn² for thy delight the more,
 So awful, that with honour thou mayst love
 Thy mate, who sees when thou art seen least wise.
 But if the sense of touch whereby mankind
 Is propagated seem such dear delight
 Beyond all other, think the same vouchsafed
 To cattle and each beast; which would not be
 To them made common and divulged, if aught
 Therein enjoyed were worthy to subdue
 The soul of man, or passion in him move

¹ *i. e.* perfect, complete.

² *i. e.* adorned, decked: an Italian form.