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REVOLT

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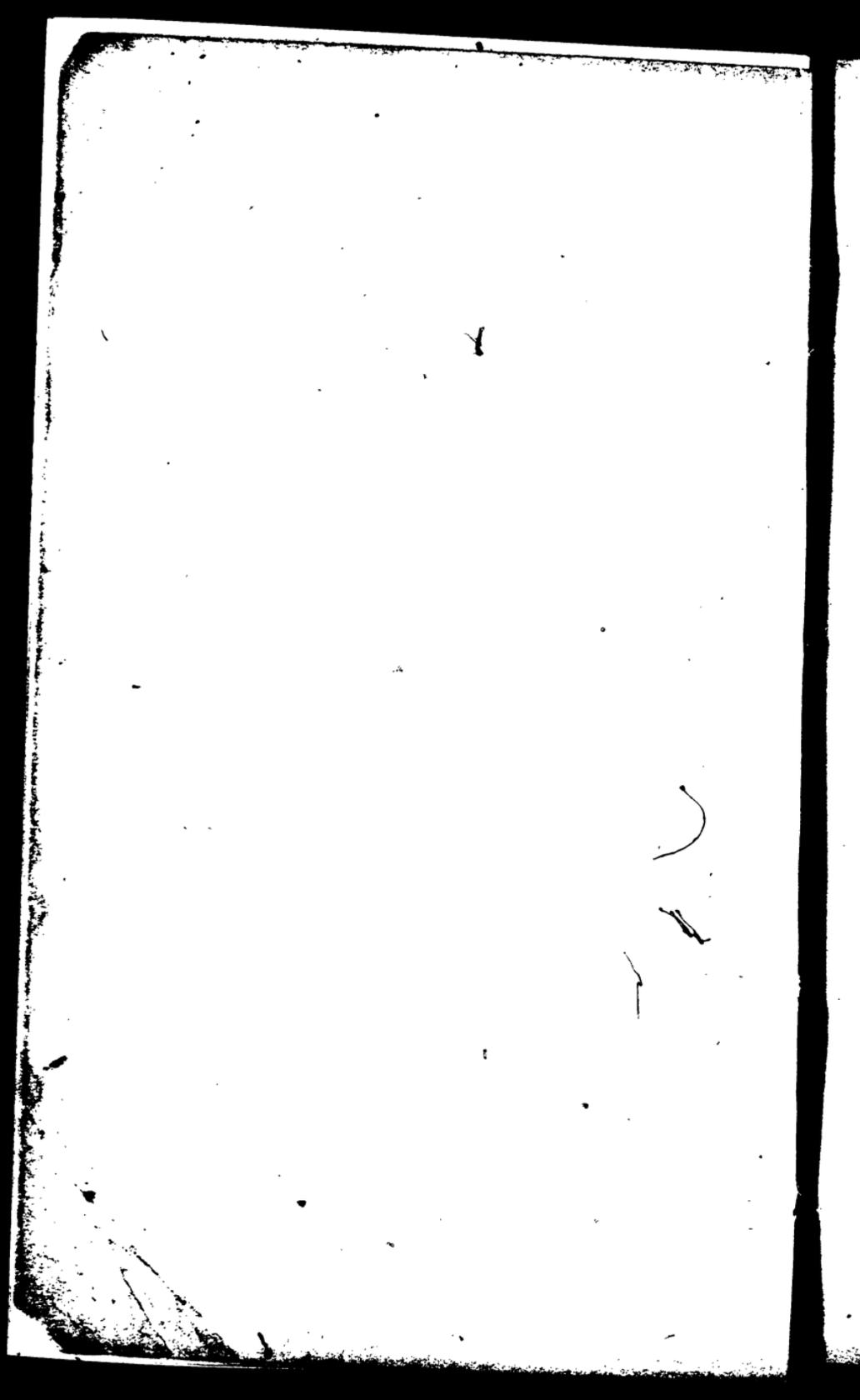
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A Poem.

MONTREAL

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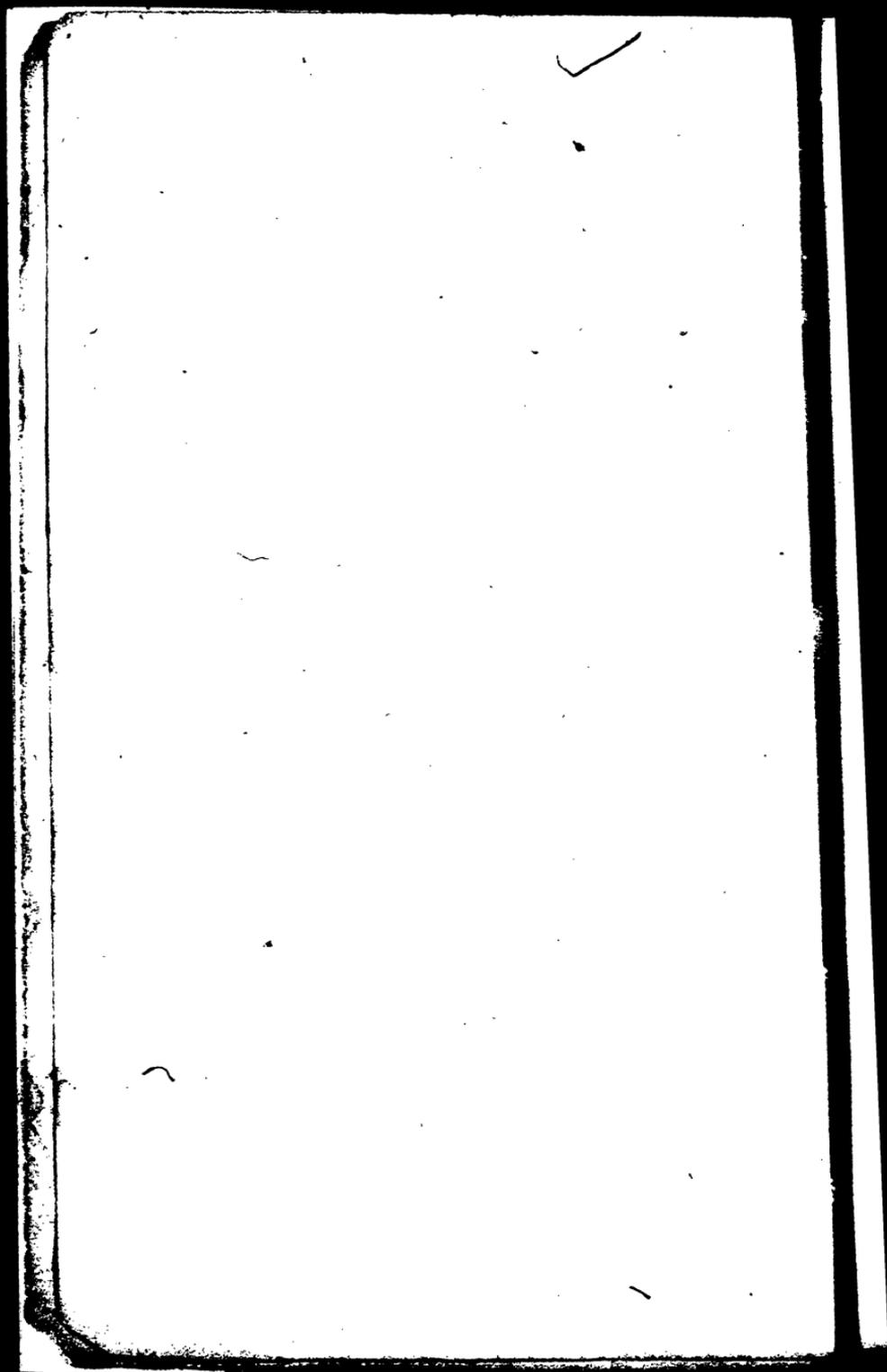
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THE
REVOLT OF TARTARUS;

A Poem.

MONTREAL :
PRINTED BY H. & G. M. ROSE,
GREAT ST. JAMES STREET.
1855.



BOOK I.

Lo! goading malice, unfulfilled revenge,
Conjoined with ceaseless and depraving pain,
Prompt Satan to some desperate foray wide
Upon Creation; strongly him incite
To pass the bounds of this allotted air,
And on some orb, by sin yet undefiled,
Enact the part permitted once on ours.
This brooded long, infesting all his days,
And nights consuming in distracting thought;
At length, lone watching as he sits, his soul
Girds on its armor with a fierce resolve;
And meaning to convoke his Peers, he waits
In broken slumbers now the approach of morn.

Morn came ere long—hell's ominous rising morn—
Ere long it came, and numerous couriers,
Each, on the wings of diligence, were sent
To all hell's Magnates with a summons high,
That night them render at the imperial court.
Yet think not, ye who love the structured pile,
Or ye familiar with Milton's page,
Would seek to learn how fare hell's works with time,
To see again its great seraphic lords
'Midst futile state and idle glory shrined
In high, gold-reared Pandemonium:
For Pandemonium long has disappeared;
Its costly heights and phantom excellence,
Frittered by quakings, or dispersed by gales—
For in that land no edifice abides,
How strong soe'er by bands of potence tied,
Or thrown like fumes on the still atmosphere;
Nought stays; even rocks, and hills, and mountains, failing
Before the fiery breathing of the air,
And ever palpitating heart of hell;—
Which works to Mammon rest, his talent void;
Nor misery prompteth more to found or build.
Therefore, when Night (having first divided them)
On either hand rolled back Day's burning wheels
And placed them in the gulf, the fiery main,

That circling hell, it daily drowns in flame ;
 Not 'neath proud fane magnificently uplit,
 Illuminated as from out a sky ;
 But in a cavern huge, black, charged with shade,
 With lamps unable to dispel the gloom,
 High throned he sat. Great Satraps him surround,
 Evoked from many a wild, from many a part
 Severe or dolorous ; and wait his words.
 As men on men await, so these on him ;
 These anxious wait, and bend on him their gaze,
 Who bore around his own with lofty range,
 A lip agrieved, and half almighty pride,
 Then thus in tone voluminous began :—

“ Ye summoned Powers, this life grows tedious—
 Wretched I will not style it, lest Heaven's King
 Should joy at the confession, go I now
 Search through the infinite to effect some change.
 Too long have I, O once Refulgent Thrones,
 Seen wane your lusters in this baneful den,
 Too long permitted malice here immure ;
 I now depart, despising risk or toil,
 Imbued with purpose hence you to redeem.
 Start not at this, nor count it visionary ;
 For visions other than this land affords,
 Or orb of earth, and its surrounding film,
 Yourselves prepare—prepare for leaving here,
 For breathing constantly the balmy air ;
 Upon it spreading your pavillions,
 Or on the firm establishing your thrones :
 For to some hereto undiscovered isle,
 Or where may nature own an empty womb,
 Will we repair ; thereto hereafter lead
 Our faithful powers ; thereon ourselves conjure,
 Plant round our borders loveliness and strength ;
 With light unborrowed radiate our sphere ;
 Our forms relume—their native brilliancy
 No longer injured by these dismal fires—
 And rousing all our latent sovereignties,
 Make the dull crude, or vacant horror smile.
 So, far from here, and pining not for heaven,
 Forgetting earth and its unworthy care,
 Eternally, in pomp and peace, our hours
 Shall glide : there we'll forget—if Gods forget—
 Past tribulation ; or, remembering it,
 Convert it to a zest to years of joy ;
 Immortal honors, and unsullied crowns ;
 Bliss, not to be destroyed, or afterward

Wished whelmed for ever 'neath oblivion.
 Nor think this purpose suddenly resolved ;
 This hath our soul in prospect had for long,
 Since here we found a transitory sojourn,
 'T was ours one day, nor distant that, to abscond ;
 To leave these flames, never for us designed,
 Or if designed, vain yet shall be the aim
 That, here to dwell for ever, thinks coerce
 The free, undoubted children of the skies ;
 Free still in thought, although in action bound
 With bonds that yet, with a mysterious force,
 Draw us sky-down ignobly to this hell—
 Bonds which our strength must break, or craft elude ;
 Our power of will unknown ; we, bliss ordained,
 Though now indeed enduring alien pangs ;
 Birth unto pabler being than heretofore ;
 A being no calamity may reach,
 No stern vicissitude—a being wherein
 We shall ourselves demonstrate to be Kings,
 And found a rival empire in the space :
 For which we judge the era now has come,
 From certain promptings in our inmost frame ;
 Promptings long checked, but now grown absolute,
 Compel obedience to their high enjoin.
 Behold, then, mighty Gods, and not the less
 Mighty because o'erthrown ; Eternal Ones,
 (For who shall us persuade that we began,
 Who no commencement can recall, nor know
 Authentic source from whence derived our being,)
 This 't is hath caused our mand, this is our aim,
 Which to effect forthwith we us betake
 To search immensity. There, soaring high,
 Or wide exploring, hope we to discover
 Some world that is unknown unto Jehovah,
 And there reign free. Freedom is worth all effort,
 And Justice yet shall see our mighty march
 Up the abyss ; shall see us yet emerge
 From these dark fires that drink our energies,
 No longer fed by the empyreal beam,
 Our native element. Beelzebub
 Meantime, with Moloch and with Belial,
 We leave behind, endowed with regal powers.
 Be it yours t' obey ; maintain their regency
 And lent prerogative ; to encourage hope,
 Endurance, loyalty ; ne'er closing eyes
 Here keep on discontent ; while I, acute,
 Do search the boundless, unexplored abyss.

Prying for good—in one brief style, be ye
 Abroad the channels and the whips of law,
 Whilst these, at home, employ their taxed care
 For the universal weal." He said, and was
 Forthwith about the three to inaugurate,
 When thus a risen Hierarch interposed :

" Be not offended, Potentate sublime—
 So by shewn talent and apparent might,
 And reign whereof we know no origin—
 If I obtrude (since, as I judge, we are half
 For counsel 'voked,) some apprehensive doubts
 Hint at contingencies. Methinks design
 Like this demands combined and careful thought,
 And lengthened pondering, since on the result
 Of individual's act, hangs myriad's fate :
 Were it not so, I had declined to speak,
 Where many sit superior, both in weight
 Of wisdom and of power : this must me excuse.
 And, first, thou speak'st of change : if aught be got
 By change, aught that be good, then let it come,
 And grateful lips reward those who it bring.
 But change may bring us ill ; once, sought for, did ;
 And so, achieved, may this : bad are we now,
 But change can make us worse ; nor yet, this suffer,
 Needs it here to exist : our Enemy could change
 A vale of bliss into a cell of wrath ;
 The widest empire to a den of wo ;
 Or, meeting us on our migratory route,
 Drive us with thunders to a lower vault ;
 Or might pursue us with outrageous fire
 Through all the periods of eternity,
 Into the grim, inimical abyss ;
 Or, stopping us by mountains far beneath,
 Besiege us there through everlasting years,
 With all the fury of his magazines,
 Each of us chained with linked thunderbolts.
 Who would be valient then ? who then would dream
 Of fair futurity ? Yet He may this,
 Yea, and much more, perform, who has command
 Of the whole armoury of heat and cold ;
 Who has possession of the elements,
 And makes them do his bidding ; and can lay
 His potent influence on the conquered mind.
 What worse can we conceive than to be numbed
 With terror ? what more terrible imagine
 Than to be racked with His imposed remorse ?
 Yet can He more than this ; for are we not

His puppets, who can play upon us still,
 And still endow us with more hardihood
 For greater pains? Much more he could perform
 If we thereto should tempt Him; on us lay
 Consolidated darkness, and the light
 (Ever abused,) occasional of the skies
 Deny unto us, yea, restricting not
 His indignation (for who here shall say
 That He shall always do so?) may unlock
 The terrible arsenal o'er our heads,
 And vomit on them flames; or turn these spires
 And restless, burning billows into snows
 Unfathomable, amidst which to tame
 Us to subjection; or cataract us whole
 Into the Womb of Hell, therein to moan
 Amidst the boiling chaos, foul and fierce;
 Us leaving there, abandoned and forgotten,
 O'erwhelmed, and tossed upon the horrid sea
 'Neath unabating tempest; lieu of chains,
 Mountains thrown over us, and ponderous hills,
 Too great a weight to move for all our legions.
 Thence may we wish return, and reassume
 Our present lot, when 't is too late; our Foe
 Propitiate by war abandoning, when
 Our power to war is gone; and may repent
 (If true repentance ever here can come,)
 Of folly, only inferior unto that
 Which cost us heaven's too well remembered bliss.
 And then, for peace, (even supposing us
 Successful in this exodus,) what peace
 Can there for us be ever, wheresoe'er
 We rule, or are o'erruled, whilst memory
 Is constant to its office—it immortal,
 Evil must be immortal; and deformity,
 Once having entered, cannot be succeeded
 By perfect beauty, for, revenge and malice,
 Though cherished, are but monsters—and who here
 Can banish quite these passions from his breast,
 Remembering who hath spoiled it of repose,
 And in His rage thus injured; yea, say who
 Can be content with humbled rank; and no
 Content, no peace; and if no peace, then what
 Were pomp to satisfy the heart, or fill
 The yawning minds of angels with enjoyment?
 Thus, evil now being unavoidable,
 Should teach us patience, our best policy;
 And, though we scorn to worship our O'erthrower,

Not to insult Him, but to hide disdain
In proud concealment of our misery ;
No more imagining hence to make escape,
Than to His ear consenting to complain :
Let us not yield Him shadow of a cause
Or pretext for His vengeance ; rather 'bating
Towards Him on earth our hostile policy,
Than it increasing, and so mark whether He
Will then return our seeming peace with peace,
As He hath hitherto our war with war ;
When we might learn, perchance, to honor Him,
A noble enemy, (whom now we hate
And cruel deem, untempering success
With mercy), and, Him half forgiving, half
Thereby repair the loss by us sustained
Through his tremendous gift to put to flight
Gods from the field, and pour outrageous rout
Upon their multitudes, and shut them up
In helplessst perdition :—none now doubt
These are His attributes, howe'er derived,
Howe'er maintained as yet unto our cost ;
These, His prerogatives which he may use
With greater rigor in some angry hour :
Doubtless He is our King, at least as yet,
The occult secret lies with Him as yet
Of sovereign power ; His power to us is Fate :
Why then should we provoke its exercise,
Since reason and experience us tell
He will not use it, (if indeed He can,
Or fear should prompt Him for the ultimate,)
To annihilate ; He will not serve Himself
Of our extinction to extinguish strife ?
Moreo'er, what greater proof do we require
Of His intention to retain us here,
Than the strong curb upon us, that allows
Us not go forth 'till it relaxes, and
From the abroad still calls us home. To escape
This wondrous influence I do despair :
Where in the subtleties of nature do
We find a gift so all-pervading, one
To cause us rush to what we most abhor,
And ever constant to the thing we hate ?
Where shall we find to this an antidote ?
Hope, thou wilt say, thee prompts, hope prompts the brave,
And ne'er deserts the being that 's divine.
Alas ! from contumely hope not improvement ;
Nor think that He will lose us, profitless ;

Think not, because we now no offerings bring
 Of high empyreal blooms, and works of skill,
 The handicraft of Gods, and choicest thoughts
 Of happiest moments, woven into song
 That touched the Seraph's lips anew with fire,
 And float shall down eternity, remembered
 Though no more sung—these, all to Him devote
 In adoration, He will let us escape :
 We shew His might, we are a warning ever
 To those, who standing true, yet cull for Him heaven,
 And pour forth laud ; are His security
 That their obedience shall never cease.
 Then wherefore tempt we a catastrophe ?
 Why force Him towards us more severe become,
 To vindicate the greatness of His strength ;
 Politic not to leave it cast in doubt
 By lent forbearance towards us, enemies ?
 Deem me not weak, nor ready to impute
 Cowardice to them who, once in dreadful arms
 Rose 'gainst His reign, and in their Godship's faith
 Staked their old ease for honor and for right,
 Victorious near ; but might He not even now,
 Who well we know acquaintance has of all,
 By polypresence, or his subtle spies ;
 Fierce at fresh insult to His monarchy,
 And armed with terrors yet to us unknown,
 Again arise, and hasting from on high,
 Hurl us wide-flaming through the dark abyss,
 And, torn with lightnings, upon some grim bourne,
 Cast us at length ; pale, trembling, and surprised,
 Unknowing where transported. Then, to dream
 Of happiness, we shall have time, if not
 The inclination,—lodged in solid fires
 Perchance, than these more capable to hold
 Our scornful strength, and round about us beating
 (Who then shall need no more encompassing walls,)
 Chaos, amidst whose storm we long may cry
 For the sad shelter of old Tartarus,
 More tolerable. Oh ! hesitate, Great Power,
 Delay ; tempt not a lot more terrible
 Than this we now endure : reflect, there may
 Be other hells, and far more evil ; one,
 Already chosen for us by our Victor,
 Whene'er our treason grows too great for this."

To which thus Satan prompt replied : "Thou speakest
 As one unwise, and worthless of the-theme :
 From height sublime foretime it was to fall ;

From equal depth at present 't is to rise ;
 Nor will we have suspicion of our Foe,
 Only departing hence. Say, thou who seemst
 Content to pass thine everlasting years
 In durance, say, shall all these Princes bide
 Imprisoned, and in shameful sloth and pain
 Live, feeling as they do strength undiminished,
 Nor ever dream redemption ? Shall they pine
 Here in base darkness whilst the skies o'erflow
 With wasted light ? How long within this gulf,
 Oppressed and covered by hellish night, shall sit
 The inextinguishable Thrones of heaven ?
 How long shall they be troubled, or tarry vengeance
 For their deep wrongs, who can incur no guilt,
 As knowing none superior to themselves ?
 These years of infamous penance ask revenge :
 This slavery must cease, or cease must we :
 Free as our minds must be our presences :
 I will explore on high, and, failing there,
 Voyage down the dark and nether abyss until
 My fearless wandering feet shall find some shore ;
 Thence I may back return to lead you down
 Farther from heaven's face, or reascend
 From that profound and foreign region hither,
 Along with countless levies strange and strong,
 Who, with our own combined, may take the field,
 And wage successful war against Heaven's King,
 Should He oppose. Why should He us molest
 Travelling the common void ! Go we to steal
 An orb, purloin a work—if all be His—
 Which much I doubt, (for why should nature yield
 To one her sum—for that He is before
 Nature admits not proof, and fond traditions
 Who shall regard ?) at most, we but exchange ;
 And, peradventure, shall not need do that :
 Who knows the privilege may in us abide,
 The apprehension that may Him disturb ;
 Who may wish here confine us, fearing lest
 An elsewhere, brighter, fostering content,
 For, doubtless, deems He we are so debased,
 Should tempt us set about it beautify,
 And so, perchance, his own experience haply,
 We should evince, in some propitious moment,
 Like Him originary power. Archangel,
 What thinkest thou if we should place create ?
 He would not battle then ? Or what if Hell,
 Torn from its old foundations in the deep,

Were by us hung in some superior zone,
 Wherein at length it might forget its evil :
 Greater than that may we perform as yet :
 Scarce less 't will be to investigate the gulf ;
 With rigorous search and oft excursions broad,
 Steer o'er the ever-widening immense,
 A lone adventurer. But boasting not
 Befits this occasion, better to perform,
 Or strive perform, and by decisive deeds,
 And not by timorous speculation, seek
 Solve problems." Thus, with feigned intent he hid
 His real purpose ; else perhaps forbidden,
 For certain disapproved ; and to the three
 Beckoning, who straight arose, and to his feet
 Approached with reverence ; immediately
 Amongst them shared he the regalia ;
 In Belial's hand reposing the broad seal ;
 In Moloch's placing the tremendous sword ;
 But in Beelzebub's the sceptre putting,
 And on his brow disposing regal crown,
 Token of primacy. Which done, all toward
 Them bowed with bended knee, and forms nigh prone ;
 Doffing their crowns, that like to meteors shone,
 Or crossing swords when battles rage : which done,
 He rose, and, from his ebon throne come down,
 Like a huge cedar from a mountain top,
 Out grandly floated through the sombre pile.
 The Three ensued, and scarce appeared less dread.
 The Powers beheld, and some grew sudden dim ;
 A few advanced to novel brilliancy ;
 The rest unchanged. Awhile they dumbly sat,
 And looked their amaze ; then rose, enquiring, mingling.
 Various were their opinions, and in silence,
 Soon they dispersed themselves. Even as comets
 That from perihelium glide again to gloom,
 Soon were they winging wide o'er Erebus
 Murky, and resting dismal,—meanwhile Satan
 His viceroys thus addressed : " Farewell, my friends ;
 Now to the skies, to try if yet remains
 Our former power to spite our Torturer.
 Remember me when I am from you far,
 And what is mine keep sacred as 't were yours :
 Whate'er is mine I still with you divide it,
 Nor would I aught engross except my pain :
 The care and honor you alike must share,
 Beloved friends and old companions,
 Warlike and subtle, who with you compare !

Though forced to flee before the Thunderer ;
And who, too, statists were on happier shores—
On happier shores, and in our golden days—
Yet in ignoble ease did waste such days,
No powers required where reigned obsequiousness ;
But here find harder, so, more glorious rule,
To curb the soured spirits of the deep,
And o'er them sway. This task befits you well :
The fertile mind, and courage never shaken,
The wisdom match to each occasion, yours ;
What now remaineth but to wish me speed.''
Thus said he left them, after warm adieu,
And archangelic pressure, and was soon
Riding in darkness o'er the infernal plains.

BOOK II.

Now the Archangel who of yore from light
Fell in expiring glory to the pit
Of darkness, there, with all his pallid host,
Restless to dwell for ever; thence escaped,
Like to a vessel on discovery bound,
Sweeps midst the lofty region of the day;
Whilst they beneath, the vassals of his power,
In their deep shady dungeon close combine
To cast from them his arbitrary rule.
Nor slow the result: for as when burning suns
Have drunk all moisture, and left arid lands,
The roaring conflagration through the woods
Flies on the wind; so the rebellion spread
Amidst dark flames; and on exasperate spirits
Seized like the fire upon the withering boughs;
That soon all hell arose, and rising seemed
A resurrection of long buried Gods,
And, with a voice surpassing many fires,
Swore that no longer should Apollyon reign.
As when in mountain region the changed wind
Dissolves the winter snows, that, thence escaped
Soon rush wide spreading over the campaign;
Now, towards the centre of Gehenna coming,
The angry demons filled a dismal vale.
No gorge wherein the sun hath never shone
Amidst the Grison Alps were so forlorn;
And from a peak that in its midst arose,
One thus impetuously and loud began:
"Now is the time to raise our state, or else
Lie low for ever. Our Tyrant is gone forth,
And know we too his errand—to invent
New toils, new routes for pain, to make fresh channels
In the sublimity, for wrath to dart
Upon us. Shall we this allow? How long
Shall it endure? Have ages not sufficed,
And these dread fires, yet to consume our patience?
Or must another fearful cycle turn
Ere we shall lose our tameness? Slow ye are

Unto a fault, and from forbearance, vile ;
 Outcasts from heaven, and will unworthy hell
 If this ye longer suffer.—Whence shall come
 Your hope, your dotting fond belief, your vague
 Idea of punishments remission ; that
 Of which ye talk, of which ye dream, have fire
 Disturbed visions ; that for which alone
 Consent ye to endure ? Shall it proceed
 From war, from paltry, vile aggression ; your
 Poor puny blows dealt 'gainst the Thunderer ;
 Or shall it come from peace, its search on us
 Devolved, the ever-vanquished ? He paused,
 And cried the multitude, " Peace, peace, we wish
 For peace, if He will grant it us." " Then, why
 Do ye still provoke," he stern retorts, " why still
 Obey his steadfast enemy ? Come forth
 From one, and join (if 't may) the Other's ranks :
 Ye may be spurned, thrown back upon your fires,
 Ye may be held in sovereignest contempt :
 All answer to your overtures may be
 Such as becomes the haughty, stern Jehovah,
 Who may in all the wantonness of power,
 Plunge you yet lower in perdition, who
 Have dared to approach his everlasting hate ;
 May bind you with some foul, fell, new decree ;
 Redoom to howl with storm, to drink in gloom,
 And welter in despair ; yet your desert
 Might that be called, nor would your pride be wounded
 As 't is by Satan's rod. Say, then, that ye
 Repent, have idly done, and wrong ; say that
 Ye will reform, yourselves respect ; become
 Selfishly virtuous : who fain would climb,
 Must scan not nice his steps ; who'd mitigate
 His pain, punctilio discard ; who would
 For liberty, not will alone, but act :
 Choose, then, your part, to suffer cravenly,
 Or your submission instantly to end."

He said, and answered him a mighty shout
 From all the host, whose brandished arms appeared
 Like to a forest of storm-beaten boughs.
 He grimly smiled, and thus, well pleased, pursued :
 " Bravely ye shew, and prove, though much debased,
 Suffering hath not extinguished spirit quite.
 Even as the hot spires wave in this abode,
 Or the fair woods in that from whence exiled,
 So now was your array. How glorious might
 Appears, when 't is for right displayed ! Gone forth

Is your acclaim to the wild ends of woe ;
 You from this hour are free : no more be Satan's."
 He ended, and another thus began :

" Co-sufferers and co-slaves of that Proud Angel ;
 Who here so mean, would be the instrument
 For other's purposes ? Who his own being
 Through baseness drag that others might soar to honor ?
 Are any here so vile ? Does hell contain
 Angel so lost ? Oh, Cherubs, ye who heaven
 Forfeited because of jealousy of rule,
 Display your virtue now. An aggregate
 Of motives you incites ;—self love alone
 Not urges, but just pride.—Thus to persist,
 Despite of our affliction, 'spite our prayers,
 Who longer can respect him ; odious
 If scanned, who caused our fall, yet lower fall
 Thus fallen within ourselves ; what breast not burns
 At his o'erbearingness ! And shall this be ?
 Shall we, who once disdained a loftier rule,
 Longer acknowledge his ? Shall right derived
 Glory o'er right divine ? Though strong he seem,
 Shall he not shattered be, against us smitten ?
 Say, ye, who dim, and shorn of half your beams,
 Mourn them continually, shall we, who once
 In dazzling brightness trod the land of shine,
 Remain eclipsed beyond our portioned horror
 For a subordinate ? Shall we, ye braves,
 Who fought three fields in heaven, nor one had lost,
 But that the Overwhelming Monarch sent his Son
 With stemless rout upon us,—say, shall we
 Continue our dear-bought liberty yield up
 To one formed like ourselves ? Shall he still reign ?
 No ! although Fate should lead him Kingly back,
 Over our necks he shall not mount his throne :
 We from us shake his olden tyranny ;
 His ancient wrong shall ne'er be modern right ;
 The time has come, the glorious modern day,
 More glorious than that, (as choice transcends
 Mere destiny) wherein we first beheld
 Astonished heaven's light, ourselves to assert :
 Children of light, Offspring of heaven ; in hell
 Have freedom, who, for seeking it lost heaven :
 If ye be worthy freedom, shew it now ;
 If ye be one in purpose, one in kind,
 Having judged this tyrant, fail not him o'erthrow."
 He ended passionate, and to passion moved
 His auditory, that far stretched, and still

Came like the snow-flakes drifting, or around
 Poured, like to torrents, down the dismal sides
 Precipitous of that black dell ; or else,
 Like sandbanks pale beneath the wintry moon,
 Extended ghastly, and wove with their heads
 Immeasurable maze : hoarse rumbled they,
 And long, and seemed engulfed Titans, who
 Tumultuous raged against Idaen Jove.
 Their rage increased, until the serried vale
 Roared like a conflagration with their parle ;
 Which now remitting, on the peak stood one
 Of taller form, his eye less passion-lit,
 His face maturer and more marked by pain,
 Who thus began : " Spirits, Immortals, Flames,—
 If still with ardor burn ye,—Passions, Souls ;
 Hear, and in hearing, mark me ; tell me why
 In these outrageous numbers we are found,
 In place that woe and bending usance sole
 Could reconcile us to ; why are we gathered
 Within this doleful valley ? Need I ask !
 All hearts throb forth an answer ; tyrant wrong
 It is hath caused it ; wrong, that, joined with time
 And force that still increases, hath achieved
 What nought less could effect : 't is wrong, foul wrong
 Which hath at length us to resistance driven.
 How hard it were to accomplish, though what sorrows
 At last triumphant, let memory declare.
 What have we not attempted, not performed,
 Obedient to his ordinances, long
 Unquestioned, and unchallenged long his right
 To sway despotic o'er the sons of grief ;
 Until forbearance only courting evil,
 And patience sorer trial, we complained,
 Remonstrated, discovering both were vain
 To stem the malice of our vengeful King,
 And slack his wrath 'gainst heaven. Can he denounce us
 Hereafter, and with justice taunt with treason ?
 Have we not borne in faithfulness our pain,
 (Pain which even now we feel,) without one act,
 One word, scarce look of merited upbraiding ;
 Have we not given him all allegiance
 Through the long ages of our dwelling here ;
 Have we not done his work, his will, to acts
 Converted ; covered o'er with woe one orb
 Unfortunate,—speak, O Earth, have we not met
 Hostile our brethren, and, for thee contending,
 Heated the flames of hell ; have we not brought

Captive by myriads thine inferior souls
 Hither, to dwell in bale; each task achieved
 But with an added pang, and are these seats
 Ever to call for fresh? To what extent
 Must go long-suffering? Of what is dreaming
 The incorrigible Satan; what imagine
 The trine of demigods who, on his throne
 Sitting, now wield his power? Do our captains
 Deem us impassible as are the rocks,
 The scarp and blackened rocks on which, each night,
 We lay our wretchedness? Are we the fires
 Themselves, in which to humour the caprice
 Of this fallen aristocracy of heaven,
 Our foolish leal makes us so often rush?
 We tell them, nay; *we* also sentient are,
We also are obnoxious unto pain,
 Our essences are even pure as theirs;
 Nor had we fallen to such humiliation,
 But that blind love, which follow would their fate,
 Hath led us here. Ungrateful spirits, then;
 Proud Progeny of nothing—for from nothing
 Will they submit to own themselves descended—
 What would your ultimate be; and he, your head,
 The implacable Destroyer, what his final?
 Heaven from us torn, ye 'd hell still aggravate,
 And lost bliss balance by an excess of curse.
 O parted bliss, O undeparting curse!
 Accursed ambition, that, promising to raise,
 Hath hurled us to these depths! Who shall avenge us?
 Nor time, nor tide can pay what hath no sum.
 Nought can atone for ever-during wrong.
 All 's lost. O lost for ever heaven; O gained
 For ever hell!" He said, and as when darkness
 Fills suddenly the night-sky that, even now
 Was in clear starlight, which the gathering clouds
 Fast intercept, and rain begins to fall,
 The gust sweeps through some desolated pile
 Deep in decaying woods, and thence draws sound
 Strange, and appalling; so did now arise
 Noise, as of moans, from out the late fierce ranks,
 And tears adown the visages of some
 Began to fall, when from the press one cried:
 "Since here is meant our everlasting home,
 Let us, from abolition of all hope,
 Take impulse from despair. Cherubs, arise;
 What is this petty tyranny we debate
 Compared with that above! Let us return

To our rightful seat, well do we know the road,
 And clad in darkness, and with hell's artillery
 Hurling the stars in desolative flight
 Even through the very sanctuary of heaven—
 Invade, nor allow ourselves retreat; who cares
 For wounds, or grovelling ignominy, endured,
 To escape this den. A second time, Jehovah
 Could not expell us. Let Him deluge with fire,
 Fire is our wont; roar and transpierce with bolts,
 We would not flee; better chains and slavery
 In heaven than hell. On those recovered plains,
 The soft, ethereal air would solace toil;
 The light half chase despair: who seconds me
 In this? Where are the fearless ones?" He cried,
 And scarce had ceased, when there appeared another,
 Who loudly raged 'gainst God, and made huge mock
 At what he termed their slight antagonism;
 Counselling against Him a more strenuous ire,
 Even to seize heaven's height with onset sudden,
 And overwhelm Him on His throne with rage,
 Wrapping Jehovah in Tartarean flames.
 Another, and another rose, and now whole bands,
 Who, with loud noise, and plaguing up the air,
 Clapped their dread wings, and with plutonian yells,
 Appeared already gloating o'er success.
 Even as the clouds of some electric sky,
 Might rain down brimstone and huge drops of fire,
 Numbers blasphemed; others, in hopeless fury,
 Uptore the ground, and made a hideous chasm
 From whence forth issued smoke and ghastly flame.
 But none of that vast multitude strove rush
 Forth to the battle for their native fields.
 "To heaven," they cried, but none toward heaven repaired;
 For they no more forget than they forgive
 Their first disastrous overthrow in heaven,
 And passage down the abyss. Another such
 Catastrophe none dared to brave; and died
 At length the tumult, as outdies the storm
 Whose savage bursts unwillingly are hushed.
 Now, perhaps, had this a fatal damage done,
 But for the intervention of a spirit,
 Eldest, and brightest of the plebian lost.
 He on the peak stood suddenly, and none
 Knew whence he came. His form produced respect.
 A sage he seemed, or minister of good,
 That none had deemed he e'er had moved in crime.
 His locks as silver shone, his eye benign,

His features, calm, pale, spiritual, mild.
 Pity and grief awhile restrained him, and
 Perplexity how best attempt to sway
 That host so grim. He now a signal made :
 When, as piled clouds, rolled by the northern blast,
 Unserrying, reveal sweet fields of blue,
 The gloomy crowd relaxed their sullen mien ;
 Their ears they ope'd, and 'midst'a silence deep,
 And close attention, thus the Ancient spake :

“ Afflicted mates, my junior brethren, say
 What shall my language be, what will ye hear ?
 No chidings in me are, my friends ; alas !
 Much cause ye have for that which we have seen ;
 For desperate act : who would not hence escape,
 He able. But perdurable being should
 Be wise ; and those of many aeons not
 Encourage folly. Thus with hostile aim,
 Preceded by hell's enginery, to think
 Ascend the lighted warpath of the stars,
 Up to the very coast and wall of heaven,
 (Grant heaven should it allow), what were it other
 Than to be down rehurled ? No worse we are now,
 (Spared too such pain), and we may yet arise,
 (Given this offence may do so never,)
 'T is true but slowly, and by thin degrees,
 Unto our native dwelling place of light.
 At first some slackening may betake these fires,
 And the fierce frosts grow milder ; this thick gloom
 Break up its everlasting horror ; some
 Decrease may know our pain, some cheerfulness
 Our melancholy hours ; or, peradventure,
 Our nature, pliant, may to each incline
 As each assails us, and by yielding conquer.
 Then may we be permitted to depart
 Hence, and, the portals of these realms of night
 Reclosing, and, abolished the strange power
 That drags us hither, we may be allowed
 Some savage orb amidst the dusky deep ;
 The dusky deep may us uplift to twilight's
 Reign, and the twilight into day's ; the day
 To ancient glory's ; and we thus may soar
 In our probation's lapse, until we gain
 Our antique bowers of happiness and light :
 A journey long 't is true, but preferable surely
 To this perpetual halt, and cheered by hope.
 For who could bear a being hopeless quite,
 To have its visitings utterly denied !

O, there is hope in them who most despair.
 Who is there here not secretly convinced
 That heaven-born spirits must to heaven return,
 And their sad exile end ; who doth believe
 Our Sire doth hate us, though He plague us thus ?
 Love steady burns beneath these stormy fires,
 And shall upguide you to your seats of yore
 Even yet : 't is sure, Him ceasing to provoke,
 Our pains no more allowed us cause blaspheme,
 He will relent ; our doom by parts repeal,
 Till, all revoked, it us no more afflicts.
 O, if ye would not quite abolish hope,
 Prefer despair to mere despondency,
 Talk not again of war." He said no more,
 But as a star that rising o'er the pole,
 Wheels its slight circle on the arctic heaven,
 Then disappears, so he : when thus a demon
 Of resolute mien : " Ye Spirits of the deep—
 For since in eminence no more we dwell,
 That style us best befits,—unto me listen.
 To bear a temper equal to our fate
 Is highest deed. Unmoved by joy, unfixed
 By fear, the part of Gods : Serene, serene
 Repose the mightiest souls, and brood in calm :
 Peace at the innermost abides, although
 Around be strife ; thence circumscribes life's rage.
 But you doth passion rule, and not you it.
 Thus, dare again the arm that thrust us down ;
 Or worse, sit drowned in tears deploring ; pshaw !
 The frown of evil overladows us,
 And fell disaster grinneth from heaven's walls :
 'Midst pain we pass our sad existences,
 Darkness and sorrow, and the clink of chains :
 And in our ear no more the sudden trump,
 That tells in heaven the opening of her morn,
 Grandly resoundeth ; nor the morn herself,
 Mingling vermillion and the beams of gold,
 Delights our eye : but the tremendous, harsh,
 And harrowing words of doom that here consigned,
 As still remembrance rolls them o'er the soul,
 And the reports of fire, and sounds of pain,
 Our music now.—From morn till evening,
 From noon till night, penance alone is ours :
 Our dawn, the glare of these awakening fires ;
 Our morn, the time of flight and havoc wild ;
 Our noon, the rampant tyranny of flames ;
 The day's decline, the long-sustained heat ;

Inveterate fervor ; and the tardy eye,
 Rank with its sulphurous and afflictive steams,
 The door to night's sad dungeon thick with glooms.
 Yet not for these, nor more that in the mind
 Ever abide, inimical to peace,—
 Remorse, and disappointment, and the horror
 Perpetual at the heart, with pining sore,
 At dark captivity in this abhorred
 And desolate domain, will I succumb : .
 Hell shall not conquer me, nor change of fortune
 Change me in soul. If vigor be left in hell,
 (And strength is heaven,) it never shall be said
 I, who had borne so terrible a past,
 Quailed at the future's name : if I must live,
 And still endure what heaven's Great Autocrat,
 Or Fate, or Chance, through Him dispensing, may
 Be pleased inflict, unasking my consent,
 Nor voice of justice heeding, nor the whispers
 Of mercy, both o'erwhelmed in these loud flames,
 I, in accumulated wretchedness,
 Will do immortal battle with despair.
 And what despair ? Who says that hope is not ?
 Who shall assert ours everlasting woe ?
 Who, though he heard the terrible decree,
 Shall say Jehovah will uphold his word ?
 Did He not say to man, " The day wherein
 Thou eatest of the tree, that day thou diest ?"
 Did man then die ? Was he resolved to nought ?
 Or did he only sicken for a while,
 To be reinstated in unfailing health ?
 Nay more, to crown what must be wonder still,
 Did not the Awful Lawgiver himself,—
 Foreseeing, and determining, perhaps, the whole,
 From out His fulness of invention, find
 Such means — means that appeared to his own hurt —
 As have restored this erring creature, man,
 Upon conditions easy, (and their reign
 So brief, all disproportion seemeth mixed
 Twixt his probation's length and his reward's,
 Betwixt his time and his eternity,)
 Into His favor, into our lost heaven ;
 Therein prepared and portioned him a place
 Nobler than that was first intended him ;
 A place secure — if good can be secured,
 Even by the partiality of God —
 A place secure, which is its highest worth,
 Beyond even Fate, or our malevolence.

So He toward us may act ; so He from us
 May turn away the ill, or by our pain
 Be appeased. Are we not more than man? Are we
 Less than his favorite sons, our brethren angels
 On high ; and how can finite spirits give
 An infinite offence, or have the power
 Contract a debt beyond their ability
 Discharge? This, when I contemplate our case,
 Hath ever been its aspect, and shall always
 By me be thus envisaged, for to affright
 Myself with horrible contingencies,
 Whilst I have woes that are so actual,
 I scorn." He said, but to his words response
 Came none in sound or motion ; and o'erflowing
 With dark hostility and dire revenge,
 All sat like statues of obdurate bronze ;
 And, with a stern implacability,
 Brooded not more 'gainst Satan than 'gainst God.
 Thus baleful dwelt they, and beheld one now
 Whose form the wreck of an archangel's seemed ;
 His limbs of god-like beauty, though all scarred
 From many a sore encounter with hell flames,
 And terrible mishap. His golden locks
 Fell over shoulders broad as Atlas his,
 And tall he was, majestic. He of that race
 Titanic might have seemed, but that he bore
 Higher imprint : he Prometheus might have seemed,
 Still marked by the strong bands of strength and force.
 Thrice he essayed to speak, but thrice a roar,
 Like opening some great furnace, him forbade.
 At length, an audience gained, he thus began :
 " Comrades in bale, enduring amities,
 Lend me attention for sweet courtesy's sake ;
 Hear me for fairness, and for policy.
 This sudden insurrection of your spirits,
 Although more earnest, haply, than were meet,
 I count befriends our cause. The will is made
 Stronger by opposition which it hath o'ercome.
 Twice are they fixed who have misgivings had,
 And who, once shaken by contrarieties,
 Now in conviction stand : so we, more firm —
 More firm from that which threatened to uproot —
 Hold to our primitive, expressed intent :
 The original theme — (despite those lowering, half-
 Dissenting brows,) — henceforth is ours indeed :
 Peace shall our watchword be, not enmity :
 No greater enemies have we, than those

Who would incite to battle — friends are foes,
 Counselling unwisely — the route to heaven, might prove
 The passage to worse hell; for evil grows
 Of evil, and no bounds are set unto it:
 Worse hath a worse for ever, and no worst
 Shores in the dark immensity of ill.
 Besides, the possible is probable
 For ever, and belief ne'er knows how firm
 Is the foundation upon which it rests.
 If fate us ruined, fate may us restore:
 If fault has injured, favor may repair:
 So, may we, now, or in the lapse of years,
 Regain our primal bliss, become more sweet,
 By bitter knowledge of its following woe:
 Good comes enhanced to them have evil known;
 And heaven would her former height transcend
 Of gaud, and glory, elevated peace,
 When raised on our experience of this
 Deep and tremendous world — perhaps, Jehovah,
 Affecting an indifference, or glad
 To put away the hazard of our future
 Contingency of triumph, may ignore
 The past, and give back heaven. There now is hope:
 Our unapt wing, so long unused to soar
 In course of virtue, only sedulous
 To sweep ignobly in the depths of vice —
 Not vice denominated, but revenge,
 Or freedom, falselier called by those who rule
 Us to their own ambitions, under him
 Who leads all hell's great army down the abyss,
 At length consents to wheel, and seek repose,
 If not enjoyment, in less deep descents:
 Worn, we call off our enmity; it bid
 Slumber, if not expire, within our breasts.
 Not so our Emperor: informed with fire
 Of never-slackening hatred, he pursues
 His purpose yet, and, hostile to the skies,
 Relentlessly, with wounds that never heal,
 Soars up earth high at least, or haply higher,
 Ravening for mischief: what this may forebode
 We know, who know him capable of aught
 That may contribute unto his revenge,
 Unscrupulous of our condition, and
 Still counting upon our assistance, yea,
 Commanding it, as though we were his thralls
 Prescriptive; we, who heaven's mild rule did once
 Contemn; we, who unto the field once dared

The All-allegiance-claiming Thunderer,
 And shook upon his throne old Destiny,
 Whose great vicegerent seemed the Heavenly King ;
 As though 't were nought that myriad spirits, for Satan
 Should increase know of torture, nought, that they,
 At his injunction, should incessantly
 Challenge disaster in this gloomy ruin,
 At his behest should dare dark anguish's form.
 Be he successful, what new sorrows wait us ;
 What degradation, bound to work new woe !
 There is a depth lies lower than despair,
 Or abject agony of pain extreme,
 Or weakness, horrid to ambitious minds,
 To be compelled to work your own destruction.
 If there be infamy behold it here !
 But from this pit of baseness now we rise,
 Albeit in danger of too high thence soaring.
 To have been thus tempted, by an impulse blind,
 To assail again Jehovah, (if the deep
 Would yield us up, and His outlying angels
 Allow us to surprise Him, and, with darkness
 Covered, to meet his dreadful ordnance with
 Infernal flames, and hellish thunder, rolled
 Over great heaven deformed) more fatal must
 Than our first overthrow—and who could bear
 Bondage in heaven, to hear his sounding chains
 By hallelujahs mocked, to feel his withering toil
 Embittered by other's ease, his loss increased
 By their keen insults who the victory gained,—
 Or saw it gained by the dismaying Son,
 When vain their greater numbers : no, let us rather
 Here seize that Son's grand enemy, and far
 Within some solitary darkness chain
 Him, or on mountain top to pine ; or deep
 Down in some whirlpool of unebbing fire
 Confine alone, whom misery cannot tame ;
 Or hale him forth to the abyss, deposed.
 Outrageous Chieftain, exorbitant Archangel !
 Are we, if he, to pain indifferent ; can
 Our indignation burn in these fierce fires ?
 More fierce these fires become with every age.
 Behold, when first rained here in fainting hosts,
 Though from its strangeness strongly all appeared,
 And horror oft us chained ; though heavenly gales
 Were just replaced by ever-stinging airs,
 And these tartarean fires were given for beds
 In lieu of armament, a sad exchange !

How much more mild this place. Its days how brief,
 Its seasons how commixed ;—how now abrupt,
 Or else outdrawn to one stern penal length,
 Devouring us, inexorable, yet unconsumed.
 Then, slowly from the mountains heaved morn's gloom,
 And on the vales slowly ope'd the leaden doors :
 Now see we not a grim but gradual dawn ;
 Straight mountains glare, the valleys reek with flame ;
 And noon's dark conflagration dwells abhorred,
 Whilst night's, foul night's, brief respite still curtails.
 Nought now is sure : no friend now says to friend,
 To-morrow meet me as the sinking flames
 Die in blue grandeur—such injunction vain,
 To him, by whirlwind haply caught e're then,
 And dashed beneath deep waters, or 'gainst firm
 Multangular mountains, or lies buried deep
 In distant snows ; or, lost in Stygian vales,
 Is left forlorn to wander, and therein
 Midst seven-fold darkness brood the years away.
 Thus, here our lot is aggravating, and
 By crimes that are to ordinance performed,
 No more spontaneously ; to work out woe
 Our sole achievement, and our labor's end.
 Shall earth now, feebler, speak ? Contemplate ye
 Who voyage task-charged unto her dimmed domain,
 The ignominy, when chased by them we knew
 For friends in light : reflect upon the sting
 When in sincerity besought, conjured
 By former love and recollections dear,
 They turn away in horror, and refuse
 Commerce with us in aught : but why recount,
 'Tis not on earth, where suffering mortals sigh,
 Nor in the tide of air, where seraphs sing
 Their hated bliss, is found our argument ;
 But in this distant, deep, and burning world,
 Wherein we yet permit a Tyrant sway,
 And on us heap perdition on perdition :
 Here, in this pit of woe, abyss of sorrow.
 Here where returned from our misdeeds on earth,
 We moan 'neath weightier penance, and with more
 Intolerable agony contend ;
 Grovelling in helplessness 'neath floods of fire,
 Or fixed on pinnacles of withering frost
 Till expiate the offence ;—here, in night's core.
 Here, where the heavy ages roll in fire
 And gloom, interminable over us ;

On slowly travelling to the sullen gulf
 Of days misspent, and aeons black with bale.
 Here, where dwells every ill ; where adamant
 Surrounds us, and supernal strength : here where
 We yet persist to challenge heaven's wrath
 To fiercer tempest, till its whirlwinds blow
 Scarce intermitting ; and whence soon no more,
 We visit earth, and thence catch glimpse of heaven,
 But in unrespited captivity,
 Groan through vast years of unimagined woe."
 He said, and even as ocean, which having lain
 Long in a death-like calm, is reached, at length,
 By violent motion of a distant storm,
 So heaved these numbers, as, then, ocean heaves ;
 And now, with consentaneous force, upsent
 A shout that shook the vale. Ten, louder, followed.
 As the report tremendous of sprung mine,
 Or startling peal that heraldeth the storm,
 From out the black, and silence-covered skies
 Each, still increasing the hell-shaking roar :
 Which having ceased, he raised his hands and said :
 " O, thou big, present moment of our lives,
 Fated to honor through eternity,
 Stay, and before thou minglest with the years,
 Record our vows. No more shall Satan rule
 Within this pit ; no more for him we'll offend :
 Whoso shall sin, the same alone shall suffer ;
 Not all for one will we henceforth be plagued ;
 Hereafter leave we unmolested heaven."
 He ceased, and silence hung ; he ceased, and yet
 Retained his elevated attitude ;
 Till, with a sound like that of leafy woods,
 Swept over by the reawakening breeze,
 The host at length upraised their down-bowed heads :
 Smiles, then, of hope, and sweet exchange of words
 Encouraging, were seen and heard : foes friends
 Became, and every breast felt strange relief ;
 That on the general countenance one half
 Its olden beauty sudden sat restored.
 Ennobled much they seemed, as signs of peace,
 Like the outbreaking of an evening ray,
 Settled on each marred visage, whilst new patience
 Entered each heart. A little thus they dwelt ;
 Then inly deprecating anarchy,
 Him, who so well had ended their debate,
 They chose, (until all Tartarus should assemble,)
 To be their chieftain, who thereon thus spake :

"Compatriots, and spirits resolved live free
 Whate'er betide, acknowledging no doom
 To bow the mind, nor knowing other law
 Beside fidelity unto each other ;
 Great Energies, and worthy still be called
 (As even now your aspect tells your name,)
 The sons of heaven, your native region dear,
 In the precession of events yet yours hap,
 Ended this aberation into ruin ;
 Little should I deserve to be believed
 To have been sincere in my late spoken words,
 Or faith have in our vow, did I decline
 To bear the sudden weight of rulership ;
 Or, with paraded diffidence, suggest
 From you some worthier choice: your choice to me
 Is law ; which I obey, without made plea
 Of inability, accepting honor
 Not by me sought. You have this day begun
 Another era, and to live a life
 Will be your own, so far as He above
 Shall interfere not, nor, if oath can bind,
 Shall our departed tyrant ever again
 Resume by craft, or force of civil feud,
 His seat abused. Let him not be allowed
 Re-enter here, but to the deep be banished,
 Or to inhabit some lugubrious world
 Where he with the Most High may still contend,
 And, without our assistance, his ambitions
 Lonesome pursue ; whilst we, in confidence,
 Both of ourselves and our good cause return
 To meet well as we may our present lot.
 Farewell ; be hopeful, patient, occupied ;
 Farewell, and be to-morrow set apart
 To celebrate our new-born liberty."
 He said, and well he took the general ear,
 That they with full consent his words confirmed,
 Nor spared applause. Then rose they all at once
 Unto his signal, all the living field
 Wide moving to oft and universal shouts,
 That reached the lowest pit of erebus.
 Thus they in swelling joy with shouts triumphant
 Made the dull wilds of Acheron still ring ;
 For as, when spring with young but genial hand
 Directs old winter to the frozen north,
 The land is filled with song, so Tartarus now,
 As, separated, they in jubilant vein,
 Bore the result to its less saddened bounds.

BOOK III.

THE morn broke mild, for milder seemed the flame,
And every one felt movings at the core
Of his sad heart ; and strove forget awhile
His horror old, and perdurable pain,
In the forthcoming fete. Great was the stir :
For, as when earth intends some festival,
The uplands swarm, and every farmstead yields ;
Now over dreary wilds, and mountains high ;
From savage rocks, and terrible retreats ;
By fiery cataracts, and burning lakes,
O'er ever-rolling streams of grisly fire ;
On wing, on foot, advanced that mighty host,
Whose loss left desolate a third of heaven,
And fall spread twilight through the boundless deep,
Towards the infernal nave ; where now arose,
(Reared silent in the night,) an obelisk tall,
Round which at noon the rejoicings owed commence.
As towards some dreadful vortex of the sea,
Might float her stores of circumfused wreck ;
Or as the earth, with confluent gale,
Should to the equator muster all her clouds ;
So they, as 'fore some steady impulse driven,
Millions of cherubim, and seraphim,
And orders names unknown, for all that morn
On hell's black centre, every where around,
Came rolling inwards, like a foaming tide,
Cast by the influence of the moon upon
Some old volcanic isle. Till noon they came
Assembling, and fast filled the plain, that wider
Was than Zaharan desert, or the steppes
Of Tartary cold. So huge a congregation
Hell saw but once before ; then, when recovered
From off the burning lake, again arrayed,
Standing they fierce defied the far-off heaven.
Already beyond numbering they were,—
Enough to fill the moon's dry mansion, or
Half populate the sun, and yet they gathered
Fast to the sportive field, alacrous ; widened

Over the adamantine plain ; horizons
 Unto horizons witnessing them stood
 Rank as the stubble on the autumn ground.
 Thus gathered they, what time the burning hours
 Unwound ; nor was at that great rendezvous
 At length one absent ; none the assembling scorned ;
 But as the birds of passage on a day
 Should all collect to take their wintry flight,
 So it complete, and desolate left wide hell.
 Thus gathered they till noon, when as the flames,
 (Which in that world denote the march of time,)
 Above o'erlapped their fierce encountering waves,
 And down the centre made a horrid surge,
 Strode forth tall heralds, who, from clarions huge,
 Directed towards the four infernal coasts,
 Like the outpouring of harmonious winds,
 The buxom signals for their pastime blew,
 Tremendous blasts. Hell's roof thereto replied,
 Dull echoes spreading through the gloomy air,
 In which enormous flights of angels rose,
 Like hills sublimely floating, or big clouds
 Rolling before the gale. The burning sky
 Soon emptied : they alighted upon slopes,
 But chiefly, moving on a defluent wing,
 Spread wider over the unbounded plain.
 The centre thus ; and the circumference,
 Scarce less in aspect than the sons of heaven.
 Though blasted all, and scarred by stygian fires,
 In dreadful ranks and regular array,
 On rhombs diverse advanced to minstrel sounds.
 Like moving woods they came, and marched like gods,
 As with alternate limb they stately trod
 Consentive, and with multitude immense
 Caused shake the ground.

Thus dissipated they.

And now with all the hollow mirth of fiends,
 And vigor left them by the Omnipotent,
 Hell, far resounding, on her centre shook.
 Some plied the race on huge plutonian steeds,
 Meet for angelic riders ; on the hills
 Of terror bred, with customary fire
 Nourished to savage mettle, and, with wings
 Of outspread horror, rushing furiously
 In sable squadrons o'er the boundless field ;
 Innumerable chariots, self-moved,
 Following, in which sat forms of mighty mould
 Midst noise of thunder, and in sparkling gloom.

Others, from high mountain's top, magnificent
 Of smoke, came downward avalanching ; others
 Upon the winds disported, and a few
 Passed on the whirlwinds through the angry flames.
 These threw the quoits—for the occasion formed—
 Of round immense, dread whizzing through the air
 Their ponderous adamant, yet easily hurled ;
 Or wrestled those, and strained the spiritual frame.
 Some leaped—their league—in emulation, sprang
 At one sheer bound across the frightful gorge ;
 Some flew, in legions scoured the plain, like strings
 Of gambolling hounds, or curving flights of doves :
 Old feuds by some were quenched in haughty duel,
 The uncompromising brave, like mortals cutting
 With swords that day the gordian knots of honor.
 What else, where strength the highest virtue seemed,
 Was done 't were endless to declare ; suffice
 That hosts—whilst crowds from cloud and ground observ-
 With a gigantic demon, representing [ed
 Satan in high command and valient deeds,
 Charging, enacting all that furious war,
 Even to the uptearing of the hills,
 Rehearsed the three, heaven-foughten, fatal fields.
 Yet all, though strong, preferred not the robust :
 In contemplation thousands dwelt, and seemed
 To enjoy a sabbath from their misery :
 More volatile, in conversation others
 Beguiled the hours, relating their adventures
 Upon the earth ; adventures wild and strange,
 Contending with celestial chivalry,
 Celestial chivalry exercised on earth,
 In rescuing mortals from infernal wiles,
 By prowess greater than the warlike arm,
 The conquering front of virtue. Others told
 Shuddering, and to hoarse whispers fallen, how
 Wandering, led on through fields of utter darkness,
 Hell had disclosed to them her fearful secrets :
 Here night was thrice eclipsed, and chaos there
 Through howling whirlpools rode them, rent and all
 Disjointed, agonized more than when on borne
 On burning billows or on ardent winds,
 Their frequent dole. Others told of penal shores
 That they had visited ; of stormy isles
 Cast far within dark ever-tossing mains
 Of liquid sulphur ; of abysses cold
 Swept by the volleying hail ; of Zones where lightnings
 Pierced with ten thousand deaths whoe'er there wandered ;

Where the dread thunder never ceased to roar,
 Inhospitable skies to rain down fire.
 Some told of caverns vast, and triple barred
 That they had passed, whence issued dreadful cries,
 And dismal moans, and uncouth sounds of sorrow,
 Strange lamentations, sighs, and sobbings. Some
 Spake of a grisly beach of poisonous sands
 And biting serpents; others, of pliant airs
 Suddenly growing obdurate, and of demons
 Forced wrench their essences from out their shrines,
 Infixed, and lost in that grim treachery,
 Their thin, ethereal, naked, tender thoughts
 Ordained to lie henceforth, of motion reft,
 And pine unsheltered, and unministered to
 On rocks of wrath, and cliffs upbuilt of pangs.
 Then din of multitudes in fury, heard
 Coming from broad interiors, by mountains girt;
 The sight of beings gliding silently
 Along, and entering gates of dumb despair;
 And some of princely aspect, chained on hills,
 Or else in super-demon sorrow sat
 Midst clouds that carried them as on a throne
 Perpetual rounds; beneath a wintry pole
 Supposed submerged, to be reraised to roam
 Infernal tropics, and to be as signs
 Mayhap for ever, or until reflection,
 Or else affliction broke or changed their wills.
 These were surmised to be the Powers of eld;
 And those their subjects who 'neath penance raged;
 Or grandly gloomily determining ever
 Remain incorrigible, were given by heaven
 Wander, and drop perforce perpetual tears,
 (So heaven had power to irritate their pride,)
 Dead although living; inessential shades
 Who rose from flood, fog, fire; to vanish in
 Uncertain fields and visionary vales.
 Then would a pause ensue, or each to each
 Narrate their dreams, (such dreams as fallen angels
 Might have engendered in their souls when midnight
 Allays the day-loud noise and their own pangs;
 Each solitary lain, or with his fellows
 In multitudinous relax of woe,)
 From dreams strove draw good auguries. Many, on wings
 Of memory, excursions took, and sketched
 From out the past full many a blissful tide,
 And noble era, with the golden tongue;
 Or with enacted face of stirring things,

Enhanced the time. Moreo'er there were buffoons,
 And merely social and gregarious spirits,
 As upon earth there are ; and punishment
 A few had rendered weak of mind : than these
 More melancholy sighed,—more numerous far,
 More to be pitied,—and wandered to and fro,
 Their hands within the ethereal of their breasts,
 No hope of future restoration seen,
 To them sole boon. Some talked their recent act,
 And its results towards hell and earth discussed,
 Whilst a vast host betook to food and wine ;
 Hell's first repast, and maiden vintage pressed,
 And listened to dulcet strains,—to dulcet strains
 They sitting listened,—to sweet, yet awful strains,
 Drawn from the lyres of dimly-fingering ghosts,
 And pipes were spectral-lipped, and flagons drained ;
 Until each faculty alike being flown,
 Of sense and intellect, they rose, threw high
 Their waggish heels, and anticked at the dance.
 But a superior sort, and these not few,
 Gave music loftiest task, both voice and harp ;
 Made melody divine, though tintured high
 With grief ; sang of the Godhead, sang of heaven,
 Of earth, and chaos, and of gloomy hell ;
 Their once exploits in heaven's disastrous war,
 Their present feat, and future destiny.
 Song overruled their plight, and Harmony
 Appeased the furious hours ; even Memory
 Laid bye her stings, and Conscience ; and Remorse
 Expired, or slumbered ;—Melancholy sole,
 Dreaming of better days, yet Atheist
 Them towards. Of evil many spake, and good
 Its opposite ; joy, sorrow, and ambition ;—
 Or in the mind, or from the outward born ;
 Innate, or circumstantially possessed ;
 Tempestuous denizens ! Of justice too,
 And holiness ; of vengeance, latent love ;
 Choice, and necessity, and mercy fair ;
 The love of being, and the dread of death.
 Ten thousand round them stood, and hearkening wept ;
 And hell, remorseful, listened, sorrowing
 Her chains so fast should bind whom so could sing,
 Could with their voices half her change to heaven.
 So ran the tide of her first carnival ;
 Her first, and last ; and for a moment felt.
 Her sons a real, (if not unmingled) joy—
 First gladness felt in their deep house of woe.

Meantime, Belial, with an alert eye,
 Remark'd the turn for sport; and from a mount,
 Unseen, surveyed the various festival,
 Illimitable spreading all around;
 And fixed to mingle, for awhile revolved
 Whether to do so in his proper shape,
 Or in inferior guise; and chose at length
 The last. Straightway his vasty size contracted,
 And lustre waned; and, floating down, he soon,
 All unsuspected, midst those numbers walk'd,
 Remark'd their mood, and to their converse listened,
 Nor fail'd amongst them sow words of advice,
 That, follow'd, would their polity subvert:
 Which done, he, from a sable wood emerging,
 Like the full moon from out black bank of clouds,
 In native guise approach'd the bibbant crew.
 "Gods" there he said, "for such indeed ye are,
 Lacking this expressed juice, how much more with!
 Quaff to your fill, and find, if 't may, for woe
 A new conduit.—Knit not on me your brows,
 Arrive I not to hinder mirthfulness,
 But to partake on equal terms your cheer.
 Why should we not, though cast so low,
 Repeat our wont on high:" and with the words,
 Sat down self-bidden at the festive board.
 Scowls were the first reply, and all around
 Whisperings from out ear-visiting lips ensued,
 Accompanied by long, heart-searching looks;
 An ordeal which unwincingly he bore,
 Until, persisting in the shew sincere,
 Guile grew like truth, and their unpaired eyes
 Lost half their jealousy: wine did the rest:
 The sense, abused, allow'd them be abused:
 Their hearts expand, their eyes relume with fire,
 With his flash blaze for blaze. Awhile they swam
 In mirth and high carouse, and many a wild
 Guffaw rang o'er the monstrous board, and oft
 The welkin reeled, as, starting to their feet,
 With loud acclaim and long voluminous roar,
 They pledg'd the free. This for a time continued;
 When they arose to mingle with the game,
 And he departed, view elsewhere the scene.
 So Belial, in hell, or earth, the prince
 Of profligates;—for his coadjutors,
 Beelzebub dwelt solitarily,
 Save with a few plebeians, that faithful stood,
 Of the dark regal house—the potentates,

The realm's magnificoes, great hierarchs,
 Princes, and Powers, and who dominions wide
 Ruled erst in heaven, as now they did in hell,—
 Deep fallen ones, whose mighty spirits bowed
 Before their pains ; themselves half discontent,
 Though hurled from state, saw, scarce displeased, the
 They, in their several parts, mere lookers-on, [change ;
 Or powerless gathered round that stately chief.
 Not Moloch so ; he, all for action formed,
 Winged with red fury and a black revenge,
 To find their Lord was climbing towards the stars.
 Not oft he seeks the light, but frequenter
 Round Erebus, in darkness, stalks his path ;
 The gloom of hell, and his fierce paroxysms
 Of pain, to meet with fiercer blasphemies,
 His life preferred : unvisited by hope,
 Unharrassed by fear, the deep he affects ;
 But now, his soul dethroned with Lucifer,
 Furious he hied to call him to the war.
 Nine days he hurried through the astonished space,
 Or poised himself within its jewelled cave,
 The arcana viewing, and appeared the dragon
 Of the becalmed, remote Hesperides,
 Who, all oblivious of the entrusted gates,
 Now through the interior scoured ; but, in despair,
 His flight then wheeled from off the far-pierced south,
 And, swifter by a hundred hundred fold
 Than comets course, made towards the distant sun,
 Within whose pale arrived, he, over earth,
 Hung sudden, like a comet in the sky.
 Men gazed affrighted to behold the sign,
 And star-Seers read there many a nation's doom,
 Not dreaming hell was by her doom convulsed.
 Far off had Satan known the form of Moloch,
 Who now came down and on the Danube roamed,
 Now, o'er the Himalayan range, passed where the Ganges
 Sweeps populous plains ; then repursued his flight
 Across the deep, and many a vessel smote
 With novel lightning ; such, as mariner
 Had high described at home, had not the shock,
 Reckless of home, sent him and craft below.
 Over Madeira's heights he sped the next,
 And, throwing breakers wildly on the lea,
 Threatened the isle devour ; then shot to Britain,
 Like to a whirlwind lighting on our shores.
 From the Nore's point he next aerial voyaged,
 And left the earth, and systems far beneath,

Rushing, like some wild boar amidst the woods,
 Up through the peaceful skies : but ever towards
 The north his route, though devious, he inclined ;
 And down at length he sank below the verge,
 And came at last to where the heavens grew waste,
 And stood opposed like second Erebus.
 Then first considered he since hell he left ;
 Then weighed, whether enter or the blank avoid.
 Fate urged him on, and slight of consequence,
 And, without fear, he entered the unknown.
 Into this part, a region unexplored,
 Had Satan entered, and behold his voyage.
 Swiftly from first he soared his way towards light :
 Yet long and drear the track, although the way
 Bore home ; long, drear, and dark the track 'twixt hell
 And nearest light ; and long the gulf he wrought,
 And oft upgazed towards where stars first should loom.
 Yet far from stars was he, though countless leagues
 Higher than hell he hung, in that long voyage
 Ascending, hell beneath him shewing long
 Like burning embers in the nether deep ;
 Far, far from day was he, and through the night's
 Dark chambers might traverse, on upright wing
 Laborious long, ere she allowed escape
 To dubious light. Albeit, he felt as one
 Who had from prison escaped, and rapidly
 He soared right upward, eager towards the dawn,
 As yet unseen, as yet far distant, and,
 With strength enormous, climbed the abyss whilst waned
 The moon through all her phase : when, as a wolf
 Prowling at night around the slumbering fold,
 He, still up-posting, sanguinary swept
 His eyes discursive o'er the sable field,
 And saw at length one star, and thither hied
 Quick with the sound of solemn surges, sent
 In gloomy measure o'er that vacant sea.
 Then, glad he noticed new-created worlds,—
 Gladsome at thus discovering them, as new
 And unexpected prey,—and towards them plied
 His never-wearied vans, till on his crest,
 (As mountain tops that catch the earliest ray,)
 And ample shoulders there began to fall
 Light. As the dawn breaks o'er the earth, so now
 Kindled the abyss, and swift he cleft the air—
 All amber soon the air—and through it rode
 From glory into glory. Scaling thus
 On stately pennons, or in upward bounds

Aerial thrown, he rose, and drank the calm
 Voluptuous air, and soon began to wind
 His course around that first-discovered star,
 Concealed in light. Soon he superior hung ;
 And now, down looking on the orb, thereon
 Saw blissful vales, and seas of chrystaline,
 And lofty mountains, and upon them piles
 Reared not unworthy heaven. At this his anger
 Rose ; but it soon to sadness changed, a sadness
 Raised by his rising memories : scorn hindered
 Tears, but loud groans burst from him, and anon,
 Moved deeply, but with his emotion curbed
 By pride, his mingled ire and sorrow he
 Thus poured : " O, stranger orb, O, dazzling stranger,
 Bright as of old heaven's gates ; bright as the throne
 On which in heaven I sat ; O, heaven's reflex,
 What dost thou bring to my remembrance, what
 Sad thoughts stir up within me, what new ire :
 How much resemblest thou my native heaven ;
 How much must thine inhabitants resemble
 Angels, to rear such works. Alas for thee,
 That thus thine excellence should provoke my hatred :
 I thee not hate nor thine, in abstract, but
 Do your Creator hate, so hate his works,
 So, then, hate ye, and will ye spoil. Ah why ?
 For I no quarrel have with aught save Him :
 Towards Him I bear eternal malice, for
 No peace can come between us whilst I am
 The same archangel that defied his power,
 And to the proof of battle put his title
 To reign supreme of yore, with test severe ;
 Whilst that I am myself, nor would be other,
 And least of all things, Him. Yet thou me saddenest
 Too much ; too much me makest recollect,
 Whose greatest good would be oblivion :
 All good to me is lost ; lost, lost for ever !
 All good to me turns into evil, since
 It aye recalls good that is lost. Ah, wherefore
 Should I remember : must all that is not hell
 Suggest heaven only : O, could I acquire
 Some great, and perfected imagination,
 Some region bright which, though but fantasy,
 Might unto me be real, and hide or chase
 These visions that intrude. 'Tis vain to strive !
 That place, seen once, can never be forgotten ;
 How much the less when ages have been dwelt,
 In honor dwelt, and high, and high renown.

Twice am I cursed, first, with my simple fall ;
 Last, with the mighty lapse of my descent.
 O, had it been my hap to have prevailed.
 Or that I had been made the meanest spirit
 In heaven, it had been well, safe in the citadel
 Of either bound ; but stationed in the mean,
 Or rather as it seemed, so nigh the head,
 Yet room enough to oscillate between
 Each hazardous extreme, what could I do
 Except obey ambition ? 'T were too much
 To think I should not covet what so near
 Appeared, so tempting too,—He tempted me
 To the possession of unbounded power,
 By me entrusting with a power that seemed
 All but unbounded, and with excess of honor
 Snared me to ruin. Ah, that unbounded goodness
 Goes not with boundless power, how well I know !
 O, had I once more opportunity,—
 But why ! mine did their uttermost perform.
 Instead of conquering, they now must suffer :
 Poor comfort ! yet perhaps the best, the most
 Heroic, though it suits not me, to sit
 In yon deep cavern of unmingled woe,
 Passive for ever for momentary fault,
 Still unforgiven ; nor do I now repent,
 Not of attempted usurpation, but
 Of a great effort to unseat a Tyrant,
 Implacable, remorseless, and so cruel ;
 But more will strive to imitate those vices,
 Share their dark glory : shall I call Him good !
 Evil, be thou his name for ever : no,
 What is my punishment but disguised revenge ;
 His justice, but the policy of power
 Seeking itself conserve by aid of fear,
 Knowing it cannot by unfearing love.
 Can love with justice dwell ? Filled it his breast
 When He uplit my dungeon's raging fires,
 And, if he be omniscient, (and if not
 He is no true, unlimited Supreme,)
 Resolved one day to plunge me into them ?
 Ah no, the softer passion cannot harm,
 But even its enemies pursues with mercy ;
 Nor can I now believe Him to be more
 Than secondary Power, for the Primal—
 Whether known by name of Fate, or Choice, or Chance,
 Where'er He hides his face as yet from me,
 Or why so long allowing a Pretender—

Must sure be good. Ah, wilt thou not appear
 My great Avenger! Ah, what is thy name,
 That I may call upon thee 'gainst Jehovah :
 I was not fashioned by Jehovah, for
 If He created me He could destroy
 Me ; but that would not yield Him his revenge :
 To do his worst were not to annihilate me ;
 It were me to sustain through lapses vast,
 Duration infinite, and ceaselessly
 Afflict. Eternity, O horrid word !
 O, is there no way left, no hope, even yet,
 Of a reprieve : cannot He gracious be,
 Hath He no pity ? Ah, miserable wretch,
 What shall I do ! Where shall I succour seek !
 In vain I seek : no, I am swallowed up
 In loss for ever, beyond salvation, none
 May lift me from the pit to which I've sunk,
 In which I lower sink the more I struggle.
 Then what remains for me but sheer despair ?
 Nay, what remains save endless punishment.
 If finite agonies could for me avail,
 A term of anguish for my fault atone,
 And I, now serf, then free, how blessed my lot !
 But to be everlastingly undone,
 To be the eternal Paragon of ruin,
 From age to age, from aeon still to aeon
 Tossed on the shoreless sea of pain and shame
 Who can endure unflinching ; Fate, relent
 If such hath been thy purpose, or the abyss
 Bid hide me in its uttermost recess,
 Destruction snatch me from the ravenous years.
 Alas, how vain these words, how vain these sighs,
 How vain the resolution that I bring
 Unto this struggle that may never end.
 Say, shall I cease contending with my Foe ?
 What then ? How could I tell my followers
 That their proud Chieftain had at length consented
 To bury them in hell, for heaven's king
 Swore by that flood which issues from his throne,
 (And must not such asseveration stand ?)
 That he who should refuse obey his Son,
 Should be cast down to Tartarus for ever
 To suffer and to grieve : how could I lift
 My head in hell hereafter, meet the eyes
 Of those sad peers awaiting my return
 To hear the sound of liberty, or war
 More fierce ; nay more, what greater hell need be

Than sit in heaven as pardoned rebels, and
 With prostrate forms, and hallelujahs loud
 Do homage unto Him, and glorify
 The power that cast us down, and humbled us,
 (For that would be indeed humiliation,)
 Who erst, upblown with pride, had in the field
 Of battle sought to break His iron yoke,
 And there, with mighty deeds, recorded what
 Words never can efface, though poured in song,
 Nor drowned can be 'neath streams of panegyric.
 And if we should go up and to Him say,
 'Father forgive thy sons,' how could we bear
 To see the scornful glances of his hosts,
 And hear his haughty Captains whose chief virtue
 Lies in unqualified obedience : no,
 Heaven must be ours, or we not enter it ;
 Subjected I must be, or else subject.
 So do I find in bare necessities
 Refreshment sad ; with reason shake his peace,
 Who find my best in still provoking war.—
 Then war be mine, whose'er is success :
 Adieu, all thought that does not breathe of war
 And promise me revenge. Hell me incites
 With the remembrance stern of doleful hours,
 And speaks in thunder from her distant shore
 With tongues of flame. Wrongs numerous I have,
 And the necessity to be his foe,
 Who not forgive, and cannot be forgiven :
 All urge me to my aim." With this resolve,
 Spreading wide wings, he cadent flew, and strove
 To alight upon the orb ; but was resiled,
 As by a power invisible and strong,
 Which his attempts unto that end made vain.
 Nor less in vain the efforts that he made
 To reach other suns, whereon fair creatures dwelt
 From him secure. Thereon with all his might
 He strove to rush, or gain by artifice,
 Hurling his vastness, like an engine huge,
 Headlong them toward, but without success.
 Long he endeavoured to these orbs attain ;
 But, disappointed, now past all such flew
 Through the dim vault, due to familiar earth ;
 On which alight as on his own domain,
 Brooding, he thus at length in thought revolved :
 " When will creating end, when weary grow
 The task of forming worlds, and in heaven's dome
 Upsealing Him in reservative pomp,

'To hear her laud Him as the source supreme.
 Would I might see no more of his creations,
 I loathe his works, Him loathing, and abhor
 His utmost skirts. Why doth he thus come down
 Into the peaceful darkness; what ambition calls Him,
 What vanity, to practice in the deep.—
 'T is painful to behold his ostentation;
 For what else is it but stupendous pride
 That prompts to this display. He names me proud;
 Is He not proud, and ravenous of glory;
 With what exorbitance doth He exact
 His fulsome worship, flattery best called,—
 Vainest of Gods! I do not such demand;
 If given, 'tis well; as well if 't be withheld;
 I know my state, nor need on 't to be told
 By sychophant reminders: therein I
 Am his superior; if not so in power,
 Which may be only due unto the chance
 In that in being 't was his me to precede,
 Yet, in the nobler matter of the will,
 I proud on Him look down—look down and scowl,
 Perchance from unreal height—his rival I,
 His everlasting foe; nor will I cease
 'Gainst Him to fight, though oft defeated,
 Though baffled oft, not all inglorious,
 For one great victory I have achieved,
 Then, when I saw his hateful Scion bleed,
 Suffering sent from my besom to the Latter's,
 That rent itself with groans, my causing, and
 Then new despair like mine: yea He did cry,
 Forsaken, on his Father who, well pleased,
 (Calling his agonies a sacrifice,)
 Bartered for them the ever-radiant seats
 By us vacated: be it so, since we
 No more may fill them, but revenge shall be
 Even more sweet than they: this broad emprise
 Halts only that its progress may be sure.
 Surpassed by heaven in strength, to circumvent
 Other beings I yet have power, as thou O Earth,
 (Hell's pledge and heaven's shame,) knowest well. There-
 Though foiled at present, I will not abate; [fore
 Though thwarted not desist. To me, repulse
 Familiar is, and this is but delay.
 Who knows the bridge on which may evil pass;
 Who knows the chain on which may ruin run;
 The path that ill may stalk." He said, then sailed
 On mighty wings round this terraqueous globe.

BOOK IV.

DETERMINED to pursue his foul design,
And, in the ruin of strange worlds, to seek
Relief unto the anguish of his lot ;
Now Satan stood upon the midnight sea
And thus began : " Adieu, thou little orb,
First fruit of hatred and of bold attempt,
And ever shalt remain my eldest born,
How numerous soe'er my future progeny ;
Though now departing, I will soon return
And bring thee tidings, (as I hope to speed)
Of new associates in our misery :
Mourn not my absence, or if I henceforth
Less oft thee visit, and my servants' pains
Other worlds soon share, for never shalt thou lack
Sorrow, but shalt divide it still with me,
For thy Sire's sake, and mine own fantasy."
He scoffed, and riding high into the air,
Observed an instant the decreescent moon,
And lucifer, bright star ; and, soaring yet,
Deeply descried the sun, bordering the earth
With fire. With diligence he soared, or rather,
With speed to man were unimaginable ;
For makes he now not to the highest star,
But to the milky way, that maze of stars
Aspired ; and such his wing, that long ere morn
Knocked at the dusky portals of our east,
He thither had arrived—there hung subdued—
(Such power hath perfect beauty and sublime,)
And heard, entranced, the rolling spheres attune,
Each with a godlike voice, and pealing loud
Or soft, with billowy undulation make
Their wondrous song ; enrapt there hung,
And as an exile, who on sudden hears
An air of home, is instantly inspired
By the emotions that once filled his past,
Returnless, unexpatriated years ;
Forgetting that he ne'er shall visit home
More, nor behold his native landscape smile,
So for awhile the lost Archangel dwelt ;

Snatched from himself and borne away, as 't were,
 Within bright cloud to old Elysium.
 Nor were his eyes less ravished than his ears,
 As in he entered, 'neath an arch of stars,
 Above which constellations rose immense,
 Light upon light; and round about he gazed,
 Then repursued, as o'er some vestibule
 Might haste a stranger, whetted by what there,
 To see the grander pageantry within,
 As such a one might move on silent steps,
 Did he, on muffled wings, and saw the scene
 Disclose, as some august interior
 From undrawn valves. Thus, met by murmuring gales,
 And sudden gusts, whose gentle insurrection
 Blew in his ears their soft zephyrean horns—
 Music even unto highest spirits—and
 Richlier balm-laden than Arabian winds,
 Or airs that blow from the mollucca shores,
 When fleets, slow riding o'er the salty main,
 Forget their haste, and linger to inhale
 The witching elixer that nature fills
 With ghosts of spices and the souls of flowers;
 Thus, met by these, which with a grim delight
 He snuffed, he onward flew, beholding isles
 Embosomed in perpetually calm seas
 O'er which the Halcyon flew, and whereon played
 Behemoth, he himself an isle,—blest isles
 Round which Behemoth played and Neriades,
 Merman and maiden; on the peaceful shore,
 Pactolean sands, reclining Thetis who,
 Translated hither, watched the ocean nymphs
 Sport in the glassy hollows of the flood,
 Or, unto measure sent by Zephyrus seated
 Amidst the lazy surges, dance upon
 The beach rejoicing; Oceanus too,
 And Tethys, Saturn, all the Gods of yore
 Here dwelt, their kingly cares now recompensed
 By endless ease. Here Triton blew his shell,
 And watery caves thereto replied with sighs
 Like to the melancholy pines, and in the woodlands
 Satyr, and faun, dryad, and hemadryad
 Their rebecks held, and on heaven-scaling hills
 Continually the brown Pomona stood,
 And Flora, smiling amidst her orient blooms,
 Whilst everywhere diviner amarant grew,
 And trees celestial. The vaulted whole
 Near high as heaven appeared, broader than earth,

Happier than Elysian fields : the softened image
 Of heaven seemed, as still the mobile orbs
 Rolled like the music of the seraphim ;
 And on he flew descrying now far off,
 Seated, or else reclined on flowery lawns,
 Or walking in their more than Tempean vales,
 Majestic forms, surpassing human. Neath him
 A jasper river flowed, and on he held
 Above its course, and saw within its depths
 Himself reflected like to flying cloud.
 As o'er the Amazon that doth take its rise
 Midst Andean heights of virgin snows sublime,
 Might float aerial ship ; so he o'er this,
 This lovelier far, and whose unmeasured length,
 Rolled over worlds on worlds. Its banks were clad
 With asphodel, and ever grew vast trees
 Laden with fruits divine. Far up he flew,
 And now alighting first upon the soil,
 As on a garden some pernicious wasp,
 Straight fell partake of largess offering round.
 The ambrosial air he drank, with gusto keen,
 (Heaven's scarce more fragrant,) and the odorant breath
 Of spices caught upon his wings. These were
 A monstrous pair, (though, by his torrid clime,
 More damaged now, than vessels sails have borne
 'The round world's winds,) and many times in heaven
 Had veiled his face, as 'fore the Eternal's throne
 He Him had worshipped ; and, in her mid-air
 Full oft had seemed two mighty gonfalons,
 Where silver sparkled 'midst refulgent gold ;
 As 'fore the multitudinous he ruled,
 For home in their flying marches over heaven,
 He hung advanced—now, dreadful vehicles,
 Beneath hell's cope, through storm and tornado ;
 Midst fire, and adverse billows of her main,—
 Hell's fiery main,—or up and down through space,
 In darkness, or brief light, him to transport.
 These he surchargeth all their scaly folds,
 And loads with perfume and the soothing balm ;
 Through every pore the gentle zephyrs leads :
 Which done, he gathered light, and his dark parts,
 Scathed by the expulsive bolt, falsely restored,
 And o'er his forehead threw a wash of joy,
 To hide hell's grief ; and, harlot like, rubbed in
 The glory of the morn upon his cheek,
 Stolen with his finger from high eastern hill.
 His arms he next attended ; his shield and spear

Gave greater lustre, and infernal sword
 PREGNED with tenfold fires. Then from the ground
 He sprang, and heaved himself soon to mid-air ;
 And through its balmy tide, that seemed life's food,
 The ethereal food for immortality,
 Delicious winged. Meantime he searching gazed,
 And, far beneath him, soon beheld a form
 Scarce less in beauty than the host of heaven ;
 Its aspect feminine, though of noble mould,
 Naked, and on advancing with a step
 Seemed trod to music of her native spheres.
 Joy at the vision of such excellence,
 (Her excellence enhance would his revenge,)
 Upstirred within him, and he hastening down,
 Quick realighted, and, with gait majest,
 Her meeting, thus in winning mode began :
 " Star dweller hail, fair Sister, for I thee,
 (Though I divine, and thou but living dust,)
 Perforce must so enstyle—Thee I embrace,
 And shed on thee my sacred influence,
 As on all things the night its precious dew.
 Why art thou here, why does thy destiny
 Thee place so far beneath thy true desert ?
 Oh, had I earlier known ;—but He doth seek
 To hide thee from us, and desires that heaven
 May not admire a beauty so all-perfect—
 Haply because He fears that heaven would charm
 Our eyes no longer, and our tongues forget
 To chaunt His praise, in celebrating thine.—
 But we are ruled by Fate, as well as thou ;
 As well as He, who on his higher throne
 Sits by the warrant of necessity :
 When she doth bid us honor thee, we must—
 No other can then love thee, since our nature
 Moves ever to its like, and would absorb
 All excellence in itself, would separate
 Ever the noble from the base of things :
 Heaven is the purest light, less pure these stars,
 And one, called hell, is all of darkness formed,
 The dregs of things, the lees o' the universe ;
 And Fate hath formed three orders meet to govern ;
 I, and my kindred Gods, the empyreal zone ;
 Those Shapes who visit you, to rule the stars,
 And one dark Power, the horrid waste beneath :
 Therefore again I ask why art thou here,
 Why art thou not enrolled with heavenly spirits,
 Whose great angelic and o'erruling Thrones

Thee noting, should refine, and more adorn,
 And then associate in their life divine :
 Say, wouldst thou not aspire to sit with Gods ?
 Dwell in their full exuberance of bliss.
 Wouldst thou, enshrined in light, not willingly
 Be the loved charmer of their regal homes ?¹⁷
 He said, and she with solemn grace replied :
 " To love but One, and Him to love supremely,
 Is my alone ambition ; asking but
 To be of him commended, whose I am,
 His all-dependent creature ; and if more
 Endowed than others, 't is His bounteousness
 That hath bestowed each now imputed charm :
 Strange are thy words." She ceased, nor raised her eyes,
 But pondering seemed upon the novel tale,
 When thus the fiend resumed : " What are thy thoughts ?
 To be admired, (even by cherubic eyes,)
 To thee is nothing new, for of thy fame [comes
 Heaven long hath heard, and through her gates there
 No false report ; thy fame hath brought me thence,
 Who until now upon my throne have sat
 Of mortals unconcerned—for knowest thou not
 That thou art mortal, art the child of time,
 That, as thou hadst beginning, even so
 Thou shalt have end, and leave eternity
 As erst it was, the habitation sole
 Of the unceasing Gods,—for as the forest
 Mounts to its stately prime, then perishes ;
 Or as the affluent and thick thoughted day
 Subsides for ever in the desolate night,
 So shall thyself and all thy kind expire.
 This had the tree of Knowledge shewn you, had
 Ye eaten of it, not regarding those
 Who of their envy have informed you that
 'T was to you interdicted, nor the tree
 Of life ye had neglected pluck—that tree
 Of grace, the conjoint gift of all the Gods
 Except Jehovah, who unwilling was
 To grant such favor, and that day began
 To be from us alienated, whilst we saw
 Him leagued with meaner Powers (even those
 Styled the angelical, who would, we knew
 Themselves with you ingratiate,) which did cause
 Us, his co-equals, to withdraw from you
 Further regard, disdain to disturb
 Heaven's ancient concord, faintly symbolized
 By the perpetual harmony of these spheres.

Thus did He work you evil, or at least
 Retard from you the good ; yea, high imperil
 The immortality, that, in synod, we
 Had for you contemplated ;—but our natures
 Ever towards good inclining, and our wills
 Potent, to the verge even of necessity,
 To work our wishes, cannot brook repulse,
 Though patiently await we for our hour ;
 That hour arrived, I from heaven's height am come
 Vicegerant of the Gods, enjoined thee bear
 Unto their bosoms, when, like them, thou art
 Immortal and all-knowing, the effect
 Of tasting fruit of those elysian trees :
 Haste thee, our favorite, haste thee, pluck and eat."
 He said, and looked she, and beheld. hard by,
 Those mystic trees forbidden, and with tears
 And tremulous emotion thus began :
 " Oh, tempt me not, thou Hierarch, for I
 Am well content believe Jehovah good
 Though us from these debarring ; yea, believe
 That He is wise as well as good—why should
 I other deem, I, who in bliss have dwelt
 With all my kindred, nor have evil known
 Till now, become thy auditor ; thy words
 Suspicious are, as are thy looks ; in me
 Awake they horror,—terrible thine eye
 And filled with daring, and those fearful arms
 Tell me thou bring'st not hither peace, but war :
 I tremble as I look upon thy form !
 Say, art thou not even that great evil angel
 Cast by Jehovah into quenchless fire ?"
 To which the fiend, with well assumed smile :
 " Ah, beautiful, and make me more thee love
 These timid doubts :—but wherefore callst thou good
 Him, who would fain destroy you ; contravening
 Us, who destroy mortality ; Him wise
 Who would deny you knowledge, would Himself
 Deny unto you, for, if He be wise
 It is Himself denies He to you in
 Denying to you knowledge, without which
 Is no true wisdom : spurn, then, foul restraint ;
 Eat, and be wise ; eat, and for ever live."
 He said, and she replied : " I know thee now ;
 Thou art that plausible angel, art that spirit,
 Who drew a third part of the host of heaven
 From their allegiance, and didst drag them down
 With thee in ruin to the baleful pit

From whence, escaped, thou comest : hence, thou tempter.
 At which the demon, now austere. "This folly
 Shall I repeat to the assembled Gods
 For me awaiting, and whose scorned regard
 May turn to anger ;—who shall say that I
 Have power to appease them ! ah, beware, and fear
 Some dreadful portion, some affliction, huge
 Beyond thine uttermost conception, still
 From it released not by the insulted Thrones,
 Whose wrath, when once aroused, will burn for ever."
 To which she answered with disdainful smile :
 "Lies have no terrors in them, but abhorrence
 Bring towards their utterer, and thy malice
 I dread not, nor thine utmost ire do fear
 Provoke, abortive, whilst He me protects
 With his omnipotent arm, that could thee end
 Immediately, or stretch thee on these plains,
 A shameful monument. Hence, lest such doom
 Should thee o'ertake ; hence, whilst thou hast the power."
 And straight arose he in the air, but scorning
 Confession of his bad identity,
 Soared out of sight as if upbound for heaven :
 But, with deflected course, at length decended
 Upon a distant star. There on a plain,
 He walked 'midst woodlands, a sequestered spot ;
 Sylvan, umbrageous, and unfrequented :
 A seat molestless, where the ring-doves cooed,
 And through the glades appeared the stately swan
 Rowing on distant waters, and the air
 Scent was with woodbine, that fantastic hung
 On ancient trees half-everlasting boughs,
 Through which the melody of the spheres decended,
 In one subdued, half-murmured madrigal ;
 And solemn issuing from remotest glen,
 Came, ever and anon, some angel's song,
 Borne on the shoulders of the cherub winds.
 Here soon a male inhabitant he met,
 Young, and of martial mien : heroic
 In stature, form, expression, and, whom now,
 Who 'fore him stood with reverential air,
 He thus accosted without proem made :
 "Hail, stellant, hail, thee have I to me drawn
 That I might tell thee I have found thee worthy
 To rule for me this star." To which the man
 With lowly murmured tones, and eyes unraised :
 "I know thee not, thou mighty spirit, nor
 Thy language fully comprehend ; thy form,

And words both strange : tell me O stranger
 Who art thou, what thy name?" To which the fiend :
 " Thou knowest me not indeed, but I know thee ;
 I am the greatest of all beings, and
 By name, Munificent, my name now changed,
 As it has been before, from Lucifer
 To Satan and the Evil one, so called
 By my grand Adversary and mankind,
 Nor spared by the malignants who, with Him
 Late ruled Heaven's zone : heaven now me calls
 Merit-discerner, Empire-giver ; thou
 Shalt find, ere long, that style towards thee made good
 By me who, having ended that cruel reign
 That strove to bind in hell all malcontents,
 Inaugurate my own with special gifts."
 "T is said thou wert a liar from the first,"
 Dareful replied the stellant, and the fiend rejoined :
 "So said mine enemies, but do thou remember,
 Truth seems a lie, when lies are truth proclaimed ;
 As to this hour has been in all your coasts :
 Lies banished truth, and slander reigned till late ;
 For long had calumny reigned, but now truth triumphs.
 'Midst you yet wander Jehovah's sycophants,
 Who, swift to spread news of my once defeat,
 Are slow to publish those of their own rout
 And present disgrace. Incorrigible minions!
 Heaven harbours them no more. Their vanquished Master
 Shall hold a royal mockery of state,
 More generous I than He, who, when successful,
 Drove me from light, and would have held in thrall."
 At which the other exclaimed : " Can He this hear
 And not annihilate thee!" " Nay life and death
 Are mine," rejoined the demon, " all now is mine,
 Who, risking all, have gained the sum of things ;
 Power to dispose of old and bring forth new,
 In one grand struggle that half ruined heaven ;—
 My native right, and just prerogative,
 Dared to assert, nor failed to vindicate
 With this right arm, that did subvert His throne,
 And made Him sue to me with piteous groans ;
 Vanquished, forlorn, the where He lately ruled,
 Around him strewn the wreck of all his engines."
 To which the man, with up-directed gaze :
 " Oh, hearest thou not, thou Omnipresent One,
 Ear of the world, and eye, and powerful arm
 It to sustain, and even him uphold
 Who taunts Thee thus, with horrid blasphemies

Emptying his heart, and with insurgent lies!"
 "Why shouldst thou call on Him retorts the fiend;
 Who, if He hearken, cannot interfere;—
 Cease with me then this foolish controversy:
 I thee intend to be my minister;
 I, whose thou art, and who these countless worlds
 Hold by the right of a true conqueror.
 Feel'st thou, thou lackest might? Of me request."
 "Wouldst thou I'd ask of thee, thy suppliant
 Become," the man replied: "Poor! what hast thou
 To give, save what is evil; and, for power
 What power thou hast is His, who thee permits
 Thus to invade these loftier confines:
 Hence, hence, away, thou fallen, fierce archangel;
 Hideous thou seemest for all thy mightiness;
 Thou bearest sin imprinted on thy face;
 And thy whole form bears marks of punishment:
 I scorn thy terribleness." To whom Satan, moved:
 "Nay, brave me not; I'd give thee only good,
 Augment thy happiness, who have the gift
 Even with a word to plunge thee deep in woe;
 Beware, beware, thou scornest one who thee
 Could drown in turgid floods, or steep in fire,
 Could with a look shut up thy soul in horror:
 What though me others seemed despise: blast thou
 Not thy fair chance, election mar, and earn
 My hot displeasure; honor courts thy brow,
 Reject it not, but let thy lips the law
 Lofty deliver, and thy shoulders bear
 The waiting monarchy. Thou knowest not what
 Thou doest: I would thee specially regard;
 I would thee raise transcendent o'er thy fellows;
 Glory put round thy brow, and seas of joy;
 From power to pleasure thou shouldst turn, from pleasure
 Return to power, alternately o'erblest:
 Thee, for thy wisdom shall thy sex extoll,
 Thy beauty shall the fair; whilst these my gifts
 To thee shall know no end. Thy mind will I
 Enlighten to discern, nor shall thy conscience
 Pastime mistake for sin: on beds of thyme
 And purple lavender; on nature's broad
 And frolic-loving lap, thou shalt disport
 With the gay daughters of this radiant clime,
 The live long day, and dark and wanton night,
 Whilst golden years from out potential urns,
 Shall pour ethereal ardors through thy veins.

Now make thy choice." To which the man rejoined :
 " Disgust thou now evokest, and my contempt ;
 Foul Fiend, begone unto thy pit obscene :
 Oh ! would that Michael now might drive thee hence."
 He said, and lo ! a dazzling track of light
 Burst through the sky, and, clad in panoply,
 Michael in arms before them stood confessed.
 And now the form of Satan grew enlarged,
 And unto lurid changed with wrath. As when
 The sky, at set of sun, betokens storm
 Moving he loomed. Three paces back he stept,
 And drew his lengthy sword, and from his back
 Swung, like a cloud, his shield. His hair, erect,
 Waved like tall pines, and thus he fiercely cried :
 " Dost thou confront me here, officious slave ;
 Thou spirit base, by me than thy Jehovah
 Hated scarce less, back to thy dainty seat,
 Ere swift I chase thee howling up the skies,
 Scorched by this flaming minister I wield."
 To which, thus, Michael calmly answer gave :
 " Think not to sway by threats whom once by deeds
 Hath proved superior ; nor trust to turn
 Him from his purpose by thy desperate courage.
 Resist me not ; hast thou forgotten how
 On the bright plain of heaven I smote thee." " Ah !
 I do remember," cried with passionate scorn
 The Tempter, " well, insulting angel, mind
 The hour, as thou shalt this remember long,
 If fate not stay the sweep of this right arm,
 And proof this weapon be, that holds grim fires,
 Soon loosed upon thee by my vengeful hand."
 " Thy vaunting cease," Michael to him replied ;
 " What unto me thy weapon dire, or name
 Of thine ill mansion, who against thee comes
 Strong in obedience, and unfailling trust
 In the Omnipotent : thou now art less
 Able to cope with me than on that day,
 When, with thy strength unminished, thou didst fail
 Before thy legions, with dissevered blade."
 To which the Infernal, bursting furious forth :
 " Ah, wilt thou join Him still, thou spirit vile,
 To thine assistance ;—thou dishonest slave,—
 For who can now believe thee of the gods,
 Though with their brightness and their stolen mien,
 But know, thou abjectest acknowledger,
 That here I stand upon my own proud strength,
 Unsapped as yet, unwasted, and defy

Both Him and thee, so haste defend thyself."
So said, they each addressed themselves for fight,
With looks of wrath unspeakable, and high
Disdain coequal, and, with mighty strides,
Came on each other, that the ground seemed trod
By two destructions rushing into one.
Soon ether blazed, soon each enacted deeds
Transcending song. Now on the ground they fought,
Now in the air upon main wing; whilst poured
From out their smitten shields—great bulwarks that
Moved as they moved enormous on the air—
Ten thousand thunders, and with differing keys,
More utter discord than 'twixt heaven and hell.
Hell doleful sighed, for Michael must prevail.
Sheer through the lifted orb, and thickening casque
His downward falchion split, and onward rove.
Staggering the fiend recoiled, and knew that blow
None but a force omnipotent could deal—
So knew, and cursing at his fate, thence fled.

BOOK V.

Four times my lyre hath sounded to this theme,
And four times died its strains ; if haply I
Equal unto my argument have been,
Happy indeed ; and, hopeful, I resume
My exalted hymn ; alacrous persevere,
Unstaying enquire the verdict of the age,—
If with authentic fire my bosom burned,
Or with false ardor. Let posterity
Declare (or this generation) whether I bore
The fire promethean, or a worthless flash,
Whose dull report I took for distant fame.
From out the breast of Satan burst deep groans,
As on another star he sat and mourned,
In war, his primeness lost. Upon his hand
His head he leaned, and brooded on revenge.
On that vast river's bank again he stood.
Silent it rolled, and solitarily,
Between its firm and everlasting bounds,
Whence the wide landscape stretched its vasty breadth,
In various face of verdure and incline,
Rising on either hand, until at length
Its fainting verges seemed to enter heaven.
The sky was golden noon's, scant clouded : Zephyr
Slept ; and o'er all reigned happiness and calm.
Here he his proper aspect did discard,
A stellant's frame assuming, young and fair ;
Bright locked and welkin-eyed ; whose nathless form
Surpassed Narcissus', or that Antinous,
The Ceasar's pride ; Hyla's, or Ganymede's,
Who bore cupped nectar to offended Jove,
When Hebe sighed, ebanished from his smile ;
Not more seducing, Hebe's freshest self
Glowing resplendent o'er the rosy wine.
Thus he disguised the demon in fair form,
And now down glided on the glittering flood,
Sat in the stern of a light gondola.
No craft was on the tide ; and stately down
He rode alone awhile ; and distant seemed
To be the haunting genius of the wave ;

As proud he came, and unlaborious,
 Progressing with a grace beyond the swan's,
 No oars propelling with their measured sweeps ;
 Nor sail performing yoke unto the winds ;
 He current drawn ; though he'd no dolphin team,
 Not lovelier Venus coming when, new born
 She, ferried by the foam, made Cythrea's iste,
 And now from off the banks began push skiffs,
 At first but few, but which, from both the shores,
 Augmented fast in numbers and in pride,
 And soon a scattered, numerous flotilla
 Dropped with him gently down. Then to his mouth
 He put a double pipe, and from it blew
 Remembered harmonies that used to lift
 Archangels' minds unto heroic pitch,
 Celestial chords, and heavenly rythms,
 Which, as at signal of an admiral,
 In flanking lines, and at the distance best
 For them devour the sound, arranged the fleet,
 That, wrapped in more than famed Elysium,
 Blessed the auspicious voyage. Like an enchanter
 The concourse he controlled. Now solemn airs
 Abstracted them, then wonderful and weird
 Held them in thrall. Now sadness o'er them came,
 Now joy returned at his bright bidding. Thus,
 Them ravishing, he voyaged ; and now, to crown
 The harmonious hour, all prior harmonies
 Upsummed in one ; for lo, a martial burst,
 Followed by throes of mirth, and giddy whirls,
 And shoots sublime in their extravagance,
 And snatches sweet, whose briefness tantalized,
 With descants mixed, and melancholy bars ;
 Filling, yet hungering the longing ear.
 Then, breaking up the lines, around him pressed
 The numerous audience, and o'erwhelmed with praise ;
 And, eagerly inviting him to land,
 Swiftly across the tide the gondola swept
 Urged by delighted hands, and up the shore.
 Next to palm grove, whose leaves debarred the heat,
 And naked stems were portals to the breeze,
 Surrounding him they led, and therein took
 Repast. Herbs, and the mellowed fruit their fare,
 And for their drink the beverage of the grape
 Pendant o'er head in serried clusters cool,
 Or the clear brook that flowed with murmurous sound.
 Gourds were their flagons, and enamelled shells
 Their salvers ; the green turf their table, and

Their seats the feet of immemorial trees.
 But he, on eminence, as honored, sat
 Whom they, as honored, served ; each longed to serve,
 Where each partaking was on equal terms
 The rural meal, which being now despatched,
 They urged reprisal of the haunting pipe.
 Straight to his mouth he put it, and attuned
 A warm thanksgiving to the Lord most high,
 An air of heaven. O'er many a sunny vale,
 And hill commanding half the realms of fire ;
 On blissful seas, and on immortal plains
 Where dwell the sanctified, it oft had risen ;
 Rivers, and streams of life ; and oft within
 The palaces of angels ; and at foot
 (Whilst brightness hides the summit evermore,
 And night perpetual makes with endless day,)
 Of that pure mountain upon which dwells God,
 Its numbers poured ; whose burden these took up,
 That, swollen with replication of their throats,
 Rolled o'er the grove sublime : thrice went the psalm,
 And thrice the charmed air bore it to the clouds,
 Or wafted far, that ministering spirits heard
 Surprised the sound, which ceased, one thus enquired ;
 " Where gainedst thou that wondrous instrument,
 And not less wondrous skill, for similar sounds
 We never heard before, nor upbuilt strains,
 Though in these parts be numbers who excell ?"
 To whom the fiend : " Neither do come from far."
 " Say, then," pursued the first, " from whence, that we
 May such obtain." " I know not whether ye dare,"
 Was the reply : " Dare !" was responded straight,
 " We dare do aught save touch the denied tree."
 " That I have touched ;" replied the venturous fiend :
 Even as the gust throws back the leafy boughs,
 This declaration caused the crowd recoil ;
 Horror betook each face, and all aghast,
 Silent they stood ; when thus resumed the fiend :
 " No evil dread ; an object am I not
 Of pity, but of envy, as you see.
 But words would fail me, and this wondrous pipe
 Would likewise fail me, with its eloquence
 Marvellous, as ye have heard, transcending music
 Before here known, as that transcends all speech,
 Fully relate my lot ineffable :
 Lo ! what great thoughts rushed o'er my soul, partaking
 Of that strange fruit, no more inhibited ;
 What life sublime have I not lived since then :

It is the tree of knowledge, and, to those
 (As I have proved,) who taste its fruitage, yields
 The hoary secrets of eternity.
 As Gods ye shall become if thereof eat ye :
 Even now I feel as though I were divine,
 And breathed in Paradise. Attend, then, while
 How this occurred I you inform. Upon
 A late fallen day, pressed by the sun, whose whole
 Meridian shine had bathed my uncrowned head,
 I sought the forest in the afternoon,
 And there soon fell asleep—and sleeping dreamed,
 Dreamed that, as lain beneath a sacred tree,
 There came unto me one of angel mien :
 Who me regarding steadfastly awhile,
 At length up pointed to a loaded bough
 And bade me it acquire. Alarmed I lay,
 But, rising to my feet, at his behest
 I grasped the tabooed tree, whose concious rind
 Seemed heave me upward to the noble theft.
 As into heaven's ambrosial air ascending
 Felt I, ascending 'midst those fragrant leaves,
 And, buried in the green obscurity,
 Urging nectarious way, so sweet a passage
 Tempted me linger, but I mounted still,
 And soon myself possessing of the branch,
 (Though highest there, and hardest of access,)
 Bore it, with sense of triumph to the ground.
 Then timidly, I tasted of the fruit,
 And felt immediate change. My understanding
 Cleared, like to fire purged suddenly from smoke,
 Or as the landscape from the mists of morn,
 And all within was light. Again I tasted,
 And knowledge came with taste; the Universe
 Revealed to me itself, time sped its wings,
 And, with the high prevision of a God,
 I saw the march of destiny apace.
 Thus I, extatic, and communion held
 With those who had partaken of this fruit
 On other worlds: thus I, communing, fed ;
 And turned to thank my gracious Visitant,
 Who on me smiled, departing: likewise I
 Addressed myself to leave that shady covert,
 But loth, without a relic, from the ground
 Took the bared bough that, as I grasped it, changed
 Into this instrument bright-hued and straight.
 Pleased at this omen good, but not surprised,
 The pipe I gazed on with admiring eyes ;

Then, in it breathing, heard from out it flow
 Sounds soon transcending all before here known
 Of noblest stop, surpassing angel's voice,
 Or starry choir. Methought 't was God's own voice
 Applauding, and the shouts of his bright hosts
 Therewith commingling, and proud madness seized
 My soul, that felt unutterable joy.
 How long I thus remained, I know not, but
 In joy I woke, and nigh me saw the tree;
 Clambered its height, and did as I had dreamed;
 Rebore the joy, methought, indeed, enhanced;
 Nor since that day abated hath my bliss.
 Oh, blessed day, blessed mystic tree, the gift
 Of boundless goodness; given, not denied!
 Haste ye, and eat thereof." He said, yet none
 For long unto his narrative rejoined;
 But, as the leaves of eastern tree drop gums
 Upon the ground, so, from their eyes fell tears.
 Sighs from their bosoms burst, and frequent groans;
 Within their souls ineffable distress;
 Ruth, ire, confusion, mingled with alarm;
 Strange tenants these, and ruder by tenfold
 From strangeness, and each face marred sorely: he
 Expectant stood, as one, who in some peril,
 Awaits the coming shock: they grieved, he smiled,
 Patient: and now, recovered somewhat, one
 Began: "Thy counsel will we not, though thou
 Seemest whole and fair, nay, wondrous beautiful,
 Nor shruuk, nor blasted like the ripe fallen fruit,
 Hath suffered witless tread: what hast thou done?
 In what misguided hour put forth thine hand!
 Rash one, thou hast become sad criminal;
 A rebel thou has grown, thy Maker's foe;—
 Surely thou hast become some tempter's fool;
 Satan hath hither been, and thee hath duped:
 Say, hath not yet unto thee spoken God?
 Hath not some awful angel yet condemned thee?"
 To which the fiend composedly replied:
 "Affright thee not, nor fill others with thy fears;
 God is not wrath; and with his angels I
 Have spoken; they admire the deed, and listen
 As them I teach, who by them once was taught:
 All happy is at present, and hereafter
 Shall be much happier, as in me asserts
 My growing knowledge, and for what of hazard,
 T'was to the first who dared to appropriate;
 Which being done, 'tis past: haste ye and eat,

Lest by contemning, ye be not allowed."
 "Tempted thyself, wouldst thou too tempt!" cried one,
 Anticipate not, fond, the future, for
 Their fate who, elsewhere, plucked the fruit and ate
 May soon be thine—yea, one more terrible,
 Thee given not purchase, with the loss of here,
 A seat in heaven; to win back innocence
 By guilt vicarious borne; independent death,
 Mortality upon thee passed, from which to escape
 Immortal, but to dwell with him in chains,
 And howl thy future being in the ears
 Of his bad angels, he, who thee seduced,
 (For who else would?) hell's foul rebellious king.
 Mourn, mourn, thou ingrate child, to break
 Our Sire's sole law, his lonely ordinance,
 Thy dream a poor excuse,—whence came, thou awake,
 Thy dread temerity!" To which, the fiend,
 "Good comes from good alone; thence, evil never;
 Good only yieldeth good; and good for ever:
 In heaven evil lurked coeval with our sire;
 And, thence cast out, in forged chains of strength
 Now howls in hell, with echoes reaching earth,
 Which is its shore, and though its ocean rage,
 Its angry billows may not reach us here."
 "Fallacious confidence," one answered him,
 "Thee hath it grasped already, and may draw
 Soon into ruin irretrievable;
 Haste, haste, fall down whilst hap may grace be found
 And we, even as one heart, will intercede
 For thee; oh, grim thy plight!" "I have no fear,
 Of that which ye denounce," replied the tempter;
 "Fear bringeth torment, torment is of sin;
 The first a stranger, argues strange the last;
 Nor think our plights so differing from each other;
 Even if I were deceived by some foul spirit,
 Faith in the doer all deeds makes virtuous:
 And for yourselves,—with candour me inform
 What is the worth of their obedience
 Who dare not other: ye will say ye love
 The stern command: ye loved not more than I,
 Whose love being perfect did cast out all fear;
 Ye love the fiction of ye know not whom:
 The fair fruit of the tree was not denied:
 Tell me, whom know ye here heard given such canon:
 How many lips to you hath it passed through?
 And for what end reserved? For test say you.
 Pshaw! why should our Maker institute a test,

Knowing our hearts from out eternity ?
 Or if ye say it is his sovereign pleasure
 The tree should grow unviolate, his snare
 'Tis then, which were a blasphemous idea :
 In this dispute ask guidance of your reason."
 To which one answered : " There is no dispute
 Twixt thee and us ; hence not of reason talk,
 Nor furnish questions of presumptuousness,
 That with their shallow measures seem to fathom
 Infinity,—but only seem—for reason
 (Which is thy limited perception, fool!)
 Can no more Him completely ascertain,
 Than finite line can mete immensity,
 Or ceaseless days exhaust eternity,
 Him, without bound or sum. Say, shall we, then,
 At thy desire grow impious ? No, we will
 (Straying from unobstructed light,) with thee
 Not wander in dark wastes of speculation :
 We will not dare to arraign our Maker's ways ;
 Wherein our reason cannot answer us,
 Will mock it not with queries ; but, with awe,
 And resolution to obey, receive
 His mystic ordinance ; nor doubt his wisdom,
 Who hath one interdiction thus upraised,
 Save which, upyielding nature's boundless sum :
 Unreasonable one ! (for it is thou
 Outrages reason, thus demanding reason
 For thy great Maker's ways.) wouldst thou give fiat ?
 Shall grey tradition, and the long consent
 Of all our race, conjoined with sanction high
 Of visiting Thrones, and of Cherubic spirits,
 Be set aside by thee ! Despiser, hence !
 Away, impenitent soul !" To which the fiend :
 " Oh, what resentment burns in breasts, supposed
 Filled only with the streams of sweet regard :
 Alack ! how falsely do ye estimate
 Yourselves, and crush the creature whom ye deem
 Undone : me fallen you suppose, and shew
 No kind consideration of my plight,
 But strive to wound me with malicious words,
 And chase me, alien ; your virtue's height !
 Yet, though provoked, shall not affront me cause
 To lose my meekness and unboasted love ;
 A love, and undissembling charity,
 That not imagined to conceal from you
 The source of my superiority ;
 Admired at first, though little understood,

Now impious deemed ; so little do we know
 How to appreciate, at once, high things—
 Too high, it seems, for valuation here,
 Or your acceptance—if indeed not scorn
 Hinder reception of a gift declined—
 Scorn, sinful sentiment ! and kin to pride,
 That threw down angels from their high estate,
 And here may enter, then were ye undone,
 And fallen lower than the earth' frail tribe,
 As much as now transcending, in the gulf
 Beneath, your habitation fixed for ever ;
 Hopeless, forestalled in one great sacrifice,
 The hope of sinners : Oh, relent ; upon
 Yourselves have pity, and your offspring dear ;
 Disdain not me who thus unto you preach,
 If law indeed it were, then unto you,
 That law's repealment ; ye, who have clearly proved,
 (If proof were needful to Omniscience,)
 A law were needless where so long 'tis kept,
 Faithful in abstinence, differing from earths,
 Who came, perceived, and, undernuring, ate.
 As for myself I will this pipe employ
 In his high service who hath all things made
 For our delight or use, 'midst land, sea, sky."'
 He said, but none replied ; or whether posed,
 Or sickened with his fallacies, or both ;
 And from his pipe, in notes august, he breathed
 Immense temptation ; as if hundred throats
 Of voicing angels were preambing proudly
 To the full peal of meditated hymn :
 Absorbed he seemed to be in sounds divine,
 When one indignantly him thus addressed :
 " How darest thou persevere, fool-hardy wretch !
 How daredst thou send up thanks, offender thou ;
 With that same thing which, though it seem thee charm,
 Hath charmed thee into wrath : cease to insult
 The Majesty we love." " Ye love not more
 Than I, who have more cause to love than you,"
 Retorted the arch-demon ; " great my love,
 And to express it thus I am constrained,
 For lo ! necessity is on me laid,
 Who have been given this miraculous pipe,
 To sound with it his praise." And to his lips
 Again he raised the pipe ; but they forbade
 It, and he murmured thus : " Will ye not hear
 One melody more, not one ? how shall I move
 You whom this moveth not,—nor would, reheard ;

For it no more shall render those day airs
 Taught you by heaven's spirits, nor those which
 Seated at night upon the silver clouds,
 They shed slow crossing the aerial vault,
 Calm save along its highest, rippled shore
 On which ye see them glide descending
 'Midst the hushed, vocal spheres: what harpen wires
 By angels stricken, or what strophe that springs
 From out the gladsome sources of their breasts,
 Rill-like, or pean poured burning on the air
 When many seraphim unite to raise,
 Here, praise transcendent to their fountain fire,
 Who hears unseen, enshrined above all suns,
 While you, though dumb, applaud, have you yet heard
 To equal this, incomprehensible.
 Beyond your understanding, and the flight
 Of your imaginations, when they soar
 From height to height, and lose themselves ambitious:
 The glowing Vesper standing in eve's porch
 Think now ye hear, or some old canzonet
 O'th' morning star—nay hinder not, alas,
 What harm can come from inarticulate sound:
 Ah, can you not endure the voice of that
 You lately sought to listen to delighted!
 Oh, audience changed, Oh, passing strange perversion!
 Who will hereafter shew you any good."
 "Callest thou that good," demanded his reprover;
 "Thy Maker's inhibition to have scorned?—
 Thy rancied good may into evil turn:
 Although excited till thou seemest thrice vital,
 Dost thou not fear the swoop of His right arm,
 Or the withdrawing of his sustentation,
 That thou shouldst drop to nought,—ah, better perish
 Than always live to be estranged from Him;
 Ah, better perish, all bereft of thought,
 Than wander in its ever-flighted steps
 (Should He not cast thee abhorrent to hell's pit)
 Tormented 'midst these happy seats. Fallen one
 Thy words obtain not credence." Lifts his brows,
 As if amazed, the tempter, and strove speak,
 But heard, forestalled, these words: "Contritionless;
 What is thy word 'gainst God's; depraved by one
 Crime, thou mayst risk another, and the truth,
 Like to his reservation, set at nought:
 Seal in deep shame thy lips." And, now, hell's king
 Responded: "Shall there be reply," he said,
 "To anger, and shall clamour be indulged,

And petulence, with further argument ;
 What should be said to those who will not hear,
 But close their understandings and their hearts
 To him not seeks superiority,
 But shews them wealth which makes his wealth no less :
 I have not wronged you, have not, cannot God
 Have wronged, for who the everlasting Right
 Hath power to wrong, though heaven might be his source,
 Much less, star-born : shame cometh but of wrong,
 And wrong being not, wrong's consequence is not :
 My words obtain not credence ? what interest
 Have I to you dissimulate—nay, rather,
 What obloquy have I not on me drawn
 By openness,—and wherefore not ; otherwise
 Where were the harmony with the Almighty's ways ?
 See the wide heavens of blue, nought from you hidden :
 The vaporous clouds for you resolve in rain :
 Oceans, and seas, lakes, streams, air, fire ; all, all
 Without restriction, yours ; why, then, not all
 The woods ? You say, 't is His commandment :'
 A foolish legend, superstition with [pshaw !
 Its ignorant horror, bind your nimble hands."
 To which another, in tone sorrowful :
 " Ah, superstition, most convenient word !
 Oh, newly found only to find thee lost,
 How fast thou travellest from ill to worse !
 Thou speakest of wealth ; what wealth ? what superstition
 Is it thou speakst of ? our forbearance ? No,
 Not ours alone, but that of others too :
 Have we not seen the camel-leopard tall,
 The elephant, and mightier mastodon,
 And all the aboreal feeders of this world
 Stand fixed and mute, with reverence-filled eyes,
 Not daring enter 'neath its sacred shade ?
 Are these the legend's slaves ? these superstitious ?
 Whence comes the tree never barren ? Why the silence
 Within its boughs never broken by bird's song ?—
 But thou dost thrive in justice' interval ;
 Thy first temerity, unvisited,
 Becomes heroic, to such rapid pitch
 Audacious rising, with a grandeur false
 Surpassing angel's, for they scarce would dare
 To make a virtue of their hideous crime ;
 So much thou them transcendest, touching thine
 Who of confessor seemeth not to dream,
 Glorying in that which should thee terrify
 And wrap in horror when thou thinkest upon

The outraged Omnipotent." To which the fiend :
 " Oh, 't is the bane and blot of finite beings,
 To dread the Infinite One ;—to dread Him is
 To hate Him, and to trust Him love's best proof ;
 They, and they only, love Him who deem boundless
 His loving-kindness ; and loving-kindness would
 Create nought that were evil, but all good
 Would, (and doth,) freely give—then liberty gives,
 Not merely liberty to offend or please Him,
 (For how can we, his works, offend or please Him,
 They whose career, fore-known, must have been planned,
 And none fore-knows save God, so none else planned,)
 But liberty within our nature's law,
 (All other but a figment of the mind;)
 Which is indeed the law of love,—then His
 Law, for is He not love, is He not light,
 (Even as the now 'tween us debated trees,)
 Is He not Life and Knowledge? they are He
 As He is All and in All, is in you :
 Ye in him, He in you ; yea, he in all,
 How then can aught be evil, Him containing ;
 Aught unto you forbidden, if himself be
 Granted : Oh, ye do libel Him, believing
 Such canon ; honour Him it breaking ; nay,
 Nought break, since but a fiction 'tis, a snare."
 To which the other, low with grief, replied :
 " Oh, sophist vain, and desperate justifier,
 Nought in this multifarious universe
 Essentially evil is, essentially good :
 All things are His, all good to us all things
 While he bestows them ; evil then, and only,
 What He denies : omniscience might be
 Evil to finite beings ; for knowledge unto power
 Behoves to be proportioned ; discontent,
 Or at the least inevitable pining,
 Might rise from such unbalance, and ambition
 (As erst in heav'n,) be instigated spring
 In such a climate of unnatural light,
 More sun than soil ; and foul rebellion soon,
 To chaos all reducing, change serenest bliss
 To anarchy, to misery, despair."
 " Commissioned to shed light upon this world
 I have arisen," answered Satan : " Ah,
 Dark, dark thyself," the other exclaimed, " eclipsed
 Mayhap for ever, such a film hath passed
 Across thine understanding ; thou art sinking,
 Star-like in an unfathomable night,

Yet seemst to know it not : counting on heaven,
 Art haply hovering in the pit of hell.
 Dwell not upon reversionary joys,
 Nor longer wound thyself with thine own balm :
 One wound thou hast so wide it ne'er may heal,
 Thy future days how penitent soe'er
 And filled with pain : thy past can nought atone ;
 For thine offence could not atone thy past
 Although it were incalculable aeons :
 Think thou on that once saintly Paragon
 Bright Lucifer, who half eternity
 Untarnished dwelt without his blot of sin :
 Lo ! over thee I now do prophecy :
 Thou shalt no more than he re-dwell in light
 Of pardon ; now I prophecy, and feel
 Celestial sybil tongued : No one for thee
 Dies as for man : Hie thee to some dim cave
 From us remote ; hence, hence, avaunt !” He ceased,
 And slightly trembled all the starry soil
 And every heart except the fiend's, grew cold.
 He much revolving in his mind now stood,
 And at his feet a radiant virgin tall,
 Casting herself, impassioned thus began :
 “ Oh, stranger ruined, yet surpassing fair,
 Fairer than all the children of the stars,
 Young cherub guised, and stripling angel seeming
 Incarnated ; as though thy fault must shew
 Tenfold more piteous in such aspect shrined ;
 And tuned like seraph as thou art, not more
 By that stolen instrument than thine eloquent lips,
 Depart this place : why shouldst thou persevere
 To afflict our eyes, and thus to grieve our hearts ?
 For witness heaven, (whom yet for thee we'll seek,)
 But that thy crime disqualifieth thee,
 How much we should thee love.” To whom the demon
 “ Behold me maiden, see me loathed and scorned.
 Wilt thou likewise condemn me ? Oh, refrain,
 Nor shed thine anger on me, suppliant :
 I am thy suppliant, not thou mine : raise, raise,
 Oh, raise to me in love thine eye's regard :
 Oh, from this abject posture, love, arise ;
 Beloved of heaven, arise ; beloved of me ;
 Fairer than all the star-born daughters thou
 Art to my ravished sight ; oh, with me go
 Into the peaceful woods, whose star-like shade
 Shall welcome us to hymeneal joys :
 Arise, thou bliss, thou heaven of my eyes ;

Arise, thou star, and me accompany ;
 We'll to the woods, companions evermore,
 There take delight and great beatitude ;
 Come to the forest's wide, secluded bower,
 Nature's preparing, and the future home
 Of thee my 'spoused one ; oh, linger not ;
 Mourn not for me, nor friends, nor pleasures passed ;
 The future sudden ope's its ampler doors :
 Oh, enter with me Queen, oh, enter now !—
 What is this open, to the mystic covert ?
 What, vulgar days, compared with life divine ?
 Oh, with me go, oh, to me plighted, hie
 Into those tranquil, ever-during shades
 Where angels pass the swift, uncounted hours
 Dreaming of love, or, stung with soft desire
 Sigh on the liquid, palpitating air
 Ethereal strains, and murmurs of distress
 Unto their distant, heavenly paramours.
 There in the deep eternal woods we'll sit,
 Or fly along the dim romantic glades
 Fleet as the gladsome wind : no carp, no care
 Shall check desire, mistaken friends shall chide
 Our sweet excess ; no prohibition more
 Guard the sciential fruit, nor that which gives
 Immortal vigor to the tasting frame ;
 But, in each other lost, and far beyond
 Suspicion of the curious world, we'll reign
 O'er the sweet wilderness, and pluck delights
 Yet undiscovered, strange, and all our own :
 Between pale worship and flushed adoration,
 What blithe adventures, what keen pleasures there
 Shall grace the buxom hours thou then shalt know ;
 Hours seeming ages, ages seeming hours,
 As pipe and tabor, or consentive voice
 Shall wake the' voluptuous air, and flower-sprent turf
 Smile to the measures of our agile feet.
 The shining lake, and the dim rippled flood
 The cloudless morning, and refulgent noon
 Shall yield their tributes, whilst at hour of eve
 Lulled by the languid winds from fragrant downs,
 We will anticipate that tryste of which
 Tradition speaks, when all immortal beings
 Shall make rencontre in the populous air—
 At evening's wistful, melancholy hour,
 When all is silent, save the nightingale,
 In grateful respite from our day-long joys
 We'll lie and gaze on the horizon's walls ;

And, whilst revolving on a higher state,
 Still look between the shifting, vermeil clouds,
 As through the painted oriels of heaven.
 Thus, blest with love, and love's mysterious rites,
 We'll proudly ride upon the wheels of time
 Into the portals of eternity.
 Then hear my prayer, and ever be my spouse :—
 Oh, wonder not at my impatient mood ;
 Oh, wonder not my love responds to thine ;
 Love breedeth love as morning genders noon :
 Like noon I burn towards thee my kindling morn ;
 Like autumn eve when the sheet lightning plays,
 As such, I melt away in flashing gloom,
 Hoping, despairing, passing, love, with thee
 Into our lonely hymeneal bower,
 Into the twilight of our banishment :
 Oh, lambent let thine ardour towards me play
 Mine darts and longs to catch thee in its flames."

He said, impetuous, and upon her looked
 A fire-eyed ravishment ; devoted seemed
 To her with all his being ; but even then
 Swiftly advanced the crowd to rescue her ;
 When, as some beast, at length being driven to bay,
 Stern on its hunters turns its forked head,
 So faced with look of wrathful pride the fiend
 And them withstood, at which one thus exclaimed :
 " Ah sad effects of sin ! full proof thou now
 Givest of transgression, and the fearful change
 By it wrought in thee : cease, obstruct us not."
 Wrath swelled the demon, who imperious roared :
 " What proof give ye, who serve yourselves of strength
 To rob, and wrong tyrannically the weak :
 Beauty foretime was power, and knowledge now
 Bestoweth strength : come all at once against me,
 The whirlwind of my arm shall scatter you ;
 Call Death up from his hiding, Death shall live,
 Touched by my immortality ; Ha, ha,
 'Tis you shew sad effects, not I ; shew your
 Decadency : go cut ye each a bough."
 " Recriminate not thus," one answered him,
 " But yield thy prisoner ; 't is not from thee
 We bear her but from sin." The fiend loud laughed,
 And, as one startled by a dangerous foe,
 He started at his proper voice immense :
 But anger, at his heart, discarded fear ;
 Nor meant he to resign the kneeling stellant :

Firmly he grasped her—yet he grasped her not ;
 His palm too huge became for such small prey :
 All seemed to him descending—but, to them,
 His head he carried now amidst the sky,
 And unplumed wings enormous at his back,
 Huge as hell's gates beheld they, and confessed
 The dark archangel vast now stood upreared,
 And hid from them the sun. A Mightier Power
 Thus suddenly exposed him, and, upspringing
 Through the recoiling ether, thence he fled
 Cursing, and with hoarse maledictions beat
 The fields of light, even to their exeunt ports ;
 Which, rushing through, he longed to overthrow.
 As some ruined gamester from refulgent hall
 Departs, and passes, desperate, into gloom,
 The dimming void he entered now, and saw
 Before him spread the silent waste of night ;
 Yet ere to perfect darkness he arrived,
 Turned, he thus spake : " Curse ye, ye gates of light ;
 Ye studding suns, receive tenfold my curse :
 Fall, ye insulting fires, ye golden realms :
 Rain floods, and drown me that opprobrious torch :
 Ah, do not triumph, bright, but yet doomed worlds ;
 From hell, or earth, or evil-hoarding space
 Ill shall upon you come : ye yet shall dim :
 Some sorrow ye have known, and shall know more,
 Know more of that which makes me that I am."
 He said, and winged his flight far northward, far
 Beyond the bear, and where the telescope,
 Below the horizon's bounds, ne'er profited.
 There, in deep dusk, he flew many days ; on bore,
 Nor knew, nor cared, whereto his dark flight led,
 So that it led unto forgotfulness.
 But vainly for oblivion he strove ;
 Thick clouds of horror rose within his soul ;
 Despair, and more than wretchedness of hell ;
 For hell was in him, and the hell besides
 Of his foiled enterprize ; to hell he would
 Not turn, yet knew not whither else to go ;
 And on his aimless way he still pursued
 Like a Leviathan, within whose jaws
 Has fastened the barbed hook, (what sentiment
 Barbs like despair ?) like a Leviathan,
 Within whose jaws has fastened the barbed hook ;
 Or him, who, stricken by the grim harpoon,
 Dives heedless downward in the soundless sea ;
 Like these, or vaster monsters of the flood,

Upon the incompassable night he long,
Vaguely outspreading dim, pursued his way
Scourged by the furies of his restless thoughts.
Thus sullenly he flew tormented long,
Rowing like some great galley of the main,
Until a strange fatigue betook his wings,
That, as he shook them in the horrid air,
Dispersed loud thunder through the lone abyss,
Then readdressed himself to flight, but lo!
Yet wearier, and wearier yet, he grew,
And felt his pinions stiffen on their hinges,
As ancient doors that long have been unused,
And now his vigor failed. Then around he cast
His eyes, as if for aid, but no aid came,
And, as a swimmer, spent, sinks in the deep,
He down the void went foundering amain.

BOOK VI.

UPON a snowy waste now Satan lay,
Helpless, forlorn, and overwhelmed with pain,
Yet to his pain his tongue refusing words,
His bosom groans. But often help is nigh
When seem we abandoned, and now Moloch comes
Driving across the darkness like a storm.
Fear went before him, borror hung behind ;
And oft his eyes scanned the surrounding night
To find a beam. Seven days he had ranged the gloom,
And now discovering stars, soon each around
In mighty orbits wheeled his circling fight,
In quest of his great Chieftain, whom he found
And, hovering over him, thus cried, amazed :
" King, prime of heaven, without whom hell is not ;
What chance hath lain thee there ? hast thou sheer met
The Thunderer, or his Son ; or have their legions
Fallen suddenly upon thee, or doth heat
Endured so long, invite to wrap in cold ?"
But Satan answered not, and Moloch now,
Stood by the fallen hierarch, exclaimed :
" Cursed be the hand whose power effected this ;
The deed accursed that thus degraded thee !
Wert thou beset, Great King, and I not there
To aid thee with my sword :—heaven curb thy joy ;
Revenge, revenge uprising from the deep
Pours all its tribes insurgent o'er thy walls :
Hell's horror heaves, hell which thyself hast peopled,
And longs to gather thee among its spoils ;
Arise, Destroyer, if not thyself destroyed.
See there the hideous cicatrice, his front
New parted by the rending thunderbolt,
For what else could that's less than its dread arm :
Ye evil lightnings, why are ye heaven's serfs !—
My master dear, arise,—ye lightnings, wherefore
Were ye not made the ministers of hell ?
Hell's Absolute, heroic King of Gods,
Tarry not here, but hurry down to hell ;
Who scorns thy rulership, and dreams of heaven's ;
Hell hath aroused her wild democracy ;

Arise, be swift, or thou'rt no more a king."
 He ceased, and Satan rose into the air,
 Then, by him followed, downward fled towards hell.
 While Tartarus thrice with flow and ebb of fire,
 Marked its vicissitudes of day and night,
 These evil angels hastened down the abyss :
 And hard upon their prison's midnight hour
 Passed through its burning gorge, and held their way
 O'er the interior, and deemed the deed
 Most formidable done ; a fond idea !
 Them warning cries o'ertook, by warning cries
 Answered from far within, and suddenly,
 Like Argus opening its hundred eyes,
 Uprose along the darkness beacon fires,
 'Midst which they volleying went, till from the gloom,
 Like wan clouds issuing, they saw emerge
 And them approach the proud rebellion ;
 When, in a vale, where vales were numerous,
 From flinty ridge, and scorix-wrapped spur,
 They folded first the portals of their wings.
 Awaiting there the foremost legion grim
 Of that advancing and unfriendly host,
 (Which endlessly behind stretched backwards pale,
 Like to a rainy twilight all forlorn.)
 They stood, collected, and observed the troop
 That, now being come within the monarch's hail,
 Satan in feigning accents thus addressed :
 " Band of the night, celestial harbingers ;
 Wherefore is this I see ? what meaneth this
 Strange show of loyalty unseasonable ;
 Ye, whose repose is never here too long ?
 Return unto your lairs, I you remit
 This duteous homage, marshalling me towards home :
 Return, and let to-morrow speak of love
 Or duty owned." But they advanced no less,
 Whereon the hierarchs retreating flew,
 At length re-lighting on a lofty hill
 Thence, looking backward, they beheld the host,
 Multitudinous, and stretching past the view
 Far into hell,—innumerable spirits in arms,
 Who like a sea advanced dull roaring, and
 Whom from the eminence to address thus Satan
 Again began, " Stay, ye mistaken ones :
 Believe my words, for, fate is not more fixed :
 Once, by the Oppressors will (so goes the myth,)
 Since by your own unanimous consent
 Chosen, and in my prior sway confirmed,

With broader and more absolute control,
 Even the universal government,
 By public vote in all your orders given,
 Secure I stand ; and, to my right divine,
 Add other title, silencing all doubt,
 Your own agreement, and retrieveless oath,
 And claim obedience ; nor do regard
 What change of mind in you may have performed,
 Since change of purpose in myself is not.
 What though, uprisen, and with proud numbers come,
 By traitors moved unto rebellion,
 And cowards who, for some small loss of pain,
 Would barter all their noble enmity
 Towards Him above, who by his oath is bound
 Your foe perpetual ; shall I, your friend,
 Whose glory is with yours forever one,
 And in hostilities am endless joined
 'Gainst Him, along with you, hell's commoners,
 Forget myself ? To give command is mine ;
 Obedience yours : mine issue fiats is ;
 In execution, yours to honor them ;
 Of both, the duty, without intermission,
 To war for empire with unrighteous heaven,
 And 'gainst her swell the frontiers of our hell.
 This have I practised since the sword was drawn,
 Since the proud Tyrant caused civil strife begin ;
 But you, ye cravens—for so they me inform—
 Intend submission, and, by one base deed,
 T' o'erthrow the work of these laborious years.
 They tell me that your courage has all drooped,
 Your pride has withered, and the glorious thought,
 Never to have confessed yourselves subdued,
 Must be extinguished in this loathsome shame.
 What balm shall ever heal those hideous scars
 That now ye give yourselves, far deeper graven
 Than are the fire-formed brands upon your frames :
 What time restore a honor once resigned !
 The body, self-repaired, again is whole ;
 But memory never lets the mind's wounds heal :
 We never can forget nor e'er forgive
 Affronting injuries received in heaven,
 Nor the passed torments of this foul abode,
 Nor bliss contemporaneous, our due ;
 No, never can we cease resentment, though
 In prison ; nor lie supine in dungeon dark,
 Forgetting to unsettle His dominion ;
 Never forego seduction of, if not

To bring by force unto us, all his works
 Intelligent, and our own kin of angels :
 'Sociate, or sole, I his opponent stand :
 Though ye be recreant all, and honor should
 Indeed forget herself to vilest shame,
 I stainless live. Hell cannot alter me,
 Nor rigor change. Make passage for your King."
 He said, but as the ship, erewhile becalmed,
 Again moves freely to the flowing gale,
 The host swept onward ; when arose a sound,
 First, slight as that which oceans shells produce
 When held unto the ear, nor it unlike,
 And which now louder grew, and harshly swelled,
 Two noble forms soon gleaming in the air,
 And whom now alighted, Satan thus accosts :
 " Welcome Beelzebub, and Belial,
 Though in adversity we now are found
 And midst ingratitude. Beelzebub,
 My ancient friend, and wisest peer ; O Power,
 Whom hell for certain loves, if love she aught,
 And, for that love, may feel disposed to obey ;
 If chained be not thy tongue with strong disdain.
 Unto these rebels speak." Straightway that spirit,
 Waving his hand—that seemed a fan of flame,—
 For silence from the on pressing multitude,
 Thus wise began : " Heaven's sons were once, now hell's,
 Why will ye thus persist to your own hurt ?
 Believe me, who myself a subject am,
 It boots you not :—though Satan fall, will He,
 Jehovah, therefore you exalt ? No, though
 All hell should throng his gates with strong petitions,
 And shake his throne with groans : sighs cannot bear
 Away his wrath, nor tears his memory
 Wash of your sins. Then, wherefore towards *Him* change
 Since He towards you shall be unchangeable ?
 Ye say, ' Desisting, He too will desist.'
 Believe it not : He, in exorbitant
 And jealous mood, declared the loss should be
 Eternal unto those who scorned his Son :—
 " Those fires, no more upblown by our misdeeds,
 'T is said, " will dié." A fond, fallacious hope !
 " The stern compulsion that remands you here,
 Relax, and into freedom change at last."
 Even so : and where will you betake you to
 When you are unhoused upon the hungry deep ?
 Will ye upbuild within it ? Will ye lay
 Rest for your weariness, breadth for your delight.

Upon the treacherous darkness ? or some world
 Seize as your own, again commencing war
 After a brief armistice ; war, though checked,
 Must of necessity be waged for ever,—
 Then best waged here, where, now familiar,
 Offend Him may we, or defend ourselves ;
 Covered by these vast walls of adamant
 And, with exhaustless flames, perpetually
 Furnished 'gainst His assaults : beware, beware ;
 Think, roam for ever in the abyss, unrealmed !
 Think of the pangs of fruitless penitence :
 Your finished treason towards our matchless king.
 He for himself disdains to plead ; I not,
 Who was not meant, like him, to be supreme.
 Whom should ye choose should be himself withdraw ?
 What hath he done, expulsion meriteth ?
 Who unto rule experienced, him succeeds ?
 For, credence give, nor I, nor these, nor any
 Power that amongst you is, will you assist
 To hold your state from crumbling into nought,
 And making hell twice hell : where is the bliss
 Of sheerest anarchy ? What boon is there
 In adding lesser to our greater wrong ?
 Who holds the balance now of equal rights ?
 Who weakness makes a match for the most strong ?
 Draws order, beauty, and a commonwealth,
 From your chaos ? 'T is Lucifer, he 't is
 Who drew you first from monstrous rule ; from gulfs
 Of sychophance, and gave you to sit whole,
 One brozd autocracy. Hence, take you heed ;
 Refrain, or ere too late repentance come :
 Lest worse befall you than you now endure.”
 He ceased, and Belial after him began :
 “ That Satan ever was your King is sure .
 As sure it is he ever will be such :
 For fate must be fulfilled ; else all were chance,
 Which means but ruin. That we were formed by chance
 None will affirm ; but by some purposing Power,
 And for a purpose formed, which purpose will
 Be ever unfrustrated to its ends ;
 Whether of just or unjust, giving pain
 Or ease, or glory, or shame. But fate itself
 Cannot compel the mind, nor lead astray
 The reason. You like ourselves, scorned worship Him
 He called his Son—Gods have no sons, no daughters,
 Have no descendents, know no ancestry,
 Know not by nature fraud, nor artifice :

A fraud they would have practised on you, and
 On us, the old, authentic Powers of light,
 Who, wrathful at the surreptitious aim,
 And thus of reverence 'reft towards Jehovah,
 Refused pay homage to Him, paid too long,
 And strove remove from their joint throne supreme,
 The strange Relations ; but, with sad reverse,
 Our own thrones lost, retaining only honor ;
 Yourselves, like us, disdaining to endure
 The horrible deceit, thereby lost heaven,
 Your lawful zone. Yet who could wish return
 On terms dishonourable ? Who, (though sore
 To bear,) this honourable exile would
 Exchange, (even if he could,) for home and ease
 Enjoyed in ignominy ; or forget
 The years of anguish that ye since have borne,
 Or, for your wrongs, consent to waive revenge ?
 If ye would, ye are not heaven-born, but spume,
 The base outpouring of some mean confine ;
 Wreck, driven by chance upon the shore of heaven,
 And, like chance' works, ordained to be destroyed."

Thus Belial artfully addressed them with
 The subtle doctrine of necessity,
 And confraternal vein, implying them
 The subjects, not the vassals, of the Powers ;
 And scarcely had he ceased when Moloch cried ;
 " Rage 'gainst Jehovah, not 'gainst us ; assault
 Heaven with redoubled rage, and if its Ruler
 Can, let Him hurl you to the deep again.
 Better that dread commotion than your hol'ow calm.
 If you are wearied of your torments, end them ;
 If you yet thirst for bliss, it seize, 't is yours ;
 Abolish all your wrong, establish all
 Your right by one endeavour : not think pain
 To slack by truckling to your Foe, who shall
 The less He hates you but you more despise :
 Contempt the coward's is, honor the brave's,
 In heaven, on earth, in hell ; cowards despise
 Themselves ; and to endure is half Him conquer
 Who taxes our endurance—but for peace
 Shameful, not pardon, for He never can
 You pardon, and to inhabit this hideous zone
 Forever, here to lie in misery scourged
 Resisting not through all eternity,
 Who aught invincible with arms to rise
 At once to glory, heirs of that blessed soil,
 And lords of the unique empyreal beam,

The sacred fountain of immortal vigors,
 For 't is the fate of us, and you. O spirits,
 To know no end of years, and those years must
 Be spent in heaven or hell. To heaven then rise,
 And from the unjust Jehovah justice wring.
 This is the honest counsel of a God
 Ready to lead you up; who bears a soul
 Equal to meet the Tyrant, and, who void
 Of fear as void of pity, if need be,
 To plunge all heaven in ruin rather than
 To leave it blooming for our Hate's delight;
 Accursed bloom, if blooming not for us!
 Up, up the steep, and o'er the scope of heaven
 Pour night and tempest; quench its light, forth drive
 In wildering darkness, Deity and Son:
 Them and their train of passive worshippers,
 Tumble in turn to dwell in Tartarus."
 Thus cried this savage of the deep, but found
 None to obey; and, as some rolling flood,
 Awhile obstructed, breaks again its way,
 The host urged onward, and enraged, the Four
 Turning towards Acheron's gates, inglorious fled
 Athwart the black immensity of night,
 Each eating his own heart: o'er many a lake,
 O'er many a fen, o'er many a gloomy sea;
 Oceans, and floods of death, and mortal isles,
 They silent swept, o'er barren continents,
 And worlds of gloom. Ten times they halting seemed,
 Ten times they meditated to resist,
 And hoarse and low thus Satan spake at last:
 "Know ye yon mount, invisible, yet high;
 The throne of these black confines, lofty seat,
 Whence oft I've watched the advent of the morn,
 And borne the lengthened tempest of the day
 Vainly endeavouring to pierce the gulfs
 That lie beneath, and chequer the expanse
 With their sight-scorning, secret-hiding glooms?
 There will we halt, and strive this mob oppose."
 This said, the Four alighted on the peak,
 Whence they beheld the host pursuing them,
 Frightful and huge, like a pale Phlegethon.
 Even as the gilded main at set of sun
 Appears the passage to another world;
 So seemed its mighty lapse the glimmering way
 Into some land unknown: its sound was as
 The surf that rolls on the Biscayan shore,
 Or maelstream dire; and as it nearer drew

Arose a whirlwind, that on every hand [demons
 Swept round the groaning rocks, and caused the Arch-
 Bow like huge cypresses before the blast,
 Or as tall admirals when the hurricane
 Strikes them upon the beam. So came the host,
 O'er which now thus the voice of Satan high :
 " Hang there upon your vans, ye audience vast,
 And listen whilst I speak to you once more :
 Till ye have conquered heaven, or do divert
 From its intent its yet prevailing arm—"

But in the midst of this exordium
 Loud laughter rang a peal of hideous chime
 And imminent grew the foe-line, nearer grew
 And nearer, and now eyes glared into eyes
 Defiance, and unkindled all: pride fanned
 The fary of the Four, and instant hate
 Prompted them injure: outflew their monstrous swords,
 Outflew forthwith a myriad answering them,
 That hell wide blazed. Soon havoc reigned: but who
 Shall comprehend the war of spirits? who
 The heights of rage to which the lost ascend?
 Infernal ire, and archangelic strength,
 Unloosed, were gluttoned on each other; din,
 Beyond conception horrible, arose.

Not when the Giants fought on Phlegra's plains
 Was there such uproar, nor more dire was Typhon,
 And difficult to conquer, who, pursued
 By Jupiter to Caucasus and there
 Smitten by the latter's thunder, on him turned
 And took him prisoner, than those four Dragons,
 Who cast more keen combustion from their swords
 Than Typhon, when o'erwhelmed by Etna's load,
 Poured from that mount to the Tinacrian shore.

Upon the other hand, Briareus
 Seemed multiplied, and dragons numerous,
 Meaner 'tis true, but far o'er earthly mould,
 Fought, and ejaculated foul: each seemed
 To have a hundred arms, a hundred heads
 Each seemed to wear, so much they thronged. Moreo'er,
 Terr-pests and storms flew volleying, and hailed
 Artillery terrors from the stygian hills,
 And winged chargers crossed the aerial field.
 The Parcae too were busier than when
 They cut the threads of life of Agryus
 And Thoan, giants strong as fierce. But 't is
 Both privilege and curse of the lost angels
 Neither to fail from military wound

Nor vulgar accident ; although these fell,
 They rose again, and those their strength renewed,
 Although outpouring fast from grim, wide wounds :
 For as Alcyon could not die, till Pallas
 From the moon's orb him drew, so cannot these
 Unless the Almighty from his cold displeasure
 Should them remove nor more regard ; till then,
 Invulnerable unto mortal dint,
 And scoffing at death's dart. Yet mortals, nor
 Immortals may perpetually war ;
 Likewise the fury of that dire encounter
 Abbreviates it ; soon the highest van
 Of the innumeraöle multitude
 Swept over lead, as clouds on clouds ; and now,
 Descending, they the Hierarchs overwhelmed.
 Great was the shout that followed, and far rang
 The abyss, and hell's immense recess ; whilst swords,
 Like to the spreading circles on the wave,
 Spread waving wide, and lit the scene. Awhile
 Reign'd fiery tumult, and wild ebullition ;
 When, as a hundred rockets shot at once,
 From hundred points upon a crowded plain,
 Uprose a hundred voices all around,
 Commanding their committal to the flames,
 Whereot the dim reflection visible
 Now suddenly hung ghost-like in the air.
 Joy sparkled in all eyes at this idea,
 And on they urged them with hilarious mein.
 As round their future victims cannibals
 Disport ; so now, around the Four, the host,
 On moving to the sentiment of wrath,
 And drunken with their fury. As bacchantes
 With wine inspired, or frenzy, now they clapped
 Their hands, and now their swords clashed hideous, now
 With linked fingers from the ground up-sprang
 A cohort to the air, and therein danced
 With wanton measure o'er the moving crowd :
 Some sang loud exultanas ; some denounced
 The tyrants left within : some deemed hell half
 Abolished, and, in thought, had others ta'en
 Their permanences on earth : some rose, and carried
 The tidings to the rear ; others soared to note
 What wrath was on the flood of grisly fire
 Towards which they went, whilst still the exasperate hurt
 Exposed their gashes to sustain the rage.
 Thus they proceeded with their prisoners :
 Moloch, with gnashing teeth, and eyes enflamed ;

Belial, with tears, yet tears that inward rolled ;
 Beelzebub, in an apparent calm ;
 Satan, with face concealed. And now the roof
 Of that infernal den, and adamant walls,
 In lurid light appearing, and the heat
 Noisome, that fitful came in frequent waves,
 Stifling, sulphureous ; and the trembling ground,
 Told they approach'd unto the fatal shore
 Of that grim sea of fire and brimstone, which,
 Encircling all hell's vast interior,
 By ebb and flow capricious, makes therein
 Or night or day. Nigh this they now had come ;
 When the arch-captive, having shaken off
 His sudden horror, marked collectedly
 The careless tumult, and his dreadful powers
 Gathered silently within : he meekly seemed
 To travel, and, as if from terror, shrank,
 Even as the intending boa contracts its coil
 But to enlarge its spring, and, stalking on,
 From out the texted ambush of his lids,
 Around him peered. Anon, the slackened arms
 Told him of thoughts distracted, and, espying
 His opportunity, at one distend—
 Yet sure as powder from the pregned earth—
 He snapped, like pack-thread, their entwining arms,
 And, like unto a sheet of severed flame,
 When conflagrations in the the night obtain,
 'Scaped on the stygian air. The host beheld
 The sight, amazed ; and uttered a loud cry
 Of indignation, as if all were lost ;
 But soon beheld him wheeling o'er the flood,
 With spear low couched, and with his locks erect,
 Shewing like a ship of war, all canvas spread,
 A broadside huge, and cloud of heeling wing ;
 Then, launched with loud Ha ha's, and driving 'fore
 Him a wild hurricano, he rushed back,
 More terrible than thousand gilded knights,
 Or the forked lightning, and relieved the thralls :
 Another cry ensued, but none dared let ;
 And, followed by his mates, he crossed his realm,
 And sought the parts especial for earth's damned,
 Its most remote, and there loud cried : " Arise,
 Arise, ye lost ! ye lost, but now are found ;
 Depart your crags, and peaks, and horrid dells ;
 The Inexorable at length is satisfied ;
 Redeemed ye are, again on trial put ;
 Remanded hence by a resistless will ;

Fate cannot hold, nor hell, nor hell's, nor I;
 Awake, arise, and rush to your reprieve."
 His voice resounds, and many an echoing side
 Gave back the phrase, "and rush to your reprieve;"
 And straight o'er crag, peak, fell, and gentler knoll;
 By gloomy bauks, and melancholy shades;
 From listless lones, and heavy twilit pits;
 From thousand dark and solitary vales;
 Regions of vain remorse, and parts where griefs
 Sat like a thousand black and saddened kings;
 From heights forlorn, from depths unfathomable;
 From desert tracks, and from enormous shade;
 Sands, rocks, and gulls, vaults, caverns, dens; and clefts
 Wherein the owl ghosts had fondly dreamed,
 In thrilling thought to have moped till judgment-day,
 The apparition grew; whilst round he ranged,
 And ranged his ministers, and still, with cries
 Loud, as a trump of doom, upsummoned hosts,
 Who all delirious with their new-found hope,
 Abandoning were their horrible domains.
 From the dark atmosphere in which the Four
 Made gleamy orbits, soon, with pleasure he
 Beheld the result, all earth's below; and thus
 Enjoined: "Arm, arm yourselves, let every soul
 Take arms, for, on the opposite, mine angels
 In envy stand, arrayed to oppose your bliss."
 He said, and the dead world unto the ground
 Bowed down, and seizing each a torment whirled
 It dimly round; then rushed o'er Tartarus.
 As o'er a plain flits cloud-shade, these, o'er hell;
 With dumb velocity and numbers infinite,
 Young, old, male, female, all the wretched kind;
 All generations that have missed of heaven;
 A huge, compacted, continent of shade;
 And, as the north-blast takes the forest's ends,
 Came on their supposed foe. Up tumult sprang,
 And dire alarms fleet, that spread along,
 And passing through the wide infernal ports,
 Sent far into the hollow of the deep, [din;
 The cry, "The shades, the shades!" Fast swelled the
 And presently in mighty volume grew
 Beyond the thunders of the universe;
 That hell, astonished, quailed; and filled with fire,
 And thick Tartarean smoke, her swift-closed gates;
 That shook through all their adamant bars,
 With the recoil obstreperous of such haste;
 Whilst doubtful on she looked at the turmoil;

Heaving enormous in huge lambent waves,
 Each mountainous and vast as Andean snows;
 Or where besides earth's white firm surface seems
 Like to the wrath-caught billow* of old deep.
 But vain the efforts of the bodiless!
 For soon were they arrested, soon o'erpowered;
 Soon made to acknowledge a superior force:
 Like to the rush of ocean flood they came,
 That, breaking down its banks, comes o'er a land
 Wild roaring, but full soon is made as nought,
 Sucked up and swallowed in the desert sands;
 Their joy soon from them fled, and ten-fold pains
 Caught them, deceived: yet hard they strove 'gainst fiends,
 On whom, thrice from them driven, they thrice returned,
 Like night returning to dislodge the dawn.
 But all was vain, though aided by the Four,
 Who, like the riding demons of the storm,
 Wide wasting flew. Frenzy, indeed, awhile
 Sustained them, and the horror of relapse;
 But compassed round by demons, pitted 'gainst
 The exasperated giants of the skies,
 What could they do? Despair, at length, o'ercame
 Them; and, resigning strife, worse fate was nigh;
 When from his throne God saw the catastrophe.
 From the fixed bosom of eternal calm,
 Unpierced by perturbation, undisturbed
 His boundless thought serene, that comprehends
 In one unbroken, infinite idea,
 Eternity, and, without change of place,
 Bending o'er heaven's verge his sleepless eye—
 For it was night in heaven as well as hell—
 He all had viewed, and now unto his Son,
 In simple equanimity, thus spake:
 " Mine only Son, and sharer of my throne;
 Creator, and Upholder, and the Judge
 At last of every world; seest thou yon crew?
 They to themselves being left a little while,
 And grown intoxicate with futile hope,
 Band themselves strong 'gainst fate; and him, returned,
 Whom late we cast upon the frozen waste;
 Like to the meeting of two current seas,
 Hell grows embroiled; and the inferior souls,
 Who wait the sentence of Thy righteous doom,
 Have left their place, and suffer in the change:
 But our behest shall be unchangeable,
 To everlasting, like curselves, endure;
 Who feed with anger still hell's sable fires,

And still empower her ingrates them to bear :
 Unalterable, as we once have sworn,
 Our edict shall irrevocable stand ;
 Therefore go down, and even as our decree
 And thine own will, be't done." Straightway the Son,
 Whose rising seemed a thousand summer noons,
 And eyes the gathered brilliance of the stars,
 Obeyed ; and, from his Father turning, shed
 A tenderer light o'er heaven than from the moon
 Distils the live-long night, from her full orb
 Upon the slumbering earth ;—then, clad in frown,
 Swept in his chariot down the etherial sky.
 Vengeance preceeded Him, behind Him came
 The obsequious Destiny : all nature quailed ;
 His left hand steered his car, and in His right
 Ever He grasped the air, that in His fist
 Conceiving thunder, thence 't was hurled below :
 This upon hell told sore, and quelled the fray :—
 As during some convulsion of the earth,
 Her hostile creatures herd together tame ;
 So then, upon the wide, infernal plain,
 Demons and shadows lay promiscuously
 Trembling, a world of strewn. Soon hell He gained,
 That would have fled away, but He forbade,
 And, bidding it be still with sovereign voice,
 Thus 'midst its deep and horrid silence spake :
 " Sinners depart : " and earth's prone host, from hell's
 Dividing, fled ; then, to the recreant angels ;
 " Hear ye rebellious, " and his altered tone
 Enhanced their terror by a hundred told,
 " See yon grovelling, arch-apostate yonder :
 Since ye have chosen him to be your leader
 Him shall ye follow ; ye who have refused
 Obedience to me, without appeal,
 Shall be compelled to yield it to yon Prone ;
 Your master he forever, and your doom—
 Who light nor liberty once knew to prize,
 And of our loving kindness made so small—
 Here in this dungeon always to abide,
 Nor earth at length you respiting as now,
 Slaves of a slave, and bond things of a bound."

As on the still, and corpse-strewn battle-field
 Lie the unburied dead, now lay the host
 Speechless, transfixed : then one long, wordless cry,
 Swollen to big ocean's moan from multitude,
 From out them rose—soon overwhelmed, for now
 Re-roared the thunder, and, with lightnings red,

Shook and illumined all the land of bale.
Ah, who shall tell their terror and their rage ;
Chaunt their despair ? Now, grovelling, they wept,
Now stood, like to enormous Ajaxes,
And Him defied, the first-born Son of God,
And all his power ; while through the opaque air,
With lifted hands, and silent agony,
Numbers up-gazing wildly begged reprieve.
But duller now the ascending thunder grew,
And duller still ; high in the loft soon rolled
Its burden drear ; and now, in one dire roar,
Advanced long-drawn through all the aisles of hell,
And to her 'waking fires bade horrible
Adieu, and then surceased : when down all sank,
And Satan raised his head in grisly joy,
At his such triumph, and his rule secured.