

Paradise Lost: Book 1 Poem

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Paradise Lost: Book 1 (1674 version)

By John Milton

OF Mans First Disobedience, and the Fruit Of that Forbidden Tree, whose mortal tast Brought Death into the World, and all our woe, With loss of Eden, till one greater Man Restore us, and regain the blissful Seat, Sing Heav'nly Muse, that on the secret top Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire That Shepherd, who first taught the chosen Seed, In the Beginning how the Heav'ns and Earth Rose out of Chaos: or if Sion Hill Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flow'd Fast by the Oracle of God; I thence Invoke thy aid to my adventurous Song, That with no middle flight intends to soar Above th' Aonian Mount, while it pursues Things unattempted yet in Prose or Rhime. And chiefly Thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer Before all Temples th' upright heart and pure, Instruct me, for Thou know'st; Thou from the first Wast present, and with mighty wings outspread Dove-like satst brooding on the vast Abyss And mad'st it pregnant: What in me is dark Illumin, what is low raise and support; That to the highth of this great Argument I may assert Eternal Providence, And justifie the wayes of God to men.

Say first, for Heav'n hides nothing from thy view Nor the deep Tract of Hell, say first what cause Mov'd our Grand Parents in that happy State, Favour'd of Heav'n so highly, to fall off From thir Creator, and transgress his Will For one restraint, Lords of the World besides? Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt? Th' infernal Serpent; he it was, whose guile Stird up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv'd The Mother of Mankind, what time his Pride Had cast him out from Heav'n, with all his Host Of Rebel Angels, by whose aid aspiring To set himself in Glory above his Peers, He trusted to have equal'd the most High, If he oppos'd; and with ambitious aim Against the Throne and Monarchy of God Rais'd impious War in Heav'n and Battel proud With vain attempt. Him the Almighty Power Hurl'd headlong flaming from th' Ethereal Skie With hideous ruine and combustion down To bottomless perdition, there to dwell In Adamantine Chains and penal Fire, Who durst defie th' Omnipotent to Arms. Nine times the Space that measures Day and Night To mortal men, he with his horrid crew Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe Confounded though immortal: But his doom Reserv'd him to more wrath; for now the thought Both of lost happiness and lasting pain Torments him; round he throws his baleful eyes That witness'd huge affliction and dismay Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate: At

once as far as Angels kenn he views The dismal Situation waste and wilde, A Dungeon horrible, on all sides round As one great Furnace flam'd, yet from those flames No light, but rather darkness visible Serv'd onely to discover sights of woe, Regions of sorrow, doleful shades, where peace And rest can never dwell, hope never comes That comes to all; but torture without end Still urges, and a fiery Deluge, fed With ever-burning Sulphur unconsum'd: Such place Eternal Justice had prepar'd For those rebellious, here thir prison ordained In utter darkness, and thir portion set As far remov'd from God and light of Heav'n As from the Center thrice to th' utmost Pole. O how unlike the place from whence they fell! There the companions of his fall, o'whelm'd With Floods and Whirlwinds of tempestuous fire, He soon discerns, and weltring by his side One next himself in power, and next in crime, Long after known in Palestine, and nam'd Beelzebub. To whom th' Arch-Enemy, And thence in Heav'n call'd Satan, with bold words Breaking the horrid silence thus began.

If thou beest he; But O how fall'n! how chang'd From him, who in the happy Realms of Light Cloth'd with transcendent brightness didst out-shine Myriads though bright: If he whom mutual league, United thoughts and counsels, equal hope And hazard in the Glorious Enterprize, Joynd with me once, now misery hath joynd In equal ruin: into what Pit thou seest From what highth fall'n, so much the stronger prov'd He with his Thunder: and till then who knew The force of those dire Arms? yet not for those, Nor what the Potent Victor in his rage Can else inflict, do I repent or change, Though chang'd in outward lustre; that fixt mind And high disdain, from sence of injur'd merit, That with the mightiest rais'd me to contend, And to the fierce contention brought along Innumerable force of Spirits arm'd That durst dislike his reign, and me preferring, His utmost power with adverse power oppos'd In dubious Battel on the Plains of Heav'n, And shook his throne. What though the field be lost? All is not lost; the unconquerable Will, And study of revenge, immortal hate, And courage never to submit or yield: And what is else not to be overcome? That Glory never shall his wrath or might Extort from me. To bow and sue for grace With suppliant knee, and deifie his power, Who from the terrour of this Arm so late Doubted his Empire, that were low indeed, That were an ignominy and shame beneath This downfall; since by Fate the strength of Gods And this Empyrean substance cannot fail, Since through experience of this great event In Arms not worse, in foresight much advanc't, We may with more successful hope resolve To wage by force or guile eternal Warr Irreconcilable, to our grand Foe, Who now triumphs, and in th' excess of joy Sole reigning holds the Tyranny of Heav'n.

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

O Prince, O Chief of many Throned Powers, That led th' imbattelld Seraphim to Warr Under thy conduct, and in dreadful deeds Fearless, endanger'd Heav'ns perpetual King; And put to proof his high Supremacy, Whether upheld by strength, or Chance, or Fate, Too well I see and rue the dire event, That with sad overthrow and foul defeat Hath lost us Heav'n, and all this mighty Host In horrible destruction laid thus low, As far as Gods and Heav'nly Essences Can perish: for the mind and spirit remains Invincible, and vigour soon returns, Though all our Glory extinct and happy state Here swallow'd up in endless misery. But what if he our Conquerour, (whom I now Of force believe Almighty, since no less Then such could hav orepow'rd such force as ours) Have left us this our spirit and strength intire Strongly to suffer and support our pains, That we may so suffice his vengeful ire, Or do him mightier service as his thralls By right of Warr, what e're his business be Here in the heart of Hell to work in Fire, Or do his Errands in the gloomy Deep; What can it then avail though yet we feel Strength undiminisht, or eternal being To undergo eternal punishment? Whereto with speedy words th' Arch-fiend reply'd.

Fall'n Cherube, to be weak is miserable Doing or Suffering: but of this be sure, To do ought good never will be our task, But ever to do ill our sole delight, As being the contrary to his high will Whom we resist. If then his Providence Out of our evil seek to bring forth good, Our labour must be to pervert that end, And out of good still to find means of evil; Which oft times may succeed, so as perhaps Shall grieve him, if I fail not, and disturb His inmost counsels from thir destind aim. But see the angry Victor hath recall'd His Ministers of vengeance and pursuit Back to the Gates of Heav'n: the Sulphurous Hail Shot after us in storm, oreblown hath laid The fiery Surge, that from the Precipice Of Heav'n receiv'd us falling, and the Thunder, Wing'd with red Lightning and impetuous rage, Perhaps hath spent his shafts, and ceases now To bellow through the vast and boundless Deep. Let us not slip th' occasion, whether scorn, Or satiate fury yield it from our Foe. Seest thou yon dreary Plain, forlorn and wilde, The seat of desolation, voyd of light, Save what the glimmering of these livid flames Casts pale and dreadful? Thither let us tend From off the tossing of these fiery waves, There rest, if any rest can harbour there, And reassembling our afflicted Powers, Consult how we may henceforth most offend Our Enemy, our own loss how repair, How overcome this dire Calamity, What reinforcement we may gain from Hope, If not what resolution from despare.

Thus Satan to his nearest Mate With Head up-lift above the wave, and Eyes That sparkling blaz'd, his other Parts besides Prone on the Flood, extended long and large Lay floating many a rood, in bulk as huge As whom the Fables name of monstrous size, Titanian, or Earth-born, that warr'd on Jove, Briareos or Typhon, whom the Den By ancient Tarsus held, or that Sea-beast Leviathan, which God of all his works Created hugest that swim th' Ocean stream: Him haply slumbring on the Norway foam The Pilot of some small night-founder'd Skiff, Deeming some

Island, oft, as Sea-men tell, With fixed Anchor in his skaly rind Moors by his side under the Lee, while Night Invests the Sea, and wished Morn delays: So stretcht out huge in length the Arch-fiend lay Chain'd on the burning Lake, nor ever thence Had ris'n or heav'd his head, but that the will And high permission of all-ruling Heaven Left him at large to his own dark designs, That with reiterated crimes he might Heap on himself damnation, while he sought Evil to others, and enrag'd might see How all his malice serv'd but to bring forth Infinite goodness, grace and mercy shewn On Man by him seduc't, but on himself Treble confusion, wrath and vengeance pour'd. Forthwith upright he rears from off the Pool His mighty Stature; on each hand the flames Drivn backward slope thir pointing spires, and rowld In billows, leave i'th'midst a horrid Vale. Then with expanded wings he steers his flight Aloft, incumbent on the dusky Air That felt unusual weight, till on dry Land He lights, as if it were Land that ever burn'd With solid, as the Lake with liquid fire; And such appear'd in hue, as when the force Of subterranean wind transports a Hill Torn from Pelorus, or the shatter'd side Of thundring Aetna, whose combustible And fewel'd entrals thence conceiving Fire, Sublim'd with Mineral fury, aid the Winds, And leave a singed bottom all involv'd With stench and smoak: Such resting found the sole Of unblest feet. Him followed his next Mate, Both glorying to have scap't the Stygian flood As Gods, and by thir own recover'd strength, Not by the sufferance of supernal Power.

Is this the Region, this the Soil, the Clime, Said then the lost Arch-Angel, this the seat That we must change for Heav'n, this mournful gloom For that celestial light? Be it so, since he Who now is Sovran can dispose and bid What shall be right: fardest from him is best Whom reason hath equald, force hath made supream Above his equals. Farewel happy Fields Where Joy for ever dwells: Hail horrors, hail Infernal world, and thou profoundest Hell Receive thy new Possessor: One who brings A mind not to be chang'd by Place or Time. The mind is its own place, and in it self Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n. What matter where, if I be still the same, And what I should be, all but less then he Whom Thunder hath made greater? Here at least We shall be free; th' Almighty hath not built Here for his envy, will not drive us hence: Here we may reign secure, and in my choyce To reign is worth ambition though in Hell: Better to reign in Hell, then serve in Heav'n. But wherefore let we then our faithful friends, Th' associates and copartners of our loss Lye thus astonisht on th' oblivious Pool, And call them not to share with us their part In this unhappy Mansion, or once more With rallied Arms to try what may be yet Regaind in Heav'n, or what more lost in Hell?

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

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

He scarce had ceas't when the superiour Fiend Was moving toward the shoar; his ponderous shield Ethereal temper, massy, large and round, Behind him cast; the broad circumference Hung on his shoulders like the Moon, whose Orb Through Optic Glass the Tuscan Artist views At Ev'ning from the top of Fesole, Or in Valdarno, to descry new Lands, Rivers or Mountains in her spotty Globe. His Spear, to equal which the tallest Pine Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the Mast Of some great Ammiral, were but a wand, He walkt with to support uneasie steps Over the burning Marle, not like those steps On Heavens Azure, and the torrid Clime Smote on him sore besides, vaulted with Fire; Nathless he so endur'd, till on the Beach Of that inflamed Sea, he stood and call'd His Legions, Angel Forms, who lay intrans't Thick as Autumnal Leaves that strow the Brooks In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades High overarch't imbower; or scatterd sedge Afloat, when with fierce Winds Orion arm'd Hath vext the Red-Sea Coast, whose waves orethrew Busirus and his Memphian Chivalry, While with perfidious hatred they pursu'd The Sojourners of Goshen, who beheld From the safe shore thir floating Carkases And broken Chariot Wheels, so thick bestrown Abject and lost lay these, covering the Flood, Under amazement of thir hideous change. He call'd so loud, that all the hollow Deep Of Hell resounded. Princes, Potentates Warriors, the Flowr of Heav'n, once yours, now lost, If such astonishment as this can sieze Eternal spirits; or have ye chos'n this place After the toyl of Battel to repose Your wearied vertue, for the ease you find To slumber here, as in the Vales of Heav'n? Or in this abject posture have ye sworn To adore the Conquerour? who now beholds Cherube and Seraph rowling in the Flood With scatter'd Arms and Ensigns, till anon His swift pursuers from Heav'n Gates discern Th' advantage, and descending tread us down Thus drooping, or with linked Thunderbolts Transfix us to the bottom of this Gulfe. Awake, arise, or be for ever fall'n.

They heard, and were abasht, and up they sprung Upon the wing, as when men wont to watch On duty, sleeping found by whom they dread, Rouse and bestir themselves ere well awake. Nor did they not perceave the evil plight In which they were, or the fierce pains not feel; Yet to thir Generals Voyce they soon obeyd Innumerable. As when the potent Rod Of Amrams Son in Egypts evill day Wav'd round the Coast, up call'd a pitchy cloud Of Locusts, warping on the Eastern Wind, That ore the Realm of impious Pharaoh hung Like Night, and darken'd all the Land of Nile: So numberless were those bad Angels seen Hovering on wind under the Cope of Hell 'Twixt upper, nether, and surrounding Fires; Till, as a signal giv'n, th' uplifted Spear Of thir great Sultan waving to direct Thir course, in even ballance down they light On the firm brimstone, and fill all the Plain; A multitude, like which the populous North Pour'd never from

her frozen loyns, to pass Rhene or the Danaw, when her barbarous Sons Came like a Deluge on the South, and spread Beneath Gibraltar to the Lybian sands. Forthwith from every Squadron and each Band The Heads and Leaders thither hast where stood Thir great Commander; Godlike shapes and forms Excelling human, Princely Dignities, And Powers that earst in Heaven sat on Thrones; Though of thir Names in heav'nly Records now Be no memorial blotted out and ras'd By thir Rebellion, from the Books of Life. Nor had they yet among the Sons of Eve Got them new Names, till wandring ore the Earth, Through Gods high sufferance for the tryal of man, By falsities and lyes the greatest part Of Mankind they corrupted to forsake God thir Creator, and th' invisible Glory of him that made them, to transform Oft to the Image of a Brute, adorn'd With gay Religions full of Pomp and Gold, And Devils to adore for Deities: Then were they known to men by various Names, And various Idols through the Heathen World. Say, Muse, the Names then known, who first, who last, Rous'd from the slumber, on that fiery Couch, At thir great Emperors call, as next in worth Came singly where he stood on the bare strand, While the promiscuous croud stood yet aloof? The chief were those who from the Pit of Hell Roaming to seek thir prey on earth, durst fix Thir Seats long after next the Seat of God, Thir Altars by his Altar, Gods ador'd Among the Nations round, and durst abide Jehovah thundring out of Sion, thron'd Between the Cherubim; yea, often plac'd Within his Sanctuary it self thir Shrines, Abominations; and with cursed things His holy Rites, and solemn Feasts profan'd, And with thir darkness durst affront his light. First Moloch, horrid King besmear'd with blood Of human sacrifice, and parents tears, Though for the noyse of Drums and Timbrels loud Thir childrens cries unheard, that past through fire To his grim Idol. Him the Ammonite Worshipt in Rabba and her watry Plain, In Argob and in Basan, to the stream Of utmost Arnon. Not content with such Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart Of Solomon he led by fraud to build His Temple right against the Temple of God On that opprobrious Hill, and made his Grove The pleasant Vally of Hinnom, Tophet thence And black Gehenna call'd, the Type of Hell. Next Chemos, th' obscene dread of Moabs Sons, From Aroar to Nebo, and the wild Of Southmost Abarim; in Hesebon And Heronaim, Seons Realm, beyond The flowry Dale of Sibma clad with Vines, And Eleale to th' Asphaltick Pool. Peor his other Name, when he entic'd Israel in Sittim on thir march from Nile To do him wanton rites, which cost them woe. Yet thence his lustful Orgies he enlarg'd Even to that Hill of scandal, but the Grove Of Moloch homicide, lust hard by hate; Till good Josiah drove them hence to Hell. With these cam they, who from the bordring flood Of old Euphrates to the Brook that parts Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names Of Baalim and Ashtaroth, those male, These Feminine. For Spirits when they please Can either Sex assume, or both; so soft And uncompounded is thir Essence pure, Nor ti'd or manacl'd with joynt or limb, Nor founded on the brittle strength of bones, Like cumbrous flesh; but in what shape they choose Dilated or condens't, bright or obscure, Can execute thir aerie purposes, And works of love or enmity fulfill. For those the Race of Israel oft forsook Thir living

strength, and unfrequented left His righteous Altar, bowing lowly down To bestial Gods; for which thir heads as low Bow'd down in Battel, sunk before the Spear Of despicable foes. With these in troop Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians call'd Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent Horns; To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon Sidonian Virgins paid thir Vows and Songs, In Sion also not unsung, where stood Her Temple on th' offensive Mountain, built By that uxorious King, whose heart though large, Beguil'd by fair Idolatresses, fell To idols foul. Thammuz came next behind, Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd The Syrian Damsels to lament his fate In amorous dittyes all a Summers day, While smooth Adonis from his native Rock Ran purple to the Sea, suppos'd with blood Of Thammuz yearly wounded; the Love-tale Infected Sions daughters with like heat, Whose wanton passions in the sacred Porch Ezekial saw, when by the Vision led His eye survey'd the dark Idolatries Of alienated Judah. Next came one Who mourn'd in earnest, when the Captive Ark Maim'd his brute Image, head and hands lopt off In his own Temple, on the grunsel edge, Where he fell flat, and sham'd his Worshipers: Dagon his Name, Sea Monster, upward Man And downward Fish: yet had his Temple high Rear'd in Azotus, dreaded through the Coast Of Palestine, in Gath and Ascalon And Accaron and Gaza's frontier bounds. Him follow'd Rimmon, whose delightful Seat Was fair Damascus, on the fertil Banks Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams. He also against the house of God was bold: A Leper once he lost and gain'd a King, Ahaz his sottish Conquerour, whom he drew Gods Altar to disparage and displace For one of Syrian mode, whereon to burn His odious offerings, and adore the Gods Whom he had vanquisht. After these appear'd A crew who under Names of old Renown, Osiris, Isis, Orus and thir Train With monstrous shapes and sorceries abus'd Fanatic Egypt and her Priests, to seek Thir wandring Gods Disguis'd in brutish forms Rather than human. Nor did Israel scape Th' infection when thir borrow'd Gold compos'd The Calf in Oreb: and the Rebel King Doubl'd that sin in Bethel and in Dan, Lik'ning his Maker to the Grazed Ox, Jehovah, who in one Night when he pass'd From Egypt marching, equal'd with one stroke Both her first born and all her bleating Gods Belial came last, then whom a Spirit more lewd Fell not from Heaven, or more gross to love Vice for it self: To him no Temple stood Or Altar smoak'd; yet who more oft than hee In Temples and at Altars, when the Priest Turns Atheist, as did Ely's Sons, who fill'd With lust and violence the house of God. In Courts and Palaces he also Reigns And in luxurious Cities, where the noyse Of riot ascends above thir loftiest Towrs, And injury and outrage: And when Night Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons Of Belial, flown with insolence and wine. Witness the Streets of Sodom, and that night In Gibeah, when the hospitable door Expos'd a Matron to avoid worse rape. These were the prime in order and in might; The rest were long to tell, though far renown'd, Th' Ionian Gods, of Javans issue held Gods, yet confest later than Heav'n and Earth Thir boasted Parents; Titan Heav'ns first born With his enormous brood, and birthright seis'd By younger Saturn, he from mightier Jove His own and Rhea's Son like measure found; So Jove usurping reign'd: these first

in Creet And Ida known, thence on the Snowy top Of cold Olympus rul'd the middle Air Thir highest Heav'n; or on the Delphian Cliff, Or in Dodona, and through all the bounds Of Doric Land; or who with Saturn old Fled over Adria to th' Hesperian Fields, And ore the Celtic roam'd the utmost Isles. All these and more came flocking; but with looks Down cast and damp, yet such wherein appear'd Obscure some glimps of joy, to have found thir chief Not in despair, to have found themselves not lost In loss itself; which on his count'nance cast Like doubtful hue: but he his wonted pride Soon recollecting, with high words, that bore Semblance of worth, not substance, gently rais'd Thir fanting courage, and dispel'd thir fears. Then strait commands that at the warlike sound Of Trumpets loud and Clarions be upreard His mighty Standard; that proud honour claim'd Azazel as his right, a Cherube tall: Who forthwith from the glittering Staff unfurld Th' Imperial Ensign, which full high advanc't Shon like a Meteor streaming to the Wind With Gemms and Golden lustre rich imblaz'd, Seraphic arms and Trophies: all the while Sonorous mettal blowing Martial sounds: At which the universal Host upsent A shout that tore Hells Concave, and beyond Frighted the Reign of Chaos and old Night. All in a moment through the gloom were seen Ten thousand Banners rise into the Air With Orient Colours waving: with them rose A Forrest huge of Spears: and thronging Helms Appear'd, and serried Shields in thick array Of depth immeasurable: Anon they move In perfect Phalanx to the Dorian mood Of Flutes and soft Recorders; such as rais'd To hight of noblest temper Hero's old Arming to Battel, and in stead of rage Deliberate valour breath'd, firm and unmov'd With dread of death to flight or foul retreat, Nor wanting power to mitigate and swage With solemn touches, troubl'd thoughts, and chase Anguish and doubt and fear and sorrow and pain From mortal or immortal minds. Thus they Breathing united force with fixed thought Mov'd on in silence to soft Pipes that charm'd Thir painful steps o're the burnt soyle; and now Advanc't in view, they stand, a horrid Front Of dreadful length and dazling Arms, in guise Of Warriors old with order'd Spear and Shield, Awaiting what command thir mighty Chief Had to impose: He through the armed Files Darts his experienc't eye, and soon traverse The whole Battalion views, thir order due, Thir visages and stature as of Gods, Thir number last he summs. And now his heart Distends with pride, and hardning in his strength Glories: For never since created man, Met such imbodyed force, as nam'd with these Could merit more then that small infantry Warr'd on by Cranes: though all the Giant brood Of Phlegra with th' Heroic Race were joyn'd That fought at Theb's and Ilium, on each side Mixt with auxiliar Gods; and what resounds In Fable or Romance of Uthers Sons Begirt with British and Armoric Knights; And all who since Baptiz'd or Infidel Jousted in Aspramont or Montalban, Damasco, or Marocco, or Trebisonde Or whom Biserta sent from Afric shore When Charlemain with all his Peerage fell By Fontarabbia. Thus far these beyond Compare of mortal prowess, yet observ'd Thir dread commander: he above the rest In shape and gesture proudly eminent Stood like a Towr; his form had yet not lost All her Original brightness, nor appear'd Less then Arch Angel ruind, and th' excess Of Glory obscur'd; As when

the Sun new ris'n Looks through the Horizontal misty Air Shorn of his Beams, or from behind the Moon In dim Eclips disastrous twilight sheds On half the Nations, and with fear of change Perplexes Monarch. Dark'n'd so, yet shon Above them all th' Arch Angel; but his face Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care Sat on his faded cheek, but under Browes Of dauntless courage, and considerate Pride Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast Signs of remorse and passion to behold The fellows of his crime, the followers rather (Far other once beheld in bliss) condemn'd For ever now to have thir lot in pain, Millions of Spirits for his fault amerc't Of Heav'n, and from Eternal Splendors flung For his revolt, yet faithfull how they stood, Thir Glory witherd. As when Heavens Fire Hath scath'd the Forrest Oaks, or Mountain Pines, With singed top thir stately growth though bare Stands on the blasted Heath. He now prepar'd To speak; whereat thir doubl'd Ranks they bend From wing to wing, and half enclose him round With all his Peers: attention held them mute. Thrice he assayd, and thrice in spight of scorn, Tears such as Angels weep, burst forth: at last Words interwove with sighs found out thir way.

O Myriads of immortal Spirits, O Powers Matchless, but with th' Almighty, and that strife Was not inglorious, though th' event was dire, As this place testifies, and this dire change Hateful to utter: but what power of mind Foreseeing or presaging, from the Depth Of knowledge past or present, could have fear'd, How such united force of Gods, how such As stood like these, could ever know repulse? For who can yet beleieve, though after loss, That all these puissant Legions, whose exile Hath emptied Heav'n, shall fail to re-ascend Self-rais'd, and repossess thir native seat? For mee be witness all the Host of Heav'n, If counsels different, or danger shun'd By mee, have lost our hopes. But he who reigns Monarch in Heav'n, till then as one secure Sat on his Throne, upheld by old reput, Consent or custome, and his Regal State Put forth at full, but still his strength conceal'd, Which tempted our attempt, and wrought our fall. Henceforth his might we know, and know our own So as not either to provoke, or dread New warr, provok't; our better part remains To work in close design, by fraud or guile What force effected not: that he no less At length from us may find, who overcomes By force, hath overcome but half his foe. Space may produce new Worlds; whereof so rife There went a fame in Heav'n that he ere long Intended to create, and therein plant A generation, whom his choice regard Should favour equal to the Sons of Heaven: Thither, if but to pry, shall be perhaps Our first eruption, thither or elsewhere: For this Infernal Pit shall never hold Caelestial Spirits in Bondage, nor th' Abyss Long under darkness cover. But these thoughts Full Counsel must mature: Peace is despaird, For who can think Submission? Warr then, Warr Open or understood must be resolv'd.

He spake: and to confirm his words, out-flew Millions of flaming swords, drawn from the thighs Of mighty Cherubim; the sudden blaze Far round illumin'd hell: highly they rag'd Against the Highest, and fierce with grasped Arms Clash'd on thir sounding Shields the din of war, Hurling

defiance toward the Vault of Heav'n.

There stood a hill not far whose griesly top Belch'd fire and rowling smoak; the rest entire Shon with a glossie scurff, undoubted sign That in his womb was hid metallic Ore, The work of Sulphur. Thither wing'd with speed A numerous Brigad hasten'd. As when Bands Of Pioners with Spade and Pickax arm'd Forerun the Royal Camp, to trench a Field, Or cast a Rampart. Mammon led them on, Mammon, the least erected Spirit that fell From heav'n, for ev'n in heav'n his looks and thoughts Were always downward bent, admiring more The riches of Heav'ns pavement, trod'n Gold, Then aught divine or holy else enjoy'd In vision beatific: by him first Men also, and by his suggestion taught Ransack'd the Center, and with impious hands Rifi'd the bowels of thir mother Earth For Treasures better hid. Soon had his crew Op'nd into the Hill a spacious wound And dig'd out ribs of Gold. Let none admire That riches grow in Hell; that soyle may best Deserve the precious bane. And here let those Who boast in mortal things, and wond'ring tell Of Babel, and the works of Memphian Kings Learn how thir greatest Monuments of Fame, And Strength and Art are easily out-done By Spirits reprobate, and in an hour What in an age they with incessant toyle And hands innumerable scarce perform. Nigh on the Plain in many cells prepar'd That underneath had veins of liquid fire Sluc'd from the Lake, a second multitude With wond'rous Art found out the massie Ore, Severing each kind, and scum'd the Bullion dross: A third as soon had form'd within the ground A various mould, and from the boyling cells By strange conveyance fill'd each hollow nook, As in an Organ from one blast of wind To many a row of Pipes the sound-board breaths. Anon out of the earth a Fabrick huge Rose like an Exhalation, with the sound Of Dulcet Symphonies and voices sweet, Built like a Temple, where Pilasters round Were set, and Doric pillars overlaid With Golden Architrave; nor did there want Cornice or Freeze, with bossy Sculptures grav'n, The Roof was fretted Gold. Not Babilon, Nor great Alcairo such magnificence Equal'd in all thir glories, to inshrine Belus or Serapis thir Gods, or seat Thir Kings, when Aegypt with Assyria strove In wealth and luxurie. Th' ascending pile Stood fixt her stately highth, and strait the dores Op'ning thir brazen foulds discover wide Within, her ample spaces, o're the smooth And level pavement: from the arched roof Pendant by subtle Magic many a row Of Starry Lamps and blazing Cressets fed With Naphtha and Asphaltus yeilded light As from a sky. The hasty multitude Admiring enter'd, and the work some praise And some the Architect: his hand was known In Heav'n by many a Towred structure high, Where Scepter'd Angels held thir residence, And sat as Princes, whom the supreme King Exalted to such power, and gave to rule, Each in his Hierarchie, the Orders bright. Nor was his name unheard or unador'd In ancient Greece; and in Ausonian land Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell From Heav'n, they fabl'd, thrown by angry Jove Sheer o're the Chrystal Battlements; from Morn To Noon he fell, from Noon to dewy Eve, A Summers day; and with the setting Sun Dropt from the Zenith like a falling Star, On Lemnos th' Aegaeon Ile: thus they relate, Erring; for he with this rebellious rout Fell long before; nor aught avail'd him

now To have built in Heav'n high Towrs; nor did he scape By all his Engins, but was headlong sent With his industrious crew to build in hell. Mean while the winged Haralds by command Of Sovran power, with awful Ceremony And Trumpets sound throughout the Host proclaim A solemn Councel forthwith to be held At Pandaemonium, the high Capital Of Satan and his Peers: thir summons call'd From every Band and squared Regiment By place or choice the worthiest; they anon With hunderds and with thousands trooping came Attended: all access was throng'd, the Gates And Porches wide, but chief the spacious Hall (Though like a cover'd field, where Champions bold Wont ride in arm'd, and at the Soldans chair Defi'd the best of Panim chivalry To mortal combat or carrear with Lance) Thick swarm'd, both on the ground and in the air, Brusht with the hiss of russling wings. As Bees In spring time, when the Sun with Taurus rides, Pour forth thir populous youth about the Hive In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers Flie to and fro, or on the smoothed Plank, The suburb of thir Straw-built Cittadel, New rub'd with Baum, expatiate and confer Thir State affairs. So thick the aerie crowd Swarm'd and were straitn'd; till the Signal giv'n Behold a wonder! they but now who seemd In bigness to surpass Earths Giant Sons Now less then smallest Dwarfs, in narrow room Throng numberless, like that Pigmean Race Beyond the Indian Mount, or Faerie Elves, Whose midnight Revels, by a Forrest side Or Fountain some belated Peasant sees, Or dreams he sees, while over-head the Moon Sits Arbitress, and neerer to the Earth Wheels her pale course, they on thir mirth and dance Intent, with jocond Music charm his ear; At once with joy and fear his heart rebounds. Thus incorporeal Spirits to smallest forms Reduc'd thir shapes immense, and were at large, Though without number still amidst the Hall Of that infernal Court. But far within And in thir own dimensions like themselves The great Seraphic Lords and Cherubim In close recess and secret conclave sat A thousand Demy-Gods on golden seat's, Frequent and full. After short silence then And summons read, the great consult began.