

The cherubs and the seraphs; he looks not
Like them.

Cain. But there are spirits loftier still —
The archangels.

Lucifer. And still loftier than the archangels.

Adah. Ay — but not blessed.

Lucifer. If the blessedness
Consists in slavery — no.

Adah. I have heard it said,
The seraphs *love most* — cherubim *know most* —
And this should be a cherub — since he loves not.

Lucifer. And if the higher knowledge quenches
love,

What must *he be* you cannot love when known? ¹

Since the all-knowing cherubim love least,
The seraphs' love can be but ignorance:
That they are not compatible, the doom
Of thy fond parents, for their daring, proves.

Choose betwixt love and knowledge — since there is
No other choice: your sire hath chosen already;
His worship is but fear.

Adah. Oh, Cain! choose love.

Cain. For thee, my Adah, I choose not — it was
Born with me — but I love nought else.

Adah. Our parents?

Cain. Did they love us when they snatch'd from
the tree

That which hath driven us all from Paradise?

Adah. We were not born then — and if we had been,
Should we not love them and our children, Cain?

Cain. My little Enoch! and his lisping sister!
Could I but deem them happy, I would half
Forget — but it can never be forgotten

Through thrice a thousand generations! never
Shall men love the remembrance of the man
Who sow'd the seed of evil and mankind

In the same hour! They pluck'd the tree of science
And sin — and, not content with their own sorrow,
Begot *me — thee* — and all the few that are,

And all the unnumber'd and innumerable
Multitudes, millions, myriads, which may be,
To inherit agonies accumulated

By ages! — and I must be sire of such things!
Thy beauty and thy love — my love and joy,
The rapturous moment and the placid hour,²

All we love in our children and each other,
But lead them and ourselves through many years
Of sin and pain — or few, but still of sorrow,
Intercheck'd with an instant of brief pleasure,
To Death — the unknown! Methinks the tree of

knowledge

Hath not fulfill'd its promise: — if they sinn'd,
At least they ought to have known all things that are
Of knowledge — and the mystery of death.

What do they know? — that they are miserable.
What need of snakes and fruits to teach us that?

Adah. I am not wretched, Cain, and if thou
Wert happy —

Cain. Be thou happy, then, alone —
I will have naught to do with happiness,
Which humbles me and mine.

Adah. Alone I could not,
Nor *would* be happy: but with those around us,
I think I could be so, despite of death,

which it will do Lord B. no credit to name, — the romance of
"Faublas."¹

² [This "placid hour" of Cain is, we fear, from a source

1 ["What can *he be* who places love in ignorance?" —
MS.]

2 [In the drawing of Cain himself, there is much vigorous

Which, as I know it not, I dread not, though
It seems an awful shadow — if I may
Judge from what I have heard.

Lucifer. And thou couldst not
Alone, thou say'st, be happy?

Adah. Alone! Oh, my God!
Who could be happy and alone, or good?

To me my solitude seems sin; unless
When I think how soon I shall see my brother,
His brother, and our children, and our parents.

Lucifer. Yet thy God is alone; and is he happy?
Lonely, and good?

Adah. He is not so; he hath
The angels and the mortals to make happy,
And thus becomes so in diffusing joy?

What else can joy be, but the spreading joy?
Lucifer. Ask of your sire, the exile fresh from
Eden;

Or of his first-born son: ask your own heart;
It is not tranquil.

Adah. Alas! no! and you —
Are you of heaven?

Lucifer. If I am not, inquire
The cause of this all-spreading happiness
(Which you proclaim) of the all-great and good
Maker of life and living things; it is
His secret, and he keeps it. We must bear,
And some of us resist, and both in vain,
His seraphs say; but it is worth the trial,
Since better may not be without: there is
A wisdom in the spirit, which directs
To right, as in the dim blue air the eye
Of you, young mortals, lights at once upon
The star which watches, welcoming the morn.

Adah. It is a beautiful star; I love it for
its beauty.

Lucifer. And why not adore?

Adah. Our father
Adores the Invisible only.

Lucifer. But the symbols
Of the Invisible are the loveliest
Of what is visible; and yon bright star
Is leader of the host of heaven.

Adah. Our father
Saith that he has beheld the God himself
Who made him and our mother.

Lucifer. Hast thou seen him?

Adah. Yes — in his works.

Lucifer. But in his being?

Adah. No —
Save in my father, who is God's own image;
Or in his angels, who are like to thee —
And brighter, yet less beautiful and powerful
In seeming: as the silent sunny noon,
All light they look upon us; but thou seem'st
Like an ethereal night, where long white clouds
Streak the deep purple, and unnumber'd stars
Spangle the wonderful mysterious vault
With things that look as if they would be suns;
So beautiful, unnumber'd, and endearing,
Not dazzling, and yet drawing us to them,
They fill my eyes with tears, and so dost thou.
Thou seem'st unhappy: do not make us so,
And I will weep for thee.³

3 [In the drawing of Cain himself, there is much vigorous

expression. It seems, however, as if, in the effort to give
to Lucifer that "spiritual politeness" which the poet
professes to have in view, he has reduced him rather below
the standard of diabolic dignity, which was necessary to his
dramatic interest. He has scarcely "given the devil his due."
We thought Lord Byron knew better. Milton's Satan, with
his faded majesty, and blasted but not obliterated glory, holds
us suspended between terror and amazement, with something
like awe of his spiritual essence and lost estate; but Lord
Byron has introduced him to us as elegant, pensive, and
beautiful, with an air of sadness and suffering that ranks him
with the oppressed, and bespeaks our pity. — Brit. Crit.]

1 [The act concludes with the departure of Cain, under the
guidance of his new monitor, to see the place of departed
spirits. Their flight, in the next, across the abyss of space,
and amid the unnumbered suns and systems which it com-
prises, is very fine. — HEBER.]

2 [In the second act, the demon carries his disciple through
all the limits of space, and expounds to him, in very lofty and
obscure terms, the destinies of past and future worlds. They
have a great deal of exceptionable talk. — JEFFERY.]

3 ["An hour, when, walking on a petty lake,
A man shall say, &c." — MS.]

Y 3

Lucifer. Alas! those tears!
Couldst thou but know what oceans will be shed —

Adah. By me?
Lucifer. By all.

Adah. What all?
Lucifer. The million millions —

The myriad myriads — the all-peopled earth —
The unpeopled earth — and the o'er-peopled Hell,
Of which thy bosom is the germ.

Adah. O Cain!
This spirit curseth us.

Cain. Let him say on;
Him will I follow.

Adah. Whither?
Lucifer. To a place
Whence he shall come back to thee in an hour;
But in that hour see things of many days.

Adah. How can that be?
Lucifer. Did not your Maker make
Out of old worlds this new one in few days?
And cannot I, who aided in this work,
Show in an hour what he hath made in many,
Or hath destroy'd in few?

Cain. Lead on.
Adah. Will he,
In sooth, return within an hour?

Lucifer. He shall.
With us acts are exempt from time, and we
Can crowd eternity into an hour,
Or stretch an hour into eternity:
We breathe not by a mortal measurement —
But that's a mystery. Cain, come on with me.

Adah. Will he return?
Lucifer. Ay, woman! he alone
Of mortals from that place (the first and last
Who shall return, save ONE), — shall come back to
thee,

To make that silent and expectant world
As populous as this: at present there
Are few inhabitants.

Adah. Where dwellest thou?
Lucifer. Throughout all space. Where should I
dwell? Where are

Thy God or Gods — there am I; all things are
Divided with me; life and death — and time —
Eternity — and heaven and earth — and that
Which is not heaven nor earth, but peopled with
Those who once peopled or shall people both —
These are my realms! So that I do divide
His, and possess a kingdom which is not
His. If I were not that which I have said,
Could I stand here? His angels are within
Your vision.

Adah. So they were when the fair serpent
Spoke with our mother first.

Lucifer. Cain! thou hast heard.
If thou dost long for knowledge, I can satiate
That thirst; nor ask thee to partake of fruits

7 [The act concludes with the departure of Cain, under the
guidance of his new monitor, to see the place of departed
spirits. Their flight, in the next, across the abyss of space,
and amid the unnumbered suns and systems which it com-
prises, is very fine. — HEBER.]

8 [In the second act, the demon carries his disciple through
all the limits of space, and expounds to him, in very lofty and
obscure terms, the destinies of past and future worlds. They
have a great deal of exceptionable talk. — JEFFERY.]

9 ["An hour, when, walking on a petty lake,
A man shall say, &c." — MS.]

Y 3

Which shall deprive thee of a single good
The conqueror has left thee. Follow me.

Cain. Spirit, I have said it.
[*Exeunt LUCIFER and CAIN.*

Adah (*follows, exclaiming*). Cain! my brother!
Cain!¹

ACT II.

SCENE I.

*The Abyss of Space.*²

Cain. I tread on air, and sink not; yet I fear
To sink.

Lucifer. Have faith in me, and thou shalt be
Borne on the air, of which I am the prince.

Cain. Can I do so without impiety?
Lucifer. Believe — and sink not! doubt — and
perish! thus

Would run the edict of the other God,
Who names me demon to his angels; they
Echo the sound to miserable things,
Which, knowing nought beyond their shallow senses,
Worship the word which strikes their ear, and deem
Evil or good what is proclaim'd to them
In their abasement. I will have none such:
Worship or worship not, thou shalt behold
The worlds beyond thy little world, nor be
Amerced for doubts beyond thy little life,
With torture of *my* dooming. There will come
An hour, when, toss'd upon some water-drops,³
A man shall say to a man, "Believe in me,
And walk the waters;" and the man shall walk
The billows and be safe. I will not say,
Believe in me, as a conditional creed
To save thee; but fly with me o'er the gulf
Of space an equal flight, and I will show
What thou dar'st not deny, — the history
Of past, and present, and of future worlds.

Cain. Oh, god, or demon, or whate'er thou art,
Is yon our earth?

Lucifer. Dost thou not recognise
The dust which form'd your father?

Cain. Can it be?
Yon small blue circle, swinging in far ether,
With an inferior circlet near it still,
Which looks like that which lit our earthly night?
Is this our Paradise? Where are its walls,
And they who guard them?

Lucifer. Point me out the site
Of Paradise.

Cain. How should I? As we move
Like sunbeams onward, it grows small and smaller,
And as it waxes little, and then less,
Gathers a halo round it, like the light
Which shone the roundest of the stars, when I
Beheld them from the skirts of Paradise:

1 [The act concludes with the departure of Cain, under the
guidance of his new monitor, to see the place of departed
spirits. Their flight, in the next, across the abyss of space,
and amid the unnumbered suns and systems which it com-
prises, is very fine. — HEBER.]

2 [In the second act, the demon carries his disciple through
all the limits of space, and expounds to him, in very lofty and
obscure terms, the destinies of past and future worlds. They
have a great deal of exceptionable talk. — JEFFERY.]

3 ["An hour, when, walking on a petty lake,
A man shall say, &c." — MS.]

Y 3

Methinks they both, as we recede from them,
Appear to join the innumerable stars
Which are around us; and, as we move on,
Increase their myriads.

Lucifer. And if there should be
Worlds greater than thine own, inhabited
By greater things, and they themselves far more
In number than the dust of thy dull earth,
Though multiplied to animated atoms,
All living, and all doom'd to death, and wretched,
What wouldst thou think?

Cain. I should be proud of thought
Which knew such things.

Lucifer. But if that high thought were
Link'd to a servile mass of matter, and,
Knowing such things, aspiring to such things,
And science still beyond them, were chain'd down
To the most gross and petty paltry wants,
All foul and fulsome, and the very best
Of thine enjoyments a sweet degradation,
A most enervating and filthy cheat
To lure thee on to the renewal of
Fresh souls and bodies, all foredoom'd to be
As frail, and few so happy!

Cain. Spirit! I
Know nought of death, save as a dreadful thing
Of which I have heard my parents speak, as of
A hideous heritage I owe to them
No less than life; a heritage not happy,
If I may judge, till now. But, spirit! if
It be as thou hast said (and I within
Feel the prophetic torture of its truth),
Here let me die: for to give birth to those
Who can but suffer many years, and die,
Methinks is merely propagating death,
And multiplying murder.

Lucifer. Thou canst not
All die—there is what must survive.

Cain. The Other
Spake not of this unto my father, when
He shut him forth from Paradise, with death
Written upon his forehead. But at least
Let what is mortal of me perish, that
I may be in the rest as angels are.

Lucifer. I am angelic: wouldst thou be as I am?

Cain. I know not what thou art: I see thy power,
And see thou show'st me things beyond my power,
Beyond all power of my born faculties,
Although inferior still to my desires
And my conceptions.

Lucifer. What are they which dwell
So humbly in their pride, as to sojourn
With worms in clay?

Cain. And what art thou who dwellest

So haughtily in spirit, and canst range
Nature and immortality—and yet
Seem'st sorrowful?

Lucifer. I seem that which I am;
And therefore do I ask of thee, if thou
Wouldst be immortal?

Cain. Thou hast said, I must be
Immortal in despite of me. I knew not
This until lately—but since it must be,
Let me, or happy or unhappy, learn
To anticipate my immortality.

Lucifer. Thou didst before I came upon thee.

Cain. How?

Lucifer. By suffering.

Cain. And must torture be immortal?

Lucifer. We and thy sons will try. But now,
behold!

Is it not glorious?

Cain. Oh, thou beautiful
And unimaginable ether! and
Ye multiplying masses of increased
And still increasing lights! what are ye? what
Is this blue wilderness of interminable
Air, where ye roll along, as I have seen
The leaves along the limpid streams of Eden?
Is your course measured for ye? Or do ye
Sweep on in your unbounded revelry
Through an aerial universe of endless
Expansion—at which my soul aches to think—
Intoxicated with eternity?

Oh God! Oh Gods! or whatso'er ye are!
How beautiful ye are! how beautiful
Your works, or accidents, or whatso'er
They may be! Let me die, as atoms die,
(If that they die) or know ye in your might
And knowledge! My thoughts are not in this hour
Unworthy what I see, though my dust is;
Spirit! let me expire, or see them nearer.

Lucifer. Art thou not nearer? look back to thine
earth!

Cain. Where is it? I see nothing save a mass
Of most innumerable lights.

Lucifer. Look there!

Cain. I cannot see it.

Lucifer. Yet it sparkles still.

Cain. That!—yonder!

Lucifer. Yea.

Cain. And wilt thou tell me so?
Why, I have seen the fire-flies and fire-worms
Sprinkle the dusky groves and the green banks
In the dim twilight, brighter than yon world
Which bears them.

Lucifer. Thou hast seen both worms and worlds,
Each bright and sparkling—what dost think of them?

purpose than to inculcate these doctrines; or, at least, to discuss the question upon which they bear. Now, we can certainly have no objection to Lord Byron writing an essay on the origin of evil, and sifting the whole of that vast and perplexing subject, with the force and the freedom that would be expected and allowed in a fair philosophical discussion; but we do not think it fair thus to argue it partially and *con amore*, in the name of Lucifer and Cain, without the responsibility or the liability to answer, that would attach to a philosophical disputant; and in a form which both doubles the danger, if the sentiments are pernicious, and almost precludes his opponents from the possibility of a reply.—JEFFREY.—“What does Jeffrey mean by *elaborate*? Why! they were written as fast as I could put pen to paper, in the midst of evolutions, and revolutions, and persecutions, and proscriptions of all who interested me in Italy.”—*Byron Letters.*]

¹ [It is nothing less than absurd to suppose, that Lucifer cannot well be expected to talk like an orthodox divine, and that the conversation of the first Rebel and the first Murderer was not likely to be very unexceptionable; or to plead the authority of Milton, or the authors of the old mysteries, for such offensive colloquies. The fact is, that *here* the whole argument—and a very *elaborate* and specious argument it is—is directed against the goodness or the power of the Deity; and there is no answer so much as attempted to the offensive doctrines that are so strenuously inculcated. The Devil and his pupil have the field entirely to themselves, and are encountered with nothing but feeble objections and unreasoning horrors. Nor is this argumentative blasphemy a mere incidental deformity that arises in the course of an action directed to the common sympathies of our nature. It forms, on the contrary, the great staple of the piece, and occupies, we should think, not less than two thirds of it; so that it is really difficult to believe that it was written for any other

Cain. That they are beautiful in their own sphere,
And that the night, which makes both beautiful,
The little shining fire-fly in its flight,
And the immortal star in its great course,
Must both be guided.

Lucifer. But by whom or what?

Cain. Show me.

Lucifer. Dar'st thou behold?

Cain. How know I what

I dare behold? As yet, thou hast shown nought

I dare not gaze on further.

Lucifer. On, then, with me.

Wouldst thou behold things mortal or immortal?

Cain. Why, what are things?

Lucifer. Both partly: but what dost

Sit next thy heart?

Cain. The things I see.

Lucifer. But what

Sate nearest it!

Cain. The things I have not seen,

Nor ever shall—the mysteries of death. [died,

Lucifer. What, if I show to thee things which have

As I have shown thee much which cannot die?

Cain. Do so.

Lucifer. Away, then! on our mighty wings.

Cain. Oh! how we cleave the blue! The stars fade

from us!

The earth! where is my earth? Let me look on it,

For I was made of it.

Lucifer. 'T is now beyond thee,

Less, in the universe, than thou in it;

Yet deem not that thou canst escape it; thou

Shalt soon return to earth, and all its dust:

'T is part of thy eternity, and mine.

Cain. Where dost thou lead me?

Lucifer. To what was before thee!

The phantasm of the world; of which thy world

Is but the wreck.

Cain. What! is it not then new?

Lucifer. No more than life is; and that was ere

thou

Or I were, or the things which seem to us

Greater than either: many things will have

No end; and some, which would pretend to have

Had no beginning, have had one as mean

As thou; and mightier things have been extinct

To make way for much meaner than we can

Surmise; for *moments* only and the *space*

Have been and must be all *unchangeable*.

But changes make not death, except to clay;

But thou art clay,—and canst but comprehend

That which was clay, and such thou shalt behold.

Cain. Clay, spirit! what thou wilt, I can survey.

Lucifer. Away, then!

Cain. But the lights fade from me fast

And some till now grew larger as we approach'd,

And wore the look of worlds.

Lucifer. And such they are.

Cain. And Edens in them?

Lucifer. It may be.

¹ [It is not very easy to perceive what natural or rational object the Devil proposes to himself in carrying his disciple through the abyss of space, to show him that repository of which we remember hearing something in our infant days, “where the old moons are hung up to dry.” To prove that there is a life beyond the grave, was surely no part of his business when he was engaged in fostering the indignation of one who repined at the necessity of dying. And, though it would seem, that entire Hades is, in Lord Byron's picture, a place of suffering, yet, when Lucifer himself had premised

Cain. And men?

Lucifer. Yea, or things higher.

Cain. Ay? and serpents too?

Lucifer. Wouldst thou have men without them?

must no reptiles

Breathe save the erect ones?

Cain. How the lights recede!

Where fly we?

Lucifer. To the world of phantoms, which

Are beings past, and shadows still to come.

Cain. But it grows dark and dark—the stars are

gone!

Lucifer. And yet thou seest.

Cain. 'T is a fearful light!

No sun, no moon, no lights innumerable.

The very blue of the empurpled night

Fades to a dreary twilight, yet I see

Huge dusky masses: but unlike the worlds

We were approaching, which, begirt with light,

Seem'd full of life even when their atmosphere

Of light gave way, and show'd them taking shapes

Unequal, of deep valleys and vast mountains;

And some emitting sparks, and some displaying

Enormous liquid plains, and some begirt

With luminous belts, and floating moons, which took,

Like them, the features of fair earth:—instead,

All here seems dark and dreadful.

Lucifer. But distinct.

Thou seekest to behold death, and dead things?

Cain. I seek it not; but as I know there are

Such, and that my sire's sin makes him and me,

And all that we inherit, liable

To such, I would behold at once, what I

Must one day see performe.

Lucifer. Behold!

Cain. 'T is darkness.

Lucifer. And so it shall be ever; but we will

Unfold its gates!

Cain. Enormous vapours roll

Apart—what's this?

Lucifer. Enter!

Cain. Can I return?

Lucifer. Return! be sure: how else should death

be peopled?

Its present realm is thine to what it will be.

Through thee and thine.

Cain. The clouds still open wide

And wider, and make widening circles round us.

Lucifer. Advance!

Cain. And thou!

Lucifer. Fear not—without me thou

Couldst not have gone beyond thy world. On! on!

[*They disappear through the clouds.*]

SCENE II.

Hades.

Enter LUCIFER and CAIN.

Cain. How silent and how vast are these dim
worlds!

that these sufferings were the lot of those spirits who had sided with him against Jehovah, is it likely that a more accurate knowledge of them would increase Cain's eagerness for the alliance, or that he would not rather have inquired whether a better fortune did not await the adherents of the triumphant side? At all events, the spectacle of many ruined worlds was more likely to awe a mortal into submission, than to rouse him to hopeless resistance; and, even if it made him a hater of God, had no natural tendency to render him furious against a brother who was to be his fellow-sufferer.—HEBER.]

For they seem more than one, and yet more peopled
Than the huge brilliant luminous orbs which swung
So thickly in the upper air, that I
Had deem'd them rather the bright populace
Of some all unimaginable heaven,
Than things to be inhabited themselves,
But that on drawing near them I beheld
Their swelling into palpable immensity
Of matter, which seem'd made for life to dwell on,
Rather than life itself. But here, all is
So shadowy and so full of twilight, that
It speaks of a day past.

Lucifer. It is the realm
Of death. — Wouldst have it present?

Cain. Till I know
That which it really is, I cannot answer.
But if it be as I have heard my father
Deal out in his long homilies, 'tis a thing —
Oh God! I dare not think on't! Cursed be
He who invented life that leads to death!
Or the dull mass of life, that, being life,
Could not retain, but needs must forfeit it —
Even for the innocent!

Lucifer. Dost thou curse thy father?

Cain. Cursed he not me in giving me my birth?
Cursed he not me before my birth, in daring
To pluck the fruit forbidden?

Lucifer. Thou say'st well:
The curse is mutual 'twixt thy sire and thee —
But for thy sons and brother?

Cain. Let them share it
With me, their sire and brother? What else is
Bequeath'd to me? I leave them my inheritance.
Oh, ye interminable gloomy realms
Of swimming shadows and enormous shapes,
Some fully shown, some indistinct, and all
Mighty and melancholy — what are ye?
Live ye, or have ye lived?

Lucifer. Somewhat of both.

Cain. Then what is death?
Lucifer. What? Hath not he who made ye
Said 'tis another life?

Cain. Till now he hath
Said nothing, save that all shall die.¹

Lucifer. Perhaps
He one day will unfold that further secret.

Cain. Happy the day!

Lucifer. Yes; happy! when unfolded

¹ ["Death, the last and most dreadful of all evils, is so far from being one, that it is the infallible cure for all others —

'To die, is landing on some silent shore,
Where billows never beat, nor tempests roar:
Ere well we feel the friendly stroke, 'tis o'er.

But was it an evil ever so great, as could not be remedied but by one much greater, which is, by living for ever; by which means our wickedness, unrestrained by the prospect of a future state, would grow so unsupportable, our sufferings so intolerable by perseverance, and our pleasures so tiresome by repetition, that no being in the universe could be so completely miserable as a species of immortal men. We have no reason, therefore, to look upon death as an evil, or to fear it as a punishment, even without any supposition of a future life: but if we consider it as a passage to a more perfect state, or a remove only in an eternal succession of still improving states (for which we have the strongest reasons), it will then appear a new favour from the divine munificence; and a man must be as absurd to repine at dying, as a traveller would be who proposed to himself a delightful tour through various unknown countries, to lament that he cannot take up his residence at the first dirty inn which he baits at on the road. The instability of human life, or of the changes of its successive periods, of which we so frequently complain, are no more than the necessary progress of it to this necessary conclusion;

Through agonies unspeakable, and clogg'd
With agonies eternal, to innumerable
Yet unborn myriads of unconscious atoms,
All to be animated for this only!

Cain. What are these mighty phantoms which I see
Floating around me? — They wear not the form
Of the intelligences I have seen
Round our regretted and unenter'd Eden,
Nor wear the form of man as I have view'd it
In Adam's, and in Abel's, and in mine,
Nor in my sister-bride's, nor in my children's:
And yet they have an aspect, which, though not
Of men nor angels, looks like something, which
If not the last, rose higher than the first,
Haughty, and high, and beautiful, and full
Of seeming strength, but of inexplicable
Shape; for I never saw such. They bear not
The wing of seraph, nor the face of man,
Nor form of mightiest brute, nor aught that is
Now breathing; mighty yet and beautiful
As the most beautiful and mighty which
Live, and yet so unlike them, that I scarce
Can call them living.

Lucifer. Yet they lived.

Cain. Where?

Lucifer. Where

Thou livest.

Cain. When?

Lucifer. On what thou callest earth
They did inhabit.

Cain. Adam is the first.

Lucifer. Of thine, I grant thee—but too mean to be
The last of these.

Cain. And what are they?

Lucifer. That which
Thou shalt be.

Cain. But what were they?

Lucifer. Living, high,
Intelligent, good, great, and glorious things,
As much superior unto all thy sire,

Adam, could e'er have been in Eden, as
The sixty-thousandth generation shall be,
In its dull damp degeneracy, to
Thee and thy son; — and how weak they are, judge
By thy own flesh.

Cain. Ah me! and did they perish?

Lucifer. Yes, from their earth, as thou wilt fade
from thine.

and are so far from being evils deserving these complaints, that they are the source of our greatest pleasures, as they are the source of all novelty, from which our greatest pleasures are ever derived. The continual successions of seasons in the human life, by daily presenting to us new scenes, render it agreeable, and, like those of the year, afford us delights by their change, which the choicest of them could not give us by their continuance. In the spring of life, the gilding of the sunshine, the verdure of the fields, and the variegated paintings of the sky, are so exquisite in the eyes of infants at their first looking abroad into a new world, as nothing perhaps afterwards can equal. The heat and vigour of the succeeding summer of youth ripen for us new pleasures, — the blooming maid, the nightly revel, and the jovial chase: the serene autumn of complete manhood feasts us with the golden harvest of our worldly pursuits; nor is the hoary winter of old age destitute of its peculiar comforts and enjoyments, of which the recollection and relation of those past are perhaps none of the least; and at last death opens to us a new prospect, from whence we shall probably look back upon the diversions and occupations of this world with the same contempt we do now on our tops and hobby-horses, and with the same surprise that they could ever so much entertain or engage us." — JENYNS. — "These," says Dr. Johnson, "are sentiments which, though not new, may be read with pleasure and profit, in the thousandth repetition."

Cain. But was mine theirs?

Lucifer. It was.

Cain. But not as now.

It is too little and too lowly to
Sustain such creatures.¹

Lucifer. True, it was more glorious.

Cain. And wherefore did it fall?

Lucifer. Ask him who fell.

Cain. But how?

Lucifer. By a most crushing and inexorable
Destruction and disorder of the elements,
Which struck a world to chaos, as a chaos
Subsiding has struck out a world: such things,
Though rare in time, are frequent in eternity. —
Pass on, and gaze upon the past.

Cain. 'Tis awful!

Lucifer. And true. Behold these phantoms! they
were once
Material as thou art.

Cain. And must I be

Like them?

Lucifer. Let He who made thee answer that.

I show thee what thy predecessors are,
And what they were thou feelest, in degree
Inferior as thy petty feelings and
Thy pettier portion of the immortal part
Of high intelligence and earthly strength.
What ye in common have with what they had
Is life, and what ye shall have — death: the rest
Of your poor attributes is such as suits
Reptiles engender'd out of the subsiding
Slime of a mighty universe, crush'd into
A scarcely-yet shaped planet, peopled with
Things whose enjoyment was to be in blindness —
A Paradise of Ignorance, from which
Knowledge was barr'd as poison. But behold
What these superior beings are or were;
Or, if it irk thee, turn thee back and till
The earth, thy task — I'll waft thee there in safety.

Cain. No: I'll stay here.

Lucifer. How long?

Cain. For ever! Since

I must one day return here from the earth,
I rather would remain; I am sick of all
That dust has shown me — let me dwell in shadows.

¹ ["If, according to some speculations, you could prove the world many thousand years older than the Mosaic chronology — or if you could knock up Adam and Eve, and the Apple and Serpent — still, what is to be put up in their stead? — or how is the difficulty removed? Things must have had a beginning: and what matters it when, or how? I sometimes think that man may be the relic of some higher material being wrecked in a former world, and degenerated in the hardship and struggle through chaos into conformity, or something like it — as we see Laplanders, Esquimaux, &c. inferior, in the present date, as the elements become more inexorable. But even then, this higher pre-Adamite supposititious creation must have had an origin and a Creator; for a Creator is a more natural imagination than a fortuitous concurrence of atoms: all things remount to a fountain, though they may flow to an ocean." — *Byron Diary*, 1821.]

² [Mr. Gifford having, through Mr. Murray, suggested the propriety of omitting a portion of this dialogue, Lord Byron replied: — "The two passages cannot be altered without making Lucifer talk like the Bishop of London, which would not be in the character of the former. The notion is from Cuvier (that of the *old worlds*). The other passage is also in character; if *nonsense*, so much the better, because then it can do no harm; and the siller Satan is made, the safer for every body. As to 'alarms,' &c. do you really think such things ever led any body astray? Are these people more impious than Milton's Satan? or the Prometheus of Eschylus? or even than 'the Sadducees,' the 'Fall of Jerusalem,' of Milman, &c.? Are not Adam, Eve, Adah, and Abel, as pious as the Catechism? Gifford is too wise a man to think

Lucifer. It cannot be: thou now beholdest as
A vision that which is reality.
To make thyself fit for this dwelling, thou [pass'd —
Must pass through what the things thou see'st have
The gates of death.

Cain. By what gate have we enter'd
Even now?

Lucifer. By mine! But, plighted to return,
My spirit buoys thee up to breathe in regions
Where all is breathless save thyself. Gaze on;
But do not think to dwell here till thine hour
Is come.

Cain. And these, too; can they ne'er repass
To earth again?

Lucifer. Their earth is gone for ever —
So changed by its convulsion, they would not
Be conscious to a single present spot
Of its new scarcely harden'd surface — 't was —
Oh, what a beautiful world it was!²

Cain. And is.

It is not with the earth, though I must till it,
I feel at war, but that I may not profit
By what it bears of beautiful untailing,
Nor gratify my thousand swelling thoughts
With knowledge, nor allay my thousand fears
Of death and life.

Lucifer. What thy world is, thou see'st,
But canst not comprehend the shadow of
That which it was.

Cain. And those enormous creatures,
Phantoms inferior in intelligence
(At least so seeming) to the things we have pass'd,
Resembling somewhat the wild habitants
Of the deep woods of earth, the hugest which
Roar nightly in the forest, but ten-fold
In magnitude and terror; taller than
The cherub-guarded walls of Eden, with
Eyes flashing like the fiery swords which fence them,
And tusks projecting like the trees stripp'd of
Their bark and branches — what were they?

Lucifer. That which

The Mammoth is in thy world; — but these lie
By myriads underneath its surface.

Cain. But

None on it?³

that such things can have any serious effect: who was ever altered by a poem? I beg leave to observe, that there is no creed or personal hypothesis of mine in all this; but I was obliged to make Cain and Lucifer talk consistently; and surely this has always been permitted to poetry. Cain is a proud man: if Lucifer promised him kingdom, &c. it would *glorify* him: the object of the demon is to *depress* him still further in his own estimation than he was before, by showing him infinite things and his own abasement, till he falls into the frame of mind that leads to the catastrophe, from mere *internal* irritation, not premeditation, or envy of *Abel* which would have made him contemptible, but from rage and fury against the inadequacy of his state to his conceptions, and which discharges itself rather against life, and the Author of life, than the mere living. His subsequent remorse is the natural effect of looking on his sudden deed. Had the deed been *premeditated*, his repentance would have been tardier.³

³ [Hades is a place, in Lord Byron's description, very different from all that we had anticipated. He supposes that the world which we now inhabit had been preceded by many successive worlds, which had each, in turn, been created and ruined; and the inhabitants of which he describes, on grounds sufficiently probable for poetry, as proportioned, in bodily and intellectual strength, to those gigantic specimens of animal existence whose remains still perplex the naturalist. But he not only places the pre-Adamite giants in Hades, but the ghosts of the Mammoth and Megatherion, their contemporaries, and, above all, the phantoms of the worlds themselves which these beings inhabited, with their mountains, oceans, and forests, all gloomy and sad together, and (we

Lucifer. No: for thy frail race to war
With them would render the curse on it useless —
'T would be destroy'd so early.

Cain. But why war?

Lucifer. You have forgotten the denunciation
Which drove your race from Eden — war with all
things,

And death to all things, and disease to most things,
And pangs, and bitterness; these were the fruits
Of the forbidden tree.

Cain. But animals —
Did they, too, eat of it, that they must die? [you,

Lucifer. Your Maker told ye, they were made for
As you for him. — You would not have their doom
Superior to your own? Had Adam not
Fallen, all had stood.

Cain. Alas! the hopeless wretches!
They too must share my sire's fate, like his sons;
Like them, too, without having shared the apple;
Like them, too, without the so dear-bought knowledge!

It was a lying tree — for we know nothing.
At least it promised knowledge at the price
Of death — but knowledge still: but what knows man?

Lucifer. It may be death leads to the highest
knowledge;

And being of all things the sole thing certain,
At least leads to the surest science: therefore
The tree was true, though deadly.

Cain. These dim realms!
I see them, but I know them not.

Lucifer. Because
Thy hour is yet afar, and matter cannot
Comprehend spirit wholly — but 'tis something
To know there are such realms.

Cain. We knew already
That there was death.

Lucifer. But not what was beyond it.
Cain. Nor know I now.

Lucifer. Thou knowest that there is
A state, and many states beyond thine own —
And this thou knewest not this morn.

Cain. But all
Seems dim and shadowy.

Lucifer. Be content; it will
Seem clearer to thine immortality.

Cain. And yon immeasurable liquid space
Of glorious azure which floats on beyond us,
Which looks like water, and which I should deem
The river which flows out of Paradise
Past my own dwelling, but that it is bankless
And boundless, and of an ethereal hue —
What is it?

Lucifer. There is still some such on earth,
Although inferior, and thy children shall
Dwell near it — 't is the phantasm of an ocean.

Cain. 'T is like another world; a liquid sun —
And those inordinate creatures sporting o'er
Its shining surface?

Lucifer. Are its inhabitants,
The past leviathans.

Cain. And yon immense
Serpent, which rears its dripping mane and vasty
Head ten times higher than the haughtiest cedar
Forth from the abyss, looking as he could coil
Himself around the orbs we lately look'd on —

suppose he means) in a state of eternal suffering. We really
think that this belongs to that species of sublime, which is

Is he not of the kind which bask'd beneath
The tree in Eden?

Lucifer. Eve, thy mother, best
Can tell what shape of serpent tempted her.

Cain. This seems too terrible. No doubt the other
Had more of beauty.

Lucifer. Hast thou ne'er beheld him?
Cain. Many of the same kind (at least so call'd),
But never that precisely which persuaded
The fatal fruit, nor even of the same aspect.

Lucifer. Your father saw him not?
Cain. No: 't was my mother
Who tempted him — she tempted by the serpent.

Lucifer. Good man! whene'er thy wife, or thy sons'
wives
Tempt thee or them to aught that's new or strange,
Be sure thou see'st first who hath tempted them.

Cain. Thy precept comes too late: there is no more
For serpents to tempt woman to.

Lucifer. But there
Are some things still which woman may tempt man to,
And man tempt woman: — let thy sons look to it!
My counsel is a kind one; for 't is even
Given chiefly at my own expense: 't is true,
'T will not be follow'd, so there's little lost.

Cain. I understand not this.
Lucifer. The happier thou! —
Thy world and thou are still too young! Thou
thinkest
Thyself most wicked and unhappy: is it
Not so?

Cain. For crime, I know not; but for pain,
I have felt much.

Lucifer. First-born of the first man!
Thy present state of sin — and thou art evil,
Of sorrow — and thou sufferest, are both Eden
In all its innocence compared to what
Thou shortly may'st be; and that state again
In its redoubled wretchedness, a Paradise
To what thy sons' sons' sons, accumulating
In generations like to dust (which they
In fact but add to), shall endure and do. —
Now let us back to earth!

Cain. And wherefore didst thou
Lead me here only to inform me this?

Lucifer. Was not thy quest for knowledge?
Cain. Yes; as being
The road to happiness.

Lucifer. If truth be so,
Thou hast it.

Cain. Then my father's God did well
When he prohibited the fatal tree.

Lucifer. But had done better in not planting it.
But ignorance of evil doth not save
From evil; it must still roll on the same,
A part of all things.

Cain. Not of all things. No:
I'll not believe it — for I thirst for good. [evil

Lucifer. And who and what doth not? Who covets
For its own bitter sake? — None — nothing! 't is
The leaven of all life, and lifelessness.

Cain. Within those glorious orbs which we behold,
Distant, and dazzling, and innumerable,
Ere we came down into this phantom realm,
Ill cannot come: they are too beautiful.

considerably less than a single step removed from the ridicu-
lous. — HEBER.]

Lucifer. Thou hast seen them from afar —

Cain. And what of that?

Distance can but diminish glory — they,
When nearer, must be more ineffable. [tiful,

Lucifer. Approach the things of earth most beau-
And judge their beauty near.

Cain. I have done this —
The loveliest thing I know is loveliest nearest.

Lucifer. Then there must be delusion. — What is
that,

Which being nearest to thine eyes is still
More beautiful than beauteous things remote?

Cain. My sister Adah. — All the stars of heaven,
The deep blue noon of night, lit by an orb
Which looks a spirit, or a spirit's world —

The hues of twilight — the sun's gorgeous coming —
His setting indescribable, which fills
My eyes with pleasant tears as I behold

Him sink, and feel my heart float softly with him
Along that western paradise of clouds — [voice —
The forest shade — the green bough — the bird's
The vesper bird's, which seems to sing of love,
And mingles with the song of cherubim,
As the day closes over Eden's walls; —
All these are nothing, to my eyes and heart,
Like Adah's face: I turn from earth and heaven
To gaze on it.

Lucifer. 'T is fair as frail mortality,
In the first dawn and bloom of young creation,
And earliest embraces of earth's parents,
Can make its offspring; still it is delusion.

Cain. You think so, being not her brother.

Lucifer. Mortal!
My brotherhood's with those who have no children.

Cain. Then thou canst have no fellowship with us.

Lucifer. It may be that thine own shall be for me.
But if thou dost possess a beautiful
Being beyond all beauty in thine eyes,
Why art thou wretched?

Cain. Why do I exist?
Why art thou wretched? why are all things so?
Ev'n he who made us must be, as the maker
Of things unhappy! To produce destruction
Can surely never be the task of joy,
And yet my sire says he's omnipotent:
Then why is evil — he being good? I ask'd
This question of my father; and he said,
Because this evil only was the path
To good. Strange good, that must arise from out
Its deadly opposite. I lately saw
A lamb stung by a reptile: the poor suckling
Lay foaming on the earth, beneath the vain
And piteous bleating of its restless dam;
My father pluck'd some herbs, and laid them to
The wound; and by degrees the helpless wretch
Resumed its careless life, and rose to drain
The mother's milk, who o'er it tremulous
Stood licking its reviving limbs with joy.
Behold, my son! said Adam, how from evil
Springs good!

Lucifer. What didst thou answer?
Cain. Nothing; for

And preachers to us all; admonishing,
That we should dress us fairly for our end.
Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself. —
SHAKESPEARE.]

He is my father: but I thought, that 't were
A better portion for the animal
Never to have been stung at all, than to
Purchase renewal of its little life
With agonies unutterable, though
Dispell'd by antidotes.

Lucifer. But as thou saidst
Of all beloved things thou lovest her
Who shared thy mother's milk, and giveth hers
Unto thy children —

Cain. Most assuredly:
What should I be without her?

Lucifer. What am I?
Cain. Dost thou love nothing?

Lucifer. What does thy God love?
Cain. All things, my father says; but I confess
I see it not in their allotment here. [love

Lucifer. And, therefore, thou canst not see if I
Or no, except some vast and general purpose,
To which particular things must melt like snows.

Cain. Snows! what are they?
Lucifer. Be happier in not knowing
What thy remoter offspring must encounter;
But bask beneath the clime which knows no winter!

Cain. But dost thou not love something like thy-
self?

Lucifer. And dost thou love thyself?
Cain. Yes, but love more
What makes my feelings more endurable,
And is more than myself, because I love it.

Lucifer. Thou lovest it, because 't is beautiful,
As was the apple in thy mother's eye;
And when it ceases to be so, thy love
Will cease, like any other appetite.

Cain. Cease to be beautiful! how can that be?
Lucifer. With time.

Cain. But time has past, and hitherto
Even Adam and my mother both are fair:
Not fair like Adah and the seraphim —
But very fair.

Lucifer. All that must pass away
In them and her.

Cain. I'm sorry for it; but
Cannot conceive my love for her the less.
And when her beauty disappears, methinks
He who creates all beauty will lose more
Than me in seeing perish such a work.

Lucifer. I pity thee who lovest what must perish.
Cain. And I thee who lov'st nothing.

Lucifer. And thy brother —
Sits he not near thy heart?

Cain. Why should he not?
Lucifer. Thy father loves him well — so does thy
God.

Cain. And so do I.
Lucifer. 'T is well and meekly done.

Cain. Meekly!
Lucifer. He is the second born of flesh,
And is his mother's favourite.

Cain. Let him keep
Her favour, since the serpent was the first
To win it.

And preachers to us all; admonishing,
That we should dress us fairly for our end.
Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself. —
SHAKESPEARE.]

And preachers to us all; admonishing,
That we should dress us fairly for our end.
Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself. —
SHAKESPEARE.]

And preachers to us all; admonishing,
That we should dress us fairly for our end.
Thus may we gather honey from the weed,
And make a moral of the devil himself. —
SHAKESPEARE.]