

Paradise Lost

2^d Book

1201

("The wealth of Ormus and of Ind")
 That is "diamonds a principal part
 of the wealth of India where they
 are found; Ormus, an island in
 the Persian gulf, where they are
 principally sold. ("on her kings")
 because there the kings have the
 principal share of property. ("poies
 and dominions") As St Paul calls
 the Angels, "Thrones or Dominions or
 principalities or Powers." / Epistle
 Colossians, 16th ver: ("Than miserable
 to have eternal being") That it is
 better not to be than to be eternally
 miserable, our Saviour has decided.
 26th chap: Matthew 24th ver: 14th
 Chap: Mark. 21st ver: ("it had been

good for that man if he had not
been born" — ("we are at worst")
we are in the worst condition we
can be. ("Wherefore² cease we then")
Belial is here proposing what is
urged by those who ("counsel war")
and then replies to it ("Is this
then worst") and shows that they
had been in a worse condition, ("that
I was worse") and might be so a-
gain ("this would be worse")

("Ah these our notions vain be,
and derides") Alluding to the 2^d.
Psalm 4th. "He that sitteth in
the heavens shall laugh, the
Lord shall have them in derision".
("Mammon shake") Mammon, we

were before told was the first
who taught mankind to sacrifice
the earth for gold and silver, and
that he was the architect of Man-
demonium, or the infernal palace
where the evil spirits were to meet
in council. His speech in this
book is every way suitable to
so depraved a character, who
is said while in Heaven, to have
had his mind dazzled with the
outward pomp, and glories of the
place, and to have been more
intent on the riches of the
pavement, than on the beatifi-
cation, ("How oft amidst thick
clouds & dark") from 10th Psalm
11. 13 ver: "He made darkness his

secret place, his pavilion round
about him were dark waters,
and thick clouds of the skies—
The Lord also thundered in the
Heavens, and the highest gave
his voice, hail-stones and coals
of fire. And Psalm 114. 2 ver: Clouds
and darkness are round about
him." ("To peaceful counsels")

There are some things wonderfully
fine in these speeches of the
infernal spirits, and in the
different arguments so suited
to their different characters;
but they have wandered from
the point in debate, Satan
had declared "peace is despised,
for who can think submission,

war, then, war, Open or under-
stood must be resolved") which
was approved & confirmed by
the whole host of Angels; and
accordingly at the opening of the
council, he proposes for the sub-
ject of their consideration, which
way they wd. make choice of,
("whether of open war, or covert
guile, we now debate") Involoch
speaks to the purpose, and declares
for open war ("My sentence is
for open war, of wiles, more un-
expert, I boast not") But Belial
argues alike against war open, or
concealed ("war therefore open or
concealed, like my voice signifies
for what can force or guile").

Hammon carries on the same arguments, and is for "dismissing quite all thoughts of war", so that the question is changed in the course of the debate. ("with regard of what we are, and where") with regard to our present condition and the place where we are, ("in his face yet thone, majestic though in ruin") his face, majestic though in ruin. ("with Atlantean shoulders" Atlas was so great an astronomer that he is said to have borne the Heavens on his shoulders.

("while thus he shake") Beelzebub who is reckoned the 2^d in dignity that fell, and is the second that awakens out of the trance, &

confers with Satan upon the situation of their affairs, maintains his rank in the look now before us. He acts as a moderator between the two opposite parties, and proposes a third undertaking, which the whole assembly gives into. The motion he makes of detaching one of their body in search of a new world, is grounded upon a project devised by Satan, and cursorily proposed by him in the 1st book ("I have may produce new worlds") It is on this project that Beelzebub ^{elaborates} ~~elaborates~~ grounds his proposal ("what if we find some easier enterprise") There is something beautiful in

this ancient prophecy, or report
in Heaven, concerning the creation
of man, nothing could show more
the dignity of the species, than
this tradition which ran of them
before their existence. They are
represented to have been the bath
of Heaven, before they were crea-
ted. ("Heard with his iron scentre
me as here, as with his golden
thote in Heaven") The iron scentre
is an allusion to 2 Psalm of the
verse "Thou shalt break them
with a rod of iron" as ~~that~~
of gold to Esther 5th chap: 2^d ver:
"And so he held up his golden scen-
tre and laid it upon her neck"

^{the place} ("And by an oath, that shook
Heaven's whole circumference, con-
firmed") "He confirmed it by an
oath" are the very words of Jo-
hane 6th chap: Hebrews. 1st ver:
"Wherein God, wishing more abundantly
to show unto the heirs of promise,
the immutability of his counsel,
confirmed it by an oath" and
this oath is said to shake Hea-
ven's whole circumference. ("The
rising all at once was as the
sound of thunder, heard remote")
The rising of this great assembly
is described in a very sublime &
poetical manner. ("Let bad men
tho' soark") the spirits damned
do not lose all their virtue,

And therefore had men whom fury
excites or ambition th^t not board,
("while the north-wind sleeps")
That wind generally clearing the
sky and dispersing the clouds. ("O
theme to man") This reflection will
appear more pertinent & natural
when one considers the contentious
age, in which Milton liv'd &
wrote. "horrent arms" Horrent
includes the idea both of terrible
and prickly, set up like the
bristles of a wild boar. ("the ^{con-}
-ding alchemy") gold & silver, brass &
 pewter are alchemy, being mixed
metals, and for that reason it
will do here; especially as it is
joined to the epithet sonorous

which determines it to mean a
trumpet, made perhaps of the mix-
-ed metals of brass & silver. Al-
-chemy, is the name of that art
which transmutes metals; Milton
names no particular metal, but
leaves the imagination at large,
any metal possible to be produced
by that mysterious art; 'tis a
metonymy - the efficient for the
effect. ("part on the plain") The
divisions of the fallen angels
with the particular account of
their place of habitation, are ^{well} de-
scribed. They are every way suitable
to beings who had nothing left them,
but strength & knowledge misapplied.
Such are their contentions at the
face & feats of arms, with their

entertainments in the following lines
"Others with vast Typhoean rage
more fell". Their music is employ-
ed in celebrating their own crimi-
nal exploits, and their discourse
in sounding the unfathomable
depths of fate, free will, and fore-
knowledge. ("baf'd in the troubled
sky") Shakespeare calls these ap-
pearances "the meteors of a trou-
bled Heaven" ("conch their shears")
fix them in their nests. a nest ~~was~~
made in the breast of the armoir,
and was called a nest, from "arter
ter" to stay. ("Others with vast
Typhoean rage") Typhoeus or Ty-
phon was one of the giants who
warred against heaven, ("As when
Alcides") Hercules named Alcides

from his grand father, Alcæus, ("from
bechalia crown'd with conquest")
after his return from the conquest
of bechalia, & ~~fifty of Bletia~~, ha-
ving brought with him from thence,
the king's daughter, ("fell th' en-
venomed robe") which was sent
him by Dejanira in jealousy of
his new mistress, & stuck so close
to his skin that he c'd. not pull
off the one without pulling off
the other ("and tore thro' pain
up by the roots Thessalian pine,
and Lichas") who had brought him
the poisoned robe, ("from the top
of beta") ~~on~~ mountain on the bor-
ders of Thessaly ("threw into th' Eu-
boic sea") the sea near Euboea
an island in the Archipelago.

("In discourse more sweet") Milton
so justly prefers discourse to the
highest harmony, that he has tea-
sted his reasoning Angels on a
high, as high & elevated as their
thoughts, leaving the songsters in
their humble valley. ("fore know-
ledge, free will, fore knowledge
absolute") The turn of the words
here is admirable, and very well
expresses the wanderings and
mazes of their discourse. ("vain
wisdom ah, & false philosophy")
Good & evil were more particu-
larly the subjects of disputation
among the sophists and philosophers
of old, as providence free will &c

were among the school men & di-
vines of later times") ("Abhorred
Styx") The Greeks reckon up five
rivers in hell, and call them af-
ter the names of the regions
springs & rivers in their own coun-
try. Styx, is name of a Greek
word that signifies to hate & abhor,
and therefore called here ("Abhorred
Styx, the flood of deadly hate")
Acheron, has its name from ^{two} ~~dolor~~
^{Greek words signifying} ~~flow~~, flowing with grief, and is
represented accordingly ("Sad Acheron")
The river of sorrow, as Styx was
of hate ("Cocytus, named of la-
mentation") because derived from
a Greek word signifying to weep &
lament, as Phlegethon is from

Another Greek word, signifying to burn; and therefore rightly described here ("fierce Phlegethon whose waves of torrents fire inflame with rage; Milton supposes a burning lake, agreeably to Scripture which often mentions a lake of fire, and he makes these four rivers to flow from different quarters & empty themselves into it. Besides these there is a fifth river called Lethe, which name in Greek signifies forgetfulness, and its waters are said to have occasioned ^{its} ~~that~~ ~~quality~~; Milton describes it as ("a slow & silent stream") The

river of oblivion is rightly placed ("far off") from the rivers of hatred, sorrow, lamentation & rage, and divides the frozen continent from the region of fire. ("That Serbonian bog") Serbonia was a lake 200 furlongs in length, and 1000 in compass between the ancient mountains Casius, and Jamiatia a city of Egypt on one of the more eastern mouths of the Nile. It was surrounded on all sides by hills of loose sand, which carried into the water by high winds so thickened the lake, as not to be distinguished from part of the continent, where whole armies have been swallowed up. ("Baras froze") There is an old

for frosty. The parching air burns
with frost. Ecclesiastius 43^d chap.
20. 21. ver: "when the cold north-
wind bloweth, it devoureth the moun-
-tains, and burneth the wilderness,
and consumeth the grass as fire"
("by ~~hazy footed furies haled~~")
~~set upon by furies, from the french~~
~~Haler.~~ ("thence hurried back to fire")

This circumstance of the damned suf-
-fering the extremes of heat & cold
by turns is finely invented to aggra-
-vate the horrors of the description.
There is a fine passage in Shakespeare
where the punishment after death is
supposed to consist in extreme heat
or extreme cold; but these extremes
are not alternate, and to be suffered

both in their turns, as Milton has
described them. "Measure for mea-
-sure Act 3^d" by, but to die, and
go we know not where: To be in cold
obstruction, and to rot; This sensible
warm motion to become a pained
clod; and the delighted spirit to
bathe in fiery floods, or to reside
In the living regions of thick-ribbed
ice — ("and so near the brink")
This is added as a farther aggrava-
-tion of their misery, that tho' they
were "so near the brink" so near
the ~~again~~ surface of the water
yet they could not taste one drop
of it. But the reasons for this ("fate
withstands") ("and Medusa with hor-
-rourian Terror guards the ford") Me-
dusa was one of the Gorgons, whose

turned the beholders into stone. ("of
itself the water flies their taste") &
serves only to tantalize them. This
is a fine allegory to show there is
no forgetfulness in Hek. Memory
makes a part of the punishment
of the damned. (Rocks, caves &c")
The Terrible and difficulty of their
are well painted in this passage;
& particularly in this rough verse
which necessarily takes up so
much time & labor in pronouncing.
("Chimæras dire") The fabulous ac-
count of this monster is, that he
had three heads, a lion, a goat, & a
dragon, & continually vomited
flames. It was overcome by Behe-
rophon, on the horse Pegasus. It

generally lived in Lycia, in the reign
of Iobates. This tradition is explained
by the recollection that there was a
burning mountain in Lycia, called
Chimaera, whose top was covered with
lions, the middle which was fruitful
with goats, and at the bottom the
marshy ground abounded with ser-
pents. Beherophon is said to have
conquered the Chimaera. Because he
first made his habitation on that
mountain. Beherophon, son of
Glauco, king of Ephyræ; he was
first called Hippodam, but the mur-
der of Beher his brother, procured
him the appellation of Beherophon
or, Murderer of Beher. After the murder
he fled to the coast of Proteus, king of
Argos; the king's wife fell in love

with him, but he not returning
her passion, she accused him to the
king of improper conduct towards
her. Proetus, not wishing to violate
the laws of hospitality sent him
to his father in law, Iobates, and
gave him a letter in which he beg-
ged the king to punish with death
a man who had so dishonorably
treated his daughter. From that cir-
cumstance all letters of an unfa-
vorably tendency to the beaver, have
been called letters of Beherophon. Ioba-
tes to satisfy his son in law sent
Beherophon to conquer the Phineaca.
Juno supported him & with the
aid of Pegasus, he conquered the mons-
ter, after this he sent him against the
Silymi, but he was again victorious, and

a third time victorious over the Ama-
zons; at his return from this ~~third~~^{second}
expedition, he was attacked by a party
sent against him by Iobates, but he de-
stroyed all his assassins; the king became
convinced of his innocence, & gave
him his daughter in marriage, & left
him his successor to the throne of Lycia.

("How shaves with level wing the deer")
^{as a bird}
~~Blending to the swan~~, who skims just
over the surface of the water without
seeming to move her wings. ("As when
far off at sea") Satan ("how 'ning high")
is here compared to a fleet of India
men discovered at a distance, as it
were, ("hanging in the clouds") as a fleet
at a distance seems to do. This fleet
is describing, ("by equinoctial winds")
the trade winds blowing about the

equivalent, ("close sailing") and there-
fore more proper to be compared to
a single person ("from Bengala") a
kingdom or city in the East India
subject to the East India ("or the islands
of Ternate & Tidore") two of the Mo-
luca islands in the East Indian
Sea, ("whence merchants bring their
spicy drugs") the most famous spices
are brought from thence by the East
into Europe; ("they on the trading floor")
as the winds are "through the wide
Extrication Sea, to the Cape," of Good
Hope, ("ply steaming mightily toward
the pole") that is by night they sail
northward, and yet, by day their
fleet may be observed hanging in
the clouds.