THE

ADAMUS EXUL OF GROTIUS;

OR THE

PROTOYPE OF PARADISE LOST.

NOW FIRST TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN,

BY

FRANCIS BARHAM, Esq.

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1839.
TO JOHN A. HERAUD, Esq.

Dear Sir,

I have taken the liberty of dedicating this astonishing Drama to you, because you have laboured more intensely than any of my Coleridgean friends to promote the highest forms of literature and poetry in Britain. This noble design it was that animated you in all your contributions to the Magazines and Reviews in which we have so often written. But to my mind, this glorious ambition is still more conspicuous in the pages of the Monthly Magazine since you undertook to edit it. It was this that prompted you to place this long-established and widely-circulated periodical on that high pedestal of catholicity so bravely illustrated by Grotius himself. When you first ventured on this measure, I admired the grand conception, the moral courage, and the intellectual truthfulness which urged you to a course so arduous and unfrequented; and I predicted, in contradiction to many literary associates, that this course would prove successful; nay, triumphant. I knew that what Schlegel had done for Germany, in his famous "Concordia;" and Guizot for France, in pe-
periodicals of consummate talent, you also would accomplish for
Britain, by the agency of the Monthly Magazine, and the
Journals attached to it. I knew how fascinating is the ex-
hibition of that Promethean mind with which a Magazine
becomes the inspiring spirit of its age, and without which it is
but a bubble on the tide of fashion. This is the scale by
which thinking men measure the value of a periodical—they
look for the genius, which is the power of calling up power in
other souls—they look for the traces of the march of that
celestial philosophy which shall yet invest our planet with im-
perishable lustre.

The more intelligent portion of society already takes
a warm interest in your enterprise, and recognises the
value of a leading Review, thus based on the broad foundation
of universal truth. I rejoice to find my prediction confirmed
by the fact,—by the perpetually increasing sale of a Magazine
thus springing like a Phœnix from its ashes into glorious
rejuvenescence. I rejoice in this renewed prosperity of a
publication essentially non-sectarian,—a publication that, like
an intellectual Apollo, shall diffuse a philosophic radiance over
all my fellow-countrymen, be they Jews, Roman Catholics,
Protestants, Tories, Whigs, or Liberals. A publication that
shall become the living focus of truth's scattered beamings;
accumulating what is fairest, and dissipating what is falsest in
all sects and parties. Be assured, my friend, that this success
will go on geometrically augmenting so long as you support
the cause of union, coalition, and harmony, with as much
talent and eloquence as are displayed by cotemporary Journals
whose views are differently modified.
Such is the conviction that has prompted me to dedicate to you this excelling Drama of Grotius. No one will better appreciate its merits, and the extraordinary circumstances that have attended its history. After having filled all Europe with its renown during the seventeenth century, and having struggled during the eighteenth with a series of occultations almost unparalleled in bibliography, it now, in the nineteenth, emerges the brighter for its prolonged eclipse, and glitters over the literary world. To whom can I more confidently submit this Prototype of Paradise Lost than to one, who by his recent reviews of Milton and his poetry, has achieved one of the loftiest triumphs of genius, which loves to sublimate the sublime, and beautify the beautiful.

To you I feel indebted in no inconsiderable degree for the formation of my literary tastes and habits; and I would fain show my gratitude by emulating your finest compositions, which I cannot rival.

I remain,

Dear Sir,

Yours very sincerely,

FRANCIS BARHAM.
P R E F A C E.

An original copy of Grotius's Adamus Exul, from the Library of the late Mr. Heber, is now in my hands. It is dated 1601, ex typographio Alberti Henrici Hage Comitatensi. By confirming the genuineness of Lauder's edition of this Drama, with the exception of a few verbal alterations, it has solved a question of deep interest, which has often been asked, but hitherto asked in vain.

The Adamus Exul of Grotius was published when he was only eighteen years of age—a remarkable instance of precocious talent, if we may venture to call that talent precocious which possesses the severest attributes of virility, without a particle of feebleness or crudeness. In writing his dedication to the Prince of Condé, at that time presumptive heir to the crown of France, he seems to have been conscious that the Tragedy was no common effort. "When," says he, "my study of law, history, and the arts has allowed me any spare or leisure time, I have reflected to what style of composition I might best devote it, so as to amuse myself with a variety of agreeable exercises. I therefore undertook to write a tragedy, because our age is less fruitful in the loftier forms of the drama than other kinds of literature. As to my argument, I resolved it should be sacred; which, you will say, was sufficiently audacious, since now-a-days sacred themes are less generally ornamented than degraded by presumptuous scribblers. However, I laboured hard so to modify my style that nothing should appear in the present poem displeasing to the taste of Christians. It elaborates
the first grand historical event recorded in the inspired volume, the dreadful catastrophe of the Fall of Man. Many philosophical speculations occur; aye, and metaphysical ones too, respecting God, angels, and souls. It abounds, likewise, in moral, physical, astrological, and geographical topics. The example of Euripides, Epicharmus, and Ennius, induced me to aim at much variety, as a source of dramatic interest. Thus at the same time I endeavoured to cultivate religion, science, and poetry. (Ita eisdem horis et pietatem exercui, et divinae humanaeque sapientiae studium et poesin).

The reception this Tragedy met with amongst the first scholars of the 17th century may easily be proved by the complimentary epigrams that were showered on its author. Here are a few specimens of them in free translation:

"Janus Dousa, to Hugo Grotius, on his Tragedy of Adamus Exul.

"Why read Sophocles, and Seneca? Why peruse the dreams of Homer, his fables and prodigies? How much better to discuss subjects worthy of the Tragic Muses, derived from the volume of revelation! We would dignify by a loftier genius the dramatic buskin; we feel a strong ambition for such an enterprise. That subject so full of divine truth attracts us, which young Grotius has pointed out with his poetic finger. Here you will find no fiction of Sphynx and Scylla: the Muse of Grotius treats of Man. You hear of the deadly forbidden fruit, and the fall of Adam, and his banishment. Now first hath the Latin empire yielded the glory which was due only to our own city. We rejoice in a native poet, who by his original talents has achieved a great name. Great you will acknowledge him, if you consider his spirit, vigour, and arrangement, and the power of his thoughts and words. As soon as you are acquainted with these, I'll warrant you will exclaim, 'O Scotland! lay aside your boast of Latin verse!' It may be difficult to introduce Jephtha into classic drama, which never owed much to Rome. It was a grander work to banish our first parents from Paradise. Alas! how unlike was that state to the present."
"John Meursius to the incomparable youth, Hugo Grotius, jurisconsult, on his Adamus Exul.

"Belgium equals Greece and Rome in the achievements of peace and war. The award of genius was trembling in the undecided balance; the palm had not yet been allotted. None of us had before ventured to tread in the tragic buskin in which alone Belgium seemed inferior. But now, by the talent of Grotius, she hath conquered her rivals; and Greece and Rome must yield to her the laurels."

"Enoc Potteius to Hugo Grotius, on his Adamus Exul.

"You sing the miracles of nature, my Grotius, in such a noble style that every one esteems yourself as a miracle. If any would celebrate you, according to your deserts, he must be endowed with a genius equal to your own."

"Daniel Heinsius to Hugo Grotius.

"At length, great father of the reborn drama, noblest light and ornament of tragic art—thou treatest the most sacred subjects with a royal eloquence. Your Adamus Exul has delighted us all. Thou art the youthful sage, that fills Holland with admiration, and Italy and France with envy. You were mature even in boyhood. Others become men by degrees—Grotius was born a man.

"Ille dum puer fuit
Vir esse cepit: namque reliqui viri
Tandem fuere; Grotius vir natus est."

After my efforts to revive this great curiosity of national literature, I must record my gratitude to learned friends connected with the press. Scholars of all sects and parties have generously come forward to celebrate the name of Grotius; and the fame of his prose works is no longer allowed to eclipse the glory of his poetic triumphs. I find no reward of literary exertion more sweet and exhilarating, than this general approbation of men of letters joining to rescue this master-piece of Batavian genius
from oblivion; and over the ashes of the mighty dead immolating the petty jealouses that are too apt to ruffle the amenity of co-temporaries.

In conclusion, I would frankly confess that my translation of this wonderful drama is in some places extremely literal, and in others extremely free. In striving to make a version worthy of the original for the English reader, I was obliged to modify, enlarge, and contract many sentiments, especially those that occur in the choruses. A precise counterpart of these elaborate compositions would not have suited the public half so well as a bold paraphrase, embodying those forms of expression to which the hearts of the people are wont to vibrate.
ADAMUS EXUL.

PROLEGOMENA BY THE TRANSLATOR.

The great design of the Deity in creating by his eternal Word the spiritual orders of being, involving the work of the divine Redeemer in saving and restoring them when fallen into transgression, forms the leading theme of Scripture. In connection with this, the aboriginal glory of Man in Paradise ending in his expulsion from the Garden of Eden, as explained by the inspired writers, is a topic of universal interest. This first scene in the grand drama of human destinies—this sole key to the enigmas of mortal experience—this tremendous lapse of mind and nature which has thrown so deep a colouring over all subsequent histories, has necessarily excited the most intense and scrutinising attention.

The brief yet forcible description of the sacred writers has been very differently expounded by theological investigators. Origen and some of the primitive evangelical fathers, agreeing with the Cabalistic and Gnostic dogmas, supposed this description to refer to a purely spiritual, angelic, and transcendental form of human existence, associated with the divine Word in an ethereal Paradise among the unfallen stars. Others, like Augustine, More, Brocklesby, and the symbolic Platonists, supposed it to allude to a fall of Angels, and the lapse of souls with their social stars, each retaining its proper paradise in lower and separate economies; while others, abiding by the literal account, have imagined that nothing superterrestrial, mystical, or figurative was at all intended. These several expositors have likewise entertained different notions with regard to the original sin; some, like Berrow, regarding it as the original and general lapse of souls, some, like Cudworth and Ramsay, esteeming it the lapse of our particular species into a state of materialism; and others more prudently conceiving it to be the offence of disobeying the divine command with regard to the forbidden fruit.

Among the expositors who have supposed that the Mosaic account should be construed literally, a great question has been mooted with respect to the geographical position of the terrestrial Paradise and the Garden of Eden. The true theory appears to have been nearly attained by Father Calmet, the Benedictine, in his commentary on the text in which the river which gave birth to the Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel and Pherath
is mentioned. He imagines that these four rivers are the Phasis, the Araxes, the Tigris, and the Euphrates; and consequently, that Paradise or Eden was placed in Colchis, now Mingrelia, near the mountains of Turcomania, and that this was what gave rise to the fable of the golden fleece.

Happily this question is now nearly set at rest, Hales and Faber having well nigh demonstrated that the situation of the Garden, according to the Mosaic account, was in the mountainous region of Ararat in Armenia. And that consequently the first birth-place of mankind, and their first post-diluvian settlement, were closely approximated. This is an important discovery, as it confirms the fact that the great chains of mountains and rivers were not essentially dislocated by the flood.

A short statement of the critical situation of these rivers will give the reader the power of correcting the errors which yet remain undefeated. We cannot define the name of the river that watered the garden; but it is not so difficult to specify its four main branches. The first is Phison (a term signifying a deep or overflowing river): this stream, which is synonymous with Phasis, was the source of the Araxes, or Arras, which rises from Ararat, and separates Armenia from Media, and falls into the Caspian. Bridges have been built over it several times, but all the art of man could never make them strong enough to resist the violence of its stream. Wherefore Virgil gives it this epithet: "PONTEM INDIGNATUS ARAXES." Both gold and bdellium are found among the mountains that surround Havila Propria and Caspiana, through which it flows.

Now Calmet has confounded this stream—the original Phasis or river—with that other Phasis more generally known by this name, which rises in the northern range of Caucasus. For this Faber substitutes the Absarus of Pliny, or Batoum of modern geographers, which rises in Armenia and runs into the Euxine sea. But its course, as Hales justly observes, "appears too short to encompass the whole land of Havila," supposing, with him, Havila to denote Colchis, which was famed in ancient times for the abundance and excellence of its gold. "The Araxes, therefore," continues Hales (in confirmation of our theory), "seems to have a better claim, which, rising in Armenia, runs by a more circuitous course into the Caspian sea, skirting the countries of Colchis and Georgia, which lie between the two seas, and might both have constituted the land of Havilah."

But a more serious error than this respecting the Phison, is pointed out by Ralegh. It arose among those expositors who forgot to distinguish between Shem's descendant and Jocan's son Havila, to whom the regions of Caspiana, Colchis, and Upper Media were allotted, extending towards his brother Ophir's Indian possessions, and that other Havila, the son of Cush. This has given rise to the gross blunders of Wells and his followers, now nearly exploded.

The name of the second river is Gihon (an impetuous river), the ancient Choasper or Korun, which surrounds Asiatic Cush, or Ethiopia, and Susiana. Its waters are so sweet, say the ancients, that the kings of Persia drank no other; and in their expeditions they always carried some with them which had been previously boiled. The numerous mistakes concerning this stream have arisen from
mistaking the position of Cush, or Asiatic Ethiopia, and from confounding it with African Æthiopia, more generally known by this name.

Sir Walter Ralegh has so well explained this matter, that his words are worth quoting. "After the flood," says he, "Cush and his children never rested till they found the valley of Shinar, in which, and near which, himself and his sons first inhabited. Havila took the river side of Tigris chiefly on the east, which, after his own name, he called Havila (now Susiana); Raamah and Sheba further down the river: at the entrance of Arabia Felix, Nimrod seated himself in the best of the valley, where he built Babel, whereof that region had afterwards the name of Babylonia. Cush himself and his brother Mizraim first kept upon Gehon, which falleth into the lakes of Chaldea, and, as their people increased, they drew themselves more westerly towards the Red, or Arabian Sea, from whence Mizraim past over into Egypt, in which part the Cushites remained for many years after."

The name of the third river is Hiddekel (a turbid river), or the Tigris, which goeth east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates, so called from its eruptive violence.

It is very important to observe how closely the Mosaic account of the original glory and disastrous fall of several orders of lapsed intelligences, and in particular the sacred histories respecting the golden age of man in Paradise—his pure communion with the divine powers—the sublime condition of his faith and obedience—his seduction by infernal subtlety working on his self-esteem and ambition—his expulsion from Eden, and his exposure to all the ills that flesh is heir to—have been found to coincide with all the discoveries hitherto made respecting the mythological initiations, secret philosophy, and chronological and geographical traditions of all Gentile nations.

The study of this comparative evidence of the truth of revelation, throws astonishing light on the obscurer passages of Scripture. The reader may collect its buried fragments from very recondite and scattered sources of information: He may, for instance, derive some assistance from Kircher, Gale, Cudworth, Ramsay, Shuckford, Dupuis, Gellin, More, Delaunaye, Phanmer, Burigne, Panza, Meursius, Rocher, Taylor, Beausobre, Reuchlin, Rosler, Creuzer, Pierius, Fludd, Agrippa, Helpen, Bryant, Oliver, Bridges, and Davies.

It is not to be supposed that a subject so full of intense interest as the glory of all created minds, the fall of angels, and the fall of man, should long be left unoccupied by the prophet bards and poets of Judah. It was evidently the first and most fascinating theme of their meditations and their songs; on it they exhausted their whole power of research and imagination, and their success is testified by a thousand passages of resplendent and imperishable verse, more or less masked by allegorical and hieroglyphic imagery, which still excite the veneration and gratify the sagacity of the student.

The early fathers of the Christian Church, some of them the most eloquent of men, were likewise distinguished by poetic honors, as might have been expected. They discoursed on these august mysteries of their religion with the demonstration of the Spirit and the power of reason, and thereto they added the glowing decorations of the muse. Augustin, Ephraim, Gregory, Prudentius, Nonnus, and the "Poetæ Christiani" of
Greece and Rome, were much engaged in the severe defence of their faith, by forcible dialectics and practical arts, but these did not hinder them from doing justice to the poetic splendors of Christianity.

Among the Christian fathers who arrayed the fall of Adam with poetical imagery, was St. Avitus, early in the sixth century. He wrote a poem, in three parts, entitled "De Origine Mundi, de Originali Peccato, and de Sententia Dei." The learned M. Guizot has lately brought these compositions into notice, and instituted a parallel between them and Milton's "Paradise Lost," which he thinks in some measure derived from them. In "Blackwood's Magazine" for March, 1838, this question is discussed with much ingenuity and candour.

The classic genius of the gentiles was yet more successful in investing these sublime doctrines of theology, so far as they understood them, by the aid of vague traditions, with the pomp of enthusiastic fancy, and the ornament of dazzling verse. It is no less profitable than pleasing to observe the progress of these traditions as they came into the hands of the gentile bards, dim and confused, and thence issued forth clad in the gorgeous apparel of fiction, passion, and rhapsody.

These grand themes of poetic genius continued to sow the seeds of future song in the mystical dramas and romantic legends connected with the initiations of the middle ages; and though long bewailed as dead and extinct, that seed retained an essential vitality not to be destroyed by violence, barbarism, or ignorance. It sprang up like a strong plant with the revival of letters, and with the outburst of universal reformation. It would be idle to notice very particularly the earliest compositions in the classical or modern languages relating to the fall of man. The first Latin poem of note on this subject, is the Protagonous of Anysius, a tragedy; the hero of which isAdam. This was published in 1535, in quarto, and was very celebrated in its day, though now little known.

The next writer of eminence on the same topic, was Zieglerus, who wrote two Latin tragedies, Protoplastis and Samson Agonistes, published in 1550.

Another writer, who followed in the same path, was Du Bartas, who wrote about 1580, a long poem in French, entitled the "Weeks of the Creation"—being a sort of poetic commentary on the earlier chapters of Genesis. This work was published with extensive annotations, and became exceedingly popular on the continent. It was translated into English by that most fantastical of all versifiers, Sylvester. The notes were likewise translated by another hand.

A little after, in 1593, our English poet, Hunis, or Hunnis, the translator of the Psalms, published a tragedy, entitled "Adam's Banishment;" which we have not met with.

Such were the compositions extant in the boyhood of Hugo Grotius, who was born at Delft, 1583—educated under the famous Francis Junius, at Leyden, in the profound study of the Scriptures, according to the Biblical commentators of his time—skilled in all the critical and varied scholarship of classical literature, and familiarized with the best compositions of the modern writers; he availed himself of his treasured resources to an extent never before equalled.

The mind of Grotius was naturally of a deeply devotional kind, and peculiarly inclined to meditate on those primary and transcendent mys-

teries of theology and philosophy so shrewdly discussed and elaborated in that metaphysical age. But his intelligence was of too bold and stalwarth a cast ever to succumb beneath the burden of abstract perplexities, or lose itself in mazes of speculative difficulty. He had that within him which could detect the hidden principle of verity beneath the cloud of superincumbent mysticism—which could follow out the golden thread of truth amid all the labyrinths of argument—grasp the only tangible and palpable forms which casuistical subtleties ever assumed—and then apply them with a curious felicity of common sense to the practical affairs of life.

But it is not our business to celebrate Grotius for his divinity, his philosophy, his jurisprudence, or his classical attainments. All these are already well known to the public. We must here confine our attention to his poetical productions, with which he seems to have amused his majestic mind from infancy to old age:—for his first sacred poems were printed at Leyden before he was 16, and he continued to write miscellaneous verses through his whole life.

Having, doubtless, in the course of his studious education, read most of the ancient and modern compositions on the Fall of Man, it appeared to him that this subject was one of the fittest possible for a noble tragedy or epic, and that nothing worthy of its sublimity had ever yet been written.

Accordingly, at the age of 18, he composed the tragedy "Adamus Exul," which we have now translated. "Grotius (says Burigny, his biographer) did not confine himself to small pieces of verse—he rose to tragedy. We have three tragedies written by him. The first was 'Adamus Exul.' He sent it to Lipsius, who liked it, and it was printed at Leyden in 1601; and again in a collection of his sacred poems, printed in quarto at the Hague, 1610. His two other tragedies, the 'Christus Patiens,' and the 'Sophromphaneas,' are published in the general collection of his poems. These were translated by Vondel into Dutch; and by Sandys and Goldsmith into English."

Whether Grotius was dissatisfied or not with this tragedy of "Adamus Exul," the leading scholars of his time were delighted with it. It called forth the panegyric and complimentary verses of Vossius, Heinsius, Dousa, Potteius, Mersius, and others, now to be found collected in the Grotii Poemata, and excited very general admiration throughout Europe.

It was more or less imitated by Andreini, 1613—by Ramsay, 1653—by Masenius, 1650—and by other Latin, Italian, German, French, and English poets, who followed in the same track.

But by none was it so closely followed, so admirably emulated and improved upon as by our Milton. The mind of Milton, originally resembling that of Grotius in many of its leading characteristics, was, like his, familiarized with scriptural, classic, and modern literature—like his, tried and harassed by the ecclesiastical, political, and literary contests of the age. The first geniuses of their respective countries, "born for whatever was arduous," too independent to press themselves into the patronage of the nations they made glorious—too proud to ask the political rewards they merited; it was their fate to receive the honors from foreigners which were withheld by their jealous fellow-countrymen. Such were the causes of their sympathy. For Grotius, Milton acknow-
ledged a veneration and an emulous regard he vouchsafed to no other modern. With Grotius, he sympathised deeply from his earliest years; he neglected not to visit him on the continent, and gloried in his friendship as long as he lived.

It is clear, that, like Grotius, Milton also was eminently skilled in theological science, in all the cabalistic and mythological initiations, and philosophical learning of antiquity. This has been sufficiently proved by Birch, Newton, and the author of the essay on "Milton's Use of the Ancients."

But it was not to the ancients only that Milton was indebted: he availed himself equally of the moderns; and without doubt the "Adamus Exul" of Grotius furnished Milton with that seed of thought and passion which afterwards bloomed out in that "bright consummate flower," the "Paradise Lost."

Much as we detest the name of Lauder, literary justice obliges us to give that unhappy gentleman his due, which he has not yet received. He was one of the first who perceived the high probability of Milton's obligation to Grotius and the modern Latin poets. And never yet did author more cunningly combine truth and falsehood than Lauder. His learning generally enabled him to prove at least half his point, and imposture supplied all that was wanting in evidence.

Lauder was a Scotchman, a Latin schoolmaster, and a literary adventurer. In reading the first act of the "Adamus Exul," and other modern Latin poems, he could hardly fail to perceive the frequent use which Milton, conversant as he was with all curious and ingenious literature, naturally made of them.

About the year 1750, Lauder wrote some articles in the "Gentleman's Magazine," stating his discoveries. These exciting some attention, and winning the approbation of Dr. Johnson, he was induced, in the same year, to publish an Essay, entitled "An Essay on Milton's Use and Imitation of the Moderns in Paradise Lost." In this work, finding his materials deficient, he unhappily endeavoured to supply the defect of his authorities by drawing largely on his own latinity.

In this Essay, in which he quotes the first Act of "Adamus Exul," Lauder says, "In Birche's Life of Milton is the copy of a manuscript in his own hand-writing, found at Trinity College, Cambridge, which contains the name of Grotius's "Adamus Exul, or Adam Unparadised or of Banishment." "This tragedy" (continues Lauder) "though it passed through no less than four editions, was never yet printed among the rest in the author's works, and was so exceedingly scarce, that I could not procure a copy either in Britain or Holland, till the learned Mr. Abraham Gronovius, keeper of the public library at Leyden, after great enquiry, obtained the sight of one, and, as I have been sometime honored with his correspondence and friendship, sent me (transcribed by his own son) the first act of it, and afterwards the rest, together with the dedication, addressed to the Duke of Bourbon.

"Now as Mr. Fenton" (continues Lauder) "as well as Mr. Phillips, Milton's nephew, informs us that 'Paradise Lost' was first written, or intended to be written, in the form of a tragedy, wherein Satan was to pronounce the prologue, the judicious reader will perceive the probability of Milton's availing himself of this literary treasure. In self-defence, I
shall, if encouraged by the public, hereafter publish the whole tragedy in the original Latin.

This promise Lauder afterwards fulfilled, and in 1752, published his "Delectus Auctorum Sacrorum Miltono Facem Prælucentium," containing the "Adamus Exul" of Grotius, and Ramsay's "Poemata Sacra." Having procured Dr. Parr's copy of this work, now become very scarce,—being personally assured by the late Mr. Heber that it was a faithful copy of the original editions, which, he said, he had in his own library—and having carefully examined the internal evidences, the translator has no doubt respecting the authenticity of this tragedy. Nor has its genuineness, thus confirmed by various authorities, ever been disproved by Bishop Douglas, or other writers, who detected so many forgeries in other publications of Lauder.

In translating it, we have endeavoured to retain as much of the spirit and sense of the original as is consistent with poetical sentiment and expression. On the whole, it will be found no unjust representation of the original, though we have here and there taken the liberty to insert a few explanatory lines, and sometimes to contract that redundancy of detailed descriptions, now considered superfluous.

By thus bringing this most celebrated Tragedy to light, after its long eclipse, we hope to supply that necessary link in the series of Milton's authorities, which has hitherto been held a desideratum. If we have been at all successful in transfusing the genius and style of the original into the translation, the reader can hardly fail to perceive that religious sublimity, that moral thoughtfulness, that intellectual urgency, and manly simplicity, so strikingly characteristic of Grotius and Milton, and so miserably deficient in the poetry of the present day.

This peculiarity is well described by Professor Wilson:—"In Milton, (says he) the power of poetry seemed to expire; not merely because no voice like his was heard when his own voice had ceased, but because the very purposes of poetry seemed to be changed, and the demesnes of verse to be subjected to other faculties, and the sceptre past into unilineal hands. Milton, like his great predecessors, drew his poetry from the depths of his own spirit—brooding over nature and life—standing between the worlds of nature and man—and chanting to men the voice of his visions—a strain that, like a bright reflection of lovely imagery, discloses to the minds of others the glories and perfections that fell beautiful and numberless on his own. The great difference between the poetry of Milton and that of our own day, is the severe obedience to an intellectual law which governed his mind in composition. The study of his poetry would be as much a work of exact intellectual analysis as that of the logical writings of Aristotle. It is evident that he was not satisfied with great conception—it was not enough that language yielded her powerful words to invest those conceptions with a living form. But he knew that when he wrote he practised an intellectual art—that both the workings of imagination, and the vivid impression of speech, must be reduced to an order satisfying to the intelligence. And hence, in his boldest poetry, in the midst of wonder and astonishment, we never feel for a moment that reason is shaken from her sovereignty over the actions of the mind. We are made to feel, on the contrary, that her prevailing overruling power rises in strength and majesty as all the powers that are subject to
ADAMUS EXUL.

HADAMUS EXUL.

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS.

INTERLOCUTORS.

JEHOVAH.

SATAN.

CHOIR OF ANGELS.

ANGEL.

ADAM.

EVE.

ARGUMENT.

After the Aboriginal creation, and the lapse of Angels and Spirits, Man is placed in Paradise, and the command of this lower world allotted to him; while he is forbidden to eat of the fruit of the tree, symbolical of the knowledge of good and evil. Satan, under pretence of friendship, endeavours to
persuade Adam to break the command of Heaven; and then, under the figure of a Serpent, deceives Eve, by whose solicitation her husband also sins. After receiving the promise of Redemption; they are expelled from the Garden of Eden, and delivered over to Death and human calamities.

ACT I.

Satan. The sacred Thunderer's foe, exiled from Heaven,
    My native birthright and my home, I come,
    Urging my desolate disastrous flight
    From that Tartarean den, and the grim curse
    Of dawnless midnight. Hatred of all good
    Hath hurled me from the hereditary throne
    Of too unblest ambition,—sowing lies,
    And ripening damn'd sedition—terrible,
    Unuttered and unutterable fraud.
    Guilt is become my nature and my joy;
    I breathe essential vice; and most I seek
    For that selectest crime, which to conceive
    Is luxury; and yet horror that appals
    Great Satan's self. Aye, with this burning hope,
    Through all these starry labyrinths, I pursue
    My vengeance, and embark on fathomless seas,
    Girt by the vague shores of infinity.
    Like the devouring lion, famine-stung,
    That, howling in his muffled ire, lays bare
    The grisly chasm of his blood-stained teeth,
    So forth I fare; and, hoping 'gainst belief,
    To eclipse intensely misery, by the shade
    Of miseries more intense, shall I not gain
    Supremacy of ill, and so become
    Sole despot, tyrant, and o'er all extend
    The immense emblazed autocracy of Hell—
    A god of gods! Ah! can I be deceived?
    Even now methinks this poised and stedfast globe
    Reels, rocks, beneath my incumbent weight. 'Tis well;
    So let it be; so speed the fair design
    Of supereminent craft. The world shall hear,
    And hearing, blench and tremble. But, behold,
    That Eden of our search appears. The East,
    The effulgent Orient pours forth all his streams
    Down its precipitous sides tumultuously.
    Here the o'erflowing Phison issues forth,
    Araxes' royal tide, which clothes with green
    The Colchian plains, and clasps with strong embrace
    Havilah, and the Caspian land of gold,
    Bdellium, and onyx. Towards the southern shore,
    Flows Gihon, or Choaspes, down the vales
    Of Persian Susiana. By his side,
    Hiddekel; the swift Tigris rolls his waves;
And furthest west, the broad Euphrates spreads
His giant arms invincible, and fills
Chaldea with his richness. Here I view
The Elysium of the earth—the Paradise
Of spirits immortal; if not lapsed so far
In guilt as their lost brethren; soon to share
Our curse, and sharing lighten or remove.
Here the thick spicy groves repeat the voice
Of many-tuned zephyr, and each tree
Grows sensitive of ecstasy, and thrills
To his most subtle whisperings. Here the light
Sheds forth its radiant, scintillating smiles,
Burning yet bashfully, and gilds the air
With an ineffable pleasure. No damp cloud
Impends; nor from the vexed electric pole
Black tempests roar; no thunder-blasting strokes
Shake the sweet calm; nor triple lightnings dash
Their horrible vengeance o'er these happy bowers.
Here reigns perpetual spring, with dewy tears,
Dissolving the chill vapour, nor permits
Harsh winter's foul intrusion. Whatsoe'er
Is precious or desirable hath place
In this voluptuous empire. When the God
Had wrought the effulgent mechanism of heaven,
With glittering spheres unnumbered, and ordained,
In their harmonic periods, all the stars,
That his first works might not his last excel,
Like his own Son, divinest image and best,
Adam he formed; and man the wonderful,
From the small dust arose. To him he gave
Princedom and lordship o'er this planet Earth;
To him authority o'er all its kinds
Of living forms or dead. And to increase
The joy of this imperial son of clay,
An Eve, the mother of his tyrannous heirs,
Hath Heaven provided. Sooth to say, the world
Was rarely more surprised than when the bone
Of this sleep-cumbered Titan did assume
That feminine form of beauty, which her spouse
Declares his supereminent, his best,
First, last, in love-taught oratory. And now,
Both naked, walk this wilderness of sweets.
All modesty they have; but nought of shame,
It seems; for dreams of shame and infamy
Have yet disturbed them little. So they dwell
In worship, praise, glory, and innocence;
Smiling at death, pain, and the envenomed stings
That wait on guilt. Alas, my stricken soul!
Alas, my blasted heart! and my despair!
How much we differ now! Whence have we fallen?
What crime committed? We, the sons of God,
A TRAGEDY. — ACT I.

Coevals of the heavens, the fabricators
And charioteers of stars and satellites,
Unscathed by bickering tongues of fire; unchilled
By icy shuddering of remorse; uncased
In foul and dissoluble elements
Of rank materialism. We angels, then
Were gods, and mates for gods. But now we live,
If death and life be one, and coexist,
We live alone to torture. We are free
Only to drag the galling cankering chains
Of desperation tighter—to augment
Ruin by ruin, and for ever heap
Damnation on damnation. O that death
Were still discoverable—the dreamless sleep
Unknown as yet to human fear—to me
Is fancy’s chiefest bliss; and hopelessly
I hope to find perdition swallowed up
By blest annihilation, and all hell
Self-burned into oblivion, self-consumed.
That triple hell, in ether, ocean, earth,
Grows worse in every stage, even to the last.
There in the flaming centre of the globe,
That last worst mansion is, which to its maw
Insatiable all spirits lapsed, and robed
In matter doth impel. The cave of night,
The abyss of shadows, the unfathomed pit,
Yawns for its prey; and down its grim descent
A vortex of unutterable woe
For ever boils. Wild Horror’s self grows dumb
While the voraginous whirl of agonies
Rebellows thro’ the vaults of blank despair.
Hither heaven-blasting Lucifer was hurled:
Here Satan reigns o’er all his giant hosts
Of angel warriors, heroes but in vain;
For now the awakened and unquenchable wrath
Of the stern Thunderer wastes us, and becomes
Our omnipresent torture, which still goads
And galls and blisters. Conscience ever hurls
The metaphysical lightnings of remorse
Thro’ the vexed heart, the heart that inly bleeds
With anguish, yet repents not. Sometimes grief
And passionate rage by turns usurp the sway.
The criminal o’erwrought, and rung with pain,
Dares his great foe to battle, and defies
His worst of torments; for all change relieves
The sad monotony of woes eterne
As hell wherein we writhe. But most of all
Good company shall cheer us, and wild wail
Shall wear the charm of sympathy, at least
If craft can win what courage can but lose;
For this I stand in Eden. Adam lives,
No doubt, most genially, with his fair bride,
Rejoicing in safe wedlock: his whole soul
Is glorified within him, and he boasts
To fill my vacant throne, and be a god,
Or, like a god, among the immortals. I
Will work on his self-flattery. Not for this
Do I renounce my vengeance, till I wreak
My wrongs and griefs on him, whom to destroy
Shall vex the court of heaven. All peace forsworn
The unconquerable soul within me vows
Eternal war unsparing and unspared;
My violent heart o'ercharged with direst curse,
Burns to inflict the infliction. I will bring
His proud soul under, or be double damned.
Doth he not mock me, laugh to bitter scorn
My prowess and assaulting, while, with brow
Of worship and calm reverence, he pursues
The steep ascent to heaven. Satan, beware!
Beware in time; be watchful, else this butt
Of thy supreme chicanery shall assume
The post among the immortals, which he holds
With such propriety of lordly grace
Amid the earth-sprung legions. Then, indeed,
Unhappy Lucifer, thou might'st indulge
The crimson blush of impotent shame, to find
Thy vacant thrones and palaces on high
Filled by these dust-born insolents. Awake!
Arise! proud fiend; bestir thy battailous strength—
O arm of power, unmatched of all but one—
And crush the pitiful fools, who thus attempt
To ape, to insult their noblers; who, like dwarfs,
Would ride on prostrate giants, famed of old.
Hell! I invoke thee! Ye Tartarean powers
Lend me your blasting influence. And ye, too,
Chaos and Night, your emulous arms array;
Thrones, dominations, all from heaven accursed,
Therefore with me confederate and conjoined,
And hurl one mingled ruin on the foe.
Let Pride, o'erwhelming and invincible Pride,
Marshal our ranks; and infidel Blasphemy,
And Error's pitchy shade; Ambition, Strife,
The insatiable avarice of new gains; the lust
Of riotous appetites, the faith of lies
And levity, credulous of things unknown,
These be our ministry, our harbingers
Of Victory. Pests and plagues, ye snaky train,
Ye clinging curses, ye soul-blinkering stings,
Burst your infernal gaol; come one, come all,
In your black pomp of horrors, and invade
This Paradise of Earth. With venomous frauds
Stir the clear soul of man; with goading thoughts
A TRAGEDY.—ACT I.

And carking cares assault him. Let no art
Of malice be forgot. In Eden's bound
Hath God two trees, of Life and Knowledge, placed.
The first, of faith symbolic, he permits
Adam to eat; the other he denies,
Lest eating, he grow wise in that sad lore,
Knowledge of good and ill, and good by ill,
Which we have proved full bitter, for with this
Is death inseparably linked. E'en here
The broad Euphrates flows, and on his banks
This fair and notable tree, with leafy hair
Splintering the purple day-beam. On each branch
The odorous and spirit-tempting fruit
Hangs lusciously: the colour, burnished gold,
Raptures the eye, and wakes refined desire
To taste the inviting store voluptuously.
But God forbids to touch, much more to pluck,
The delicate banquet; and his fixed command
Hath ratified by penalties of death.
As yet this man is innocent, unshamed
By aught of vice; he walks the middle track
Of virtue: yet in vain self-confidence,
Whene'er he lists, may turn to each extreme.
When Satan blows the wind, shall it not bend
This strained freewill, so boasted, yet so frail?
On this I build my hope; for on this warped,
This weak, this blind, this hoodwinked side of man,
Will I begin the assault. Here I obtest
Thee, my presiding genius. All thy powers
Of infinite invention, and each art,
Graceful to cheat, and flattering to destroy;—
If man's temptation-proof, not so his spouse.
Him I'll befool by her; for lighter far
Her soul, and more fantastic, sound command
Prone to forget, and mischief apt to learn,
And variable as fancy. Much she longs
Herself to indulge, and in o'erweening hope,
Preoccopies high things; and most she loves
All gifts denied her: all habitual goods
With her grow stale, and pall upon her sense;
While with preposterous curiosity
She probes the unknown, and doats upon the strange.
Already sick of permanent bliss, and tired
Of blest repose, her rash inconstancy,
Her hot ambition, and the unmatchable hue
Of these mysterious and most magical fruits—
All, all are in my favour: and without
These friendly adjuncts, could I else but win
The Devil 'gainst the Woman, shrewd enough
Without my aid to cull the flowers of sin.
But will she hear me, one whom she esteems
So ugly, spiteful, horrible, and black;
Or lend the amicable womanly ear
To her foul foe? Nay, in my righteous soul
I must dissimulate hatred, I must cloak
The goblin to the heel; for he who cheats
Too openly, doth aid the antagonist most,
And wrong himself much more. He ne'er can give
Malice fair play, who doth not malice hide.
'Tis easy love to feign; and she who takes
Feigned love for true, doth lie to her own soul.
Too credulous hope is but self-mockery;
But if quite firm in goodness, if self-will
For once befriends her, and her placable ear
Is obstinately denied me, in new forms,
New shows of blandishment, will I succeed.
No eye of mortal can the subtle fiend
So finely masked discern, no hand detect
The inscrutable demon. Such a form I'll try,
Form without substance, a pure phantasm only
Of plausible beauty; for if ghostly thing
Doth dress itself in body, and assume
Aught of material lineament, at once
The imposture shall be proved. I will avoid
This marplot of ambition, and connect
My diabolical mind with that lapsed soul
Of undiscoverable craft which fills
The serpent and his sons. And thus unknown,
My lubricating snakeship will I wind
Cunningly onward, and, observing all,
Traverse this haunted garden, self-involved,
In mazy complications. I can coil,
And turn, and turn, and go straight on. Sweet words
Must hang upon my triple-forked tongue,
From which the honied prodigality
Of guile, into her ear distilling, shall
So metamorphose her, she shall become
All appetite to taste, all hand to pluck
The golden ruin. Wherefore more delay?
This very day, this hated man shall like
A god o'errule me, or a beast subserve.

**Chorus of Angels.**

They who from the ethereal height
Of heaven, audaciously despise
Those beings of a lowlier flight,
Who dwell beneath more dusky skies,
Beware; beware, ye proud ones, lest
Like one our pure lips never name;
Ye learn how sweet the immortal rest
Only by contrast with the pain
A TRAGEDY.—ACT I.

Of sleepless agonies.

Lo he
Who late in heaven resplendent shone,
Now writhes in wordless ecstasy
Of woes, unpitied and unknown.
He who refused to call his God
More than his equal, now is cast,
By all despised, by all abhor'd,
To weep for glories ever past
From his lost soul.

How like the star
Of orient day, once beamed he forth,
Dazzling all eyes, and scattering far
His burning splendours south and north;
Like Lucifer, the prince of light,
He led the morning stars along;
Now Hesperus, of ominous night,
His sole compeers, the infernal throng,
He walks in darkness.

Happy they
Who like the unfallen angels dwell,
And celebrate their Deity,
With voice of music's choral swell,
From Heaven's empyreal citadel
Where God is light. Whose truth and love
Are sun and moon; whose genial rays
Send rapture thro' all hearts above,—
The voiceless joy,—the sweet amaze.

But he, alas! how sad the dream
Of our fallen brother, outcast, lost;
Who glides on the portentous gleam
Of bursting meteors, shattered, crost;
Whose wild, oblique, and quivering course
Rocks the firm poles, and hurrying by,
With passion-winged remorseless force
Scares the bright armies of the sky,
Dancing perpetual jubilee.

And now he goes, in all his power
Of blasted treachery, to abuse
That human race, which to this hour
Is holy, just. Will these refuse
The fair seduction? Will they stand?
Or, like our lapsed and exiled foes,
Sink from the glory and command
Of virtue, to the accursed woes
Which crush the apostate and the damned?
ACT II.

Adam. The day arises, and the trooping shades
Of night are scattered. Lo, the orient sun,
With golden frontlet, glitters o'er the hills,
And all the stars hide their diminished heads.
O how immense is He, who steadfast, fixed
With his unseen and thunder-grasping hand,
Rolls the celestial axle, and its poles,
Whereon the multitudinous universe
Of gorgeous constellations still revolves,
Most musically eloquent! They praise
The law of Him the omnipotent, and weave
Eternal harmonies of mind and thought,
Nature, and time, and season. Like a hymn
Of visible worship, doth their choral pomp
Spell-bind the soul. It is the heart's own voice,
Heard by the heart alone, while in the ear
Silence is tranced with mystery. Still, methinks,
The immeasurable armament of stars,
This host of heaven, with wordless melodies sweet,
Solicit man's devotion, and awake
Ambition more divine—the emulous thirst
Of fame, like theirs the immortals, which indeed
Might have been ours, or yet perchance may be.

Angel. O happy those, in whom the image of God
Ingrafted in the heart, daily expands
Its boundless aspirations; on whom faith
And holiest veneration, and no less
The metaphysical intellect and discourse
Of reason have been lavished! Dost thou see,
Father of men, how vastly thou excellest
All thy terrestrial subjects? Thou hast mind,
The imperishable luxury of gods,
Thou immortality of hope. Behold
Thy gifts of conscience, reason, active power
Of self-producing, self-combining all
Innate ideas of intellectual truth,
Intelligible abstract principles,
Illimitably applicable. These,
With minds in matter more involved, show forth
Much less of moral instinct; oft the sport
Of passive and particular phantasies,
Which to combine they know not, nor apply
To more than small experience doth enforce,
Or smaller wants solicit. So much they
Beneath thy scope have lapsed, and been ordained
Thy servants, their free service usefully
To employ, tho' of abuse responsible.
Adam. Blessed be God! the eternal God and Sire
Of gods and men. His omnipresence fills
All minds, all bodies; no beginning, he
No end doth know; no equal, in all else
The self-omniscent. Unto him no form
But light, and but infinitude no place;
God's life, it is eternity; his end
His proper possibility. All hail!
Paternal and imperishable God!
One, only One, thou dwellest, yet dost contain,
In unity, tri pecity of minds,
Powers, and relations. O majestic Fount
Of Goodness! Origin of vital Truth!
Thy divine Son and Wisdom, unto whom
Wishes are works. He, whatsoever ill
With wings of gloom o'er casts the unwary soul,
Dispels; and with the ever genial spirit of love,
Doth soothe all sorrows, and all sins forgive.

Angel. Well hast thou spoken, O Adam! God in thee
His image hath infused, and therewithal
Divinest truths which teach thee what he is;
Him know we but in part—Himself alone
Himself throughout discerns—the which he views,
And viewing doth admire; enjoys all good
Which creatures share in fragments of delight.
Yes, God is supreme Mind, the Spirit that fills
The universe, impregnates and informs;
He is the Truth; all truth he therefore knows.
All good is He; He is the cause of good,
Which like an emanation doth proceed
From its unfathomable source. We stand
Nearest to Him, his chosen ministers,
Cherub and seraph, archangelic powers,
Who work His will; but in His holy sight
Heaven is not pure, and we, with folly charged,
Blush, and with veiling wings our brows o'ershade;
O how remorsefully; and far removed
From that most incommunicable fire,
Which, Iris-like, involves the unconquered throne.
Such are his ministers, and such are yours,
For he doth send us to you, to protect
Your worship and your innocence; and thus
We pass 'twixt heaven and earth, 'twixt earth and heaven,
Viewless and momentarily. Yet not the less
Pure indivisible minds, which though indeed
Not gifted with ubiquity, are here
And there, as instantaneously as light.
Adam, how boundless our felicity,
Thou may'st conceive, may'st feel. Still be it ours
To will even as God wills, and urgently
Work out his just commands—his praise extol,
Cherish his love, and learn his hidden truth,
Which secret things makes manifest, and search
Its works, which are the index of the power
Which formed them so resplendent, and preserves.

Adam. Truth is in all thy words; and since the day
Of my mysterious birth in this new sphere,
Wherein I wakened and beheld a world
Of vital miracles round me, hath my soul
Burned with a still yet quenchless appetite
To know the occult philosophy of things.
Stupid, and crushed with ignorance, I live,
Not in myself, but in the vague amaze
Of all external marvels. O my guide,
If thy swift-thinking passion-stirring mind
One vacant hour can idle, ah disperse
This thick cloud of wild wonder, and instruct
With angel-wisdom a poor child of clay!

Angel. O Adam, One Almighty Word there is!
He from his still eternity went forth,
And did with intellectual plastic power
Inform that spiritual element, which none
Can understand, whether divine or not,
Whose form is Nature, and whose course is Time.
From hence the immortal Chorus, sons of God,
The angelic host arose, and with them sprung,
Adapted to their minds, those physical stars
Of morning, which did sing Creation’s birth.
Thus was God’s primitive universe all light,
All glory, all renown, till Lucifer,
Chief of the angel guardians of the stars,
Rebelled in heaven, and grisly war disturbed
The prime crystalline spheres. Michael opposed,
With all the heroic loyalty of heaven,
The apostate foe; and him, with all his powers
Of impious demons and Titanian stars,
Hurled from the effulgent centre. Hence arose
The purgatorial gulf of exiled Nature,
Chaos and Night, the immeasurable mass
Of mixed material elements, and forms
Shattered in ominous ruin. Then at last
The Spirit of God moved on the murky face
Of the confused abyss, and, with the swift
And thought-winged powers that work the Almighty’s will,
The lapsed intelligences of fallen worlds
Roused from their torpid trance; and these disposed
Over new suns and planet earths to prove
Moral probation, such as best befits
Immortal souls in mortal forms confined.
The best of these that least had forfeited
Their once angelic attributes, he placed
In pleasant places, Gardens of Paradise,
Whether ethereal, or with matter mixed,
Like this thy earthly Eden. But the rest,
Satan, and those his diabolic fiends,
Stung by intenser guilt, these worse chastised
In air, and sea, and subterranean gloom,
Rage, but repent not. Oh of these beware,
For their sole aim is to seduce to ill
Returning souls aspiring after heaven;
Nor fraud nor force are spared how to ensnare
The unwary pilgrim, and his hope destroy.

Adam. Methinks I understand thee, how the vast
And gorgeous constellations we behold
At midnight, and their filial families,
Rose into being. Now, O seraph, say
Whence our peculiar system, whence our sun,
Our planets, earths, comets, and satellites,
Sprung in their order, like the hosts above.

Angel. When the ethereal universe of stars
Had full four times revolved, the fiery source,
The vital flame and principle of things
Gathered itself towards thy solar sphere,
And stirred the floating atmosphere, and all
Aerial fluid elements around
To swiftest vortices. From hence the birth
Of all your system sprung. Your glittering sun,
Your planet earths, on fixed harmonic scale
Revolving, and their satellites, and those
Mysterious cometary bands which sweep
The purple hollowness of heaven, and plunge
Through fierce extremes of blistering heat and cold
Alternately, and with tumultuous fears
Perplex the peaceful denizens of heaven;
All these, with spiritual agencies,
And elemental powers invincible,
Are furnished, and no less with living souls
In various forms invested, masked, disguised,
And carcerated in matter, which to learn,
And their strange destinies, thy restless thought
Shall ever seek and ever hope to find.

Eve. O my immortal spouse, my best delight,
My solace, I have sought thee far and near—
Among our bowers of bliss; I cannot live
But in thy presence; with thee I inhale
The element of living love, but torn
From thee I faint, my feeble pulse forgets
Its joyous dance, I languish, and I die.

Adam. Soul of my soul, life of my life, my Eve,
My own heart-born sole partner, without whom
Ease could not soothe, and pleasure cannot please,
How doubled is my rapture, when I share
Rapture with thee, and, by imparting, gain.
Alone with his Great Maker, man may be
O'erwhelmed in solemn ecstasies, and seem
To lose himself amidst the thrilling awe,
The keen sweet horror of delight, which fills
Cherub and seraph. But the human heart
Hath thought and feeling far too frail and mixed
For the pure unity of Godhead. These
We pant to share, we agonise to pour,
The treasured tenderness of aching breasts
On our own bright similitudes who thirst
Thus to receive and give. This fond desire,
Dearer than all enjoyment, this wrought tide
Of passionate anxieties doth make
The element of love, the bliss of bliss;
Such my serene experience, since I lay
In that most death-like slumber, and did dream
Of some fair angel-creature like to thee,
And woke and found thee fairer than all dreams.

Eve. Thy words are more than music; thou to me
Art all in all of blessing. All things sweet
With thee and thy dear smile, without thee seem
To lose their proper nature, and become
Harsh and embittered as the name of death.

Adam. So last our mutual love, so burn the fire
Of worship, and this passion-glowing charm,
On the heart's stainless altar. Hand in hand,
And soul in soul, commixed, we 'll venerate
The name of Him, the Author of our joys;
Him, our first love, our last; his laws obey,
Emulous in sweet rivalry of praise,
And never let a vain or impious wish
Seek the forbidden fruitage. Ah, methinks
I hear, on the soft billows of the wind,
Ethereal music streaming! List! e'en now
The angelic choirs hold jubilee, and sing.

Chorus of Angels.
Father of all! thy boundless praise
Eternal, yet for ever new,
We celebrate in symphonies
Of choral hymns. Upon the blue
Waves of this earthly atmosphere
The voice of our outgushing love
Floats joyously, for Thou art here
Present, as in the stars above.
A TRAGEDY.—ACT II.

Thee the sun doth ever sing,
Glorious in his giant might,
Girding with electric ring
Each thunder-belted satellite;
In his blaze we seraphs fly,
Light and love in every plume,
And from his beams all earnestly
Drink living splendors, and relume
The faded hues of ecstasy.

Thee the starry hosts obey,
Dancing in their mazy mood;
Earth’s far planet owns thy sway
In its exiled solitude.
O thou central Home of rest,
North, and south, and east, and west,
Point to thee, the first, the best;
Bless thy bounty, and are blest!

Thee, the breezy zephyr calls,
Waving light his viewless fan;
Thee, the roaring seneschals
Of tempest and mad hurricane,
Invoke. The flashing lightnings dance
Before thee, and grim thunders play,
But harm not the fair countenance
Of earth on this her natal day.

Mountain-torrents clap their hands,
Mighty rivers sound thy praise,
Wandering streams of every land,
Murmuring thro’ their tangled ways,
Towards the great ocean,—azure glass
Of the eternal skies around,
O’er which the entranced spirits pass,
Mingling strange voices with its sound.

When liquid day comes glittering through
The golden vistas of the dawn,
Man and his subject race anew
Rise up, exulting in fresh morn:
And every fierce and savage brood,
That nightly blood-stained revels swell,
Glide to their forest solitude,
And all day long keep centinel.

Here, by the heavenward hills supplied
With living waters, thou dost make
Sweet fountains gush on every side,
In which wild beasts eagerly slake
Their thirst; and o’er their shining way
Poetic birds rejoicing sing,
And fill the vocal woods all day
With music’s loveliest echoing.
And ever as the enlarging flood
Sweeps thro' the plain or vallies deep,
Glad herds of cattle gather food,
And glittering flocks of snow-white sheep;
There fruits and flowers perpetual bloom,
And golden harvest, oil and wine,
Rich store, whereby fell famine's doom
Is banished from this earthly line.

All and each, through years untold,
Shall flourish forth, and, flourishing,
Add gift to gift, till time grows old,
When the tired ages fold their wing,
And fade into the eternity,
From whence fresh glories ever burst,
Never exhausted; for the first,
Midmost, and last, all equally
Praise forth the ineffable Deity.

Satan comes to blast the ball,
Shall he conquer, shall he fall?

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ACT III.

Satan. I see my foe approaching, with proud steps
Haughty and self-collected. Now the hour
Is ripe for my revenge—he comes alone,
His heaven-descended guardian hath retired
From his frail impotent charge, and now he falls,
Unaided, undefended. With the cords
Of errors quite inextricable I
Will fetter his doomed soul—the snare is laid—
Beneath the mask of well dissembled love
Hatred lies coiled and basking. Even now,
With greedy and insatiable thirst of blood,
My teeth I grind, impatient to devour.
Ah, but I'll watch the occasion—like the wolf,
With fiery glistening eyes and lips of foam,
Watches the feeble sheep. Afar he stands,
Silent in keen resolve, and hesitating,
Suspends the uplifted step till now he sees
His prey more favourably exposed to fate,
Then speeds his stealthy course exultingly,
Bristles his ragged locks, and half reveals
The grisly horror of his gory tusks.—
So let me deal with man—and so disguise
The immedicable wound with honied words.
A TRAGEDY.—ACT III.

(Adam enters).

Lord of the earth, and emperor of the sea!
Adam, majestic Adam, let me kiss
Thy princely hand, and bow me at thy feet.
Ah! wherefore frown'st thou—rather on me bend
Thy genial smile benignant—for me too
The Almighty formed thy elder brother, high
Above thee throned, amid the glittering spheres
Of spirit-robing ether.—And thy God
Vouchsafed me the choice privilege to lead
A thousand, thousand friends. Now he forsakes,
And those perfidious and forsworn comppeers
Desert me too—blind followers of blind chance;
But thou august, indulgent, too benign
To harbour weak resentment, thee I sue
For pity if not friendship, and implore
The eternal pledge of amity, the bond
Of fellowship—But why that cloudy brow?

Adam. Accursed of God, avaunt, detested fiend,
Rebellious and perfidious, execrable;
Avaunt, begone, nor with polluted touch,
Stain this immaculate form. The friends of Heaven
Are mine, none else—Away, blaspheming One,
Fly to thy own fit Hell, and never more
Blast my pure sight, with infamy unnamed.

Satan. Why is thy heart so hardened, so perturbed
With hate and headstrong passion? knowst thou not
That these are evil?—anger, envy, fear,
Can make none good or happy. Let thy soul
Know that prime art of wisdom, how to put
The best construction on suspicious things;
Therefore be favourable—at least be fair.

Adam. Great Heaven shall fall, and all the glittering stars
Come crushing on the affrighted earth—the sea
Shall burn like one unmeasured lake of fire,
And from its bickering flames, the cooling drops
Of limpid water sweat. Euphrates' self
Shall backward roll his many-volumed tides,
And mingle with the Tigris, sooner far
Than peace or faith or charitable love,
'Twixt thee and me, accursed, and forsworn.
Such sweet society as wolves and lambs
Combine, this shall be ours, nor less, nor more,
While on the many-heaving breezy waves
Of the ethereal sky, Aurora drives
Her purple wheels, and silent-pacing Night
Doth in her starry mantle wrap the earth,
Such be our compact, our confederacy.
Satan. O spare thyself this thunder! Mighty chiefs
Like thee should waste no strength on feeble foes,
They who wage war on weak, and on base things,
Themselves are baser. Mark the forest king—
The lion—dost thou ever see him spoil
Poor sheep, or rend the innocent bleating lamb?
No, he disdains such conquest, but he loves
To engage the rival lion of his hate
In his swollen rage, or grapple to the death
With the throat-throttling tiger, or grim bear,
Sparing the weak and trampling on the strong.
Thou thinkst that I can harm thee—lay aside
This idle terror, this ridiculous fright
Of one so lost, so fallen—one so base,
So little worthy of your hate, and make
This most political compact without fear.

Adam. Thou sayst right well, thou art not worth my hate,
Much less, foul demon, art thou worth my love.

Satan. Nay, nay, not quite so abject; let no vain
Or false conceit delude thee. We have store
Of wit and counsel, power and agency
Thou little reckst of; but perchance mayst need
Hereafter on occasion. God, forsooth,
Hath robbed us of good luck, and the fair smiles
Of fortune: but he hath not yet despoiled
The antique glory of our souls, the full
Keen armoury of thought made thunder-proof,
Nor yet the invincible will to dare or do.
Ay, and we still have kingdoms, princedoms, powers,
Gorgeously bright, right glowing, tho' too low
To suit our aspirations. God, meanwhile,
Sits thundering thro' his empty halls of heaven—
There let him reign. To thee a better sway,
O'er this fair earth, he yields—the purple air,
The immeasurable and hollow-sounding main,
And all that it inhabit. Unto us
Belongs the nether empire, which the gods
Do courteously call Hell and Tartarus—
Such is the subterranean territory
We exiled heroes hold. Here the august
Titanic brood of murmuring demons wield
The sceptre over Chaos, and the shades
Of the jarred elements,—now let us rule
Together, as our kingdoms stand so nigh.

Adam. Whate'er the Thunderer gave to me and mine
Of lordship or authority, he gave
But on condition of pure stainless faith
And fealty to Him. This we maintain
Rejoicing, and, still serving him, desire
No other service, nor impatient seek
To extend our proper bounds, thinking all gained
By impious disobedience worse than lost.

*Satan.* But who but fools good offers will refuse?

*Adam.* They who their virtue prize above all gifts.

*Satan.* To wage perpetual war can profit none.

*Adam.* Thou canst not harm me, hoping, fearing nought.

*Satan.* But our confederacy may profit both;
   He that relieves misfortune is twice blest.

*Adam.* But piety is blest, and nought beside.

*Satan.* And what religion bars an honest bargain?

*Adam.* Confederacy in vice you compact call.

*Satan.* Most truly; since whatever now is mine
   Will then become your own unalterably.

*Adam.* Ah, thou hast nought but evil to bestow.

*Satan.* I 'll never hurt, but help you when I can.

*Adam.* And what security have I for this?

*Satan.* I promise, swear, pledge, and engage myself.

*Adam.* An exile, an apostate, and a devil!

*Satan.* I swear by the great name of the Eternal.

*Adam.* Whom thou of latedidst seek to hurl from heaven!

*Satan.* Ay, but his wrath would follow broken vows.

*Adam.* Thou fearest pain it seems, tho' not transgression.

*Satan.* I like to assist my friends now grown too few.

*Adam.* That with thee they may perish, is it not?

*Satan.* Since with this pertinacious insolence
   Peace thou refusest, crossing fair design,
   Now learn my hate, my vengeance. I will plague
   Thy blind soul with the vehement craft of hell,
   And thy pride-bloated impudence chastise
   As with a scorpion scourge. Aye, know me now
   Thy everlasting foe, damning and damned,
   Smitten and smiting, crushed and crushing all—
   Ay, know me now. By day I will beset
   Thy path with torturing doubts, even when thou prayest;
   By night I 'll watch beside thee, and distil
   Such diabolical spirit-racking dreams
   On thy sick phantasy, that thou shalt start
   From haunted couch, and think thyself in hell;
Thou, who deniest my fellowship, shalt feel
How sweet my vengeance, and how blest my doom.

Adam. Begone, accursed deceiver, savage fiend;
Monster, begone; I dread thee not, nor heed
Thy impotent rage! The God in whom I trust
Hath with his favour, as a triple shield,
Girded my heart; thy fury I defy,
For, fearing God alone, I nothing fear
Thee or thy exiled demons—hence, away!

Satan. Thou shalt be exiled too—if not to day.

Chorus of Angels.
The stream of Eden nobly flows,
And on its banks of emerald green
Each glorious tree of pure life grows;
The plant of knowledge shines between,
And hangs its golden-tinged fruit
To tempt, alas, and to destroy!—
Such knowledge, sure, can never suit
Immortal hope or mortal joy!

Adam reposes in the shade,
His brow with laurel chaplet bound,
With his espoused matchless maid;
He listens to the harmonic sound
Of falling leaves, and fleeting waves,
And light birds’ singing, wild and free,
While in his joyous heart he braves
All sorrow, doubt, despondency.

O man! thou wonderful and fair,
Pensive and passion-taming king
Of this new planet, we can share
In all thy bright imagining,
Ah never let the shade of ill
Wither the bloom or mar the bliss!
But be as pure and tranquil still
In unborn ages as in this
Sweet hour of perfect blessedness.

Ye too, who born of grosser dust,
Children of your mother clay,
Whose souls are doomed to quench the lust
Of cursed ambition, day by day,
In solid forms of quick decay,
Chaunt your praise to him who lends
So much enjoyment to a life
Which once, and now, wild passion blends
With desolating guilt and strife.
Ah! the foe is hastening on  
To the stern work of blood and tears;  
The dread ordeal is begun  
Which waking our longings and our fears.  
Will these glorious beings foil  
The keen temptation, or be cast  
To grief and suffering and harsh toil?  
Soon the trial will be past!

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ACT IV.

Eve. What animal is this that coils and winds  
His oblique course toward me? How he rears  
Alone his scaly, mottled head; and forth  
Launches his triple tongue: his glittering eye  
Glares with an indescribable fire, that burns  
And scintillates, and seems to scorch my soul  
With horrible fascination. Now his neck,  
Burnished with many-flashing gold, he bends,  
And swells his purple breast, whereon bright stars  
Flash, dazzling with strange lustre. Now he rests  
His cheek upon his flexile neck, and looks  
In cautious calmness round him; while, behind,  
His length of tail against the opposing light  
Burns like a fallen comet. Whate'er  
His name or nature, this way straight he comes,  
And spreads his mazy labyrinths athwart  
My chosen path, and with his spiral coils  
Surrounds me. Lo, he lifts his sparkling head,  
And doth address himself to motion like  
As he would speak;—I wonder if he can!

Satan. Ay, I can speak: my tongue shall ne'er be dumb  
In thy fair service. Goddess, Queen of Earth!  
I do protest my soul's best homage due:  
And it delights me well thus to have fallen  
Beneath so exquisite a regency  
Of love and beauty; and with me no less,  
Whate'er the involving amplitude of air  
Contains of choice or precious. For we all  
(Though not with equal eloquence of voice)  
Rejoice in such a princess. Lady fairest,  
'Tis sweet to obey maternal majesty  
Like thine; to bow to godlike human sway,  
Not cruel, insolent tyrants. Here, indeed,  
Reason doth rule our rulers; and her rule  
Is freedom and delight. One thing alone  
Doth much amaze thy subjects—that the Power  
Sometimes invoked as Giver of all good
(Forsooth, his favourite title), should forbid
To eat the very fruits his bounty gave.
Can envy such as this so vilify
Celestial minds; can he who did bestow
A planet thus refuse one little garden?

_Eve._ Yet hath He given us all things to enjoy
Most generously. He gives the tree of Life,
Of which we eat, and live immortally.
So bountiful a King would not deny
This sole exception but for reason good;
Nor else would he have warned us that to eat
The plant of this false knowledge shall destroy
Our best apotheosis, and reveal—
That dark strange mystery—the doom of death.

_Satan._ Nay, nay; believe it not. Can thy clear soul,
Thy fine fixed intellectual reason, dream
So vain a phantasy? Canst thou suppose
That on the loss of one poor pitiful apple
Death shall ensue? Consider, can those die
Whom God to everlasting life foredooms?
All things by one eternal fate are swayed:
We work but things foreseen, and we endure
None but foreknown calamities. For thus
Divine decrees of prescience ever stand
Read through all causes, wrought in all effects—
Unalterable series, settled order,
And dire necessity, in one vast stream
Compel our dim futurities. If these
Have willed your death, prepare yourselves to die;
If they have not willed, wherefore should you fear
To pluck this mystic fruitage? Therefore think
No more of this vain spectral phantasm,
This idle bugbear. No, believe me, death
Is nothing but perpetual change; no more
Than sweet variety; still opening new
Bright metamorphoses of raptured soul—
Metempsychosis, and the exquisite scale
Of gorgeous transmigrations. All that is
Shall live, and cannot perish, though it seem
To die a thousand deaths; for life and death
Alternate every day and every hour.
These sympathetic contraries, these fond
Antitheses of being, now embrace
And now contend, and now embrace again.
Nay, death itself is life, and life is death:
Each is the source of other, and the grave—
Death is but nature; 'tis no punishment:
'Twere folly, cowardice, to dread a thing
So genial and so very common. True,
You may just possibly die; but if you die,
Into new life you rise, more glorious far
Than this which you renounce. This is the law
Of living souls and all corporeal forms—
To soar towards perfection, to ascend
The eternal scale of being. But, perhaps,
You dream that in this death the soul may fall
Under the lash of vengeance. Idle terror!
Sure, the free soul was made to act, not bear
Mere passive sufferings. Indivisible spirit,
Having no parts, can lose none: it subsists
Whole in itself; is its own place, own time,
Nor seeks abroad the life it grants at home—
It is its own beginning, its own end.
Nor do I think it possible that God
Meant to forbid the least of all his gifts
But for some limited season. For who dares
To question this, that every work of His
Must in itself be good, and be approved
By his most gratified creatures? Wherefore, then,
Refuse to approve this blessing? Not in vain
This largess was bestowed, nor yet the taste,
The exquisite, the unutterable gust
Of pleasurable appetite, which still
Follows such dainty banqueting. If these,
The gifts of nature, longer you refuse,
You blame the giver, and despise the gift.

Eve. Yet God forbids us, for what subtle cause
I know not, or for none; but he forbids—
That is enough. I do remember well
This great, this sole condition of our bliss
Prescribed us, and indelibly impressed
On my heart's memory. God may well dispose
Of his own gifts even as his will ordains.

Satan. Why gave He not this same exception, then,
When He committed to your queenly hands
The rule o'er earth and ocean? This, indeed,
This was a tree of value, not made vain
By such repulsive clause and codicil.
If it be just and equitable thus
To give with barred provisos and strange bans,
'Tis not, methinks, o'er-generous. God, at least,
May quit this foul condition, if he be
Indeed so liberal, so beneficent
As you report Him. But bethink thee well;
Some greater mystery than aught you dream
Attends this limitary check. Perhaps
He envies you the magical, marvellous bliss,
This same fruit may contain; and it may be
He wishes to retain for private use
This lore of good and evil. O, my soul!
What odious servitude, base slavery,  
Served thus by one who serves Himself alone!
He, sure, is evil who is never good
But for his proper self and interest.
And is He, then, so bountiful, so kind,
Who gives such glorious benefits, and then
Reserves their use for His peculiar gain
And profit? O, intolerable yoke!
Richer than He is none, none less benign—
The Tyrant of the Thunder! Dost thou know
How lately He did crush, with His dire hate,
Ten thousand bands of all the heroic youth
Of peopled Heaven? their fortunate estate
Their only crime, their dauntless bravery
His terror and revenge. He hurled the storm
Of His all-withering, three-forked thunderbolts,
Full on their matchless phalanx, and pursued,
With His hot, sulphurous, spirit-blistering shafts,
Even to the gate of Hell, the infernal cave
Of madness and despair. Generous, forsooth!
Doth He not stop the ear of merciless wrath
When the fallen legions pray, and moan in prayer,
And, writhed in weltering agony, confess
Their fault, if fault there be, which, as unknown,
They know not to repent? Thus hath He done;
What He will do hereafter lies in night.
Be wise by our misfortune. If He loves
Mankind, as you imagine, He will not
Surely torment you with the fear of death;
And if He love you not, beware in time;
Delay not one poor instant, but shake off
This tyrannous yoke of bondage. Hold your own,
And vindicate yourselves; bravely maintain
Your proper rights, the rights of your own world.
This is not the celestial court, nor here
The ethereal armies fix their starry camp
Of radiant vigilance. Be bold, be firm,
Banish your impotent terrors; never yet
Was peril but by peril overcome:
Courage alone is safety, when all things
Grow hazardous and teem with difficulties.

Eve. O, but I cannot think the God of Heaven
Can thus with jealousy be stung, or be
So wrung with passion for another's good!
For He who gives us these hath all to give.
Can the eternal Lord of the bright stars
Envy our little honours? What His wrath
To Satan or his horrible damned crew
May work is naught to me, though I suppose
Their punishment is just, nor undeserved.
But thou, mysterious one, whose mental power
Seems conversant with wonders, canst thou tell
What hidden virtues in this tree reside?

_Satan._ Its very name may teach thee. Is it not
The immortal, the inexplicable bliss
Of knowledge, perfect knowledge? How divine
To know all good and evil; to discern
All mysteries, like a god, in this new world!
Evil is only evil when unknown;
Known, it refines to good. What happiness,
What intellectual rapture, to compel
Into one gorgeous focus all the charms
Of knowledge, elsewhere scattered, vague, confused!
By this keen sight to make the universe
Transparent as fine ether; by this vision,
To see all causes, all effects conjoined
In their superb complexity! O Queen
Of Earth! say, is it not the chiefest good
To know all godlike truth, all evil lies,
So as to mock deception, and deride
The assaults of demon tempters? To the mind
This world is but one glittering mirror, which
Reflects its swift ideas, and refines
And multiplies with Iris-tinctured hues.
Is not the height of strong intelligence
Thus to anatomise all things, and from all
Educe new powers occult? The more it finds
More earnestly it seeks, and spurns at rest—
That empty, pitiful calmness of content.
It tramples with ambition-wingèd feet
The low, base boundaries of mortality,
Burns to know more, and bursts the bars of fate,
And death itself, to explain the august unknown.
All that it has is nothing to the intense
Glorious concupiscence of all it wants—
Always the greater share. One God there is,
Whose mind, without this enterprise of toil,
Can form its own ideas, and vindicate,
None daring him to question. Thus He knows,
Or thinks He knows, all arts and sciences.
Who shall disprove him by the test of fact?
He stands alone. To other thinking souls,
Either he grants not power to apprehend
The fair discourse of reason, or he grants
This boon of liberal thought, all manacled,
Halt, withered, blind, perplexed with chafing doubts,
Haggard with fears, hoodwinked from heaven's free light,
Masked in incomprehensibility.
By the same words in which he promises
This blessing, in postponed futurity,
Doth he deny it now? Then break you off
The terms of the agreement, and forestall
At once these promised honours. What stern heaven
Denies so niggardly this generous tree
Shall instant yield you. Dare but this one act,
And share the secret of the Deity.
Ay, well he knows, when once this pregnant fruit
Shall pass your lips, therewith your souls shall gain
Such inaccessible brightness, as shall melt
The last faint cloud of error, doubt, and dread.
Then shall ye be as gods, knowing yourselves,
All things which swell magnificence of power,
Beauty, and grace ineffable. For this
His dark prohibitory law he makes;
For this he cast o'er your imperial heart
This chilling fear of death; that, conscience-smit
With panic terrors at all touch of ill,
You might forego the good, lest you become
Emancipated demi-gods. Believe
For once in honest counsel, and be sure
No opportunity of fair revenge
Escapes the Thunderer. That which thou designest
Do quickly, lest you lose your crown for aye;
Perchance e'en now the pole-sustaining king
Meditates revocation of a boon
So full of ominous rivalship. He thinks
To cheat you of the prize: be not forestalled
In this fair fraud. To acquire or maintain
Glory and high renown, requires keen wit
And dashing strokes of shrewd finessing art.
Believe me—well to hoard your former store,
And build thereon accumulations fresh
Of glorious superstructure, so secured,
That your aerial castles never fall
By their own weight and crush their dreaming lord—
Gain is the best security 'gainst loss.
One single taste will make the apotheosis,
And raise you from the woman to the goddess.

Eve. Reason it seems hath occupied the breast
Of more than human kind. This animal
Doubtless is but a brute; and yet his tongue
Is dipped in subtlest eloquence; his words,
And my own longing appetite, persuade,
Almost invincibly, forthwith to enjoy
This mystic stolen delight; but that the fear
To lose those true, those heart-felt ecstasies,
Proved, tried, experienced, much deters my hand
From venturing on this perilous enterprise.

Satan. Let no vain superstitions hold thee back
From thy own good, nor foolishly rebel
A TRAGEDY.—ACT IV.

Against thy proper nature. All that charms
And gratulates is lawful. Thy own sense
Prompts to the deed; wage not-unnatural war
Against thyself. Nature, our common nurse,
Our general mother, gave all living kinds
Their senses, that by outward forms and shows
The hidden intimate properties of things
Might clearly be discerned; and appetite
Is her own best instructress. She desires
All profitable pleasures; noxious things
Instinctively rejects. This secret test
Works warily, nor rashly deviates
From its distinctive purpose. Whatever
It likes or fancies, colour, taste, or smell,
Think amicable to nature. For all these
Do draw the delicate passion of delight
Right to its ultimate ravishment of joy.
Use their soft guidance now—approach the tree
And pluck the golden fruit. Well, thou hast done
The bold work bravely, now no more remains
But just to taste, it is the smallest thing
Which makes thee greatest. Does it like thee well?

Eve. O sweet, sweet apple! how thy glittering store
Dazzles my eyes—the inebriating scent
Fills all my sense. Would I could lay aside
All fear—that trembling folly—and enjoy
The elysium of the fruit, and learn at once
Its mystery of bliss. Had I but courage—
Less womanly and weak, shrinking—I would dare
Much more, as freely. Does not reason's self
Teach me that mind can never, never die,
Whatever chance to dust-compacted forms
Of body? Such a law as this declares
The envy of the God. He fears, forsooth,
To allow me that fine science, which doth make
Our soul familiar with all ecstasies,
And shield it from all pains. Strong appetite,
The quenchless and infallible instinct, prompts
Such gallant feats, such noble hazardous strokes
Of intellectual gambling. Ah! how now?
What spells, what indefinable horrors creep
Along my thrilling limbs! An icy chill
Invades the all-conscious nerves. I know not why,
And yet I feel I fear. I long to pluck
The fruit, and lo, my disobedient hand
Faintly accuses its own coward weight,
And hesitates the exploit. The magic food
Seems from my lips to fly, and thus absorbed
In vacant mute astonishment, I stand
Shuddering. Methinks the charmed tree itself

F
Starts from the rending soil, and with a wild,
Though voiceless eloquence, utters—"Woman, stay;
Hold thy mad hand. What! darest thou so profane
This spell-bound symbol? Is not this the sole,
The special prohibition of His will
Who gave thee all things richly to enjoy?
Forbear, forbear in time. Who leads you on?
One devilish and one brutal thing, the first—
This metaphysical animal—and then
Your own rash passion. Follow better guides.
Let the free grace and bounty of thy God
Touch thy hard heart, if thus already steeled
To death's unspeakable curse. Alas! what bliss
Can these bestow: consider, and suspect
Goods which begin in evil. Now, at least,
Your sentence, undetermined, pendulous hangs
On your own will." My trembling anxious soul
Reels to and fro with ominous counsels crost.
How long remain thus doubt-racked? Courage, heart,
Is all required; why vex yourself with fears?
Why agonise with terrors. Come, be firm,
Be bold and conquer. Cut the invincible knot,
And be thy own free self, and prove at once
The luxury of the apple. Wilt thou not
Become a goddess then—thy spouse a god?
Wilt thou not scale the inaccessible walls
Of heaven, and scan the immeasurable
Vastness of vague infinity? Be wise,
Be daring. For salvation's self doth hang
On this audacious bite. Wilt thou not bless,
By this frank enterprise, the unnumbered heirs
Of future ages? Shall thy children be
Freeborn or slaves? As gods or mortal men?
Which is the brighter destiny? For which
Will throng'd posterity most ardently
Revere their general mother? Then, if God
Should see the happy consequence of sin
He can no less than pardon; but for me
'Tis better that he sees not. And, forsooth,
If so severe he be as to refuse
The merited pardon, I must, even now,
Be guilty in his sight, because so near
The guilt I meditate. Already part
Of the great feat is done: I have approached
The tree—have plucked the fruit, and what is worse,
Done it deliberately, calm, and bold;
And if I do no more, he will no less
Indict me for a criminal. Alas!
How vain to attempt to save the sliding step,
Half way adown the giddy slope of crime.
It is but idiocy to anatomise
The fine degrees of guilt, which is itself
An indivisible essence. Thus one sin
Can only by its proper progeny
Of sins be well defended; and one lie,
By lies innumerable, be made secure.
So the august hurt Majesty of Heaven
Must hold me guilty, nor delay to strike;
And I must back the luxury of vice
By strong transgression, and accumulate
The ramparts of offence. Such is my choice,
My free self-poised election. Now, my hand,
Be firm, and thus raise to my burning lips
The mystery of knowledge. O my soul,
How exquisitely luscious! how divine
Its odorous perfume! Most nectareous juice
Of immortality, thou dost infuse
A more than earthly bliss, too great for earth,
Fit only for the skies. No more remains,
To crown the eternal rapture, but to share
This blessing with my love and be twice blest.

Satan. The deed is done, and many times and oft,
Doubtless, you'll bless my memory when you feel
Your full extent of obligation. Now
You will know the good you've lost, and learn, full soon,
The evil you have gained. No lapse of time
Shall take this knowledge from you; and your sons
And daughters too shall share it. Truth's fair lights
Are thus extinguished, and the sable lies
They leave behind them you shall well defend
Not without wordy wars and bloody. I
Will still befriend you. Now behold at once
The first part of your happiness, your spouse,
Led by the happy accident no doubt,
This way approaches. I will hide myself,
While you invite him to the delicate banquet.

Adam. Slowly and half dejectedly; oppressed
With consciousness of evil, have I walked
This garden of delights; and now I come
To that same spot, whereon the tree of knowledge
Hangs forth the tempting mischief. Here I drew
My heaven-derived birth; here first awake
To sense of life and feeling, and blest hope
Of Godlike immortality. And now,
Wearied with wandering through my vacant bowers,
Return I with strange awe and presage dire;
A clinging wild presentiment of woe
Unfelt before. For nowhere can I find
My Eve, my beautiful, my ever young
Amiably pensive one, who sweetly smiles—
O how familiarly! —and sweetly speaks
Words which begin in rapture, and then fade
Into elegiac music, which still charms,
And still subdues the melancholy soul.
Alas! I doubt me, but her sportive step
Hath hither strayed to the forbidden tree,
Led on by metaphysical subtle craft,
Or her own feminine ambition. Oh,
Even here she is, wrapt in the atmosphere
Of her own light and loveliness. My Eve,
What luxury find'st thou on this haunted ground,
That hath so long stolen thy dear company
From him whose heart would break with more of love,
Yet cannot live with less?—Tell me, my prettiest.

Eve. Nay, ask me not, my Lord. Dost thou not mark
How this same tree scatters delicious shade
Of fragrant coolness thro' the noontide air,
And lends unmatchable fruitage for bold hands
To pluck what cowards only would refuse.

Adam. What do I see!—Lo, is not this the fruit
Whereof our God commanded not to eat?

Eve. Even so. And this the very reason is
That I such harsh commands did violate.
Look, my own spouse, see how the golden sheen
Blends with the rosy vermeil! Canst thou think
Such exquisite exteriors ever hide
An inward mischief? nay, impossible!

Adam. The icy coldness shudders thro' my frame;
A pang like death, sudden, unutterable.
I faint, I die. Mute horror doth unfix
My clustered locks; and the free breath of life
Curdles within me. O ye spiritual powers,
That in your sightless substances pervade
And quicken boundless Nature, here direct
Your many-flashing and infallible eyes,
And, if capacity of grief be yours,
Drop your full tears, and wail the Fall of Man.

Eve. O my blest Lord. do not, for mercy, speak
Those conscience-thrilling words! believe me, sweet,
No crime have I committed to produce
Such ominous sighs—such soul-expiring sobs
Of bursting lamentation. Dry at once
Thy needless tears; dare what thy wife has dared;
And, from the hand so often kissed by lips
Of burning love, accept the proffered fruit.

Adam. And dost thou wish, my lost and fallen one,
That I, too, should desert the righteous laws
Of the sole God, and follow thee to death?

Eve. Were it not worthier, Adam, to exert
Your own cool balanced reason, than give way
To blind impression? for this hasty style
Of prejudice still errs. You have condemned
Your innocent wife unheard. I do confess
I did the deed; I do deny it wrong.

Adam. Is it then right to break our Lord's command?
Eve. Yes, if our Lord happen to be unjust.
Adam. If just, we love, if not we ought to bear.
Eve. And is not slavery, think'st thou, worse than death?
Adam. But to serve God is highest liberty.
Eve. Is it not higher still to be as God?
Adam. But to be as God man was never made.
Eve. Yes, this forbidden tree will make him such—
It is the source of knowledge of all good.
Adam. Of knowledge, good and evil, was it not?
Eve. Ah, but the very God you love to praise
As he knows good, knows he not evil too?
Adam. That he may never feel it as thou feel'st.
Eve. Away with omens! of the deed I am proud,
And do exult in consciousness of power.
Adam. To obey is virtue's first, her safest course;
And to repent her second,—to do good
Without all imperfection none can boast,
But to repent is open unto all,
And to return to virtue's blessed lore
Can never be too late. Be wise in time,
The penitent is next to innocence:
Still will Heaven pardon Eve, if she repent.
Eve. How God is moved by prayers of penitence
The fate of Satan sure is proof enough.
Adam. Alas! what hope is left you?
Eve. To fear nought.
Adam. But God is to be feared.
Eve. Who fears an equal?
Adam. But you will die, be sure.
Adam. You're worthy death.
Eve. I am better worthy life.
Adam. Oh! what will you become?
Eve. What but a goddess?
Adam. And by what means?
Eve. By virtue of an apple.
Adam. Which God forbade.

Eve. Because he envied us.

Adam. Is it not impious, think you, to talk thus?

Eve. Now, by our conjugal pure faith and love,
By thy dear eyes, and those embraces sweet
And unrevealable, if ever bliss
Was richly shared between us, I implore
Forgiveness from thee. O forsake me not,
My only love, but rather join thyself
By the same bond with me, that you may keep
Our nuptial contract sacred thro' all fears,
All perils. If dear happiness attend
This bold exploit, is it not fit that thou
Should'st share it with me; and if evil come,
Is it not thine, my Adam, to take part
Of my misfortune; and with soothing words,
And labours of fond sympathy, to cheer
Thy grief-oppressed mistress? Let there be
Such sweet communion of the o'er-credulous heart
Betwixt us, as defies all destiny,
Both good and ill, to sever—sorrow-proof—
But lay aside all fear. Our better stars
Smile on the adventure—my aspiring mind
Glows with a quenchless ardour. I will bless
Thee also with my blessing; for the fruit
Fills me with exultation. O I grieve
To see my own devoted godlike spouse
Still crushed by scrupulous doubts, and round his neck
The galling yoke of superstitious fear,
That worst of slavery. Thus while you dream
Yourself most blest, the deeper sinks your soul
In abject prostitution. Why refuse
This spirit-kindling gift, this proper food
Of thy immortal genius, and thy powers
Invincible of isangelic thought?
Art thou not born immortal—a fit match
And proper mate for Heaven's divinities?
Imparadise your soul in its own sphere,
Midst the crystalline stars; and burst the reins
Of impotent terror, which so ill befit
Thy proud and dauntless nature. Follow me,
And from this abject poverty of mind
Arise at once, and snatch the gift that makes
The hero and the god. Then will you owe
To your own prowess better things than those
Tamely bestowed and passively received—
Blessings of common Providence. Be bold,
Fear nothing but the name of fear: for me,
I'd rather bear the blame of daring crime
Boldly, than be accused of dreading it.
Adam. But faith and love towards the Invisible
Supreme still bind me with eternal chains.

Eve. 'Tis folly so to love as to forget
Your love may prove your enemy. So love
As not to give occasion for the birth
Of hate. But grant love's yoke delectable
To bear—what then? Is it to be preferred
Before our conjugal bond, love's proper pledge?
What ill have I committed half so bad
As this, to call in question the true faith
Of your own wife? For shame! Can I be blest,
And yet suspected, vilified? I must
Indeed become most hateful, if I fail
Of love from him whose love is more than life!

Adam. Thy words have half unmann'd me. Equal cares
Perplex my harassed soul: the love of God—
The love of woman—mighty both, and strong
Necessities of nature. If I break his will
He holds me his despiser; and if her's,
She calls herself suspected. How my heart
Is urged betwixt the opposing tides of love!
Even like a narrow shore, washed by the waves
Of storm-embattled oceans, so my soul
Is wrought by the stern conflict of desires
And passionate aspirations. O my God!
Till now I nothing else have loved but Thee;
I loved Thee even in her: because she seemed
Thy second image—thy pure spiritual love
Embodied in its beauty, and brought down
From heaven to earth, to lead my thought-rack'd soul
Back to the skies. Ah! what can I deny
To one so precious?—Unto Thee the theft
Of this sole fruit is less a bitter crime
Than breach of thy command, the last, the best,
Of conjugal affection. Therefore I
Will taste the fruit already in my hand.

Eve. O words well worthy of the name of man!
Now am I sure thou lov'st me: taste and prove
The mystic virtues of this marvellous fruit,
And learn both good and evil. God shall find
An equal, and be jealous, though in vain,
Of human deities, to whom, no doubt,
Prayers also shall be made. Alas! what now?
What sudden paleness falls upon thy cheek?
How droops thy head! Methinks the curse of Heaven,
The horrible, the avenging stroke of death
Already blights him. O my God, my God!
On me hurl all thy thunders; pour at once
Thy blasting indignation; but Oh spare!
Spare, for thy love's sake, spare my innocent husband!
Chorus of Angels.

The sun looks dim and desolate;
Its light is dark—its heat is fled,
And all the stars bewail the fate
Of man, whose glory all is dead.
And the great ocean echoes back
The dirge-note of the murmuring spheres,
And mourns the omen, dire and black,
Which wraps in shade all future years.

O hapless! O insensate man!
The deed is done, the doom is sealed,
And Heaven's eternal curse and ban
Is frowning o'er thee, half revealed,
Half hid in horrors. Now fair fame
Is gone for ever, and you stand
All naked to the blast of shame;
An impious, perjured, exiled band.

Now immortality of life
Is gone, with all its boundless charms;
And you are stung with the harsh strife
Of envy, hatred, and the alarms
That wait on mischief, and your heart
Lies crushed beneath the o'erwhelming sense
Of death, that never shall depart
Till the last spark of sin's offence
Is quenched in gushing penitence.

Alas, alas! we dare not tell
The vision of the bleeding woes
Which on the opening future swell,
And to the astonished sight disclose
The mystery of guilt and grief,
And pain and terror, and mad crime—
Dark tortures which have no relief,
Unless by grace and love sublime,
Nor end with finished life or time.

But ah! if He, unnamed above,
Who comes to blast and to destroy,
Should triumph over faith and love
And blight the flowers of human joy,
Will not our God, who did create,
Redeem the erring sons of men,
And make all creatures, small and great,
All holy, pure, and blest again.
A TRAGEDY.—ACT V.

ACT V.

Satan. All things have happened to my wish. I strike
My head against the effulgent stars of heaven,
And boast myself a god. Do I not sway
The aërial atmosphere, the liquid main,
And all the solid earth, both round about
Its broad circumference, and within its womb
Of fire and smoke, and blackness of despair.
My exile grows delectable. This feat
Of valorous prowess thro' all Hell shall ring
My fame, and make the envy-jabbering fiends
Right jealous of ambition, and no less
The emulous rivals of my chivalry.
Now, my revenge, take thy sweet fill, and drink
Even to the dregs the cup of ecstasy,
And so, intoxicate with others' woes,
Forget thy proper torture! Ah, proud man!
My slave, my subject now, methinks I hear
The Almighty's curse, already on the wing,
Muttering revenge. Away, and linger not.
Quit your ripe garden of delight: begone,
Ye vagrant vagabond exilesof my hate!
Rush shrieking from your Eden's gates and learn
The sweets of foreign travel. Yes, ye fools!
I give ye leave to wander; wander on
For ever and for ever. Make the most
Of your free will, ye idiots. But where'er
Ye bend your weary bleeding steps ye take
My omnipresence with you, and my curse
Of death, if not damnation. I will vex
Your wrought souls with my furies, and the lash
Of scorpion-stinging rage, and passionate hate
Shall goad ye to the dust from whence ye rose.
No flight remains, no exit, no escape
From my choice metaphysical donjon-keep—
This blasted earth. And Time, all-soothing Time,
With his benign philosophy, shall add
Fresh rapture to your torments of despair.
Yes! hie ye forth,—invest yourselves at once
With this new fee and territory, the large
The desolate waste, and thunder-smitten scope
Of your poised planet, which I'll do my best
To make as barren and untillable
As the infernal sulphur; till your heart
Envy the blest repose of the damn'd fiends
You once so bravely scorned, and not in vain,
For they can answer insults with good grace;
Or take them, and pay interest for their wrongs.
Thus shall my vengeance ever live with you,
But with you shall not die. It shall survive
And be the precious heritage bequeathed
To your predestined progeny. Your sons
And daughters shall enjoy, as well as you,
This heirloom of your infamy, and share
The testamentary bequest of Hell.
Satan, rejoice! Blow thy full trump of fame,
All-conquering regicide! Exult, be glad;
Cherish thy heart with lies and murders dire,
And glorify thy shame. Ay, cast thyself,
In all thy plenitude of damned power
And rage, into man's heart,—steep it brimful
With blasphemy and lust. Let fathers curse
Their first-born sons, and mothers wash their hands
In sucklings' blood, and ireful brethren dream
The reeking dreams of fratricide, and so
Run howling through the weird and sterile world,
 Gnashing the teeth of madness, self-consumed,
And rearing oft their gory arms to heaven,
With crenellèd imprecations. Then shall God
Repent of making man; and Earth herself,
Sick of her own abortions, shall relapse
To Chaos and Old Night, and many a flood
Of roaring ocean strive with hidden fires
To purge the planetary pest in vain.
Adam, thou little knowest of ills like these;
Yet come they shall. The coward sense of shame
Already I discern; and you shall weave
The leafy-fruited branch, wherewith to hide
Your brand of nakedness, not so concealed
But passionate lust shall quicken in your heart,
And bring soft images of vague desire
O'er the mind's eye; and ye shall shake with fear
And impotent repentance, and shall read
Your conscious crimes reflected in the looks
Of friend and foe, and so grow pale within
With unrevealed irrevocable sins,
And hate the all-beholding day, and love
Night's pitchy blanketing. And hope shall fade,
Self-withered, self-sepulchred, in despair.
But lo, the curse of God already smites
Adam! He stands like the mute lunatic,
When the broad moon with many-flashing fires
Blasts his crushed heart. His eye glares wildly forth
With his unutterable thoughts: his lips
Quiver with impotent eloquence. By turns
The snow-white horror chases from his cheek
That flaring blush of self-wrought infamy.
Alas, how dire the change! But list, he speaks.

Adam. What am I? where? what have I done? Begone,
Spectres of horror—phantoms of despair—
A TRAGEDY.—ACT V.

Avaunt! Aha! am I the very lord
Of Eden or of Hell? Methinks I see,
With some new opened visionary sight,
The infernal gulph, and ever as I gaze
Lo the mysterious and Titanic power
Of grisly Death strides onward; and on me
Fixes his Gorgon frown. My wife, my Eve,
Dost thou not mark the goblin frantic band
Of grinning furies? Hideously they dance
Before his shadowy steps, and shake abroad
Their snake-beclotted hair, and howl, and hiss,
And shriek in their mad laughter. Oh my God!
How horribly near they come. Avaunt and vanish!
Ye demon throng, ye damned sons of Night,
I hurl ye from me, ye apostate ones.
Heaven's curse be on ye all! And yet more close
And closer they approach, and Death, and Sin,
The monster-teeming sorceress of Hell,
Still lead them on. A ghostly train of woes
Follows interminable. Direful plagues
Of gaunt and bony Famine, and the pale
And withered phalanx of Disease, and Care,
Haggard and bowed with labour, and wild Wars,
Discord, and Battle, waving fast and far
Their blood-baptised standards. I can see
No more; such dizzy horror racks my soul.

Eve. What! art thou mad? What spectres of strange fear
Thus shake thy steadfast soul? Come, be a man;
Nor, coward-like, shrink backward from the dreams
Of your own idle fancy. They who fight
With self-created mockeries should at least
Beware of showing others they are fools.

Adam. Thou star-compelling Majesty of Heaven,
Why do thy inmost purple Spirits of light
Flash thro' the cleaving firmament; and why
Do those, the sable-vested thunder-clouds,
Scatter their spangled forest-splintering bolts
Thro' all the wizard air? Why swells the note
Of tempest, mingled with the ominous roar
That ocean, from his hollow-sounding caves,
Moans forth, like a wild wailing dirge? Behold,
Omnipotent God, the victim of thy doom
Naked before thee. Dost thou not extend
Thy red right hand to smite me, and prepare
The triple-forkèd, and heart-blistering fires
To scorch me into nothingness? Methinks
This vast and planet-blazoned universe,
Sinks in some huge eclipse, and all the stars
Rush to chaotic battle in the skies,
And hurl their last expiring curse on me.
Eve. Alas, my spouse! why will you not begin
To act less like the jibbering maniac,
Whose words are imprecations and despair?
If vengeance is decreed, why come it must,
And we must bear it gallantly; and so
Either destroy, or by it be destroyed.

Adam. Ay, come it must; and better it come now
Than keep my agonising heart all racked
In ecstasy of this suspense. Thou Earth,
Open at once thy hot and sulphurous womb,
And, if thou canst, O make us what we were,
Thy dust of dissolution. Or, if Hell
May best agree with guiltiness, unbar,
Ye flaming gates of Tartarus; for ne'er
Did richer spoil, or nobler victims, greet
The sable gulf where exiled demons dwell.

Eve. O my loved lord! I pri'thee speak not so;
There is no sin repentance cannot cure.

Adam. Alas! thou little knowest what sin is our's;
What words can utter it, or what laments
Atone the apostasy, wherein all law,
Right, justice, mercy, faith, felicity,
And peace all perished. Never more to us
Shall joy return, or hope; eternal grief,
Forever fresh, forever unfulfilled,
Shall waste our cankered hearts. For we have left
Our God; and God shall leave us to ourselves.
O exquisite rebellion! thou most curst,
And unforgiveable treachery. That free minds,
Made but to serve their Maker, thus should strive
To serve themselves, and thus themselves destroy
By deadliest suicide. That the frank love
Of sons to a dear father, should be locked
In their own thankless bosoms, and become
Infernal fire to blast them; so bowed down
Beneath the pitiful brute, and the poor worm
We trample. Hence, thou mad and blasphemous soul,
Thou hast deserted God, thy Father:—now
Desert thy vilified body, and at once
Learn the whole mystery of the curse of death.

Eve. Beware, rash man; thou dost but aggravate
Thy grief and mine by these foul execrations.

Adam. Well, and what then? Even now I taste of death,
And of perdition—dying, perishing,
In my lost soul, ere yet I feel the sting
That soon shall quite dissolve me, and consume
To nothing this essential. Am I not
Accursed of God? And is not his stern doom
Grimmer than thousand sepulchres? Ay, worse
Than Hell, whereto I haste. I will forego
The abeyance of my fate, and with bold hand
Anticipate black destiny, and be
My own most just avenger. I will live
No living death—still dying never dead.
No dull, procrastinating, cankerling blight,
For me at least. I go—I go alone,
And in this swift voracious tide of fate,
The many-voiced Euphrates, will I lose
This more than lost existence, and be borne
To the unfathomable deep, and lie
On undiscovered shores, o'er which the waves
Howl their monotonous elegies, and Night
Forever broods in wizard solitude.

_Eve._
He, who by evil seeks to cure his ill,
Doth but increase the wrong he hates. This crime
Is surely worth surviving, if 'tis worth
Thus rashly dying for. Let not the soul
So madly leave its form, but rather wait
Till body leaves the mind. Thus quietly
Expect the doomed, the inevitable hour
When our tired spirits shall, by just decree,
Resign their sad mortalities; and God,
Great Arbiter of life and death, shall loose
The yoke, and bid his weary ones go home.
At his command death wears the charm of duty;
But now t'were madness, sin, and infamy.

_Adam._
No, Eve; not so hath dissolute passion quenched
All sense of spiritual shame indelible.
Think 'st thou, fond fool, that I will thus live on,
The scorn of my own slaves? Methinks I hear
All beasts and birds, and insect-winged things,
Lift up their pitiful voices, some in hate,
Or worse compassion, and at once exclaim,
As with the thunder-peal of vengeance—Die!
Begone, and slay thyself! Let the earth hide
Thy curse-crowned execrable head, and hurl
Thy spirit down the blazing throat of Hell,
That gapes for thy destruction. Yes, I hear
Their words, and will obey them. All my vows
Shall be accomplished, gallantly at least,
If madly, let it be so. Why should I
Longer detain this conscience-scorched soul,
Amid the upbraiding light? Have I not lost
All things worth living for?—my power, my joy,
My kingdom, my salvation, my own self—
All but my life? Nay; counsel not in vain.

_Eve._
Alas! sweet consort of my blighted heart!
Why thus persist in passionate words? Why rush
To self-wrought doom so desperately? Reflect,
If you consent to live, will not your life
Improve, and bring a happier calmer hour
For mortal dissolution? In the past
The crime hath been all mine. The punishment
Will doubly light on me; but if you act
This other sin, so unrepentable,
Of your own choice, and wilfully against
Your Eve's dearest soliciting,—O think,
Will you not mourn persuasion, thus despised?

Adam. I have believed thee once, and once too much.
Eve. And wilt thou slay me too?
Adam. No; rather I
Would die a thousand deaths, than harm my Eve.

Eve. Though your wild grief will not itself submit
To your own conscience, reason, and pure sense
Of truth and prudence, yet forbear a while,
And listen to your wife—if e'er you owed
To her soft words attention. O, ye fates!
That woman thus should act the comforter
To man, and so invert great Nature's law;
And yet it much concerns me to repair
By words, the bitter ills that words have wrought
To him, to me, to all. My dearest lord,
Who for my sake did'st risk all perilous doom,
Shall I not by my tears, my bursting sighs,
My agonies of heart, attempt to save
Him whom my madness ruined. O forbear!
This most insensate and precipitous storm
Of passionate outcries. Struggle with despair,
And triumph o'er yourself. So it befits
The manly mind to conquer and subdue
All doubts, all fears, all evils. I implore,
I do beseech thee, Adam, spare thy life,
For thy wife's sake at least. You boast yourself
Strong, valiant, half omnipotent of soul,
To mock at death and trample on the grave.
Now to my mind, 'tis more like cowardice
To fear to live. He best o'er-masters death
Who doth not wish nor hate it. Therefore arm
Thy breast with shield of manliest fortitude,
And face the opposing host. The past is nought
But an ingenuous error. If you fall
Amid the gallant combat, you'll be like
A brave and innocent hero. If you die
By your own hand, you sign your verdict just
And seal your own death-warrant miserably.

Adam. Whence does she borrow these sweet words of truth,
Virtue and innocence, amid this crowd
Of thronging infamies? Methinks her tongue
Hath counselled well and lovingly, and much
Reason and delicate tenderness are blent
In all she says. But vehement deadly rage,
And the black hurricane of thick despair
Urge on the unshunnable doom. My stricken soul
Conscious of its wild error, and amazed
By its own savage phantasm, foregoes
All better thoughts, and whirls and hurries on
Thro' diabolical buffooneries
Of madd'ning guilt. None but the Almighty Power
Who made me can absolve me or forgive.
But thou, unhappy bride of the first man,
Leave me. Ah! leave thy miserable spouse,
And let me, all companionless and lone,
Pay the great debt of Nature, and have rest.

_Eve._ By our most sacred nature and our name,
Our divine union, and our holy love,
Whether as self-creating sire, thou callest
Me thy own wife, and proper counterpart,
Or whether born of thy collateral blood,
Thou nam'st me Sister, and dear Parallel;
Or in descending series so derived,
Inferior and complex, thou lovest me best
As thy submissive Daughter—leave me not—
Now most I need thy kind protecting care
When Fortune takes her flight. Thou sole support,
Last refuge of thy outcast, hopeless one.
I clasp thee to my heart, nor let thee go,
But with my latest sigh. Let not the race
Of mortal men, by one delirious deed,
Utterly perish, thro' our filicide.

_Adam._ And does not death, which thus extinguishes
The infinity of woes, look temptingly?
At least it is not frightful—if it be
No worse than thou imaginest. Therefore cease
Vain words of consolation—let me die.

_Eve._ And what shall be my fate if death be thine?
Shall I, deserted, widowed, desolate,
And quite unparadised in heart, live on
To wander in the wilderness, and keep
Companionship with monsters; and still list
The insatiable roar of cavern-haunting wolves,
Tigers, and ravening lions. Oh, my spouse!
If this be your best pity, rather take
My life at once, and all thy gift resume.
Ay, take it. Art thou not most innocent,
While I am queen of sin, infanticide,
And speechless shame? Behold my naked throat,
My bosom bared and ready for the blow—
The author of your infamy. Ah! why 
Resist—why hesitate? Avenge yourself— 
Prepare for the sweet sacrifice. Your heart 
Requires a little hardening, and your hand 
Is not yet quite familiarised enough 
With blood. Be quick—I'll brook no long delay— 
Or with my woman's hand will I tear out 
My more than woman's heart. Though false to God, 
True, aye, most true to thee, I do deserve 
The fate which I solicit well thou knowest. 
And if the thunder-grasping hand of Him 
Who made and can annihilate should hurl 
His three-forked corruscating thunder-bolt 
All crashing on my head, I should not half 
Atone the unforgiveable damned crime. 
O impious Eve! why hesitate to die? 
Was't not enough to sin thyself, not make 
Thy innocent lover sinful, and in him 
Destroy thy unborn progeny? At least, 
Let me who first transgression did essay 
Find the first privilege and proof of death, 
So justly due. However miserable 
The mortal pang may be, no day shall then 
Behold me widowed, and no night repeat 
The echo of my mourning and despair.

Adam. Nay, my sweet Eve, 'tis mine to show the way 
To the dark gulph, and first to brave whate'er 
Of grim or terrible besets the gates 
That ever open stand to those that seek 
Mortality. I therefore will die first, 
Who cannot live without thee, and then thou, 
If so thy heart incline; and we will sleep 
The last long sleep together, in the shade 
Of that disastrous tree, whose fruit to gain 
All things were lost but misery and despair.

Eve. Alas! what noise is that? How is it with us 
When every sound affrights? Methinks I hear 
A noise of distant hurricanes at war; 
The rush of their invisible combat swells 
And hurtles thro' the air. A hollow din 
Of ominous, dirge-like thunder howls aloft; 
And as it comes reverberating down 
The many-spherèd firmament, a strange 
And impotent horror thrills the aching nerve 
Of intense expectation. Lo! the trees 
Nod their huge heads around us, and the floods 
Lift up their deep-toned murmurs wailingly!

Adam. The guilt-avenging God, whom most we dread, 
Is hastening in his swift omnipotence 
To crush and to consume us. Let us fly.
A TRAGEDY.—ACT V.

Instantly where the dark-embowering woods
Expel the light, and shield us from his eye,
In their profoundest glooms. The sense of shame
Urges me onwards, and I blush and pale,
Smit by the infamous disgrace, and think
The massive forest all too thin a veil
To mask my degradation. I survey
My naked form—alas! no leafy zone
Can blanket up the brand which burns within!
Now is fate near, my Eve; let us prepare
For death, and in each other's arms expire.

**Jehovah.** Adam! where art thou? In what bower of shade
Dost thou attempt concealment? Knowest thou not
How vain to veil thyself from Him whose eye
Makes darkness light? Whose omnipresence fills
All minds, all bodies, and is still the same?
'Tis I, thy God! before whose burning steps
The ethereal spheres bow down, and own the Judge
Of irreversible decrees. 'Tis I
Who made thee, and endowed thee with all gifts!
Can such a son from such a father hide,
And seek to escape ubiquity? Come forth!
I do arrest thee, fugitive of heaven!

**Adam.** Lord, I obey thee; but I heard thy voice
Walking the garden, and the spiritual awe,
That sacred horror, smote me, and I fled,
Unable to sustain the unwonted face
Of thy omnipotent majesty; and shame
Bad me retire, lest, with my naked form,
I should pollute thy sanctity, and die.

**Jehovah.** Who told thee thou wast naked? Shame like this
Follows the sense of guilt. Confess thy crime
At once, nor aggravate by lies. Declare
If thou hast eaten the forbidden fruit
Whose penalty is death:—hast thou so done?

**Adam.** It was the woman's crime; she, with sweet words,
And her bewitching blandishments, did win
My fond ambition to the dire offence.

**Jehovah.** Thou most pernicious wife, why hast thou thus
Tempted thy own destruction, and thy husband's?

**Eve.** The serpent, Lord, beguiled me, and so
Seduced my frail simplicity of sex
And credulous desire, that I did eat.

**Jehovah.** Accursed serpent! by the apostate fiend
Inspired with hell's own malice, hear thy fate:
Because thou hast done this, thou shalt be filled
With poisonous venom, and shalt crawl and coil
Along the slimy earth, the hate and dread
Of man and beast, and dust shall be thy food.
And know, thou outcast demon, that this plot
Against this woman shall at last outburst
With triple ruin and confusion poured
On thy own head. Myself will be her friend,
Her champion armed. My word shall advocate
The woman's cause, and my free spirit burn
Within her kindling conscience, and the host
Of ministering angels still protect
The spark of immortality. Her seed
Shall be her Saviour, and his brethren love
His bright regeneration, and detest
The foul apostate traitor by whose fraud
And complicate perversity they fell.
Thou hast indeed bruised her heel, but she
Shall sorer crush thy head, and be avenged;
For so my grace shall triumph o'er my justice.
But thou, O guilty woman! shalt not thus
All purifying anguish, chastening grief,
Escape, or woe remedial, curative;
For thy desire and trembling fear shall grow
Towards thy injured husband. He shall rule
More sternly, more severely, over her,
So nearly his perdition and his curse.
And I will multiply thy motherly cares
And sorrows in conception and in birth.
Thou, too, her spouse—thou conscience-smitten man—
Whose faith thus grievously hath been seduced
By demon pride and passion—for thy sake
I curse the ground thou tillest, and in woe
And tribulation, and the sweat of brow,
Shalt thou elicit from its sterile womb
Thy hard-earned sustenance, till thou return
To dust, whence thou wast taken, and repose,
After life's fitful fever, in the grave.

Adam. O hard condition! spirit-blighting curse!
How shall all joy hereafter be dissolved
In gushing tears of penitence and shame!

Jehovah. Now, grace-delivered victim of just doom,
Survey thyself and know thyself a man;
Thou who erewhile by knowledge didst attempt
To equal the Supreme! what art thou now?
How changed, how fallen thy aspect; how o'erveiled
With inextinguishable mournfulness!
Ambitioning the greatest, thou hast lost
The great, the good, the immaculate, the fair;
And that bright passion, too refined for earth,
For Heaven too voluptuous, is commixed
With heart-consuming care. Now, lest ye pluck
That tree of life immortal, ne'er restored
But by all-sacrificing death, behold!
I call the swift-winged cherubim of heaven,
And bid them watch with many-flashing swords
That vital fruit which faith alone can pluck
From the original stem, eternally.

_Eve._ They come! they come! before their burning course
The sudden lightnings glare, and momently
A universal and mysterious flame
Enwraps lost Eden. The ineffable light
Pervades the wandering air, and all the trees
Glow in its hot embraces unconsumed.
These are the host of Him who doth command
Our instant flight from hence: let us obey.

_Adam._ O thou almighty and ubiquitous Power!
No longer I resist; thy fatherly will
Subdues my heart to love; and now I long
To fly where'er thy high directing hand
Appoints my dwelling. Yet my heart is sad
To quit this charmed birthplace, and my eye,
Wet with its many-gushing tears, looks back
To take its long, its last farewell of Eden.
Where shall we wander? Whither shall we bend
Our weary steps? Where choose our place of rest
And find a home in exile, and a hope?