THE GIFT OF
W. W. Murphy
THE ODYSSÉY OF HOMER.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GREEK,

BY

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THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK I
THE ARGUMENT.

Minerva's descent to Ithaca.

The poem opens within forty-eight days of the arrival of Ulysses in his dominions. He had now remained seven years in the island of Calypso, when the gods assembled in council proposed the method of his departure from thence, and his return to his native country. For this purpose it is concluded to send Mercury to Calypso, and Pallas immediately descends to Ithaca. She holds a conference with Telemachus, in the shape of Mentor, king of the Taphians; in which she advises him to take a journey in quest of his father Ulysses, to Pylos and Sparta, where Nestor and Menelaus yet reigned: then, after having visibly displayed her divinity, disappears. The suitors of Penelope make great entertainments and riot in her palace till night. Phemius sings to them the return of the Grecians, till Penelope puts a stop to the song. Some words arise between the suitors and Telemachus, who summons the council to meet the day following.
THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK I.

THE man for wisdom's various arts renown'd;
Long exercis'd in woes, oh Muse! resound;
Who, when his arms had wrought the distin'd:
Of sacred Troy, and raz'd her heav'n-built wall, [saw
Wand'ring from clime to clime, observant, stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd.
On stormy seas unnumber'd toils he bore,
Safe with his friends to gain his natal shore:
Vain toils! their impious folly dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day:
The god, vindictive, doom'd them never more
(Ah men unblest!) to touch that natal shore.
Oh snatch some portion of these acts from fate,
Celestial Muse! and to our world relate.

Now at their native realms the Greeks arriv'd;
All who the wars of ten long years surviv'd,
And 'scap'd the perils of the gulsy main.
Ulysses, sole of all the victor train,
An exile from his dear paternal coast,
Deplor'd his absent queen, and empire lost.
Calypso in her cave constrain'd his stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay:
In vain—for now the circling years disclose
The day predestin'd to reward his woes.
At length his Ithaca is giv'n by fate,
Where yet new labours his arrival wait:

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At length—their rage the hostile Pow'rs restrain,
All but the ruthless monarch of the main.
But now the god, remote, a heav'ly guest
In Æthiopia grac'd the genial feast,
(A rage divided, whom with sloping rays
The rising and descending sun surveys;)
There on the world's extremest verge rever'd,
With hecatombs and pray'r in pomp prefer'd,
Distant he lay; while in the bright abodes
Of high Olympus, Jove conven'd the gods:
Th' assembly thus the fire supreme address,
Ægythis' fate revolving in his breast,
Whom young Orestes to the dreary coast
Of Pluto sent, a blood-polluted ghost.

Perverse mankind! whose wills, created free,
Charge all their woes on absolute decree;
All to the dooming gods their guilt translate,
And follies are miscall'd the crimes of fate.
When to his lust Ægythis gave the rein,
Did fate, or we, th' adulterous act constrain?
Did fate, or we, when great Atrides dy'd,
Urge the bold traitor to the regicide?
Hermes I sent, while yet his soul remain'd
Sincere from royal blood, and faith profan'd;
To warn the wretch, that young Orestes grown
To manly years should re assert the throne;
Yet, impotent of mind, and uncontroul'd,
He plung'd into the gulf which heav'n foretold,
Here paus'd the god, and pensive thus replies
Minerva, graceful with her azure eyes:
O thou! from whom the whole creation springs,
The source of pow'r on earth deriv'd to kings!
His death was equal to the direful deed;
So may the man of blood be doom'd to bleed!
But grief and rage alternate wound my breast
For brave Ulysses, still by fate oppress'd.
Amidst an isle, around whose rocky shore
The forrests murmur; and the surges roar.
The blameless hero from his wish'd-for home
A goddess guards in her enchanted dome,
(Aratus her face, to whose far-piercing eye
The wonders of the deep expanded ly;
Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the stately vault, and prop the spheres.)
By his fair daughter is the chief confin'd,
Who sooths to dear delight his anxious mind.
Successless all her soft caresses prove,
To banish from his breast his country's love:
To see the flame from his lov'd palace rise,
While the dear isle in distant prospect lies,
With what contentment could he close his eyes?
And will omnipotence neglect to save
The suff ring virtue of the wife and brave?
Must he, whose altars on the Phrygian shore
With frequent rites, and pure, avow'd thy pow'r,
Be doom'd the worst of human ills to prove,
Unblest'd, abandon'd to the wrath of Jove?
Daughter! what words have pass'd thy lips unweigh'd?
(Reply'd the thund'rer to the martial maid)
Deem not unjustly by my doom oppress
Of human race the wisest and the best.
Neptune, by pray'r repentant rarely won,
Afflicts the chief, t' avenge his giant son,
Whose visual orb Ulysses rob'd of light;
Great Polyphemus, of more than mortal might!
Him young Thoosa bore, (the bright increase
Of Phorcys, dreaded in the sounds and seas;)
Whom Neptune ey'd with bloom of beauty blest'd,
And in his cave the yielding nymph compre'sst'd.
For this the god constrains the Greek to roam,
A hopelesse exile from his native home,
From death alone exempt—but cease to mourn;
Let all combine t' achieve his wish'd return:
Neptune atop'd, his wrath shall now restrain,
Or thwart the synod of the gods in vain.
Father and king ador'd! Minerva cry'd,
Since all who in th' Olympian bow'r reside
Now make the wand'ring Greek their public care,
Let Hermes to th' * Atlantic isle repair;
Bid him, arriv'd in bright Calypso's court,
The sanction of th' assembled Pow'r's report;
That wise Ulysses to his native land
Must speed, obedient to their high command.
Mean time Telemachus, the blooming heir
Of sea-girt Ithaca, demands my care:
'Tis mine to form his green, unpractis'd years,
In sage debates, surrounded with his peers,
To save the state; and timely to restrain
The bold intrusion of the suitor-train,
Who crowd his palace, and with lawless pow'r
His herds and flocks in feastful rites devour.
To distant Sparta, and the spacious waste
Of sandy Pyle, the royal youth shall haste.
There, warm with filial love, the cause enquire
That from his realm retards his god-like fire;
Deliv'ring early to the voice of fame
The promise of a great, immortal name.
She said: the sandal's of celestial mould
Fledg'd with ambrosial plumes, and rich with gold,
Surround her feet; with these sublime she salls
Th' aereal space, and mounts the winged gales:
O'er earth and ocean wide prepar'd to soar,
Her dreaded arm a beamy javelin bore,
Prond'rous and vast; which, when her fury burns,
Proud tyrants humble, and whole hosts o'erturns.
From high Olympus prone her flight she bends,
And in the realm of Ithaca descends:
Her lineaments divine the grave disguise
Of Mentes' form conceal'd from human eyes;
(Mentes, the monarch of the Taphian land,)
A glitt'ring spear wav'd awful in her hand.

* Ogygia.
Book I. Homer's Odyssey.

There in the portal plac'd, the heav'n-born maid
Enormous riot and mis-rule survey'd.
On hides of beehives before the palace-gate,
(Sad spoils of luxury,) the suitors fate.
With rival art, and ardour in their vein,
At chefs't they vie, to captivate the queen,
Divining of their loves. Attending nigh,
A menial train the flowing bowl supply:
Others apart the spacious hall prepare,
And form the costly feast with busy care.
There young Telemachus, his bloomy face
Glowing celestial-sweet with god-like grace,
Amid the circle shines: but hope and fear
(Painful vicissitude!) his bosom teem.
Now imag'd in his mind, he sees, wait'd,
In peace and joy, the people's rightful lord;
The proud oppressor, by the vengeance sword.
While his fond soul these fancied triumphs swell'd,
The stranger-guest the royal youth beheld.
Grief'd that a visitant so long should wait
Unmark'd, unhonour'd, at a monarch's gate;
Instant he flew with hospitable haste,
And the new friend with courteous air embrac'd:
Stranger I whose'er thou art, securely rest
Affianc'd in my faith, a friendly guest:
Approach the dome, the social banquet share,
And then the purpose of thy soul declare.
Thus affable and mild, the prince proceeds,
And to the dome th' unknown celestial leads.
The spear-receiving from her hand, he plac'd
Against a column, fair with sculpture grac'd;
Where seemly rang'd in peaceful order, flood
Ulysses' arms, now long disas'd to blood.
He led the goddess to the sovereign seat,
Her feet supported with a stool of state;
(A purple-carpet spread the pavement wide)
Then drew his seat, familiar, to her side;
Far from the suitor train, a brutal crowd,
With insolence, and wine, elate and loud;
Where the free guest, unnoted, might relate,
If haply conscious, of his father's fate.
The golden ew'r a maid obsequious brings,
Replenish'd from the cool, translucent springs;
With copious water the bright vase supplies
A silver laver of capacious size:
They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
They heap the glitt'ring canisters with bread:
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and savour, rich repast!
Delicious wines th' attending herald brought;
The gold gave lustre to the purple draught.
Lur'd with the vapour of the fragrant feast,
In rush'd the suitors with varicious haste:
Marshal'd in order due, to each a few'r
Presents, to bathe his hands, a radiant ew'r.
Luxurious then they feast. Obsequious youth
Gay, stripling youths the brimming goblets crown'd.
The rage of hunger quell'd, they all advance,
And form to measur'd airs the mazy dance:
To Phemius was confign'd the chorded lyre,
Whose hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire;
Phemius, whose voice divine could sweetest sing
High strains responsive to the vocal string.
Mean while, in whispers to his heav'nly guest,
His indignation thus the prince express'd:
Indulge my rising grief, whilst these (my friend)
With song and dance the pompous revel end.
Light is the dance, and doubly sweet the lays,
When, for the dear delight, another pays.
His treasure'd stores these cormorants consume,
Whose bones, defrauded of a regal tomb,
And common turf, ly naked on the plain;
Or doom'd to walter in the whelming main.
Should he return, that troop so blithe and bold,
With purple robes inwrought, and stiff with gold,
Book I. HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

Precipitant in fear, would wing their flight,
And curse their cumbrous pride's unweildy weight.
But ah I dream!—th' appointed hour is fled,
And hope, too long with vain delusion fed,
Deaf to the rumour of fallacious fame,
Gives to the roll of death his glorious name!
With venial freedom let me now demand
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land:
Sincere, from whence began thy course, recite,
And to what ship I owe the friendly freight?
Now first to me this visit do'st thou deign,
Or number'd in my father's social train?
All who deserv'd his choice, he made his own,
And curious much to know, he far was known.
My birth I boast, (the blue-ey'd virgin cries,) From great Anchialus, renown'd and wise:
Mentes—my name; I rule the Taphian race, Whose bounds the deep circumfluent waves embrace:
A duteous people, and industrious isle,
To naval arts inur'd, and stormy toil.
Freighted with iron from my native land, I steer my voyage to the Brutian strand;
To gain by commerce, for the labour'd mast,
A just proportion of refulgent brack.
Far from your capital my ship resides
At Reithrus, and secure at anchor rides; Where waving groves on airy Nelon grow, Supremely tall, and shade the deeps below.
Thence to re-visit your imperial dome,
An old, hereditary guest I come;
Your father's friend, Laertes can relate
Our faith unspotted, and its early date; Who, prest with heart-corroding grief and years,
To the gay court a rural shade prefers;
Where, sole of all his train, a matron sage, Supports with homely food his drooping age, With feeble steps from marshalling his vines Returning sad, when toilsome day declines.
With friendly speed, induc'd by earring fame,
To hail Ulysses' safe return I came:
But still the frown of some celestial pow'r
With envious joy retards the blissful hour.
Let not your soul be sunk in sad despair;
He lives; he breathes this heav'nly, vital air,
Among a savage race, whose fiery bounds
With ceaseless roar the foaming deep surrounds.
The thoughts which rov'd within my rash'd breast,
To me, no seer, th' inspiring gods suggest;
Nor skill'd, nor studious, with prophetic eye
To judge the winged omens of the sky;
Yet hear this certain speech, nor deem it vain;
Though adamantine bonds the chief restrains,
The dire restraint his wisdom will defeat,
And soon restore him to his regal seat.
But, gen'rous youth! sincere and free declare,
Are you, of manly growth, his royal heir?
For sure Ulysses in your look appears,
The same his features, if the same his years.
Such was that face, on which I dwelt with joy,
Ere Greece assembled stem'd the tides to Troy;
But parting then for that defaced shore,
Our eyes, unhappy! never greeting more.
To prove a genuine birth, the prince replies,
On female truth asserting faith relies;
Thus manifest of right, I build my claim
Sure-founded on a fair maternal fame,
Ulysses' son: but happier he, whom fate
Hath plac'd beneath the storms which tost the great! 28a
Happier the son, whose hoary fire is blest
With humble affluence, and domestic rest!
Happier than I, to future empire born,
But doom'd a father's wretched fate to mourn!
To whom, with aspect mild, the guest diring:
Oh true descendent of a sceptor'd line!
The gods, a glorious fate, from anguish free,
To chastise Penelope's increase decree.
Book I.  Homer's Odyssey.

But say, you jovial troop so gayly drest,
Is this a bridal, or a friendly feast?
Or from their deed I rightlier may divine,
Unseemly flown with insolence and wine?
Unwelcome revellers, whose lawless joy
Pains the sage ear, and hurts the sober eye.
Magnificence of old (the prince reply'd)
Beneath our roof with virtue could reside;
Unblam'd abundance crown'd the royal board,
What time this dome rever'd her prudent lord;
Who now (so heav'n decrees) is doom'd to mourn,
Bitter constraint! erroneous and forlorn.
Better the chief, on Ilion's hostile plain
Had fall'n, surrounded with his warlike train;
Or safe return'd, the race of glory past,
New to his friends embrace, had breath'd his last!
Then grateful Greece with streaming eyes would raise
Historic marbles, to record his praise;
His praise, eternal on the faithful stone,
Had with transmisible honour grac'd his son.
Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost:
Vanish'd at once! unheard of, and unknown!
And I, his heir, in misery alone.
Nor for a dear lost father only flow
The filial tears, but woe succeeds to woe:
To tempt the spouseless queen with am'rous wiles;
Refort the nobles from the neigh'ring isles;
From Samos, circled with th' Ionian main,
Dulichium, and Zacynthus' sylvan reign:
Ev'n with presumptuous hope her bed t' ascend,
The lords of Ithaca their right pretend.
She seems attentive to their pleaded vows,
Her heart detesting what her ear allows.
They, vain expectants of the bridal hour,
My flores in riotous expence devour;
In feast and dance the mirthful months employ,
And meditate my doom, to crown their joy.
With tender pity touch'd, the gods cry'd:
Soon may kind heav'n a sure relief provide!
Soon may your fire discharge the vengeance due,
And all your wrongs the proud oppressors rue!

Oh! in that portal should the chief appear,
Each hand tremendous with a brazen spear,
In radiant panoply his limbs incas'd;
(For so of old my father's court he graced,
When social mirth unbent his serious soul,
O'er the full banquet, and the sprightly bowl;)

He then from Ephyre, the fair domain
Of Ilus, sprung from Jason's royal strain,
Measur'd a length of seas, a toilfulome length, in vain.
For voyaging to learn the direful art
To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart;
Observant of the gods, and sternly just,
Ilus refus'd to impart the baneful trust:
With friendlier zeal my father's soul was stir'd;
The drugs he knew, and gave the boon desi'd.

Appear'd he now with such heroic port,
As then conspicuous at the Taphian court;
Soon should you' boasters cease their haughty strife,
Or each atone his guilty love with life.
But of his wish'd return the care resign;
Be future vengeance to the Pow'r's divine.

My sentence hear: with stern diisaste avow'd,
To their own districts drive the suitor-croud:
When next the morning warms the purple east,
Convolve the peerage, and the gods attest;
The sorrows of your inmost soul relate;
And form sure plans to save the sinking state.

Should second love a pleasing flame inspire,
And the chaste queen connubial rites require;
Dismiss'd with honour let her hence repair
To great Icarius, whose paternal care
Will guide her passion, and reward the choice
With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.
Then let this dictate of my love prevail:
Instant, to foreign realms prepare to fail,
To learn your father's fortunes: fame may prove,
Or omen'd voice, (the messenger of Jove)
Propitious to the search. Direct your toil
Through the wide ocean, first to sandy Pyle,
Of Nestor, hoary sage, his doom demand;
Thence speed your voyage to the Spartan strand,
For young Atrides to the Achaian coast
Arriv'd the last of all the victor host,
If yet Ulysses views the light, forbear,
Till the fleet hours restore the circling year.
But if his soul hath wing'd the destin'd flight,
Inhabitant of deep disaff'trous night,
Homeward with pious speed repass the main,
To the pale shade funereal rites ordain,
Plant the fair column o'er the vacant grave;
A hero's honours let the hero have.
With decent grief the royal dead deplor'd,
For the chaste queen select an equal lord.
Then let revenge your daring mind employ,
By fraud or force the suitor-train destroy,
And starting into manhood, scorn the boy.
Hast thou not heard how young Orestes, sir'd
With great revenge, immortal praise acquire'd!
His virgin sword Αegythus' veins imbru'd;
The murd'rer fell, and blood atton'd for blood.
Greatly bless'd with ev'ry blooming grace!
With equal steps the paths of glory trace;
Join to that royal youth's your rival name,
And shine eternal in the sphere of fame
But my associates now my stay deplore,
Impatient on the hoarse-refounding shore.
Thou, heedful of advice, secure proceed;
My praise the precept is, be thine the deed.
The counsel of my friend, the youth rejoin'd,
Imprints conviction on my grateful mind.
So fathers speak (persuasive speech and mild!)
Their sage experience to the fav'rite child.
But since to part, for sweet reflection due
The genial viands let my train renew:
And the rich pledge of plighted faith receive;
Worthy the heir of Ithaca to give.
Defer the promis'd boon, (the goddess cries,
Celestial azure brightening in her eyes,)
And let me now regain the Reithrian port:
From Tempe return'd, your royal court
I shall revisit; and that pledge receive,
And gifts, memorial of our friendship, leave.

Abrupt; with eagle-speed she cut the sky;
Instant invisible to mortal eye.
Then first he recogniz'd th' aethereal guest;
Wonder and joy alternate fire his breast:
Heroic thoughts infus'd, his heart dilate,
Revolving much his father's doubtful fate:
At length compos'd, he join'd the suitor-throng,
Hush'd in attention to the warbled song.
His tender theme the charming lyrift chose,
Minerva's anger, and the direful woes
Which voyaging from Troy the victors bore,
While storms vindictive intercept the shore.
The thrilling airs the vaulted roof rebounds,
Reflecting to the queen the silver sounds.
With grief renew'd, the weeping fair descends;
't heir sov'reign's step a virgin train attends:
A veil of richest texture wrought she wears,
And silent to the joyous hall repairs,
There from the portal, with her mild command
Thus gently checks the minstrel's tuneful hand:
Phemius! let acts of gods and heroes old,
What antient bards in hall and bowr have told,
Attender'd to the lyre, your voice employ:
Such the pleas'd ear will drink with silent joy.
But oh! forbear that dear disast'rous name,
To sorrow sacred, and secure of fame:
My bleeding bosom sickens at the sound;
And ev'ry piercing note inflicts a wound.

Why, dearest object of my duteous love,
(Reply'd the prince,) will you the bard reprove?
Oft, Jove's aethereal rays (resistless fire)
The chanter's soul and raptur'd song inspire;
Instinct divine! nor blame severe his choice,

Warbling the Grecian woes with harp and voice:
For novel lays attract our ravish'd ears;
But old, the mind with inattention hears.
Patient permit the sadly-pleasing-strain;
Familiar now with grief, your tears refrain,
And in the public woe forget your own;
You weep not for a perish'd lord alone.
What Greeks, now wand'ring in the Stygian gloom,
With your Ulysses shar'd an equal doom!
Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil
And various labours of the loom, beguile;
There rule, from palace-cares remote and free,
That care to man belongs, and most to me.

Mature beyond his years, the queen admires
His sage reply, and with her train retires.
Then swelling sorrows burst their former bounds,
With echoing grief afresh the dome resounds;
Till Pallas, piteous of her plaintive cries,
In slumber clos'd her silver-streaming eyes.

Mean-time, rekindled at the royal charms,
Tumultuous love each beating bosom warms;
Intem'prate rage a wordy war began;
But bold Telemachus assum'd the man.
Infiant, he cry'd, your female discord end,
Ye deedless boastlers! and the song attend:
Obey that sweet compulsion, nor profane
With dissonance the smooth, melodious strain.

Pacific now prolong the jovial feast;
But when the dawn reveals the rosy east,
I, to the peers assembled, shall propose
The firm resolve I here in few disclose,
No longer live the cankers of my court;
All to your sev’ral states with speed resort;
Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
There play the early feast, and late carouse.
But if, to honour lost, ’tis still decreed
For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed,
Judge and revenge my right; impartial Jove!
By him, and all th’ immortal thrones above,
(A sacred oath,) each proud oppressor slain
Shall with inglorious gore this marble stain.

Awd by the prince, thus haughty, bold, and young,
Rage gnaw’d the lip, and wonder chain’d the tongue.
Silence, at length, the gay Antinous broke,
Constrain’d a smile, and thus ambiguous spoke:

What god to your untutor’d youth affords
This headlong torrent of amazing words?
May Jove delay thy reign, and cumber late
As bright a genius with the toils of state!

Those toils (Telemachus serene replies)
Have charms, with all their weight, t’ allure the wise.
Fast by the throne obsequious fame resides,
And wealth incessant rolls her golden tides.
Nor let Antinous rage, if strong desire
Of wealth and fame a youthful bosom fire;
Elect by Jove his delegate of sway,
With joyous pride the summons I’d obey.
Where’er Ulysses roams the realm of night,
Should factious pow’r dispute my lineal right,
Some other Greeks a fairer claim may plead;
To your pretence their title would precede.
At least, the sceptre lost, I still should reign.
Sole o’er my vaillals, and domestic train.

To this Eurymachus: To heav’n alone
Refer the choice to fill the vacant throne.
Your patrimonial stores in peace posses;
Undoubted all your filial claim confes:
Your private right should impious pow’r invade.
The peers of Ithaca would arm in aid.
But say, that stranger guest who late withdrew,
What, and from whence? his name and lineage shew.
His grave demeanour, and majestic grace
Speak him descended of no vulgar race:
Did he some loan of antient right require,
Or came fore-runner of your scepter'd fire?
Oh son of Polybus! the prince replies,
No more my fire will glad those longing eyes:
The queen's fond hope inventive rumour cheers,
Or vain diviners' dreams divert her fears.
That stranger-guest the Taphian realm obeys,
A realm defended with encircling seas.
Mentes, an ever-honour'd name, of old
High in Ulysses' social lift ihroll'd.

Thus he, though conscious of th' asthereal-guest,
Answer'd evasive of the fly request.
Mean time the lyre rejoins the sprightly lay;
Love dittied airs, and dance conclude the day.
But when the star of Eve, with golden light,
Adorn'd the matron brow of fable night;
The mirthful train dispersing quit the court,
And to their sev'ral domes to rest resort.
A tow'ring structure to the palace join'd;
To this his steps the thoughtful prince inclin'd;
In his pavilion there to sleep repairs;
The lighted torch the sage Euryclea bears.
(Daughter of Ops, the just Pisenor's son,
For twenty beeves by great Laertes won;
In rosy prime, with charms attractive grac'd,
Honour'd by him, a gentle lord and chaste,
With dear esteem: too wise, with jealous strife
To taint the joys of sweet connubial life.
Sole with Telemachus her service ends,
A child she nurs'd him, and a man attends.)
Whilst to his couch himself the prince address'd,
The duteous dame receiv'd the purple vest:
The purple vest with decent care dispos'd,
The silver ring she pull'd, the door reclos'd;
The bolt obedient to the silken cord,
To the strong staple’s inmost depth restor’d,
Secur’d the valves. There wrapt in silent shade, 555
Pensive, the rules the goddess gave, he weigh’d;
Stretch’d on the downy fleece, no rest he knows,
And in his raptur’d soul the vision glows.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK II.
THE ARGUMENT.

The council of Ithaca.

Telmachus, in the assembly of the lords of Ithaca, complains of the injustice done him by the suitors, and insists upon their departure from his palace; appealing to the prince, and exciting the people to declare against them. The suitors endeavour to justify their stay, at least till he shall send the queen to the court of Icarius her father; which he refuses. There appears a prodigy of two eagles in the sky, which an augur expounds to the ruin of the suitors. Telmachus then demands a vessel to carry him to Pylos and Sparta; there to enquire of his father's fortunes. Pallas, in the shape of Mentor, (an antient friend of Ulysses) helps him to a ship, assists him in preparing necessaries for the voyage, and embarks with him that night; which concludes the second day from the opening of the poem.

The scene continues in the palace of Ulysses in Ithaca.
Now rising from the dawn, the morning ray
Glow'd in the front of heav'n, and gave the day.
The youthful hero, with returning light,
Rose anxious from th' inquietudes of night.
A royal robe he wore, with graceful pride
A two-edg'd fauchion threaten'd by his side,
Embroider'd sandals glitter'd as he trod,
And forth he mov'd, majestic as a god.
Then by his heralds, restless of delay,
To council calls the peers: the peers obey.

Soon as in solemn form th' assembly came,
From his high dome himself descends in state.
Bright in his hand a pond'rous jav'lin shin'd;
Two dogs, a faithful guard, attend behind;
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
And gazing crowds admire him as he moves.

His father's throne he fill'd: while distant stood
The hoary peers, and aged wisdom bow'd.
'Twas silence all; at last Ægyptius spoke:
Ægyptius, by his age and sorrows broke:
A length of days his soul with prudence crown'd,
A length of days had bent him to the ground.
His eldest * hope in arms to Ilion came,
By great Ulysses taught the path to fame;

* Antiphus.
But, hapless youth, the hideous Cyclops tore
His quiv'ring limbs, and quaff'd his spouting gore.
Three sons remain'd: to climb with haughty fires
The royal bed, Eurynomus aspires;
The rest with duteous love his griefs assuage,
And ease the fire of half the cares of age.
Yet still his Antiphus he loves, he mourns,
And as he stood, he spoke and wept by turns.

Since great Ulysses fought the Phrygian plains,
Within these walls inglorious silence reigns.
Say then, ye peers! by whose commands we meet?
Why here once more in solemn council sit?
Ye young, ye old, the weighty cause disclose:
Arrives some message of invading foes?
Or say, does high necessity of state
Inspire some patriot, and demand debate?
The present synod speaks its author wise;
Assist him, Jove! thou regent of the skies!

He spoke. Telemachus with transport glows;
Embrac'd the omen, and majestic rote:
(His royal hand th' imperial sceptre sway'd)
Then thus, addressing to Ægyptius, said:
Rev'rend old man! lo here confess he stands
By whom ye meet; my grief your care demands.
No story I unfold of public woes,
Nor bear advices of impending foes:
Peace the blest land, and joys incessant crown;
Of all this happy realm, I grieve alone:
For my lost fire continual sorrows spring;
The great, the good; your father and your king.
Yet more; our house from its foundation bows,
Our foes are pow'rful, and your sons the foes:
Hither, unwelcome, to the queen they come;
Why seek they not the rich Icarian dome?
If she must wed, from other hands require
The dowry: is Telemachus her sire?
Yet through my court the noise of revel rings,
And wastes the wise frugality of kings.
Scarse all my herds their luxury suffice;
Scarse all my wine their midnight hours supplies.
Safe in my youth, in riot still they grow,
Nor in the helpless orphan dread a foe.
But come it will, the time when manhood grants
More pow'rful advocates than vain complaints.
Approach that hour! unsufferable wrong
Cries to the gods, and vengeance sleeps too long.
Rise then, ye peers! with virtuous anger rise!
Your fame revere, but most th' avenging skies.
By all the deathless pow'rs that reign above,
By righteous Themis, and by thund'ring Jove,
(Themis, who gives to councils, or denies
Success, and humbles or confirms the wise)
Rise in my aid! suffice the tears that flow
For my lost fire, nor add new woe to woe.
If e'er he bore the sword to strengthen ill,
Or, having pow'r to wrong, betray'd the will;
On me, on me your kindled wrath assuage,
And bid the voice of lawless riot rage.
If ruin to our royal race ye doom,
Be you the spoilers, and our wealth confine.
Then might we hope redress from juster laws,
And raise all Ithaca to aid our cause:
But while your sons commit th' unpunish'd wrong,
You make the arm of violence too strong.
While thus he spake, with rage and grief he frown'd,
And dash'd th' imperial sceptre to the ground:
The big-round tear hung trembling in his eye;
The synod griev'd, and gave a pitying sigh;
Then silent sat—at length Antinous burns
With haughty rage, and sternly thus returns:
O insolence of youth! whole tongue affords
Such railing eloquence, and war of words.
Studious thy country's worthies to defame,
Thy erring voice displays thy mother's shame.
Elusive of the bridal-day she gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.
Did not the sun, through heav'n's wide azure roll'd,
For three long years the royal fraud behold?
While she, laborious in delusion, spread
The spacious loom, and mix'd the various thread.
Where as to life the wondrous figures rise,
Thus spoke th' inventive queen, with artful sighs:
' Though cold in death Ulysses breathes no more,
' Cease yet a while to urge the bridal hour;
' Cease, till to great Laertes I bequeath
' A task of grief, his ornaments of death:
' Left when the fates his royal ashes claim,
' The Grecian matrons taint my spoils of fame;
' When he, whom living mighty realms obey'd,
' Shall want in death a shroud to grace his shade.'
Thus she: at once the gen'rous train complies,
Nor fraud mistrusts in virtue's fair disguise.
The work she ply'd; but, studious of delay,
By night revers'd the labours of the day.
While thrice the sun his annual journey made,
The conscious lamp the midnight fraud survey'd;
Unheard, unseen, three years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid unfolds th' amazing tale.
We saw, as unperceiv'd we took our stand,
The backward labours of her faithless hand.
Then urg'd, she perfects her illusive toils;
A wondrous monument of female wiles!
But you, oh peers! and thou, oh prince! give ear:
(I speak aloud, that ev'ry Greek may hear)
Dismiss the queen; and if her sire approves,
Let him espouse her to the peer she loves:
Bid instant to prepare the bridal train,
Nor let a race of princes wait in vain.
Though with a grace divine her soul is blest,
And all Minerva breathes within her breast;
In wondrous arts than woman more renown'd,
And more than woman with deep wisdom crown'd;
Though Tyro nor Mycene match her name,
Nor great Alcmena, the proud boast of fame,
Yet thus by heav'n adorn'd, by heav'n's decree
She shines with fatal excellence to thee:
With thee the bowl we drain, indulge the feast,
Till righteous heav'n reclaim her stubborn breast.
What though from pole to pole resounds her name?
The son's destruction waits the mother's fame:
For till she leaves thy court, it is decreed,
Thy bowl to empty, and thy flocks to bleed.

While yet he speaks, Telemachus replies,
Ev'n nature starts, and what ye ask denies.
Thus, shall I thus repay a mother's cares,
Who gave me life, and nurs'd my infant years?
While sad on foreign shores Ulysses treads,
Or glides a ghost with unapparent shades,
How to Icarus in the bridal hour
Shall I, by waste undone, refund the dow'r?
How from my father should I vengeance dread?
How would my mother curse my hated head?
And while in wrath to vengeful fiends she cries,
How from their hell would vengeful fiends arise?
Abhor'd by all, accurs'd my name would grow,
The earth's disgrace, and human-kind my foe.
If this displease, why urge ye here your stay?
Haste from the court, ye spoilers, haste away:
Waste in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feast, and late circuite.
But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed
For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed;
Judge and avert my right, impartial Jove!
By him, and all th' immortal host above,
(A sacred oath) if heav'n the pow'r supply,
Vengeance I vow, and for your wrongs ye die.

With that, two eagles from a mountaine's height
By Jove's command direct their rapid flight;
Swift they descend; with wing to wing conjoin'd,
Stretch their broad plumes, and float upon the wind:
Above th' assembl'd peers they wheel on high,
And clang their wings, and hovering beat the sky;
With ardent eyes the rival train they threat,
And shrieking loud, denounce approaching fate.
They cuff, they tear; their cheeks and necks they rend,
And from their plumes huge drops of blood descend:
Then sailing o'er the domes and tow'rs they fly,
Full toward the east, and mount into the sky.

The wond'ring rivals gaze with cares opprest,
And chilling horrors freeze in every breast.
Till big with knowledge of approaching woes
The prince of augurs, Halitherses, rose:
Prescient he view'd th' aerial tracts, and drew
A sure presage from ev'ry wing that flew.
Ye sons, he cry'd, of Ithaca, give ear,
Hear all! but chiefly you, oh rivals! hear,
Destruction sure o'er all your heads impends;
Ulysses comes, and death his steps attends.
Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
We, and our guilty Ithaca must bleed.
Why cease we then the wrath of heav'n to stay?
Be humbled all, and lead, ye great! the way.
For lo! my words no fancy'd woes relate:
I speak from science, and the voice is fate.

When great Ulysses sought the Phrygian shores
To shake with war proud Ilium's lofty tow'rs,
Deeds then undone my faithful tongue foretold;
Heav'n seal'd my words, and you these deeds behold.
I see (I cry'd) his woes, a countless train;
I see his friends o'erwhelm'd beneath the main:
How twice ten years from shore to shore he roams!
Now twice ten years are past, and now he comes!

To whom Eurymachus—Fly, dotard, fly!
With thy wife dreams, and fables of the sky.
Go prophesy at home; thy sons advise:
Here thou art sate in vain—I better read the skies.
Unnumber'd birds glide through the aerial way,
Vagrants of air, and unforboding stray.
Gold in the tomb, or in the deeps below.
Ulysses lies: oh wert thou laid as low!
Then would that busy head no broils suggest,
Nor fire to rage Telemachus's breast.

From him some bribes thy venal tongue requires,
And int'rest, not the god, thy voice inspires.

His guide-less youth, if thy experienc'd age
Mislead fallacious into idle rage,

Vengeance deserv'd thy malice shall repress,
And but augment the wrongs thou wouldst redress.

Telemachus may bid the queen repair
To great Icarius, whose paternal care
Will guide her passion, and reward her choice,

With wealthy dow'r, and bridal gifts of price.

Till she retires, determin'd we remain,
And both the prince and augur threat in vain:

His pride of words, and thy wild dream of fate,
Move not the brave, or only move their hate.

Threat on, oh prince! elude the bridal day,

Threat on, till all thy stores in waste decay.

True, Greece affords a train of lovely dames,
In wealth and beauty worthy of our flames:

But never from this nobler suit we cease;

For wealth and beauty less than virtue please.

To whom the youth: Since then in vain I tell
My num'rous woes, in silence let them dwell.

But heav'n, and all the Greeks, have heard my wrongs:

To heav'n, and all the Greeks, redress belongs.

Yet this I ask (nor be it ask'd in vain)
A bark to waft me o'er the rolling main;

The realms of Pyle and Sparta to explore,

And seek my royal fire from shore to shore:

If, or to fame his doubtful fate be known,

Or to be learn'd from oracles alone?

If yet he lives, with patience I forbear
Till the fleet hours restore the circling year:

But if already wand'ring in the train

Of empty shades, I measure back the main;

Plant the fair column o'er the mighty dead,

And yield his comfort to the nuptial bed.
He cease'd; and while abash'd the peers attend,
Mentor arose, Ulysses' faithful friend;
[When fierce in arms he fought the scenes of war, 255.
' My friend, he cry'd, my palace be thy care;
' Years roll'd on years my god-like sire decay,
' Guard thou his age, and his behests obey."
Stern as he rofe, he cast his eyes around 259.
That flash'd with rage; and as he spoke, he frown'd.
O never, never more let king be just,
Be mild in pow'r, or faithful to his trust!
Let tyrants govern with an iron rod,
Oppress, destroy, and be the scourge of God;
Since he who like a father held his reign, 265.
So soon forgot, was just and mild in vain!
True, while my friend is griev'd, his griefs I share;
Yet now the rivals are my smallest care:
They, for the mighty mischiefs they devise,
Ere long shall pay—their forfeit lives the price. 270.
But against you, ye Greeks! ye coward train.
Gods! how my soul is mov'd with just disdain!
Dumb ye all stand, and not one tongue affords
His injur'd prince the little aid of words.
While yet he spake, Leuctritus rejoin'd: 275.
O pride of words, and arrogance of mind!
Wouldst thou to rise in arms the Greeks advise?
Join all your pow'rs! in arms, ye Greeks, arise!
Yet would your pow'rs in vain. our strength oppose;
The valiant few o'ermatch an host of foes. 280.
Should great Ulysses stern appear in arms,
While the bowl circles, and the banquet warms;
Though to his breast his spouse with transport flies,
Torn from her breast, that hour, Ulysses dies.
But hence retreating to your domes repair;
To arm the vessel, Mentor! be thy care,
And Halitherses! thine: be each his friend:
Ye lov'd the father: go, the son attend.
But yet, I trust, the boaster means to slay
Safe in the court, nor tempt the wat'ry way... 290.
Then with a rushing sound, th’ assembly bend
Diverse their steps: the rival rout ascend
The royal dome; while sad the prince explores
The neigh’ring main, and sorrowing treads the shores.
There, as the waters o’er his hands he shed,
The royal suppliant to Minerva pray’d:
O goddess! who descending from the skies,
Vouchsaf’d thy presence to my wound’ring eyes.
By whose commands the raging deeps I trace,
And seek my fire through storms and rolling seas!
Hear from thy heav’n’s above, oh warrior maid!
Descend once more, propitious to my aid.
Without thy presence vain is thy command;
Greece, and the rival train thy voice withstand.

Indulgent to his pray’r, the goddess took
Sage Mentor’s form, and thus like Mentor spoke:
O prince, in early youth divinely wise,
Born the Ulysses of thy age to rise!
If to the son the father’s worth descends,
O’er the wide waves success thy ways attends:
To tread the walks of death he stood prepar’d,
And what he greatly thought he nobly dar’d.
Were not wise sons descendant of the wise;
And did not heroes from great heroes rise,
Vain were my hopes: few sons attain the praise.
Of their great fires, and most their fires disgrace.
But since thy veins paternal virtue breathes,
And all Penelope thy soul inspires,
Go, and succeed! the rival aims despise:
For never, never, wicked man was wise.
Blind, they rejoice, though now, ev’n now they fall;
Death hastes amain: one hour o’erwhelms them all!
And lo, with speed we plow the wat’ry way;
My pow’r shall guard thee, and my hand convey:
The winged vessel studious I prepare,
Through seas and realms companion of thy care.
Thou to the court ascend; and to the shores
(When night advances) bear the naval stores;
Bread, that decaying man with strength supplies,
And gen'rous wine, which thoughtful sorrow flies.
Mean while the mariners by my command
Shall speed aboard, a valiant chosen band.
Wide o'er the bay, by valiant vessel rides;
The best I chuse, so waft thee o'er the tides.

She spoke: to his high dome the prince returns,
And as he moves, with royal anguish mourns.
'Twas riot all among the lawless train;
Boar bled with boar, and goat by goat lay slain.
Arriv'd, his hand the gay Antinous prest,
And thus deriding, with a smile addrest:

Grieve not, oh daring prince! that noble heart:
Ill suits gay youth the stern heroic part.
Indulge the genial hour, unbend thy soul,
Leave thought to age, and drain the flowing bowl.
Studious to ease thy grief, our care provides
The bark, to waft thee o'er the swelling tides.

Is this, returns the prince, for mirth a time?
When lawless gluttons riot, mirth's a crime;
The luscious wines dishonour'd lose their taste,
The song is noise, and impious is the feast.
Suffice it to have spent with swift decay
The wealth of kings, and made my youth a prey:
But now the wise instructions of the sage,
And manly thoughts inspir'd by manly age,
Teach me to seek redress for all my woe.

Here, or in Pyle—In Pyle or here, your foe,
Deny your vessels, ye deny in vain;
A private voyager I pass the main.
Free breathe the winds, and free the billows flow,
And where on earth I live, I live your foe.

He spoke and frowned, nor longer deign'd to stay,
Sternly his hand withdrew, and strode away.

Mean time o'er all the dome, they quaff, they feast,
Derisive taunts were spread from guest to guest,
And each in jovial mood his mate addrest,
Tremble ye not, oh friends! and coward fly,
Doom'd by the stern Telemachus to die?
To Pyle or Sparta to demand supplies,
Big with revenge, the mighty warrior flies:
Or comes from Ephyre with poisons fraught,
And kills us all in one tremendous draught?
Or who can say, his gameesome mate replies,
But while the dangers of the deep he tries,
He, like his sire, may sink, deprived of breath,
And punish us unkindly by his death?
What mighty labours would he then create,
To seize his treasures, and divide his state,
The royal palace to the queen convey,
Or him she blesses in the bridal day!

Mean time the lofty rooms the prince surveys,
Where lay the treasures of th' Ithacian race:
Here ruddy brads, and gold resplendent blaz'd;
There polish'd chests embroider'd vestures grac'd;
Here jars of oil breath'd forth a rich perfume:
There casks of wine in rows adorn'd the dome.
(Pure flav'rous wine, by gods in bounty giv'n,
And worthy to exalt the feasts of heav'n.)
Untouch'd they stood, till his long labours o'er
The great Ulysses reach'd his native shore.
A double strength of bars secur'd the gates:
Fast by the door the wife Euryclea waits;
Euryclea, who, great Ops! thy lineage shar'd,
And watch'd all night, all day; a faithful guard.

To whom the prince: O thou, whose guardian care
Nurs'd the most wretched king that breathes the air!
Untouch'd and sacred may these vessels stand,
Till great Ulysses views his native land.
But by thy care twelve urns of wine be fill'd,
Next these in worth, and firm those urns be seal'd;
And twice ten measures of the choicest flour
Prepar'd, ere yet descends the evening hour.
For when the sav'ring shades of night arise,
And peaceful slumbers close my mother's eyes,
Me from our coast shall spreading sails convey,
To seek Ulysses through the wat'ry way.

While yet he spoke, she fill'd the walls with cries,
And tears ran trickling from her aged eyes.
Oh whither, whither flies my son? she cry'd,
To realms, that rocks and roaring seas divide?
In foreign lands thy father's days decay'd,
And foreign lands contain the mighty dead.
The wat'ry-way ill-fated if thou, try,
All, all must perish, and by fraud you die!
Then slay, my child! storms beat, and rolls the main;
Oh beat those storms, and roll the seas in vain!

Far hence, reply'd the prince, thy fears be driv'n:
Heav'n calls me forth; these counsels are of heav'n.
But by the pow'rs that hate the perjur'd, swear,
To keep my voyage from the royal ear,
Nor uncompl'd the dang'rous truth betray,
Till twice six times descends the lamp of day:
Left the sad tale a mother's life impair,
And grief destroy what time a while would spare.

Thus she. The matron with uplifted eyes
Attests th'all-seeing sovereign of the skies.
Then studious she prepares the choicest flour,
The strength of wheat, and wines an ample store,
While to the rival train the prince returns,
The martial goddess with impatience burns;
Like that, Telemachus, in voice and size,
With speed divine: from street to street she flies,
She bids the mariners prepar'd to hand,
When night descends, embodied on the strand.
Then to Noemon swift she runs, she flies,
And asks a bark; the chief a bark supplies.

And now, declining with his florid wheels,
Down sunk the sun behind the western hills.
The goddess show'd the velis from the shores,
And show'd within its womb the naval stores,
Full in the openings of the spacious main.
It rides; and now descends the sailor train.
Next, to the court, impatient of delay,
With rapid step the goddess urg’d her way:
There ev’ry eye with slumb’rous chains he bound
And dash’d the flowing goblet to the ground.
Drowzy they rose, with heavy fumes opprest,
Reel’d from the palace, and retir’d to rest.

Then thus, in Mentor’s rev’rend form array’d,
Spoke to Telemachus the martial maid:
Lo! on the seas prepar’d the vessel stands;
Th’ impatient mariner thy speed demands.
Swift as he spoke, with rapid pace he leads,
The footsteps of the deity he treads.
Swift to the shore they move: along the strand
The ready vessel rides; the sailors ready stand.

He bids them bring their stores; th’ attending
Load the tall bark, and launch into the main.
The prince and goddess to the stern ascend;
To the strong stroke at once the rower’s bend,
Full from the west the bids fresh breezes blow;
The sable billows foam and roar below;
The chief his orders gives; th’ obedient band
With due observance wait the chief’s command:
With speed the mast they rear; with speed unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch’d it to the wind.
High o’er the roaring waves the spreading sails
Bow their tall mast, and swell before the gales;
The crooked keel the parting surge divides,
And to the stern retreating roll the tides,
And now they ship their oars, and crown with wind
The holy goblet to the pow’rs divine:
Imploring all the gods that reign above,
But chief the blue-ey’d progeny of Jove.

Thus all the night they stem the liquid way,
And end their voyage with the morning ray.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK III.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK III.
THE ARGUMENT.

The interview of Telemachus and Nestor.

Telemachus, guided by Pallas in the shape of Mentor, arrives in the morning at Pylos; where Nestor and his sons are sacrificing on the sea-shore to Neptune. Telemachus declares the occasion of his coming, and Nestor relates what pass'd in their return from Troy, how their fleets were separated, and he never since heard of Ulysses. They discourse concerning the death of Agamemnon, the revenge of Orestes, and the injuries of the suitors. Nestor advises him to go to Sparta, and enquire further of Menelaus. The sacrifice ending with the night, Minerva vanishes from them in the form of an eagle. Telemachus is lodged in the palace. The next morning they sacrifice a bullock to Minerva, and Telemachus proceeds on his journey to Sparta, attended by Pisistratus.

The scene lyes on the sea-shore of Pylos.
THE SACRED SUN, ABOVE THE WATER RAIS'D,
Through heav'n's eternal, brazen portals blaz'd;
And wide o'er earth diffus'd his chearing ray,
To gods and men to give the golden day:
Now on the coast of Pyle-the-vessel falls,
Before old Nelus' venerable walls.
There, suppliant to the monarch of the flood,
At nine green theatres the Pylians stood,
Each held five hundred, (a deputed train)
At each, nine oxen on the sand lay slain.
They taste the entrails; and the altars load
With smoking thighs, an offering to the god.
Ful for the port the Ithacensians stand,
And sail their sails; and issue on the land.
Telemachus already press'd the shore;
Not first, the Pow'r of wisdom march'd before,
And e'er the sacrificing through he join'd,
Admonish'd thus his well-attending mind:
Proceed, my son! this youthful shame expel;
An honest business ne'er blush to tell,
To learn what fates thy wretched sire detain,
We past the wide, immeasurable main.
Meet then the senior far renown'd for sense,
With reverend awe, but decent confidence:
Urge him with truth to frame his fair replies:
And sure he will; for wisdom never lies.
O tell me, Mentor! tell me, faithful guide,
(The youth with prudent modesty reply'd)
How shall I meet, or how accost the sage,
Unskill'd in speech, nor yet mature of age?

Awful th' approach, and hard the task appears,
To question wisely men of riper years.

To whom the martial goddess thus rejoin'd:
Search, for some thoughts, thy own suggesting mind;
And others, dictated by heav'nly pow'r,
Shall rise spontaneous in the needful hour.

For nought unprosp'rous shall thy ways attend,
Born with good omens, and with heav'n thy friend.

She spake, and led the way with swiftest speed:
As swift the youth pursu'd the way she led;
And join'd the band before the sacred fire.

Where sat, encompas'd with his sons, the fire.

The youth of Pylos, fame on pointed wood
Transfix'd the fragments, same prepar'd the food.

In friendly throughs they gather to embrace.

Their unknown guests, and at the banquet place.

Pisistratus was first to grasp their hands;
And spread soft hides upon the yellow sands;
Along the shore th' illustrious pair he led,

Where Nestor sat with youthful Thrasymed.

To each a portion of the feast he bore,
And held the golden goblet foaming o'er;

Then first approaching to the elder guest,
The latent goddess in these words address'd:

Whoe'er thou art whom fortune brings to keep
These rites of Neptune, monarch of the deep,
Thee first it fits, oh stranger! to prepare
The due libation, and the solemn pray'r:
Then give thy friend to shed the sacred wine;
Though much thy younger, and his years like mine,
He too, I deem, implores the pow'r's divine:

For all mankind alike require their grace;
All born to want; a miserable race!
He spake, and to her hand preferr'd the bowl:
A secret pleasure touch'd Athena's soul,
'To see the pref'rence due to sacred age
Regarded ever by the just and sage.
Of ocean's king she then implores the grace:
Oh thou! whose arms this ample globe embrace,
Fulfil our wish, and let thy glory shine
On Nestor first, and Nestor's royal line;
Next grant the Pylian states their just desires,
Pleas'd with their hecatomb's ascending fires;
Last deign Telemachus and me to bless,
And crown our voyage with desir'd success.

Thus she; and having paid the rite divine,
Gave to Ulysses' son the rosy wine.
Suppliant he pray'd. And now the victims dress'd,
They draw, divide, and celebrate the feast.
The banqueter done, the narrative old man
Thus mild the pleasing conference began:

Now, gentle guests! the genial banquet o'er,
It fits to ask ye, what your native shore,
And whence your race? on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander through the wat'ry way?
Relate, if business, or the thirst of gain,
Engage your journey o'er the pathless main;
Where savage pyrates seek, through seas unknown,
The lives of others, vent'rous of their own?

Urg'd by the precepts by the goddess giv'n
And fill'd with confidence instru'd from heav'n,
The youth whom Pallas destin'd to be wife.
And fam'd among the sons of men, replies:
Enquir'st thou, father! from what coast we came,
(Oh grace and glory of the Grecian name!)
From where high Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Brown with o'er-arching shades and pendent wood;
Us to these shores our filial duty draws,
A private sorrow, not a public cause.
My fire I seek, where-e'er the voice of fame
Has told the glories of his noble name,
The great Ulysses; fam'd from shore to shore
For valour much, for hardy suffer'ring more.
Long time with thee before proud Ilion's wall
In arms he fought; with thee beheld her fall.

Of all the chiefs, this hero's fate alone
Has Jove reserv'd, unheard of, and unknown;
Whether in fields by hostile fury slain,
Or sunk by tempests in the giddy main;
Of this to learn, opprest with tender fears
Lo at thy knee his suppliant son appears.
If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,
Have learn'd his fate, the whole dark story clear:
And oh! whate'er heav'n destin'd to betide
Let neither flatt'ry smooth, nor pity hide.
Prepar'd I stand: he was but born to try
The lot of man; to suffer, and to die.
Oh then, if ever through the ten years war
The wise, the good Ulysses claim'd thy care;
If e'er he join'd thy council or thy sword,
True in his deed, and constant to his word;
Far as thy mind through backward time can see,
Search all thy stores of faithful memory:
'Tis sacred truth I ask, and ask of thee.

To him experience'd Nestor thus rejoin'd:
O friend! what sorrows dost thou bring to mind?
Shall I the long, laborious scene review?
And open all the wounds of Greece anew?
What toils by sea! where dark in quest of prey
Dauntless we rov'd; Achilles led the way:
What toils by land! where mix'd in fatal fight
Such numbers fell, such heroes sunk to night:
There Ajax great, Achilles there the brave,
There wise Patroclus, fill an early grave:
There too my son—ah once my best delight,
Once swift of foot, and terrible in fight;
In whom stern courage with soft virtue join'd,
A faultless body, and a blameless mind;
Antilochus—what more can I relate?
How trace the tedious series of our fate?
Not added years on years my task could close,
The long historian of my country's woes:
Back to thy native isle might'st thou sail,
And leave half-heard the melancholy tale.
Nine painful years, on that detested shore
What stratagems we form'd! what toils we bore!
Still lab'ring on, till scarce at last we found
Great Jove propitious, and our conquest crown'd.
Far o'er the rest thy mighty father shin'd
In wit, in prudence, and in force of mind.
Art thou the son of that illustrious sire?
With joy I grasp thee, and with love admire.
So like your voices, and your words so wise,
Who finds thee younger must consult his eyes.
Thy fire and I were one; nor vary'd ought
In public sentence, or in private thought;
Alike to counsel or 'th' assembly came,
With equal souls, and sentiments the same.
But when, by wisdom won, proud Iliumburn'd,
And in their ships the conqu'ring Greeks return'd;
'Twas God's will the victors to divide,
And turn th' event, confounding human pride:
Some be destitute, some scatter'd as the dust,
(Not all were prudent, and not all were just)
Then Discord, sent by Pallas from above,
Stern daughter of the great avenger Jove,
The brother-kings inspir'd with fell debate;
Who call'd to counsel all th' Achaian state,
But call'd untimely, (nor the sacred rite
Observ'd, nor heedful of the setting light;
Nor herald sworn, the session to proclaim)
Sour with debauch, a reeling tribe, they came.
To these the cause of meeting they explain,
And Menelaus moves to cross the main:
Not so the king of men; he will'd to stay,
The sacred rites and hecatombs to pay,
And calm Minerva's wrath. Oh blind to fate!
The gods not lightly change their love or hate;
With ire-ful taunts each other they oppose;
Till in loud tumult all the Greeks arose.
Now diff'rent counsels ev'ry breast divide,
Each burns with rancour to the adverse side;
Th' unquiet night strange projects entertain'd;
(So Jove, that urg'd us to our fate, ordain'd.)
We, with the rising morn our ships unmoor'd,
And brought our captives and our stores aboard;
But half the people with respect obey'd
The king of men, and at his bidding stay'd.
Now on the wings of winds our course we keep;
(For God had smooth'd the waters of the deep)
For Tenedos we spread our eager-oars,
There land, and pay due victims to the Pow'rs;
To bless our safe return we join in pray'r,
But angry Jove dispers'd our vows in air,
And rais'd new discord. Then (fo-heav'n decreed)
Ulysses first and Nestor disagreed:
Wife as he was, by various counsels sway'd,
He there, though late, to please the monarch, stay'd.
But I, determin'd, stem the foamy floods,
Warn'd of the coming fury of the gods.
With us Tydides fear'd, and urg'd his haste:
And Menelaus came, but came the last.
He join'd our vessels in the Lesbian bay,
While yet we doubted of our wat'ry way;
If to the right to urge the pilot's toil,
(The safer road) beside the Phryian ile;
Or the strait course to rocky Chios plow,
And anchor under Mimas' shaggy brow.
We sought direction of the pow'r divine:
The god propitious gave the guiding sign;
Through the mid seas he bids our navy steer,
And in Eubea shun the woes we fear.
The whistling winds already wak'd the sky;
Before the whistling winds the vessels fly,
Book III.- HOMER's ODESSEY.

With rapid swiftness cut the liquid way;
And reach Gerestus at the point of day.
There hecatombs of bulls to Neptune slain
High-flaming please the monarch of the main.
The fourth day shone, when all their labours o'er
Tydides' vessels touch'd the with'd-for shore:
But I to Pylos scud before the gales.
The god still breathing on my swelling sails;
Sep'rate from all, I safely landed here;
Their fates or fortunes never reach'd my ear.
Yet what I learn'd, attend; as here I sat,
And ask each voyager each hero's fate;
Curious to know, and willing to relate.
Safe reach'd the Myrmidons' their native land,
Beneath Achilles' warlike son's command.
Those, whom the heir of great Apollo's art,
Brave Philoctetes, taught to wing the dart;
And those whom Iomen from Ithion's plain
Had led, securely cross the dreadful main.
How Agamemnon touch'd his Argive coast,
And how his life by fraud and force he lost,
And how the ward'rer pay'd his forfeit breath;
What land so distant from that scene of death
But trembling heard the same? and heard, admire
How well the son appeas'd his slaughter'd sire!
Ev'n to th' unhappy, that unjustly bleed,
Heav'n gives posterity t' avenge the deed.
So fell Egestias; and may'st thou, my friend,
(On whom the virtues of thy fire descend)
Make future times thy equal act adore,
And be what brave Orestes was before!

The prudent youth reply'd: Oh thou the grace
And lasting glory of the Grecian race!
Just was the vengeance, and to latest days
Shall long posterity resound the praise.
Some god this arm with equal prowess blest!
And the proud suitors shall its force confess.
Injurious men! who while my soul is sore
Of fresh affronts, are meditating more.
But heav’n denies this honour to my hand,
Nor shall my father reposess the land;
The father’s fortune never to return,
And the sad son’s to suffer and to mourn!

Thus he, and Nestor took the word: My son,
Is it then true, as distant rumours run,
That crowds of rivals for thy mother’s charms
Thy palace fill with insults and alarms?
Say, is the fault, through tame submission, thine?
Or leagu’d against thee, do thy people join,
Mov’d by some oracle, or voice divine?
And yet who knows, but ripening lies in fate
An hour of vengeance for th’ afflicted state;
When great Ulysses shall suppress these harms,
Ulysses singly, or all Greece in arms.
But if Athena, war’s triumphant maid,
The happy son, will, as the father, aid,
(Whose fame and safety was her constant care)
In ev’ry danger and in ev’ry war:
Never on man did heav’nly favour shine
With rays so strong, distinguishing and divine,
As those with which Minerva mark’d the sire
So might she love thee, so thy soul inspire!
Soon should their hopes in humble dust be laid,
And long oblivion of the bridal bed.

Ah! no such hope (the prince with sighs replies)
Can touch my breast; that blessing heav’n denies.
Ev’n by celest’lial favour were it giv’n,
Fortune or fate would cross the will of heav’n.

What words are these, and what imprudence thine?
(Thus interpos’d the martial maid divine)
Forgetful youth! but know, the pow’r above
With ease can save each object of his love;
Wide, as his will, extends his boundless grace;
Nor lost in time, nor circumscrib’d by place.
Happier his lot, who many sorrows past,
Long-lab'ring gains his natal shore at last;
Than who too speedy, haftes to end his life
By some stern Russian, or adult'rous wife.
Death only is the lot which none can miss;
And all is possible to heav'n, but this.
The best, the dearest fav'rite of the sky
Must taste that cup, for man is born to die.
Thus check'd, reply'd Ulysses' prudent heir:
Mentor, no more—the mournful thought forbear:
For he no more must draw his country's breath,
Already snatch'd by fate, and the black doom of death!
Pafs we to other subjects, and engage
On themes remote the venerable sage;
(Who thrice has seen the perishable kind
Of men decay, and through three ages shin'd,
Like gods, majestic, and like gods in mind:)
For much he knows, and just conclusions draws
From various precedents, and various laws.
O son of Neleus! awful Nestor, tell
How he, the mighty Agamemnon fell?
By what strange fraud Ægylthus wrought, relate,
(By force he could not) such a hero's fate?
Liv'd Menelaus not in Greece? or where
Was then the martial brother's pious care?
Condemn'd perhaps some foreign shore to tread;
Or sure Ægylthus had not dar'd the deed.

To whom the full of days: illustrious youth,
Attend (though partly thou hast quest) the truth.
For had the martial Menelaus found
The Russian breathing yet on Argive ground;
Nor earth had hid his carcase from the skies,
Nor Grecian virgins shriek'd his obsequies:
But fowls obscene dismember'd his remains,
And dogs had torn him on the naked plains.
While us the works of bloody Mars employ'd,
The wanton youth inglorious peace enjoy'd;
He, stretch'd at ease in Argos' calm recess,
(Whose stately deeds luxuriant pastures blest)
With flattery's insinuating art
Sooth'd the frail queen, and poison'd all her heart.
At first with worthy shame and decent pride,
The royal dame his lawless suit deny'd:
For virtue's image yet possess'd her mind,
Taught by a master of the tuneful kind.
Atrides, parting for the Trojan war,
Consign'd the youthful consorts to his care:
True to his charge, the bard preferr'd her long.
In honour's limits (such the pow'r of song).
But when the gods these objects of their hate
Dragg'd to destruction by the links of fate;
The bard they banish'd from his native soil,
And left all helpless in a desert isle:
There he, the sweetest of the sacred train,
Sung dying to the rocks, but sung in vain.
Then virtue was no more; her guard away,
She fell, to luft a voluntary prey.
Ev'n to the temple stalk'd th' adult'rous spouse,
With impious hands, and mockery of vows,
With images, with garments, and with gold,
And od'rous fumes, from loaded altars roll'd.
Mean time from flaming Troy we cut the way,
With Menelaus, through the curling sea.
But when to Sanium's sacred point we came,
Crown'd with the temple of th' Athenian dame;
Atrides' pilot, Phrontes, there expir'd;
(Phrontes, of all the sons of men admir'd
To steer the bounding bark with steady toil,
When the storm thickens, and the billows boil)
While yet he exercis'd the steersman's art,
Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart;
Ev'n with the rudder in his hand, he fell.
To pay whose honours to the shades of hell,
We check'd our haste, by pious office bound,
And laid our old companion in the ground.
And now, the rites discharg'd, our course we keep, 365
Far on the gloomy bosom of the deep:
Scon as Mallaea's misty tops arise,
Sudden the thunder blackens all the skies,
And the winds whistle, and the surges roll
Mountains on mountains, and obscure the pole.
The tempest scatters, and divides our fleet;
Part, the storm urges on the coast of Crete,
Where winding round the rich Cydonian plain,
The streams of Jordan issue to the main.
There stands a rock, high, eminent and steep,
Whose shaggy brow o'er-hangs the shady deep,
And views Gortyna on the western side;
On this rough Auster drove th' impetuous tide:
With broken force the billows howl'd away,
And heav'd the fleet into the neigh'ring bay.
Thus sav'd from death they gain'd the Phaeasian shores;
With shatter'd vessels, and disabled oars:
But five tall barks the winds and waters tost
Far from their fellows, on th' Ægyptian coast.
There wander'd Menelans through foreign shores,
Amassing gold, and gathering naval stores;
While curst Ægythus the detested deed
By fraud fulfill'd, and his great brother blad.
Sev'n years, the traitor rich Mycenae sway'd,
And his stern rule the groaning land obey'd;
The eighth, from Athens to his realm restor'd,
Orestes brandish'd the revenging sword,
Slew the dire pair, and gave to fun'ral flame
The vile assassin, and adult'rous dame.
That day, 'ere yet the bloody triumphs cease,
Return'd Atrides to the coast of Greece,
And safe to Argos' port his navy brought,
With gifts of price and pond'rous treasure fraught.
Hence warn'd, my son, beware! nor idly stand
Too long a stranger to thy native land;
Left heedless absence wear thy wealth away,
While lawless feasters in thy palace sway;
Perhaps may seize thy realm, and share the spoil;
And thou return, with disappointed toil,
From thy vain journey, to a siled isle.
H owe' er, my friend, indulge one labour, more,
And seek Atrides on the Spartan shore.
He, wand'ring long, a wider circle made,
And many languag'd nations has survey'd;
And measur'd tracts unknown to other ships,
Amid the monstrous wonders of the deeps;
(A length of ocean and unbounded sky,
Which scarce the sea-fowl in a year o'erfly.)
Go then; to Sparta take the wat'ry way,
Thy ship and sailors but for orders stay;
Or if by land thou choose thy course to bend,
My steeds, my chariots, and my sons attend;
Thee to Atrides they shall safe convey,
Guides of thy road, companions of thy way.
Urge him with truth to frame his free replies;
And sure he will: for Menelaus is wise.

Thus while he speaks, the ruddy sun descends,
And twilight grey her ev'ning shade extends:
Then thus the blue-eyed maid: O full of days!
Wife are thy words, and just are all thy ways.
Now immolate the tongues, and mix the wine,
Sacred to Neptune and the Pow'rs divine.
The lamp of day is quench'd beneath the deep,
And soft approach the balmy hours of sleep:
Nor fits it to prolong the heavenly feast,
Timeless, indecent, but retire to rest.

So spake Jove's daughter, the celestial maid.
The sober train attended, and obey'd.
The sacred heralds on their hands around
Pour'd the full urns; the youths the goblets crown'd:
From bowl to bowl the holy bev'rage flows;
While to the final sacrifice they rote.
The tongues they cast upon the fragrant flame,
And pour, above, the consecrated stream.
And now, their thirst by copious draughts allay’d;
The youthful hero and th’ Athenian maid
Propose departure from the smit’h’d rite,
And in their hollow bark to pass the night:
But this the hospitable sage deny’d.
Forbid it, Jove! and all the gods! he cry’d,
Thus from my walls the much-lov’d son to send:
Of such a hero, and of such a friend!
Me, as some needy peasant, would ye leave,
Whom heav’n denies the blessing to relieve?
Me would ye leave, who boast imperial sway,
When beds of royal state invite your stay?
No—long as life this mortal shall inspire,
Or as my children imitate their sire,
Here shall the wand’ring stranger find his home,
And hospitable rites adorn the dome.

Well haft thou spoke, the blue-eye’d maid replies,
Belov’d old man! benevolent, as wise.
Be the kind dictates of thy heart obey’d,
And let thy words Telemachus persuade:
He to thy palace shall thy steps pursue;
I to the ship, to give the orders due;
Prescribe directions, and confirm the crew.
For I alone sustain their naval cares,
Who boast experience from these silver hairs;
All youths the rest, whom to this journey move
Like years, like tempers, and their prince’s love.
There in the vessel shall I pass the night;
And soon as morning paints the fields of light,
I go to challenge from the Caucons bold,
A debt, contracted in the days of old.
But this thy guest, receiv’d with friendly care,
Let thy strong courser swift to Sparta bear;
Prepare thy chariot at the dawn of day,
And be thy son companion of his way.

Then turning with the word, Minerva flies,
And soars an eagle through the liquid skies.
Vision divine! The throng spectators gaze
In holy wonder fixt, and still amaze.
But chief the rev'rend sage admir'd; he took
The hand of young Telemachus, and spoke:
   O happy youth! and favour'd of the skies,
Distinguished care of guardian deities!
Whole early years for future worth engage,
No vulgar manhood, no ignoble age.
For lo! no other of the court above
Than she, the daughter of almighty Jove,
Pallas herself, the war-triumphant maid,
Confess is thine, as once thy father's aid.
So guide me, goddess! so propitious shine
On me, my comfort, and my royal line!
A yearling bullock to thy name shall smoke,
Untam'd, unconscious of the galling yoke.
With ample forehead, and yet tender horns,
Whose budding honours ductile gold adorns.

Submissive thus the hoary sire preferr'd
His holy vows: the fav'ring goddess heard.
Then slowly rising, o'er the sandy space
Precedes the father, follow'd by his race,
(A long procession) timely marching home
In comely order to the regal dome.
There when arriv'd, on thrones around him plac'd,
His sons and grand-sons the wide circle grac'd.
To these the hospitable sage, in sign
Of social welcome, mix'd the racy wine,
(Late from the mellowing cask restor'd to light,
By ten long years refrain'd, and rosy-bright.)
To Pallas high the foaming bowl he crown'd,
And sprinkled large libation on the ground.
Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs.
Deep in a rich alcove the prince was laid,
And slept beneath the pommous columns;
For by his side Philistratus lay spread,
(In age his equal) on a splendid bed:
Book III. Homer's Odyssey

But in an inner court, securely clos'd,
The rev'rent Neoptolemus and his queen repos'd. 515
When now Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With rosy lustre purpled o'er the lawn;
The old man early rose, walk'd forth, and set
On polish'd stone before his palace gate:
With unguents smooth the lucid marble shone,
Where stentive Nelesus sat; a rustic throne;
But he descending to th' infernal shade,
Sage Neoptolemus fill'd it, and the sceptre sway'd,
His sons around him, mild obeysance pay,
And duteous take the orders of the day.
First Echephon and Stratus quit their bed;
Then Perseus, Aretus, and Theraphyes;
The last Philoctetes arose from rest:
They came, and near him plac'd the stranger-guest.
To these the seniour thus declar'd his will:
My sons! the dictates of your sire fulfil.
To Pallas, first of gods, prepare the feast,
Who graci'd our rites, a more than mortal guest.
Let one, dispatch'd, bid some swain to lead
A well fed bullock from the grassy mead;
One seek the harbour where the vessels moor;
And bring thy friends, Telemachus! ashore,
(Leave only two the galley to attend)
Another to Laertes must we send.
Artift divine! whose skilful hands infold
The victim's horn with circumfulible gold.
The rest may here the pious duty share,
And bid the handmaids for the feast prepare,
The seats to range, the fragrant wood to bring,
And limpid waters from the living spring.
He said, and busy each his care bestow'd;
Already at the gates the bullock low'd,
Already came the Ithacensian crew,
The dext'rous smith the tools already drew:
His pond'rous hammer, and his anvil round;
And the strong tongs to turn the metal round.
Nor was Minerva absent from the rite,
She view'd her honours, and enjoy'd the sight.
With reverend hand the king presents the gold,
Which round th' intorted horns the gilder roll'd;
So wrought, as Pallas might with pride behold.
Young Arctus from forth his bridal bow'r
Brought the full raver, o'er their hands to pour,
And canisters of consecrated flour.
Stratius and Echephron the victim-led;
The ax was held by warlike Thrasymed,
In act to strike: before him Perseus stood;
The vase extending to receive the blood.
The king himself initiates to the pow'r;
Scatters with quiv'ring hand the sacred flour,
And the stream sprinkles: from the curling brows.
The hair collected in the fire he throws.
Soon as due vows on ev'ry part were paid;
And sacred wheat upon the victim laid;
Strong Thrasymed discharg'd the speeding blow,
Full on his neck, and cut the nerves in two:
Down sunk the heavy beast: the females round,
Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a thrilling sound:
Nor scorn'd the queen the holy choir to join,
(The first-born she of old Clymenus' line;
In youth by Neoptolomus' fame,
And lov'd in age, Eurydice her name.)
From earth they rear him, struggling now with death;
And Neoptolomus' youngest stops the vents of breath.
The soul for ever flies: on all sides round
Streams the black blood, and smokes upon the ground.
The heart they then divide, and did unite
The ribs and limbs, observant of the rite:
On these: in double caws involv'd with art,
The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part.
The sacred Sage before his altar stands,
Turns the burnt-off'ring with his holy hands,
And pours the wine, and bids the flames aspire:
The youths with instruments surround the fire.
Book III. HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

The thighs now sacrific'd, and entrails dress'd,
Th' assistants part, transfix, and broil the rest.
While these officious tend the rites divine,
The last fair branch of the Neptonian line,
Sweet Polycaste, took the pleasing toil
To bathe the prince, and pour the fragrant oil.
O'er his fair limbs a flow'ry vest he threw,
And issu'd, like a god, to mortal view.
His former seat beside the king he found,
(His people's father with his peers around,)
All plac'd at ease, the holy banquet join,
And in the dazzling goblets laughs the wine.

The rage of thirst and hunger now suppcrest,
The monarch turns him to his royal guest;
And for the promis'd journey bids prepare
The smooth-hair'd horses, and the rapid car,
Obser vant of his word. The word scarce spoke,
The sons obey, and join them to the yoke.
Then bread and wine a ready handmaid brings,
And presents, suit as suit the state of kings.
The glitt'ring seat Telemachus ascends;
His faithful guide, Pisistratus, attends:
With hafty hand the ruling reins he drew:
He lash'd the coulers, and the coulers flew.
Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
Their equal pace, and smok'd along the field.
The tow'rs of Pylos sink, its views decay,
Fields after fields fall back, till close of day;
Then sunk the sun, and darken'd all the way.

To Phæsea now, Diocleus' stately seat,
(Of Alpheus' race) the weary youths retreat.
His house affords the hospitable rite,
And pleas'd they sleep (the blessing of the night.)
But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
With rosy lustré purpled o'er the lawn;
Again they mount, their journey to renew,
And from the sounding portico they flew.
Along the waying fields their way they bold,
The fields receding as the chariot roll'd:
Then slowly sunk the ruddy globe of light,
And o'er the shaded landscape rush'd the night.
The Odyssey of Homer. Book IV.
THE ARGUMENT.

The conference with Menelaus.

Telemachus, with Písistratus, arriving at Sparta, is hospitably received by Menelaus, to whom he relates the cause of his coming, and learns from him many particulars of what befel the Greeks since the destruction of Troy. He dwells more at large upon the prophecies of Proteus to him in his return, from which he acquaints Telemachus, that Ulysses is detained in the island of Calypso.

In the mean time, the suitors consult to destroy Telemachus in his voyage home. Penelope is apprised of this, but comforted in a dream by Pallas, in the shape of her sister Iphthima.
AND now proud Sparta with their wheels resounds,
Sparta whose walls a range of hills surrounds:
At the fair dome the rapid labour ends;
Where fat Atrides 'midst his bridal friends,
With double vows invoking Hymen's pow'r,
To bless his sons and daughters nuptial hour.
That day, to great Achilles' son resign'd
Hermione, (the fairest of her kind)
Was sent to crown the long-protracted joy,
Espous'd before the final doom of Troy:
With steeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nymph to Phthia's distant reign.
Mean-while at home, to Megapentes' bed
The virgin-choir Alector's daughter led.
Brave Megapentes, from a stol'n amour
To great Atrides' age his handmaid bore:
'To Helen's bed the gods alone assign
Hermione, t' extend the regal line;
On whom a radiant pomp of Graces wait,
Resembling Venus in attractive state.

While this gay friendly troop the king surround,
With festival and mirth the roofs resound:
A bard amid the joyous circle sings
High airs, attemper'd to the vocal strings;
Whilst warbling to the varied strain, advance
Two sprightly youths, to form the bounding dance.
'Twas then, that issuing through the palace gate
The splendid car roll'd slow in regal state:
On the bright eminence young Neptor shone,
And sate beside him great Ulysses' son:
Grave Pteoneus saw the pomp appear,
And Speeding, thus address'd the royal car:
Two youths approach, whose semblant features prove
Their blood devolving from the source of Jove.
Is due reception deign'd? or must they bend
Their doubtful course to seek a distant friend?
Insensate! with a sigh the king replies,
Too long, misjudging, have I thought thee wife:
But sure relentless folly steals thy breast,
Obdurate to reject the stranger guest;
To these dear hospitable rites a foe,
Which in my wand'ring oft reliev'd my woe:
Fed by the bounty of another's board,
'Till pitying Jove my native realm restor'd.—
Strait be the coursers from the car releas'd,
Conduct the youths to grace the genial feast.

The seneschal rebuk'd, in haste withdrew;
With equal haste a menial train pursue:
Part led the coursers, from the car enlarg'd,
Each to a crib with choicest grain surcharg'd;
Part in a portico, profusely grac'd
With rich magnificence, the chariot plac'd:
Then to the dome the friendly pair invite,
Who eye the dazzling roofs with vait delight;
Resplendent as the blaze of summer-noon,
Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
From room to room their eager view they bend;
Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, descend;
Where a bright damsel-train attend the guests
With liquid odours, and embroider'd vests.
Refresh'd, they wait them to the bow'r of state,
Where circled with his peers Atrides fate:
Thron'd next the king, a fair attendant brings
The purest product of the chrysal springs:
High on a massy vase of silver mold,
The burnish'd laver flames with solid gold:
In solid gold the purple vintage flows,
And on the board a second banquet rose.
When thus the king, with hospitable port:—
Accept this welcome to the Spartan court;
The waste of nature let the feast repair,
Then your high lineage and your names declare:
Say from what scepter'd ancestry ye claim,
Recorded eminent in deathless fame?
For vulgar parents cannot stamp their race
With signatures of such majestic grace.
Ceasing, benevolent he strait assigns
The royal portion of the choicest chines
To each accepted friend: with grateful haste
They share the honours of the rich repast.
Suffic'd, soft whispering thus to Nestor's son,
His head reclin'd, young Ithacus begun:
View'st thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd host!
These prodigies of art and wond'rous cost!
Above, beneath, around the palace shins
The sumless treasure of exhausted mines;
The spoils of elephants the roofs inlay,
And studded amber darts a golden ray:
Such, and not nobler, in the realms above
My wonder dictates is the dome of Jove.

The monarch took the word, and grave reply'd:
Presumptuous are the vaunts, and vain the pride
Of man, who dares in pomp with Jove contest,
Unchang'd, immortal, and supremely blest!
With all my affluence when my woes are weigh'd,
Envy will own the purchase dearly paid.
For eight flow-circling years by tempests tost,
From Cyprus to the far Phoenician coast,
(Sidon the capital) I stretch'd my toil
Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile.
Next, Æthiopia's utmost bound explore,
And the parch'd borders of th' Arabian shore:
Then warp my voyage on the southern gales,
O'er the warm Lybian wave, to spread my sails;
That happy clime! where each revolving year
The teeming ews a triple offspring bear;
And two fair crescents of translucent horn
The brows of all their young increase adorn:
The shepherd swains, with sure abundance blest,
On the fat flock and rural dainties feast;
Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
But ev'ry season fills the foaming pail.
Whilst heaping unvith'd wealth, I distant roam;
The best of brothers, at his natal home,
By the dire fury of a traitrefs wife,
Ends the sad evening of a stormy life:
Whence with incessant grief my soul annoy'd,
These riches are possess'd, but not enjoy'd!
My war, the copious theme of ev'ry tongue,
To you, your fathers have recorded long:
How fav'ring heav'n repaid my glorious toils
With a sack'd palace and barbaric spoils.
Oh! had the gods so large a boon deny'd,
And life, the just equivalent, supply'd
To those brave warriors, who with glory sir'd
Far from their country in my cause expir'd!
Still in short-intervals of pleasing woe,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe,
I to the glorious dead, for ever dear!
Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear.
But oh! Ulysses—deeper than the rest
That sad idea wounds my anxious breast!
My heart bleeds fresh with agonizing pain;
The bowl and tasteful viands tempt in vain,
Nor sleep's soft pow'r can close my streaming eyes,
When imag'd to my soul his sorrows: rise.
No peril in my cause he ceas'd to prove,
His labours equal'd only by my love:
And both alike to bitter fortune born,
For him, to suffer, and for me to mourn!
Whether he wanders on some friendless coast,
Or glides in Stygian gloom a pensive ghost,
No fate reveals; but doubtful of his doom,
His good old fire with sorrow to the tomb
Declines his trembling steps; untimely care
Withers the blooming vigour of his heir;
And the chaste partner of his bed and throne
Wastes all her widow'd hours in tender moan.

While thus pathetic to the prince he spoke,
From the brave youth the streaming passion broke:
Studious to veil the grief, in vain repref't,
His face he shrouded with his purple vest;
The conscious monarch pierc'd the coy disguise;
And view'd his filial love with vast surprise:
Doubtous to press the tender theme, or wait
To hear the youth enquire his father's fate.

In this suspense bright Helen grac'd the room;
Before her breath'd a gale of rich perfume.
So moves, adorn'd with each attractive grace,
The silver-shafted goddess of the chase!
The seat of majesty A'drafe brings;
With art illustrious, for the pomp of kings,
To spread the pall beneath the regal chair;
Of softest woof, is bright Alcipp'e's care.
A silver canifter divinely wrought,
In her soft hands the beauteous Phylo brought:
To Sparta's queen of old the radiant vase.
Alcandra gave, a pledge of royal grace:
For Polybus her lord, (whose sovereign sway
The wealthy tribes of Pharian Thebes obey)
When to that court Atrides came, careft
With vail munificence th' imperial guest:
Two lavers from the richest ore refin'd,
With silver tripods, the kind host assign'd;
And bounteous, from the royal treasure told
Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.
Alcandra, confor't of his high command,
A golden distaff gave to Helen's hand;
And that rich vase, with living scripture wrought,
Which heap'd with wool the beauteous Phylo brought:
The silken fleece impurpled for the loom,
Rival'd the hyacinth in vernal bloom.
The sovereign seat then Jove-born Helen press'd,
And pleasing thus her sceptred lord address'd:

Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair,
Speak they their lineage, or their names declare?
Uncertain of the truth, yet uncontrol'd
Hear me the bodings of my breast unfold.
With wonder rapt, on wond'rous cheek I trace
The feature of the Ulyssian race:
Diffus'd o'er each resembling line appear,
In just similitude, the grace and air
Of young Telemachus! the lovely boy
Who bless'd Ulysses with a father's joy.
What time: the Greeks combin'd their social arms,
T' avenge the stain of my ill-fated charms!

Just is thy thought, the King assenting cries,
Methinks Ulysses strikes my wond'rous eyes:
Full shines the father in the filial frame,
His port, his features, and his shape the same;
Such quick regards his sparkling eyes bestow;
Such wavy ringlets o'er his shoulders flow.
And when he heard the long disastrous store
Of cares, which in my cause Ulysses bore;
Dismay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes,
Above restraint the tide of sorrow rose:
Cautious to let the gushing grief appear,
His purple garment veil'd the falling tears.

See there confest, Pífístratus replies,
The genuine worth of Ithacus the wise!
Of that heroic fire the youth is spring,
But modest awe hath chain'd his tim'rous tongue:
Thy voice, O King! with pleas'd attention heard,
Is like the dictates of a God rever'd.
With him at Nestor's high command I came,
Whose age I honour with a parent's name.
By adverse destiny constrain'd to sue
For counsel and redress, he sues to you.
Whatever ill the friendless orphan bears,
Bereav'd of parents in his infant years,
Still must the wrong'd Telemachus sustain.
If hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain;
Affianc'd in your friendly pow'r alone,
The youth would vindicate the vacant throne.

Is Sparta blest, and these desiring eyes
View my friend's son? (the king exulting cries)
Son of my friend, by glorious toils approv'd,
Whose sword was sacred to the man he lov'd;
Mirror of constant faith, rever'd and mourn'd!
When Troy was ruin'd, had the chief return'd,
No Greek an equal space had e'er possess'd.
Of dear affection, in my grateful breast,
I, to confirm the mutual joys we shah'd;
For his abode a capital prepar'd;
Argos the seat of sovereign rule I chose;
Fair in the plan the future palace rose,
Where my Ulysses and his race might reign;
And portion to his tribes the wide domain.
To them my vassals had design'd a soil,
With teeming plenty to reward their toil.
There with commutual zeal we both had strove;
In acts of dear benevolence and love:
Brothers in peace, not rivals in command;
And death alone dissolv'd the friendly band!
Some envious pow'r the blissful scene destroys;
Vanish'd are all the visionary joys:
The soul of friendship to my hope is lost,
Fated to wander from his natal coast!

He cease'd; a gulf of grief began to rise:
Faint streams a tide from beauteous Helen's eyes;
Faint for the fire the filial sorrows flow;
The weeping monarch swells the mighty woes;
Thy cheek, Pilissatus, the tears now,
While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view.
Thy martial brother*, on the Phrygian plain
Extended pale, by swarthy Memnon slain!
But silence soon the son of Nestor broke,
And melting with fraternal pity spoke:

Frequent, O king, was Nestor wont to rise
And charm attention, with thy copious praise:
To crown thy various gifts, the sage assign'd
The glory of a firm capacious mind:
With that superior attribute control
This unavailing impotence of soul.
Let not your roof with echoing grief resound,
Now for the feast the friendly bowl is crown'd:
But when from dewy shade emerging bright,
Aurora streaks the sky with orient light,
Let each deplore his dead: the rites of woe
Are all, alas! the living can bestow:
O'er the consensual dust injoin'd to their
The graceful curl, and drop the tender tear.
Then mingling in the mournful pomp with you,
I'll pay my brother's ghost a warrior's due,
And mourn the brave Antilochus, a name
Not unrecorded in the rolls of fame:
With strength and speed superior form'd, in fight
To face the foe, or intercept his flight:
Too early snatch'd by fate, ere known to me!
I boast a witness of his worth in thee.

Young and mature! the monarch thus rejoins,
In thee renew'd the soul of Nestor shines:
Form'd by the care of that consummate sage,
In early bloom an oracle of age.
When-e'er his influence Jove vouchsafes to show't
To bless the natal and the nuptial hour;
From the great fire transmissive to the race,
The boon devolving gives distinguish'd grace.
Such, happy Nestor! was thy glorious doom;
Around thee full of years, thy offspring bloom.

* Antilochus.
Expert of arms, and prudent in debate;
The gifts of heaven to guard thy hoary state.
But now let each becalm his troubled breast,
Wash, and partake serene the friendly feast.
To move thy foot; Telemachus, delay,
'Till heaven's revolving lamp restores the day.

He said: Asphalon swift the laver brings;
Alternate all partake the grateful springs;
Then from the rites of purity repair,
And with keen gust the sav'ry viands share.
Mean time with genial joy to warm the soul,
Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inspiring bowl;
Tempers'd with drugs of low reign use, 't allay age
The boiling bosom of tumultuous rage;
To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled care,
And dry the tearful drenches of despair:
Charm'd with that virtuous draught, th' exalted mind
All sense of woe delivers to the wind.
Though on the blazing pile his parent lay,
Or a lov'd brother gean'd his life away,
Or darling son oppress'd by Russian force.
Fell breathless at his feet, a mangled corpse;
From morn to ev'n, impassive and serene,
The man entranced would view the deathful scene.
These drugs, so friendly to the joys of life,
Bright Helen learn'd from Thon's imperial wife;
Who sway'd the sceptre, where prolific Nile
With various tipples clothes the fat'ned soil.
With wholesome herbage mix'd the direful bane
Of vegetable venom, taints the plain;
From Paeon sprung, their patron-god imparts
To all the Pharian race his healing arts.
The bev'rage now prepar'd t' inspire the feast,
The circle thus the beauteous Queen addrest:

Thron'd in omnipotence, supremest Jove
Tempers the fates of human race above;
By the firm sanction of his sov'reign will,
Alternate are decreed our good and ill.
To feastful mirth be this white hour assign'd,
And sweet discourse, the banquet of the mind.

My self aslant in the social joy,
Will tell Ulysses' bold exploit in Troy:
Sole witness of the deed I now declare;
Speak you (who saw) his wonders in the war.

Seam'd o'er with wounds, which his own sabre gave,
In the vile habit of a village slave,
The foe deceiv'd, he pas'd the tented plain,
In Troy to mingle with the hostile train:
In this attire, secure from searching eyes,
Till haply piercing through the dark disguise.

The chief I challeng'd: he, whose praxis'd wit
Knew all the serpent-mazes of deceit,
Eludes my search: but when his form I view'd,
Fresh from the bath with fragrant oils renew'd,
His limbs in military purple dres's'd:

Each bright'ning grace the genuine Greek confess'd.
A previous pledge of sacred faith obtain'd,
'Till he the lines and Argive fleet regain'd,
To keep his stay conceal'd: the chief declar'd:
The plans of war against the town prepar'd.

Exploring then the secrets of the state,
He learn'd what best might urge the Dardan fate:
And safe returning to the Grecian hoft,
Sent many a shade to Pluto's dreary coast,
Loud grief resounded through the towers of Troy,
But my pleas'd bosphor glow'd with secret joy:

For then with dire remorse, and conscious shame,
I view'd th' effects of that disastrous flame,
Which kindled by th' imperious queen of love,

Constrain'd me from my native realm to rove:

And oft in bitterness of soul deplor'd
My absent daughter, and my dearer lord;
Admir'd among the first of human race,

For ev'ry gift of mind, and manly grace.

Right well, reply'd the king, your speech displays
The matchless merit of the chief you praise:
Heroes in various climes myself have found,
For martial deeds and depth of thought renown'd;
But Ithacus, unrival'd in his claim,
May boast a title to the loudest fame:
In battle calm he guides the rapid storm,
Wise to resolve, and patient to perform.
What wond'rous conduct in the chief appear'd,
When the vaft fabric of the fleet we rear'd!
Some daemon mixtious for the Trojan doom,
Urg'd you with great Deiphobus to come,
To explore the fraud: with guile oppos'd to guile,
Slow pacing thrice around th' insidious pile;
Each noted leader's name you thrice invoke,
Your accent varying as their spouses spoke:
The pleasing sounds each latent warrior warm'd,
But most Tydides' and my heart alarm'd:
To quit the fleet we both impatient press,
Threat'ning to answer from the dark recess.
Unmov'd the mind of Ithacus remain'd,
And the vain ardors of our love restrain'd:
But Anticlus unable to control,
Spoke loud the language of his yarning soul.
Ulysses, strait, with indignation fir'd,
(For so the common care of Greece requir'd)
Firm to his lips his forceful hand apply'd,
Till on his tongue the flattering murmurs dy'd.
Mean-time Minerva from his fraudful horse,
Back to the court of Priam bent your course.

Inclement fate! Telemachus replies,
Frail is the boasted attribute of wife:
The leader, mingling with the vulgar host,
Is 'in the common mass of matter lost!
But now let sleep the painful waste repair.
Of sad reflection, and corroding care:

He ceas'd; the menial fair that round her wait,
At Helen's book prepare the room of state:
Beneath an ample portico they spread
The downy fleece to form the stately bed.
And o'er soft palms of purple grain unfold
Rich tapestry, stiff with inwoven gold:
Then through th' illumin'd dome, to balmy rest
Th' obsequious herald guides each princely guest:
While to his regal bow'r the king ascends,
And beauteous Helen on her lord attends.

Soon as the morn, in orient purple dress,
Unbarr'd the portal of the roseate east,
The monarch rose; magnificent to view,
Th' imperial mantle o'er his vest he threw;
The glitt'ring zone athwart his shoulder cast
A starry fauchion low-depending grac'd,
Clasp'd on his feet th' embroider'd sandals shine,
And forth he moves, majestic and divine:
Instant to young Telemachus he press'd,
And thus benevolent his speech address'd:

Say, royal youth, sincere of soul, report
What cause hath led you to the Spartan court?
Do public or domestic cares confine
This toilsome voyage o'er the surgy main?
'O highly favour'd delegate of Jove!
(Replies the prince) inflam'd with filial love,
And anxious hope, to hear my parent's doom,
A suppliant to your royal court I come.
Our soveraign feat a lewd usurping race
With lawless riot and mis rule disgrace;
To pamper'd insolence devoted fall
Prime of the flock, and choicest of the fall:
For wild ambition wings their bold desire,
And all to mount th' imperial bed aspire.
But prostrate, I implore, oh king! relate
The mournful series of my father's fate:
Each known disfater of the man disclose,
Born by his mother to a world of woes!
Recite them! nor in erring pity fear
To wound with storied grief the filial ear:
If o'er Ulysses, to reclaim your right,
Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight.
If Phrygian camps the friendly toils attest,
To the fire's merit give the son's request.
Deep from his inmost soul Atrides sigh'd,
And thus indignant to the prince reply'd:
Heav'n's! would a soft, inglorious, daftard train
An absent hero's nuptial joy profane!
So with her young, amid the woodland shades
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,
Leaves in that fatal laire the tender fawns,
Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flow'ry lawns:
Mean-time return'd, with dire remorseless sway
The monarch-savage rends the trembling prey.
With equal fury, and with equal fame,
Ulysses soon shall re-affert his claim.
O Jove, supreme, whom gods and men revere!
And thou*, to whom 'tis giv'n to gild the sphere!
With pow'r, congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial maid!
Such to our wish the warrior soon restore,
As when contending on the Lesbian shore
His prowess Philomelides confess'd,
And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor blest:
Then soon th' invaders of his bed and throne,
Their love presumptuous shall with life atone.
With patient ear, oh royal youth, attend
The floried labours of thy father's friend:
Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
But truth severe shall dictate to my tongue:
Learn what I heard the tea-born seer relate,
Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.

Long-on-th' Egyptian coast by calms confin'd,
Heav'n to my fleet refus'd a prosp'rous wind:
No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim slain!
For this the gods each fav'ring gale restrain.
Jealous to see their high beholds obey'd,
Severe, if men th' eternal rights evade!

* Apollo.
High o'er a gulfy sea, the Pharian isle
Fronts the deep roar of disemboguing Nile:
Her distance from the shore, the course begun
At dawn, and ending with the setting sun,
A galley measures; when the stiffer gales
Roll on the poop, and fully stretch the sails.
There anchor'd vessels safe in harbour ly,
Whilst limpid springs the failing cask supply.

And now the twentieth sun descending, laves
His glowing axle in the western waves;
Still with expanded fails we court in vain
Propitious winds, to waft us o'er the main:
And the pale mariner at once deplores
His drooping vigour and exhausted stores.
When lo! a bright cerulean form appears,
The fair Eidothea! to dispel my fears;
Proteus her fire divine. With pity press'd,
Me solé the daughter of the deep address'd;
What time, with hunger pin'd, my absent mates
Roam the wild isle in search of rural cates,
Bait the barb'd steel, and from the fishy flood
Appease th' afflicting fierce desire of food

Whoe'er thou art, the azure goddes cries,
Thy conduct ill deserves the praise of wise.
Is death thy choice, or misery thy boast,
That here inglorious on a barren coast
Thy brave associates droop, a meager train!
With famine pale, and ask thy care in vain?

Struck with the kind reproach, I straight reply:
Whate'er thy title in thy native sky,
A goddes sure! for more than mortal grace
Speaks thee descendent of ethereal race:
Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains;
Some heav'nly pow'r averse my stay constrains:
O, piteous of my fate, vouchsafe to shew,
(For what's sequester'd from celestial view?)
What power becalms th' innavigable seas?
What guilt provokes him, and what vows appease?
I ceas'd; when assiable the goddess cry'd: 515
Observe, and in the truths I speak confide:
Th' oraculous seer frequents the Pharian coast,
From whose high bed my birth divine I boast:
Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main,
The delegate of Neptune's wat'ry reign.
Watch with insidious care his known abode;
There fast in chains constrain the various god:
Who bound, obedient to superior force,
Unerring will prescribe your destin'd course.
If studious of your realms, you then demand
Their state, since last you left your natal land;
Instant the god obsequious will disclose
Bright tracks of glory, or a cloud of woes.

She ceas'd, and suppliant thus I made reply:
O goddess! on thy aid my hopes rely:
Dictate propitious to my duteous ear,
What arts can captivate the changeful seer?
For perilous th' affray, unheard the toil,
T' elude the presence of a god by guile.
Thus to the goddess mild my suit I end.

Then she: Obedient to my rule attend.
When through the zone of heav'n the mounted sun
Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run;
The seer, while zephyrs curl the swelling deep,
Basks on the breezy shore, in grateful sleep,
His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,
The Phocae swift surround his rocky cave,
Frequent and full; the consecrated train
Of her * whose azure trident awes the main:
There wallowing warm, th' enormous herd exhales
An oily steam, and taints the noon-tide gales.
To that reeds, commodious for surprise,
When purple light shall next suffuse the skies,
With me repair; and from thy warrior band
Three cho'en chiefs of dauntless soul command:
Let their auxiliar force befriend the toil,
For strong the god, and perfected in guile.
Stretch'd on the shelly shore, he first surveys
The flouncing herd ascending from the seas;
The number summ'd, repos'd in deep profound
The scaly charge their guardian god surround.
So with his batt'ning flocks the careful swain
Abides, pavilion'd on the grassy plain.
With pow'rs united, obstinately bold
Invade him, couch'd amid the scaly fold:
Instant he wears, elusive of the rape,
The mimic force of every savage shape:
Or glides with liquid lapse a murm'ring stream,
Or, wrapt in flame, he glows at every limb.
Yet still retentive, with redoubled might
Through each vain passive form constrain his flight.
But when, his native shape resum'd, he stands
Patient of conquest, and your cause demands;
The cause that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
And soothe the vanquish'd with a victor's pray'r.
The bands relax'd, implore the seer to say
What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
Who strait propitious, in prophetic strain
Will teach you to repass th' unmeasur'd main.
She ceas'd, and bounding from the shelly shore,
Round the descending nymph the waves redounding roar.
High rapt in wonder of the future deed,
With joy impetuous, to the port I speed:
The wants of nature with repast suffice,
Till night with grateful shade involv'd the skies,
And shed ambrosial dews. Faint by the deep,
Along the tented shore, in balmy sleep
Our cares were lost. When o'er the eastern lawn,
In saffron robes, the daughter of the dawn
Advanc'd her rosy steps; before the bay,
Due ritual honours to the gods I pay:
Then seek the place the sea-born nymph assign'd;
With three associates of undaunted mind.
Arriv'd, to form along th' appointed strand
For each a bed, she scoops the hilly sand:
Then from her azure car the finny spoils
Of four vast Phocae takes, to veil her wiles;
Beneath the finny spoils extended prone,
Hard toil! the prophet’s piercing eye to shun;
New from the corse, the scaly frauds diffuse
Unsavoury stench of oil, and brackish ooze:
But the bright sea-maid’s gentle pow’r implor’d,
With nectar’d drops the sick’ning sense restor’d.

Thus till the sun had travell’d half the skies,
Ambush’d we ly, and wait the bold emprise:
When thronging thick to bask in open air,
The flocks of ocean to the strand repair:
Couch’d on the finny sand the monsters sleep:
Then Proteus mounting from the hoary deep,
Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit:
(In order told we make the sum complete.)
Pleas’d with the false review, secure he lies,
And leaden slumbers pres’t his drooping eyes.
Rushing impetuous forth, we strait prepare
A furious onset with the sound of war,
And shouting seize the God: our force t’ evade
His various arts he soon resumes in aid:
A lion now, he curls a surgy mane;
Sudden our hands a spotted pard restrain;
Then arm’d with tusks, and light’ning in his eyes,
A boat’s obscener shape the god belies:
On spiry volumes there a dragon rides;
Here from our strict embrace a stream he glides:
And last, sublime his stately growth he rears,
A tree, and well-dissembled foliage wears.
Vain efforts! with superior pow’r compress’d,
Me with reluctance thus the feer address’d;
Say, son of Atreus, say what God inspir’d
This daring fraud, and what the boon desir’d?
I thus; O thou, whose certain eye foresees
The fix’d event of fate’s remote decrees;
After long woes, and various toil endur’d,
Still on this desert isle my fleet is moor’d.
Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing! say
What godhead interdicts the wat'ry way?
What vows repentant will the pow'r appease,
To speed a prosperous voyage o'er the seas?
   To Jove, (with stern regard the god replies,) -635
And all th' offended synod of the skies;
Just hecatombs, with due devotion slain,
Thy guilt absolv'd, a prosperous voyage gain.
To the firm sanction of thy fate attend:
An exile thou; nor chearing face of friend,
Nor sight of natal shore, nor regal dome,
Shalt yet enjoy, but still art doom'd to roam.
Once more the Nile, who from the secret source
Of Jove's high seat descends with sweepy force,
Must view his billows white beneath thy oar,
And altars blaze along his languine shore.
Then will the gods, with holy pomp ador'd,
To thy long vows a safe return accord.
He ceas'd. Heart-wounded with afflictive pain,
(Doom'd to repeat the perils of the main,
A sheerly tract, and long!) O seer, I cry,
To the stern sanction of th' offended sky
My prompt obedience bows. But deign to say,
What fate propitious, or what dire dismay
Sustain those peers, the reliques of our hoist,
Whom I with Nestor on the Phrygian coast
Embracing left? must I the warriors weep,
Whelm'd in the bottom of the monstrous deep?
Or did the kind domestic friend deplore
The breathless heroes on their native shore?
Press not too far, reply'd the god; but cease
To know, what known will violate thy peace:
Too curious of their doom! with friendly woe
Thy breast will heave, and tears eternal flow.
Part live; the rest, a lamentable train!
Range the dark bounds of Pluto's dreary reign.
Two, foremost in the roll of Mars renown'd,
Whose arms with conquest in thy cause were crown'd,
Fell by disastrous fate; by tempests tost,
A third lives wretched on a distant coast.
By Neptune rescu'd from Minerva's hate,
On Gyrae, safe Oilean Ajax fate,
His ship o'erwhelm'd; but frowning on the floods,
Impious he roar'd defiance to the gods;
To his own prowess all the glory gave,
The pow'r desrauding who vouchsaf'd to save.
This heard the raging ruler of the main;
His spear, indignant for such high disdain,
He launch'd, dividing with his forky mace.
Th' aerial summit from the marble base;
The rock rush'd sea-ward with impetuous roar,
Ingulf'd, and to th' abyss the boaster bore.
By Juno's guardian aid, the wat'ry vast;
Secure of storms, your royal brother past:
Till coasting nigh the cape, where Malea shrouds.
Her spiry cliffs amid surrounding clouds,
A whirling gust tumultuous from the shore,
Across the deep his lab'ring vessel bore:
In an ill-fated hour the coast he gain'd;
Where late in regal pomp Thyestes reign'd;
But when his hoary honours bow'd to fate,
Ægilthus govern'd in paternal state.
The surges now subside, the tempest ends;
From his tall ship the king of men descends:
There fondly thinks the gods conclude his toil!
Far from his own domain salutes the soil;
With rapture o'er the verge of Greece reviews,
And the dear turf with tears of joy bedews.
Him thus exulting on the distant strand,
A spy distinguish'd from his airy stand;
To bribe whose vigilance, Ægilthus told
A mighty sum of ill-persuading gold:
There watch'd this guardian of his guilty fear,
Till the twelfth moon had wheel'd her pale career;
And now admonish'd by his eye, to court
With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
Of deathful arts expert, his lord employs
The ministers of blood in dark surprise:
And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
Close ambush'd nigh the spacious hall he plac'd. 710
Then bids prepare the hospitable treat:
Vain shews of love to veil his felon hate!
To grace the victor's welcome from the wars,
A train of courser, and triumphal cars-
Magnificent he leads: the royal guest,
Thoughtless of ill, accepts the fraudulent feast.
The troops forth issuing from the dark recesses,
With homicidal rage the king oppress'd!
So, whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall,
The sov'reign of the herd is doom'd to fall. 720
The partners of his fame and toils at Troy,
Around their lord, a mighty ruin! ly:
Mix'd with the brave; the base invaders bleed;
Ægillus sole survives to boast the deed.

He said: chill horrors shook my shiv'ring soul,
Rack'd with convulsive pangs in dust I roul;
And hate, in madness of extreme despair,
To view the sun, or breathe the vital air.
But when, superior to the rage of woe,
I stood restor'd, and tears had ceas'd to flow; 730
Lenient of grief, the pitying god began——
Forget the brother, and resume the man:
To fate's supreme dispose the dead resign,
That care be fate's, a speedy passage thine.
Still lives the wretch who wrought the death deplor'd,
But lives a victim for thy vengeful sword;
Unless with filial rage Orestes glow,
And swift prevent the meditated blow;
You timely will return a welcome guest,
With him to share the sad funereal feast. 740

He said: new thoughts my beating heart employ,
My gloomy soul receives a gleam of joy.
Fair hope revives; and eager I address
The prescient godhead to reveal the rest:
The doom decreed of these disast'rous two
I've heard with pain; but oh! the tale pursue;
What third brave son of Mars the fates constrain
To roam the howling desert of the main:
Or in eternal shade if cold he lies,
Provoke new sorrow from these grateful eyes.
That chief, rejoin'd the god, his race derives
From Ithaca, and wond'rous woes survives;
Laertes' son: girt with circumfluous tides,
He still calamitous constraint abides.
Him in Calypso's cave of late view'd,
When streaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
But vain his pray'r, his arts are vain to move.
Th' enamour'd goddes, or elude her love:
His vessel sunk, and dear companions lost,
He lives reluctant on a foreign coast.
But oh below'd by heav'n! reserv'd to thee
A happier lot the smiling fates decree:
Free from that law beneath whose mortal sway
Matter is chang'd, and varying forms decay;
Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plains
Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.
Joys ever young, unmix'd with pain or fear,
Fill the wide circle of th' eternal year:
Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime:
The fields are florid with unsading prime:
From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mold the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
But from the breezy deep the blest inhale
The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.
This grace peculiar will the gods afford
To thee the son of Jove, and beauteous Helen's lord.
He ceas'd, and plunging in the vast profound,
Beneath the god the whirling billows bound.
Then speeding back, involv'd in various thought,
My friends attending at the shore I sought.
Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we controll,
Till light with silent shade invets the pole;
Then lose the cares of life in pleasing rest. —
Soon as the morn reveals the rosy east,
With fails we wing the masts, our anchors weigh, 785
Unmoor the fleet, and rush into the sea.
Rang'd on the banks, beneath our equal oars
White curl the waves, and the vex'd ocean roars.
Then steering backward from the Pharian isle,
We gain the stream of Jove-descended Nile; 790
There quit the ships, and on the deslin'd shore
With ritual hecatombs the gods adore:
Their wrath aton'd, to Agamemnon's name
A cenotaph I raise of deathless fame.
These rites to piety and grief discharg'd,
The friendly gods a springing gale enlarg'd:
The fleet swift tilting o'er the sargas flew,
Till Grecian cliffs appear'd, a blissful view!
Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
A story, fruitful of dismal fate: 800
And now, young prince, indulge my fond request;
Be Sparta honour'd with his royal guest,
Till from his eastern goal the joyous sun
His twelfth diurnal race begins to run.
Mean-time my train the friendly gifts prepare,
Three sprightly coursers, and a polish'd car:
With these a goblet of capacious mold,
Figur'd with art to dignify the gold,
(Form'd for libation to the gods,) shall prove
A pledge and monument of sacred love. 810
My quick return, young Ithacus rejoin'd,
Damps the warm wishes of my raptur'd mind:
Did not my fate my needful baffle constrain,
Charm'd by your speech, so graceful and humane,
Lost in delight the circling year would roll,
While deep attention fix'd my lifting soul.
But now to Pyle permit my deslin'd way,
My lov'd associates chide my long delay.
In dear remembrance of your royal grace,
I take the present of the promis'd vale; 820
Book IV. HOMER's ODYSSEY.

The courser for the champian sports, retain;
That gift our barren rocks will render vain:
Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browse,
But neither mead nor plain supplies to feed
The sprightly courser, or indulge his speed:
To sea-surrounded realms the gods assign
Small tract of fertile land, the least to mine.

His hand the king with tender passion pres'd,
And smiling, thus the royal youth address'd:
O early worth! a soul so wise, and young,
Proclaims you from the sage Ulysses sprung.
Selected from my stores, of matchless price
An urn shall recompence your prudent choice:
Not mean, the massy mold, of silver gruc'd
By Vulcan's art, the verge with gold enchas'd:
A pledge the scepter'd pow'r of Sidon gave,
When to his realm I plow'd the orient wave.

Thus they alternate; while with artful care
The menial train the regal feast prepare:
The firstlings of the flock are doom'd to die;
Rich fragrant wines the chearing bowl supply;
A female band the gift of Ceres bring;
And the gift roos with genial triumphs ring.

Mean-while, in Ithaca, the suitor-pow'r's
In active games divide their jovial hours:
In areas vary'd with Mosaic art,
Some whirl the disk, and some the jav'lin dart.
Aside, sequester'd from the vast resort,
Antinous late spectator of the sport;
With great Eurymachus, of worth confess,
And high descent, superior to the rest;
Whom young Noemon lowly thus address'd:

My ship equipp'd within the neighb'ring port,
The prince, departing from the Pylian court,
Requested for his speed; but, courteous, say
When steers he home? or why this long delay?
For Elis I should sail with utmost speed,
T' import twelve mares which there luxurious feed,
And twelve young mules, a strong, laborious race, 860
New to the plow, unpractis'd in the trace.

Unknowing of the course to Pyle design'd,
A sudden horror seiz'd on either mind:
The prince in rural bow'r, they fondly thought,
Numb'ring his flocks and herds, not far remote. 865
Relate, Antinous cries, devoid of guile,
When spread the prince his fail for distant Pyle?
Did chosen chiefs across the gulfy main
Attend his voyage, or domestic train?
Spontaneous did you speed his secret course,
Or was the vessel seiz'd by fraud or force?
With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
(Noemon cry'd) the vessel was resign'd.
Who in the balance with the great affairs
Of courts, presume to weigh their private cares? 875
With him the peerage next in pow'r to you:
And Mentor, captain of the lordly crew,
Or some celestial in his rev'rend form,
Safe from the secret rock and adverse storm,
Pilots the course: for when the glimm'ring ray
Of yester dawn disclos'd the tender day,
Mentor himself I saw, and much admir'd.—
Then ceas'd the youth, and from the court retir'd.

Confounded and appall'd, th' unfinish'd game
The suitors quit, and all to council came: 885
Antinous first th' assembled peers address,
Rage sparkling in his eyes, and burning in his breast:
O shame to manhood! shall one daring boy
The scheme of all our happiness destroy?
Fly unperceiv'd, seducing half the flow'r
Of nobles, and invite a foreign pow'r?
The pond'rous engine rais'd to crush us all,
Recoiling, on his head is sure to fall.
Instant prepare me, on the neigh'ring strand,
With twenty chosen mates a vessel mann'd; 895
Book IV. Homer's Odyssey.

For, ambush'd close beneath the Samian shore,
His ships returning shall my spies explore:
He soon his rashness shall with life atone,
Seek for his father's fate, but find his own.

With vast applause the sentence all approve;
Then rise, and to the feastful hall remove:
Swift to the queen the herald Medon ran,
Who heard the consult of the dire divan:
Before her dome the royal matron stands,
And thus the message of his haste demands:
What will the suitors! must my servant train
Th' allotted labours of the day refrain,
For them to form some exquisite repast?
Heav'n grant this festival may prove their last!
Or if they still must live, from me remove
The double plague of luxury and love!
Forbear, ye sons of insolence! forbear,
In riot to consume a wretched heir,
In the young soul illustrious thought to raise,
Were ye not tutor'd with Ulysses' praise?
Have not your fathers oft my lord defin'd,
Gentle of speech, beneficent of mind?
Some kings with arbitrary rage devour,
Or in their tyrant-minions vest the power:
Ulysses let no partial favours fall,
The people's parent, he protected all:
But absent now, pernicious and ingrate!
His stores ye ravage, and usurp his fate.

He thus; O were the woes you speak the worst!
They form a deed more odious and accurst;
More dreadful than your boding soul divines:
But pitying Jove avert the dire designs!
The darling object of your royal care
Is mark'd to perish in a deathful snare:
Before he anchors in his native port,
From Pyle re-failing and the Spartan court,
Horrid to speak! in ambush is decreed
The hope and heir of Ithaca to bleed!
Sudden the sunk beneath the weighty woes,
The vital streams a chilling horror froze:
The big round tear stands trembling in her eye,
And on her tongue imperfect accents die.
At length, in tender language, interwove
With sighs, she thus express’d her anxious love:
Why rashly would my son his fate explore,
Ride the wild waves, and quit the safer shore?
Did he, with all the greatly wretched, crave
A blank oblivion, and untimely grave!
’Tis not, reply’d the sage, to Medon giv’n
To know, if some inhabitant of heav’n
In his young breast the daring thought inspir’d;
Or if, alone with filial duty sir’d,
The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
Studious to learn his absent father’s doom.

The sage retir’d. Unable to controul
The mighty griefs that swell her lab’ring soul,
Rolling convulsive on the floor, is seen
The piteous object of a prostrate queen.
Words to her dumb complaint a pause supplies,
And breath, to waste in unavailing cries.
Around their sovereign wept the menial fair,
To whom the thus address’d her deep despair:
Behold a wretch, whom all the gods consign
To woe! did ever sorrows equal mine?
Long to my joys my dearest lord is lost,
His country’s buckler, and the Grecian boast:
Now from my fond embrace, by tempests torn,
Our other column of the state is born:
Nor took a kind adieu, nor sought consent!—
Unkind confed’rates in his dire intent!
Ill suits it with your shews of dutous zeal,
From me the purpos’d voyage to conceal:
Though at the solemn midnight hour he rose,
Why did you fear to trouble my repose?
He either had obey’d my fond desire,
Or seen his mother pierc’d with grief expire.
Bid Dolius quick attend, the faithful slave,
Whom to my nuptial train Icarius gave,
To tend the fruit-groves: with incessant speed
He shall this violence of death decreed,
To good Laertes tell: experienc'd age
May timely intercept their Russian rage,
Convene the tribes, the murd'rous plot reveal,
And to their pow'r to save his race appeal.

Then Euryclea thus: My dearest dread!
Though to the sword I bow this hoary head,
Or if a dungeon be the pain decreed,
I own me conscious of th' unpleasing deed:
Auxiliars to his flight, my aid implor'd,
With wine and viands I the vessel flor'd.

A solemn oath impos'd the secret seal'd,
'Till the twelfth dawn the light of heav'n reveal'd:
Dreading th' effect of a fond mother's fear,
He darr'd not violate your royal ear.

But bathe, and in imperial robes array'd,
Pay due devotions to the martial * maid,
And rest affianc'd in her guardian aid.
Send not to good Laertes, nor engage
In toils of state the miseries of age:
'Tis impious to surmise, the pow'r's divine
To ruin doom the Jove-descended line:
Long shall the race of just Arceius reign,
And if remote enlarge his old domain.

The queen her speech with calm attention hears,
Her eyes restrain the silver-streaming tears.

She bathes, and rob'd, the sacred dome ascends;
Her pious speed a female train attends;
The salted cakes in canisters are laid;
And thus the queen invokes Minerva's aid:

Daughter divine of Jove, whose arm can wield
Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield!
If e'er Ulysses to thy fane prefer'd
The best and choicest of his flock and herd;
Hear, goddess, hear! by those oblations won;
And for the pious fire preserve the son:
His wish'd return with happy pow'r befriend,
And on the suitors let thy wrath descend.

She ceas'd; shrill ecstasies of joy declare
The fav'ring goddess present to the pray'r.
The suitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
A signal of her hymenael choice:
Whilst one most jovial thus accosts the board;
' Too late the queen selects a second lord:
' In evil hour the nuptial rite intends,
' When o'er her son disastrous death impends.'

Thus he, unskill'd of what the fates provide!
But with severe rebuke Antinous cry'd;
These empty vaunts will make the voyage vain;
Alarm not with discourse the menial train:
The great event with silent hope attend;
Our deeds alone our counsel must commend.

His speech thus ended short, he frowning rose,
And twenty chiefs renown'd for valour chose:
Down to the strand he speeds with haughty strides,
Where anchor'd in the bay the vessel rides;
Replete with mail, and military store,
In all her tackle trim to quit the shore.
The desp'rate crew ascend, unfurl the sails;
(The sea-ward prow invites the tardy gales)
Then take repast, till Hesperus display'd
His golden circlet in the western shade.

Mean-time the queen without reflection due,
Heart-wounded, to the bed of state withdrew:
In her sad breast the prince's fortunes roul,
And hope and doubt alternate seize her soul.
So when the wood-man's toil her cave surrounds,
And with the hunter's cry the grove resounds;
With grief and rage the mother-lion flung,
Fearless herself, yet trembles for her young.
While pensive in the silent slumberous shade,
Sleep's gentle pow'rs her drooping eyes invade;
Minerva, life-like on imbody'd air,
Impress'd the form of Iphthima the fair:
(Icarus' daughter she, whose blooming charms
Allur'd Eumelus to her virgin-arms);
A sceptred lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
Of Theffaly wide stretch'd his ample reign;
As Pallas will'd, along the sable skies,
To calm the queen the phantom siter flies.
Swift on the regal dome descending right;
The bolted valves are pervious to her flight;
Close to her head the pleasing vision stands,
And thus performs Minerva's high commands.

O why, Penelope, this causeless fear;
To render sleep's soft blessing un sincere?
Alike devote to sorrow's dire extreme,
The day reflection, and the midnight dream!
Thy son the gods propitious will restore,
And bid thee cease his absence to deplore.

To whom the queen, (whilst yet her pensive mind
Was in the silent gates of sleep confin'd)
O sixteen, to my soul forever dear!
Why this first visit to reprove my fear?
How in a realm so distant should you know
From what deep source my ceaseless sorrows flow?
To all my hopes my royal lord is lost,
His country's buckler, and the Grecian boast:
And with consummate woe to weigh me down,
The heir of all his honours, and his crown,
My darling son is dead! an easy prey
To the fierce storms, or men more fierce than they;
Who in a league of blood associates sworn,
Will intercept th' unwary youth's return.

Courage resume, the shadowy form reply'd,
In the protecting care of heav'n confide:
On him attends the blue-eye'd martial maid;
What earthly can implore a furer aid?
Me now the guardian goddess deigns to send,
To bid thee patient his return attend.

The queen replies: If in the blest abodes,
A goddess thou, hast commerce with the gods;
Say, breathes my lord the blissful realm of light,
Or liyes he wrapt in ever during night?

Enquire not of his doom, the phantom cries:
I speak not all the counsel of the skies;
Nor must indulge with vain discourse, or long,
The windy satisfaction of the tongue.

Swift through the valves the visionary fair
Repais’d, and viewless mix’d with common air.
The queen awakes, deliver’d of her woes;
With florid joy her heart dilating glows:
The vision, manifest of future fate,
Makes her with hope her son’s arrival wait.

Mean-time the suitors plow the wat’ry plain,
Telemachus in thought already slain!
When sight of less’ning Ithaca was lost,
Their sail directed for the Samian coast,
A small but verdant isle appear’d in view.
And Afteris th’ advancing pilot knew:
An ample port the rocks projected form,
To break the rolling waves, and ruffling storm:
That safe recess they gain with happy speed,
And in close ambush wait the murd’rous deed.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK V.
THE ARGUMENT.

The departure of Ulysses from Calypso.

Pallas, in a council of the gods, complains of the detention of Ulysses in the island of Calypso; whereupon Mercury is sent to command his removal. The seat of Calypso described. She consents with much difficulty, and Ulysses builds a vessel with his own hands, on which he embarks. Neptune overtakes him with a terrible tempest, in which he is ship-wrecked, and in the last danger of death: till Leucothea, a sea-goddess, assists him, and after innumerable perils he gets ashore on Phaeacia.
THE O D Y S S E Y.

BOOK V.

The saffron morn, with early blushers spread,
Now rose resplendent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal sight:
And gild the courts of heav'n with sacred light.
Then met th' eternal synod of the sky,
Before the god who thunders from on high,
Supreme in might, sublime in majesty.
Pallas, to these, deplores th' unequal fates
Of wise Ulysses, and his toils relates;
Her hero's danger touch'd the pitying pow'r,
The nymph's seductions, and the magic bow'r.
Thus she began her plaint: Immortal Jove!
And you who fill the blissful seats above!
Let kings no more with gentle mercy sway,
Or bless a people willing to obey,
But crush the nations with an iron rod,
And every monarch be the scourge of God;
If from your thoughts Ulysses you remove,
Who rul'd his subjects with a father's love.
Sole in an isle, encircled by the main,
Abandon'd, banish'd from his native reign,
Unblest he sighs, detain'd by faultless charms,
And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms.
Nor friends are there, nor vessels to convey,
Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable way.
And now fierce traitors, studious to destroy
His only son, their ambush’d fraud employ,
Who pious, following his great father’s fame,
To sacred Pylos and to Sparta came.

What words are these? (reply’d the pow’r who forms
The clouds of night, and darkens heav’n with storms)
Is not already in thy soul decreed,
The chief’s return shall make the guilty bleed?
What cannot wisdom do? Thou may’st restore
The son in safety to his native shore;
While the fell foes who late in ambush lay,
With fraud defeated measure back their way.

Then thus to Hermes the command was giv’n:
Hermes, thou chosen messenger of heav’n!
Go, to the nymph be these our orders born:
’Tis Jove’s decree Ulysses shall return:
The patient man shall view his old abodes,
Nor help’d by mortal hand, nor guiding gods;
In twice ten days shall fertile Scheria find,
Alone, and floating to the wave and wind.
The bold Phaeacians there; whose haughty line
Is mix’d with gods, half human, half divine;
The chief shall honour as some heav’nly guest;
And swift transport him to his place of rest;
His vessels loaded with a plenteous store
Of brass, of vestures, and resplendent ore;
(A richer prize than if his joyful isle
Receiv’d him charg’d with Ilion’s noble spoil);
His friends, his country he shall see, though late;
Such is our sovereign will, and such is fate.

He spoke. The god who mounts the winged winds
Fell to his feet the golden pinions binds,
That high through fields of air his flight sustain
O’er the wide earth; or o’er the boundless main.
He grasps the wand that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye.
Then shoots from heav’n to high Pieria’s steep,
And stoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So wat’ry fowl, that seek their silty food,
With wings expanded o’er the foaming flood,
Now sailing smooth the level surface sweep,
Now dip their pinions in the briny deep.
Thus o’er the world of waters Hermes flew,
Till now the distant island rose in view:
Then swift ascending from the the azure wave,
He took the path that winded to the cave.
Large was the grot, in which the nymph he found,
(The fair hair’d nymph with ev’ry beauty crown’d)
She fat and f jung; the rocks resound her lays:
The cave was brightness with a rising blaze:
Cedar and frankincense, an od’rous pile,
Flam’d on the hearth, and wide perfum’d the Isle;
While she with work and song the time divides,
And through the loom the golden shuttle guides,
Without the grot, a various sylvan scene
Appeard’round, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quiv’ring play’d,
And nodding cypress form’d a fragrant shade:
On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
The birds of broadest wings their mansion form,
The cough, the sea-mew, the loquacious crow,
And scream aloft, and skim the deeps below.
Depending vines the shelving cavern screen,
With purple clusters blushing through the green.
Four limped fountains from the clefts distill,
And every fountain pours a saviour rill,
In mazy windings wand’ring down the hill:
Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown’d,
And glowing violets threw odors round.
A scene, where if a god should cast his sight;
A god might gaze, and wander with delight!
Joy touch’d the messenger of heav’n: he stay’d
Entranc’d, and all the blissful haunt survey’d.
Him, ent’ring in the cave, Calypso knew,
For pow’rs celestial to each other’s view
Stand still confest, though distant far they lie
Or habitants of earth, or sea, or sky.
But sad Ulysses by himself apart
Pour'd the big sorrows of his swelling heart;
All on the lonely shore he sat to weep,
And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep;
Tow'd his lov'd coast he roll'd his eyes in vain,
Till dimm'd with rising grief, they stream'd again.
   Now graceful seated on her shining throne,
To Hermes thus the nymph divine begun:
   God of the golden wand! on what behest
Arriv'lt thou here, an unexpected guest?
Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay:
'Tis mine with joy and duty to obey.
   Till now a stranger, in a happy hour
Approach, and taste the dainties of my bow'r.
   Thus having spoke, the nymph the table spread,
(Ambrosial cates, with nectar rosy red)
Hermes the hospitable rite partook,
   Divine refection! then recruited, spoke:
   What mov'd this journey from my native sky,
A goddess asks, nor can a god deny:
Hear then the truth: By mighty Jove's command,
Unwilling, have I trod this pleasing land;
For who, self-mov'd, with weary wing would sweep
Such length of ocean, and unmeasur'd deep?
   A world of waters! far from all the ways
Where men frequent, or sacred altars blaze.
But to Jove's will submission we must pay;
   What pow'r so great, to dare to disobey?
A man, he says, a man resides with thee,
Of all his kind most worn with misery:
The Greeks (whose arms for nine long years employ'd
Their force on Ilion, in the tenth destroy'd)
   At length imnarking in a luckless hour
With conquest proud, incens'd Minerva's pow'r:
   Hence on the guilty race her vengeance hurl'd,
With storms pursued them through the liquid world.
There all his vessels sunk beneath the wave!
There all his dear companions found their grave!
Sav'd from the jaws of death by heav'n's decree,
The tempest drove him to these shores and thee.
Him Jove now orders to his native lands
Strait to dismiss; so destiny commands:
Impatient fate his near return intends,
And calls him to his country, and his friends.
Ev'n to her inmost soul the goddess shook;
Then thus her anguish and her passion broke:
Ungracious gods! with spite and envy curs'd!
Still to your own aethereal race the worst!
Ye envy mortal and immortal joy,
And love the only sweet of life destroy.
Did ever goddess by her charms engage
A favour'd mortal, and not feel your rage?
So when Aurora fought Orion's love,
Her joys disturb'd your blissful hours above,
Till in Ostygia, Dian's winged dart
Had pierc'd the hapless hunter to the heart.
So when the covert of the thrice ear'd field
Saw stately Ceres to her passion yield,
Scarce could Iason taste her heav'nly charms,
But Jove's swift lightning scorched him in her arms.
And is it now my turn, ye mighty pow'rs!
Am I the envy of your blissful bow'rs?
A man, an outcast to the storm and wave,
It was my crime: to pity, and to save;
When he who thunders rent his bark in twain,
And sunk his brave companions in the main.
Alone, abandon'd, in mid ocean toss,
The sport of winds, and driv'n from ev'ry coast,
Hither this man of miseries I led,
Receiv'd the friendless, and the hungry fed;
Nay promis'd (vainly promis'd!) to bestow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
'Tis past——and Jove decrees he shall remove:
Gods as we are, we are but slaves to Jove.
Go then he may, (he must, if he ordain)  
Try all those dangers, all those deeps, again.  
But never, never shall Calypso send  
To toils like these, her husband and her friend.  
What ships have I, what sailors to convey,  
What oars to cut the long laborious way?  
Yet I'll direct the safest means to go:  
That last advice is all I can bestow.

To her the pow'r who bears the charming road:  
Dismisse the man, nor irritate the god;  
Prevent the rage of him who reigns above,  
For what so dreadful as the wrath of Jove?  
Thus having said, he cut the cleaving sky,  
And in a moment vanish'd from her eye.

The nymph, obedient to divine command,  
To seek Ulysses, pac'd along the sand.  
Him penfive on the lonely beach she found,  
With streaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,  
And inly pining for his native shore;  
For now the soft enchantress pleas'd no more;  
For now, reluctant, and constrain'd by charms,  
Absent he lay in her desiring arms,  
In slumber wore the heavy night away,  
On rocks and shores consum'd the tedious day;  
There fate all desolate, and sigh'd alone,  
With echoing sorrows made the mountains groan,  
And roll'd his eyes o'er all the restless main,  
Till dim'd with rising grief they stream'd again.

Here, on his musing mood the goddess press'd,  
Approaching soft; and thus the chief address'd:  
Unhappy man! to wasting woes a prey,  
No more in sorrows languish life away:  
Free as the winds I give thee now to rove—  
Go, fell the timber of yon' lofty grove,  
And form a raft, and build the rising ship,  
Sublime to bear thee o'er the gloomy deep.  
To store the vessel let the care be mine,  
With water from the rock, and rosy wine,
And life-sustaining bread, and fair array
And prosp'rous gales to waft thee on thy way.
These, if the gods with my desires comply,
(The gods, alas! more mighty far than I,
And better skill'd in dark events to come)
In peace shall land thee at thy native home.

With sighs, Ulysses heard the words she spoke,
Then thus his melancholy silence broke:
Some other motive, goddess! sways thy mind,
(Some close design, or turn of womankind)
Nor my return the end, nor this the way,
On a slight raft to pass the swelling sea,
Huge, horrid, vast! where scarce in safety fails
The best built ship, though Jove inspire the gales:
The bold proposal how shall I fulfill?
Dark as I am, unconscious of thy will.

Swear then, thou mean'st not what my soul forebodes;
Swear, by the solemn oath that binds the gods.

Him, while he spoke, with smiles Calypso ey'd,
And gently grasp'd his hand, and thus reply'd:
This shews thee, friend, by old experience taught,
And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought.
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wife!
But hear, oh earth, and hear, ye sacred skies!
And thou, oh Styx! whose formidable floods
Glide through the shades, and bind th' attesting gods!
No form'd design, no meditated end

Lurks in the counsel of thy faithful friend;
Kind the persuasion, and sincere my aim;
The same my practice, were my fate the same.
Heav'n has not curb'd me with a heart of steel;

But giv'n the sense, to pity and to feel.

Thus having said, the goddess march'd before:
He trod her footsteps in the sandy shore.
At the cool cave arriv'd, they took their state;
He fill'd the throne where Mercury had seat.

For him the nymph a rich repast ordains,
Such as the mortal life of man sustains;
Before herself were plac'd the cates divine,
Ambrosial banquet, and celestial wine.
Their hunger satiate, and their thirst repriest,
Thus spoke Calypso to her god-like guest:
Ulysses! (with a sigh she thus began)
Oh sprung from gods! in wisdom more than man;
Is there any home the passion of thy heart?
Thus wilt thou leave me? are we thus to part?
Farewel! and ever joyful may't thou be,
Nor break the transport with one thought of me.
But, ah Ulysses! wert thou giv'n to know
What fate has doom'd thee: yet to undergo;
Thy heart might settle in this scene of ease,
And these slighted charms might learn to please,
A willing goddess, and immortal life,
Might banish from thy mind an absent wife.
Am I inferior to a mortal dame?
Lest soft my feature, lest august my frame?
Or shall the daughters of mankind compare
Their earth-born beauties with the heavenly fair?
Alas! for this (the prudent man replies)
Against Ulysses shall thy anger rise?
Love'd and adore'd, oh goddess! as thou art,
Forgive the weakness of a human heart.
Though well I see thy graces far above
The dear, though mortal, object of my love,
Of youth eternal well the difference know,
And the short date of fading charms below;
Yet ev'ry day, while absent thus I roam,
I languish to return, and die at home.
Whate'er the gods shall define me to bear
In the black ocean, or the wat'ry war,
'Tis mine to master with a constant mind;
Enur'd to perils, to the worst resign'd.
By seas, by wars, so many dangers run,
Still I can suffer; their high will be done!
Thus while he spoke, the barmy sun descends,
And rising night her friendly shade extends.
To the close grot the lonely pair remove,
And slept delighted with the gifts of love.
When rosy morning call'd them from their rest,
Ulysses rob'd him in the cloak and vest.
The nymph's fair head a veil transparent grac'd,
Her swelling loins a radiant zone embrac'd.
With flow'rs of gold: an under-robe, unbound,
In snowy waves flow'd glitt'ring on the ground.
Forth-issuing thus, she gave him first to wield
A weighty axe, with truest temper, steel'd,
And double edg'd, the handle smooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's early grain;
And next, a wedge to drive with sweepy sway:
Then to the neighbour'ring forest led the way.
On the lone island's utmost verge there stood:
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whose leafless summits to the skies aspire,
Scorch'd by the sun, or fear'd by heav'nly fire,
(Already dry'd.) These pointing out to view,
The nymph just shew'd him, and with tears withdrew.

Now toils the hero: trees on trees o'erthrown.
Fall crackling round him, and the forests groan:
Sudden, full twenty on the plain are strow'd,
And lopp'd, and lighten'd of their branchy load.
At equal angles these dispos'd to join,
He smooth'd and squar'd 'em by the rule and line.
The wimbles for the work Calypso found;
With those he pierc'd them, and with clinchers bound.
Long and capacious, as a ship-wright forms
Some bark's broad bottom to out ride the storms,
So large he built the raft: then rib'd it strong
From space to space, and nail'd the planks along:
These form'd the sides: the deck he fashion'd last;
Then o'er the vessel rais'd the taper mast,
With crossing sail-yards, dancing in the wind;
And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd,
(With yielding oars he seiz'd, to break the force
Of surging waves, and steer the steady course).

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Thy loom, Calypso! for the future fails
Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales.
With stays and cordage last he rigg'd the ship,
And roll'd on leavers, launch'd her in the deep.

Four days were past, and now the work compleat
Shone the fifth morn: when from her sacred seat
The nymph dismiss'd him, (od'rous garments giv'n,
And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of heav'n)
Then fill'd two goat-skins with her hands divine,
With water one, and one with sable wine:
Of ev'ry kind provisions heav'd aboard,
And the full decks with copious viands store'd,
The goddess left a gentle breeze supplies,
To curl old Ocean, and to warm the skies.

And now rejoicing in the prosp'rous gales,
With beating heart Ulysses spreads his sails;
Plac'd at the helm he sat, and mark'd the skies,
Nor clos'd in sleep his ever-watchful eyes.
There view'd the Pleiads, and the northern Team,
And great Orion's more refulgent beam,
To which, around the axle of the sky
The Bear revolving, points his golden eye:
Who shines exalted on th' ethereal plain,
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
Far on the left those radiant fires to keep
The nymph direct'd, as he sail'd the deep.

Full sev'nteen nights he cut the foamy way;
The distant land appear'd the following day:
Then swell'd to fight Phaeacia's dusky coast,
And woody mountains, half in vapours lost;
That lay before him, indistinct and vast,
Like a broad shield amid the wat'ry waste.

But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on Solime's aereal brow,
The king of ocean saw, and seeing burn'd,
(From Ethiopia's happy climes return'd)
The raging monarch shook his azure head,
And thus in secret to his soul he said:
Heav'n's! how uncertain are the pow'r's on high!
Is then revers'd the sentence of the sky,
In one man's favour? while a distant guest
I shar'd secure th' Ethiopian feast.

Behold now near Phaeacia's land he draws!
The land affix'd by fate's eternal laws
To end his toils. Is then our anger vain?
No, if this seer yet commands the main,

He spoke, and high the fork'd trident hurl'd,
Rolls clouds on clouds; and stirs the wat'ry world,
At once the face of earth and sea deforms;
Swells all the winds, and rouses all the storms.
Down rush'd the night. East, west, together roar,
And south, and north, roll mountains to the shore;
Then shook the hero, to despair resign'd,
And question'd thus his yet unconquer'd mind:

Wretch that I am! what farther fates attend
This life of toils? and what my desin'd end?
Too well, alas! the island-goddes knew,
On the black sea what perils should enshue.
New horrors now this desin'd head enclose;
Unfill'd is yet the measure of my woes.
With what a cloud the brows of heav'n are crown'd?
What raging winds? what roaring waters round?
'Tis Jove himself the swelling tempest rears;
Death, present death, on ev'ry side appears.
Happy! thrice happy! who in battle stain.
Preest in Atrides' cause the Trojan plain:
Oh! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall;
Had some distinguisht day renown'd my fall,
(Such as was that when show'rds of jav'lins fled
From conq'ring Troy around Achilles dead);
All Greece had paid my solemn fun'ral's then,
And spread my glory with the sons of men.
A shameful fate now hides my hapless head,
Un-wept, un-noted, and for ever dead!

A mighty wave rush'd o'er him as he spoke;
The raft it cover'd, and the maft it broke;
Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn,
Far on the swelling surge the chief was born;
While by the howling tempest rent in twain
Elew sail and sail-yards rattling o'er the main.
Long press'd he heav'd beneath the weighty waye,
Clogg'd by the cumb'rous vest Calypso gave;
At length emerging, from his nostrils wide,
And gushing mouth, effus'd the briny tide.
Ev'n then, not mindless of his last retreat,
He seiz'd the raft, and leapt into his seat,
Strong with the fear of death. The rolling flood
Now here, now there, impell'd the floating wood.
As when a heap of gather'd thorns is cast
Now to, now fro, before th' autumnal blast;
Together clung, it rolls around the field;
So roll'd the float, and so its texture held:
And now the south, and now the north, bear sway,
And now the east the foamy floods obey,
And now the west wind whirls it o'er the sea.
The wand'ring chief, with toils on toils opprest,
Leucothea saw, and pity touch'd her breast:
(Herself a mortal once, of Cadmus' strain,
But now an azure fitter of the main)
Swift as a sea-mew springing from the flood,
All radiant on the raft the goddess' foot;
Then thus address'd him: Thou, whom heav'n decrees
to Neptune's wrath, stern tyrant of the seas,
(Unequal contest) not his rage and pow'r
Great as he is, such virtue shall devour.
What I suggest thy wisdom will perform;
Nor take thy float, and leave it to the storm;
Strip off thy garments, Neptune's fury brave
With naked strength, and plunge into the wave.
To reach Phaeacia, all thy nerves extend,
'There fate decrees thy miseries shall end.
This heav'nly scarf beneath thy bosom bind,
And live; give all thy terrors to the wind.
Soon as thy arms the happy shore shall gain,
Return the gift, and cast it in the main:
Observe my orders, and with heed obey,
Cast it far off; and turn thy eyes away.

With that, her hand the sacred veil bestows,
Then down the deeps she div'd, from whence she rose;
A moment snatch'd the shining form away,
And all was cover'd with the curling sea.

Struck with amaze, yet still to doubt inclin'd,
He stands suspended; and explores his mind:
What shall I do! Unhappy me! who knows
But other gods intend me other woes?
Whoe'er thou art, I shall not blindly join.
Thy pleader reason, but consult with mine:

For scarce in ken appears that distant isle
Thy voice foretells me shall conclude my toil.
Thus then I judge; while yet the planks sustain
The wild waves fury, here I fix'd remain;
But when their texture to the tempest yields,
I launch adventurous on the liquid fields,
Join to the help of gods the strength of man;
And take this method, since the best I can.

While thus his thoughts an anxious council hold,
The raging god a wat'ry mountain roll'd;
Like a black sheet the whelming billow spread,
Burst o'er the float, and thunder'd on his head;
Planks, beams, disparted fly: the scatter'd wood
Rolls diverse, and in fragments strows the flood.
So the rude Boreas, o'er the field new born,
Tosses and drives the scatter'd heaps of corn.
And now a single beam the chief, bestrides;
There, pois'd a while above the bounding tides;
His limbs discumbers of the clinging velt,
And binds the sacred chfire round his breast:

Then prone on ocean in a moment flung,
Stretch'd wide his eager arms, and shot the seas along.
All naked now, on heaving billows laid,
Stern Neptune ey'd him, and contemptuous said;
Go, learn'd in woes, and other woes essay:
Go, wander helpless on the wa'try way:
Thus, thus find out the destin'd shore; and then
(If Jove ordains it) mix with happier men.
Whate'er thy fate, the ills our wrath could raise
Shall last remember'd in thy best of days.

Thus said, his sea-green steeds divide the foam,
And reach high Egae and the tow'ry dome.

Now, scarce withdrawn, the fierce earth-shaking pow'r,
Jove's daughter Pallas watch'd the fav'ring hour;
Back to their caves she bade the winds to fly,
And hush'd the blust'ring brethren of the sky.
The dryer blasts alone of Boreas sway,
And bear him soft on broken waves away;
With gentle force impelling to that shore,
Where fate has destin'd he shall toil no more.

And now two nights, and now two days were past,
Since wide he wander'd on the wa'try waste;
Heav'd on the surge with intermitting breath,
And hourly panting in the arms of death:
The third-fair morn now blaz'd upon the main;
Then glassy smooth lay all the liquid plain,
The winds were hush'd, the billows scarcely curl'd,
And a dead silence still'd the wa'try world,
When lifted on a ridgy wave, he spies
The land at distance, and with sharpen'd eyes,
As pious children joy with vast delight
When a lov'd fire revives before their sight,
(Who ling'ring long has call'd on death in vain,
Fist by some daemon to his bed of pain,
'Till heav'n by miracle his life restore)
So joys Ulysses at th' appearing shore;
And sees (and labours onward as he sees)
The rising forests, and the tufted trees,
And now, as near approaching as the sound
Of human voice the lift'ning ear may wound,
Amidst the rocks he hears a hollow roar
Of murm'ring surges breaking on the shore:
Nor peaceful port was there, nor winding bay,
To shield the vessel from the rolling sea.
But cliffs, and shaggy shores, a dreadful sight!
All rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
Fear seiz'd his shaggy limbs and beating heart,
As thus he commun'd with his soul apart:

Ah me! when o'er a length of waters toss,
These eyes at last beheld th'unhop'd-for coast.
No port receives me from the angry main;
But the loud deeps demand me back again.
Above, sharp rocks forbid access; around
Roar the wild waves; beneath, is sea profound!
No footing sure affords the faithless land,
To stem too rapid, and too deep to stand.

If here I enter, my efforts are in vain,
Dash'd on the cliffs, or hea'v'd into the main;
Or round the isle if my course I bend,
Where the ports open, or the shores defend,
Back to the seas the rolling surge may sweep,
And bury all my hopes beneath the deep;
Or some enormous whale the god may send,
(For many such on Amphitrite attend.)
Too well the turns of mortal chance I know,
And hate relentless of my heav'nly foe.

While thus he thought, a mons't'rous wave up-bore
The chief, and dash'd him on the craggy shore:
Torn was his skin, nor had the ribs been whole,
But instant Pallas enter'd in his soul.
Close to the cliff with both his hands he clung,
And stuck adherent, and suspended hung:
Till the huge surge roll'd off. Then backward sweep
The refract tides, and plunge him in the deep.
As when the Polyphemus from forth his cave
Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave,
His ragged claws are stuck with stones and sands;
So the rough rock had shaggy Ulysses' hands.
And now had perish'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
Th' unhappy man; ev'n fate had been in vain:
But all-subduing Pallas lent her pow'r,
And prudence sav'd him in the needful hour,
Beyond the beating surge his course he bore,
(A wider circle, but in sight of shore)
With longing eyes, observing, to survey
Some smooth ascent, or safe-sequester'd bay.
Between the parting rocks at length he spy'd
A falling stream with gentler waters glide;
Where to the seas the shelving shore declin'd,
And form'd a bay impervious to the wind.
To this calm port the glad Ulysses prest,
And hail'd the river, and its god address'd:

Who'er thou art, before whose stream unknown
I bend, a suppliant at thy wat'ry throne,
Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain
To thee from Neptune and the raging main.
Heav'n hears and pities helpless men like me;
For sacred ev'n to gods is misery:
Let then thy waters give the weary rest,
And save a suppliant, and a man distress'd.

He pray'd, and strait the gentle stream subsides,
Detains the rushing current of his tides,
Before the wand'rer smooths the wat'ry way,
And soft receives him from the rolling sea.
That moment, fainting, as he touch'd the shore,
He dropt his snowy arms: his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His swol'n heart heav'd; his bloated body swell'd:
From mouth and nose the briny torrent ran;
And lost in latitude lay all the man,
Depriv'd of voice, of motion, and of breath;
The soul scarce waking, in the arms of death.
Soon as warm life its wonted office found,
The mindful chief Leucothea's loath unbound;
Observant of her word, he turn'd aside
His head, and cast it on the rolling tide.
Behind him far, upon the purple waves,
The waters waft it, and the nymph receives.
Now parting from the stream, Ulysses found
A mossy bank, with pliant rushes crown'd;
The bank he prefs'd, and gently kifs'd the ground;
Where on the flow'ry herb as soft he lay,
Thus to his soul the sage began to say:
What will ye next ordain, ye pow'rs on high!
And yet, ah yet! what fates are we to try?
Here by the stream, if I the night out-wear,
Thus spent already, how shall nature bear
The dews descending, and nocturnal air?
Or chilly vapours breathing from the flood
When morning rises? If I take the wood,
And in thick shelter of innum'rous boughs
Enjoy the comfort gentle sleep allows;
Though fenc'd from cold, and though my toil be past,
What savage beasts may wander in the walle?
Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey
To prowling bears, or lions, in their way.
Thus long debating in himself he flood:
At length he took the passage to the wood,
Whose shady horrors on a rising brow
Wav'd high, and frown'd upon the stream below.
There grew two olives, closest of the grove;
With roots intwine'd, and branches interwove;
Alike their leaves, but not alike they smil'd
With sister-fruits; one fertile, one was wild.
Nor here the sun's meridian rays had pow'r,
Nor wind sharp-piercing, nor the rushing show'r;
The verdant arch so close its texture kept:
Beneath this covert great Ulysses crept.
Of gather'd leaves an ample bed he made,
(Thick strown by tempest through the bow'ry shade)
Where three at least might winter's cold defy,
Though Boreas rag'd along th' inclement sky.
This store with joy the patient hero found,
And sunk amidst them, heap'd the leaves around.
As some poor peasant, fated to reside
Remote from neighbours in a forest wide,
Studious to save what human wants require,
In embers heap’d, preserves the seeds of fire:
Hid in dry foliage thus Ulysses lies,
Till Pallas pour’d soft slumber’s on his eyes;
And golden dreams, (the gift of sweet repose)
Lull’d all his cares, and banish’d all his woes.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK VI.
THE ARGUMENT.

Pallas appearing in a dream to Nausicaa, (the daughter of Alcinous king of Phaeacia) commands her to descend to the river, and wash the robes of flax, in preparation to her nuptials. Nausicaa goes with her handmaids to the river; where, while the garments are spread on the bank, they divert themselves in sports. Their voices awake Ulysses; who, addressing himself to the princess, is, by her relieved and clothed, and receives directions in what manner to apply to the king and queen of the island.
WHILE thus the weary wand'rer sunk to rest,
And peaceful numbers calm'd his anxious breast;
The martial maid from heav'n's aerial height
Swift to Phaeacia wing'd her rapid flight.
In elder times the soft Phaeacian train
In ease possefs'd the wide Hyperian plain;
Till the Cyclopean race in arms arose,
A lawless nation of gigantic foes:
Then great Nausithous from Hyperia far
Through seas retreating, from the sound of war
The recreant nation to fair Scheria led,
Where never science rear'd her laurel'd head:
There round his tribes a strength of wall he rais'd,
To heav'n the glitt'ring domes and temples blaz'd;
Just to his realms, he part'd grounds from grounds,
And shar'd the lands, and gave the lands their bounds.
Now in the silent grave the monarch lay,
And wise Alcinous held the regal sway.
To his high palace through the fields of air
The goddes shot; Ulysses was her care.
There as the night in silence roll'd away,
A heav'n of charms divine Nausicaa lay:
Through the thick gloom the shining portals blaze;
Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.
Light as the viewlesf air, the warrior maid
Glides through the valves, and hovers round her head:
A favourite virgin's blooming form she took,
From Dymas sprung; and thus the vision spoke:
Oh indolent! to waste thy hours away!
And sleep'th thou, careless of the bridal day?
Thy spousal ornament neglected lies;
Arise, prepare the bridal train, arise.
A just applause the cares of dress impart,
And give soft transport to a parent's heart.
Haste, to the limpid stream direct thy way,
When the gay morn unveils her smiling ray:
Haste to the stream! companion of thy care,
Lo! thy steps attend, thy labours share.
Virgin, awake! the marriage hour is nigh,
See! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs sigh!
The royal car at early dawn obtain,
And order maids obedient to the rein;
For rough the way, and distant rolls the wave
Where their fair veils Phaeacian virgins lave.
In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the great,
And majesty derives a grace from state.

Then to the palaces of heav'n the sails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales;
The seat of gods, the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of ease.
There no rude winds presume to shake the skies,
No rains descend, no snowy vapours rise;
But on immortal thrones the blest repose;
The firmament with living splendors glows.
Hither the goddess wing'd th' aereal way,
Through heav'n's eternal gates that blaz'd with day.

Now from her rosy car Aurora shed
The dawn, and all the orient flam'd with red:
Up rose the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the vision of the night.
The queen she sought; the queen her hours bestow'd
In curious works; the whirling spindle glow'd
With crimson threads, while busy damsels cull
The snowy fleece, or twist the purpled wool.
mean-while Phaeacia’s peers in council fate;
From his high dome the king descends in state;
Then with a filial awe the royal maid
Approach’d him passing, and submissive said;
Will my dread fire his ear regardful deign,
And may his child the royal car obtain?
Say, with thy garments shall I bend my way
Where through the vales the mazy waters stray?

A dignity of dress adorns the great,
And kings draw lustre from the robe of state,
Five sons thou hast; three wait the bridal day;
And spotless robes become the young and gay:
So when with praise amid the dance they shine,
By these my cares adorn’d, that praise is mine.
Thus she: but blushes ill restrain’d betray
Her thoughts intentive on the bridal day:
The conscious fire the dawning blush survey’d,
And smiling, thus bespoke the blooming maid:
My child, my darling joy! the car receive;
That, and whatever our daughter asks, we give.

Swift at the royal nod th’ attending train
The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.
The blooming virgin, with dispatchful cares,
Tunics, and stoles, and robes imperial bears.
The queen, assiduous, to her train assigns
The sumptuous viands, and the flav’rous wines.
The train prepare a cruife of curious mold,
A cruife of fragrance, form’d of burnish’d gold;
Odour divine! whose soft refreshing streams
Sleek the smooth skin, and scent the snowy limbs.

Now mounting the gay seat, the silken reins
Shine in her hand: along the bowing plains
Swift fly the mules, nor rod the nymph alone,
Around, a beavy of bright dam’l’s thone.
They seek the cisterns where Phaeacian dams
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams;
Where gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious basin fills.
The mules unharness'd range beside the main,  
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.  
Then emulous the royal robes they lave,  
And plunge the vesture in the cleansing wave:  
(The vesture cleans'd o'erspread the shelly sand,  
Their snowy lustre whitens all the strand:)  
Then with a short repast relieve their toil,  
And o'er their limbs diffuse ambrosial oil:  
And while the robes imbibe the solar ray,  
O'er the green mead the spouting virgins play,  
(Their shining veils unbound.) Along the skies,  
Toft, and retoft, the ball incessant flies.  
They sport, they feast; Nausicaa lifts her voice;  
And warbling sweet, makes earth and heavn rejoice.  
As when o'er Erymanth. Diana roves,  
Or wide Taygetus's resounding groves;  
A sylvan-train the huntress queen surrounds,  
Her rattling quiver from her shoulder sounds:  
Fierce in the sport, along the mountain brow  
They bay the boar, or chase the bounding roe;  
High o'er the lawn, with more majestic pace,  
Above the nymphs she treads with slaty grace;  
Distinguishes' excellence the goddes proves;  
Exults Latona as the virgin moves.  
With equal grace Nausicaa trod the plain,  
And shone transcendent, o'er the beauteous train.  
Mean time (the care and fav'rite of the skies),  
Wrapped in embow'ring shade Ulysses lies,  
His woes forgot. But Pallas now address  
To break the bands of all-composing rest.  
Forth from her snowy hand Nausicaa threw  
The various ball; the ball erroneous flew,  
And swam the stream. loud shrieks the virgin train,  
And the loud shriek redoubles from the main.  
Wak'd by the shrilling sound Ulysses rose,  
And to the deaf, woods wailing breath'd his woes.  
Ah me! on what inhospitable coast,  
O'n what new region is Ulysses tost?
Poss'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men whose bosom tender pity warms?
What sounds are these that gather from the shores?
The voice of nymphs that haunt the sylvan bow'r's?
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the shady wood,
Or azure daughters of the silver flood,
Or human voice? But, issuing from the shades,
Why cease I strait to learn what sound invades?

Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends,
With forceful strength a branch the hero sends;
Around his loins the verdant circlet spreads
A wreathy foliage, and concealing shades.
As when a lion in the midnight hours,
Beat by rude blasts, and wet with wat'ry show'r's,
Descends terrific from the mountain's brow;
With living flames his rolling eye-balls glow;
With conscious strength elate, he bends his way.

Majestically fierce, to seize his prey,
(The steer or stag): or with keen hunger bold
Springs o'er the fence, and dissipates the fold.
No less a terror, from the neigh'ring groves,
Rough from the toiling surge, Ulysses moves,
Urg'd on by want, and recent from the storms;
The brackish ooze his manly grace deforms.
Wide o'er the shore, with many a piercing cry.
To rocks, to caves the frightened virgins fly:
All but the nymph: the nymph stood six'd alone,
By Pallas arm'd, with boldness not her own.
Mean time in dubious thought the king awaits,
And self-considering, as he stands, debates;
Distant his mournful story to declare,
Or prostrate at her knee address the pray'r.
But fearful, to offend, by wisdom sway'd,
At awful distance he accosts the maid:
If from the skies a goddess, or if earth
(Imperial virgin) boast thy glorious birth,
To thee I bend: if in that bright disguise
Thou visit earth a daughter of the skies.
Hail, Dian, hail! the huntress of the groves,
So shines majestic, and so stately moves,
So breathes an air divine! But if thy race
Be mortal, and this earth thy native place,
Blest is the father from whose loins you sprang,
Blest is the mother at whose breast you hung,
Blest are the brethren who thy blood divide,
To such a miracle of charms ally'd;
Joyful they see applauding princes gaze,
When stately in the dance you swim th' harmonious maze:
But blest o'er all the youth with heav'nly charms,
Who clasps the bright perfection in his arms!
Never, I never view'd till this blest's hour
Such finish'd grace! I gaze and I adore!
Thus seems the palm with stately honours crown'd
By Phoebus altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;
The pride of Delos. By the Delian coast
I voyag'd, leader of a warrior host,
But ah how chang'd! from thence my sorrow flows;
O fatal voyage, source of all my woes!
Raptur'd I stood, and as this hour amaz'd,
With rev'rence at the lofty wonder gaz'd:
Raptur'd I stand! for earth ne'er knew to bear
A plant so stately, or a nymph so fair.
Aw'd from access, I lift my suppliant hands;
For misery, oh queen, before thee stands!
Twice ten tempestuous nights I roll'd, resign'd
To roaring billows, and the warring wind;
Heav'n bade the deep to spare! but heav'n my foe
Spares only to inflict some mightier woe!
Inur'd to cares, to death in all its forms,
Outcast I rove, familiar with the storms!
Once more I view the face of human kind:
Oh let soft pity touch thy gen'rous mind!
Unconscious of what air I breathe, I stand
Naked, defenceless, on a foreign land.
Propitious to my wants, a velt supply,
To guard the wretch from the inclement sky:
So may the gods who heav’n and earth control
Crown the chaste wishes of thy virtuous soul,
On thy soft hours their choicest blessings shed:
Blest with a husband be thy bridal bed,
Blest be thy husband with a blooming race,
And lafting union crown your blissful days.
The gods, when they supremely bless, bestow
Firm union on their favourites below:
Then envy grieves, with inly-pining hate;
The good exult, and heav’n is in our state.
To whom the nymph; O stranger, cease thy care:
Wife is thy soul, but man is born to bear:
Jove weighs affairs of earth in dubious scales,
And the good sufferers, while the bad prevails.
Bear with a soul resign’d the will of Jove:
Who breathes, must mourn: thy woes are from above.
But since thou tread’st our hospitable shore,
’Tis mine to bid the wretched grieve no more,
To clothe the naked, and thy way to guide—
Know the Phaeacian tribes this land divide:
From great Alcinous’ royal loins I spring;
A happy nation, and an happy king.
Then to her maids—Why, why, ye coward train,
These fears, this flight? ye fear and fly in vain.
Dread ye a foe? dismiss that idle dread;
’Tis death with hostile step these shores to tread;
Safe in the love of heav’n, an ocean flows
Around our realm, a barrier from the foes.
’Tis ours this son of sorrow to relieve,
Chear the sad heart, nor let affliction grieve.
By Jove the stranger and the poor are sent;
And what to those we give, to Jove is sent.
Then food supply, and bathe his fainting limbs
Where waving shades obscure the mazy streams.
Obedient to the call, the chief they guide
To the calm current of the secret tide;
Close by the stream a royal dress they lay,
A vest and robe with rich embroid’ry gay:
Then unguents in a vase of gold supply,
That breath'd a fragrance through the balmy sky.
To them the king: No longer I detain
Your friendly care: retire, ye virgin train!
Retire, while from my weary'd limbs I lave
The soul pollution of the briny wave.
Ye gods! since this worn frame reflection knew,
What scenes have I survey'd of dreadful view?
But, nymphs, recede! sage chastity denies
To raise the blush, or pain the modest eyes.

The nymphs withdrawn, at once into the tide
Active he bounds; the flashing waves divide:
O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuse,
And from his locks compriseth the weedy ooze;
The balmy oil, a fragrant show'r, he sheds,
Then dresses'd in pomp magnificently treads.
The warrior goddess gives his frame to shine
With majesty enlarg'd, and air divine:
Back from his brows a length of hair unfurls,
His hyacinthine locks descend in wavy curls.
As by some-artist, to whom Vulcan gives
His skill divine, a breathing statute lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wondrous mold,
And o'er the silver pours the fusile gold:
So Pallas his heroic frame improves
With heavenly bloom, and like a god he moves.
A fragrance breathes around: majestic grace
Attend his steps: th' astonish'd virgins gaze.
Soft he reclines along the murm'ring seas,
Inhaling freshness from the fanning breeze.
The wond'ring nymph his glorious port survey'd,
And to her damsels, with amazement, said;

Not without care divine the stranger treads
This land of joy: his steps some godhead leads:
Would Jove destroy him, sure he had been driv'n
Far from this realm, the fav'rite isle of heav'n.
Late a sad spectacle of woe he trod
The desert sands, and now he looks a god.
Oh heav'n! in my connubial hour decree
This man my spouse, or such a spouse as he!
But haste, the viands and the bowl provide—
The maids, the viands and the bowl supply'd:
Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
And with the gen'rous vintage thirst allag'd.

Now on return her care Nausicaa bends,
The robes resumes, the glitt'ring car ascends,
Far blooming o'er the field; and as the press'd
The splendid feat, the lift'ning chief address'd:

Stranger, arise! the sun rolls down the day:
Lo, to the palace I direct thy way;
Where in high state the nobles of the land
Attend my royal fire, a radiant band!
But hear, though wisdom in thy soul presides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and ev'ry action guides;
Advance at distance, while I pass the plain
Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain:

Alone I re-ascend——With airy mounds
A strength of wall the guarded city bounds:
The jutting land two ample bays divides:
Full through the narrow mouths descend the tides:
The spacious basins arching rocks enclose,
A sure defence from ev'ry storm that blows.
Close to the bay great Neptune's sane adjoins;
And near, a forum flank'd with marble shines,
Where the bold youth, the num'rous fleets to store,
Shape the broad sail, or smoothe the taper oar;

For not the bow they bend, nor boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
But, the tall mast above the vessel rear,
Or teach the fluttering sail to float in air;
They rush into the deep with eager joy,
Climb the steep surge, and through the tempest fly;
A proud, unpolish'd race——To me belongs
The care to stanch the blast of land'rous tongues;
Left malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
Thus with vile censure taint my spotless name:
What stranger this whom thus Nausicaa leads?
Heav'ns! with what graceful majesty he treads!
Perhaps a native of some distant shore,
The future comfort of her bridal hour;
Or rather some descendent of the skies;
Won by her pray'r th' aereal bridegroom flies.
Heav'n on that hour its choicest influence shed,
That gave a foreign spouse to crown her bed!
All, all the godlike worthies that adorn
This realm she flies; Phaeacia is her scorn.
And just the blame; for female innocence
Not only flies the guilt, but shuns th' offence:
Th' unguarded virgin as unchaste I blame,
And the least freedom with the sex is shame,
Till our consenting fires a spouse provide,
And public nuptials justify the bride.

But would'lt thou soon review thy native plain,
Attend; and speedy thou shalt pass the main:
Nigh where a grove, with verdant poplars crown'd,
To Pallas sacred, shades the holy ground,
We bend our way: a bubbling fount distills
A lucid lake, and thence descends in rills;
Around the grove a mead with lively green
Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous scene;
Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours;
And there the garden yields a waste of flow'rs.
Hence lyes the town as far as to the ear
Floats a strong shoot along the waves of air.
There wait embow'r'd, while I ascend alone
To great Alainous on his royal throne.

Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
And to the lofty palace bend thy way:
The lofty palace overlooks the town,
From ev'ry dome by pomp superior known;
A child may point the way. With earnest gait
Seek thou the queen along the rooms of state.
Her royal hand a wond'rous work designs;
Around, a circle of bright damsels shines;
Part twisht the threads, and part the wool dispose,
While with the purple orb the spindle glows.

High on a throne, amid the Scherian pow'rs,
My royal father shares the genial hours.

But to the queen thy mournful tale disclose,
With the prevailing eloquence of woes:
So shalt thou view with joy thy natal shore,
Though mountains rise between, and oceans roar.

She added not; but waving as the wheel'd
The silver scourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:
With skill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,
Slow rowls the car before th' attending train.

Now whirling down the heav'n's, the golden day
Shot through the western clouds a dewy ray:
'The grove they reach, where from the sacred shade
To Pallas thus the pensive hero pray'd:

Daughter of Jove! whose arms in thunder weild
'Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreadful shield; 386
Forsook by thee, in vain I sought thy aid,
When booming billows clos'd above my head:

Attend, unconquer'd maid! accord my vows,
Bid the great hear, and pitying heal my woes.

This heard Minerva, but forbore to fly,
By Neptune aw'd, apparent from the sky;
Stern god! who rag'd with vengeance unrestrain'd,
Till great Ulysses hail'd his native land.
THE ODESSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK VII.
THE ARGUMENT.

The court of Alcinous.

The princess Nausicaa returns to the city, and Ulysses soon after follows thither. He is met by Pallas in the form of a young virgin, who guides him to the palace, and directs him in what manner to address the queen Arete. She then involves him in a mist, which causes him to pass invisible. The palace and gardens of Alcinous described. Ulysses falling at the feet of the queen, the mist disperses, the Phaeacians admire, and receive him with respect. The queen enquiring by what means he had the garments he then wore, he relates to her and Alcinous his departure from Calypso, and his arrival on their dominions.

The same day continues; and the book ends with the night.
THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK VII.

The patient, heav'nly man thus suppliant pray'd;
While the slow mules draw on th' imperial maid:
Thro' the proud street she moves, the public gaze:
The turning wheel before the palace stays.
With ready love her brothers gath'ring round,
Receiv'd the vestures, and the mules unbound.
She seeks the bridal bow'r: a matron there:
The rising fire supplies with bus'ry care.
Whose charms in youth her father's heart inflam'd,
Now worn with age, Evymedusa nam'd:
The captive dame Phaeacian rovers bore,
Snatch'd from Epirus, her sweet native shore,
A grateful prize (1) and in her bloom bestow'd.
On good Alcinous, honour'd as a God:
Nurse of Nausicaa from her infant years,
And tender second to a mother's cares.
Now from the sacred thicket where he lay,
T'o town Ulysses took the winding way.
Propitious Pallas, to secure her care,
Around him spread a veil of thick'en'd air:
To shun th' encounter of the vulgar crowd,
Insulting still, inquisitive and loud.
When near the fam'd Phaeacian walls he drew,
The beauteous city opening to his view.
His step a virgin met, and stood before:  
A polished urn the seeming virgin bore,  
And youthful smil'd; but in the low disguise  
Lay hid the goddess with the azure eyes.

Show me, fair daughter, (thus the chief demands)  
The house of him who rules these happy lands.  
Thro' many woes and wand'ring, lo! I come:  
To good Alcinous hospitable home.

Far from my native coast, I roved alone,  
A wretched stranger, and of all unknown.

The goddess answer'd: Father, I obey,  
And point the wand'ring traveller his way:  
Well known to me the palace you enquire,  
For fast beside it dwells my honour'd fire.

But silent march, nor greet the common train,  
With question needless, or enquiry vain.

A race of rugged mariners are these;  
Unpolish'd men, and boastrious as their seas:  
The native islanders alone their care,  
And hateful he that breathes a foreign air.

These did the ruler of the deep ordain  
To build proud navies, and command the main;

On canvas wings to cut the wat'ry way;  
No bird so light, no thought so swift as they.

Thus having spoke, th' unknown celestial leads:  
The footsteps of the deity he treads;  
And secret moves along the crowded space,  
Unseen of all the rude Phaeacian race.

(Sc Pallas order'd, Pallas to their eyes.  
The mist objected; and condens'd the skies:)  
The chief, with wonder sees th' extended streets,  
The spreading harbours, and the riding fleets;  
He next their prince's lofty domes admires,  
In sep'rate islands crown'd with rising spires;

And deep entrenchments, and high walls of stone,  
That gird the city like a marble zone.

At length the kingly palace gates he view'd:  
There flopp'd the goddess; and her speech renew'd:
My talk is done; the mansion you enquire
Appears before you; enter and admire.
High-throned; and feasting, there thou shalt behold. 65.
The scepter'd rulers: fear not, but be bold.
A decent boldness ever meets with friends,
Succeeds, and ev'n a stranger recommends.
First to the queen prefer a suppliant's claim,
Alicious' queen, Arete is her name.
The same her parents, and her pow'r the same.
For know, from Ocean's god Nausithous sprung.
And Periboea, beautiful and young:
(Eurymedon's last hope, who rule'd of old.
The race of giants, impious, proud, and bold.
Perish'd the nation in unrighteous war,
Perish'd the prince, and left this only heir:)
Who now, by Neptune's am'rous pow'r compriz'd,
Produc'd a monarch that his people blest,
Father and prince of the Phaecean name; 80.
From him Riexenor and, Alicious came.
The first by Phoebus' burning arrows fir'd,
New from his nuptials, hapless youth! expir'd.
No son surviv'd: Arete heir'd his state,
And her Alicious chose his royal mate.
With honours yet to womankind unknown,
This queen, he graces, and divides the throne:
In equal tenderness her sons conspire,
And all the children emulate their sire.
When thro' the street she gracious deign'd to move;
(The public wonder, and the public love.)
The tongues of all with transport found her praise.
The eyes of all, as on a goddess, gaze.
She feels the triumph of a generous breast.
To heal divisions, to relieve th' opprest;
In virtue rich: in blessing others, blest.
Go then, secure, thy humble suit prefer,
And owe thy country, and thy friends to her.
With that the goddess deign'd no longer stay.
But o'er the world of waters wing'd her way;
Forsaking Scheria's ever-pleasing shore,  
The winds to Marathon the virgin bore;  
Thence, where proud Athens rears her tow'ry head;  
With opening streets and shining structures spread,  
She pafs'd, delighted with the well-known seats; 105,  
And to Eretheus' sacred dome retreats.

Mean while Ulysses at the palace waits,  
There stops, and anxious with his soul debates,  
Fix'd in amaze before the royal gates.  
The front appear'd with radiant splendors gay,  
Bright as the lamp of night, or orb of day.  
The walls were massy brass: the cornice high  
Blue metals crown'd, in colours of the sky:  
Rich plates of gold the folding doors incase;  
The pillars silver, on a brazen base; 115,  
Silver the lintels deep-projecting o'er,  
And gold the ringlets that command the door.  
Two rows of stately dogs, on either hand,  
In sculptur'd gold and labour'd silver stand.  
These Vulcan form'd with art divine, to wait 120,  
Immortal guardians at Alcinous' gate;  
Alive each animated frame appears,  
And still to live, beyond the pow'r of years.  
Fair thrones within from space to space were rais'd,  
Where various carpets with embroid'ry blaz'd, 125,  
The work of matrons: these the princes pref't,  
Day following day, a long continu'd feast.  
Refulgent pedestals the walls surround,  
Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd;  
The polith'd ore, reflecting ev'ry ray, 130,  
Blaz'd on the banquets with a double ray.  
Full fifty handmaids from the household train;  
Some turn the mill, or sift the golden grain,  
Some ply the loom: their busy fingers move  
Like poplar-leaves when Zephyr fans the grove. 135,  
Not more renown'd the men of Scheria's isle,  
For failing arts and all the naval toil,
Book VII: HOMER's ODYSSEY

Than works of female skill their womens pride,
The flying shuttle through the threads to guide:
Pallas to these her double gifts imparts,
Inventive genius, and industrious arts.
Close to the gates a spacious garden lies,
From storms defended and inclement skies:
Four acres was 'tis allotted space of ground;
Fenc'd with a green inclosure all around.
Tall thriving trees confess'd the fruitful mould;
The red'ning apple ripens here to gold;
Here the blue fig with luscious juice o'erflows,
With deeper red the full pomegranate glows.
The branch here bends beneath the weighty pear,
And verdant olives flourish round the year.
The balmy spirit of the western gale
Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fall:
Each dropping pear a following pear supplies;
On apples apples, figs on figs arise.
The same mild season gives the blooms to blow,
The buds to harden, and the fruits to grow.
Here order'd vines in equal ranks appear,
With all the united labour of the year.
Some to unload the fertile branches' run,
Some dry the black'ning clusters in the sun:
Others to tread the liquid harvest join,
The groaning press's foam with floods of wine.
Here are the vines in early bow'rt destrey'd,
Here grapes discolor'd on the sunny side,
And there in Autumn's riches purple dy'd.

Beds of all various herbs, for ever green,
In beauteous order terminate the scene.

Two plenteous fountains the whole prospect crown'd;
This thro' the gardens leads its streams around,
Visits each plant, and waters all the ground:
While that in pipes beneath the palace flows,
And thence its current on the town beflows;
To various use their various streams they bring,
The people one; and one supplies the king.
Such were the glories which the gods ordain'd
To grace Alcinous, and his happy land.
Ev'n from the chief who men and nations knew,
Th' unwonted scene surprize and rapture drew;
In pleasing thought he ran the prospect o'er,
Then hasty enter'd at the lofty door.
Night now approaching, in the palace stand,
With goblets crown'd, the rulers of the land;
Prepar'd for rest, and off'ring to the * god
Who bears the virtue of the sleepy rod.
Unseen he glided through the joyous crowd,
With darkness circled, and an ambient cloud.
Direct to great Alcinous' throne he came,
And prostrate fell before th' imperial dame.
Then from around him dropp'd the veil of night;
Sudden he shines, and manifest to sight.
The nobles gaze, with awful fear opprest;
Silent they gaze, and eye the god-like guest;
Daughter of great Rhexenor! (thus began
Low at her knees, the much-induring man)
To thee, thy consorts, and this royal train.
To all that share the blessings of your reign,
A suppliant bends: oh pity human woe!
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe.
A wretched exile to his country seld,
Long worn with griefs, and long without a friend.
So may the gods your better days increase,
And all your joys descend on all your race,
So reign for ever on your country's breast,
Your people blessing, by your people blest!
Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And humbled in the ashes took his place.
Silence ensu'd. The eldest first began,
Echeneus sage, a venerable man!
Whose well-taught mind the present age surpaßt,
And join'd to that th' experience of the last.
Fit words attended on his weighty senfe,
And mild persuasion flow'd in eloquence.

* Mercury.
Oh sift (he cry'd) dishonest and unjust!
A guest, a stranger, feasted in the dust!
To raise the lowly suppliant from the ground
Befits a monarch. Lo! the peers around
But wait thy word, the gentle guest to grace,
And seat him fair in some distinguishing'd place.
Let first the herald due libation pay
To Jove, who guides the wand'rer on his way;
Then set the genial banquet in his view,
And give the stranger-guest a stranger's due.
His sage advice the lift'ning king obeys,
He stretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raise,
And from his seat Laodamas remov'd,
(The monarch's offspring, and his best belov'd)
There next his side the god-like hero sat;
With flars of silver shone the bed of state.
The golden ew'r a beauteous handmaid brings,
Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs,
Whose polish'd vafe with copious streams supplies
A silver laver, of capacious size.
The table next in regal order spread,
The glitt'ring canisters are heap'd with bread:
Viands of various kinds invite the taste,
Of choicest form and favour, rich repast!
Thus feasting high, Alcinous gave the sign,
And bad the herald pour the rosy wine.
Let all around the due libation pay
To Jove, who guides the wand'rer on his way.
He said. Pontonous heard the king's command;
The circling goblet moves from hand to hand;
Each drinks the juice that glads the heart of man.
Alcinous then, with aspect mild, began:
Princes and peers, attend! while we impart
To you the thoughts of no inhuman heart.
Now plea'd and satiate, from the social rite
Repair we to the blessings of the night:
But with the rising day, assembled here,
Let all the elders of the land appear,
Pious observe our hospitable laws,
And heav'n propitiate in the stranger's cause:
Then join'd in council, proper means explore
Safe to transport him to the wish'd for shore:
(How distant that, imports not us to know,
Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe.)
Mean-time, nor harm nor anguish let him bear;
This interval heav'n trusts him to our care.
But to his native-land our charge resign'd,
Heav'n is his life to come, and all the woes behind.
Then must he suffer what the fates ordain;
For fate has wove the thread of life with pain,
And twins ev'n from the birth, are misery and man!
But if descended from th' Olympian bow'r,
Gracious approach us some immortal pow'r;
If in that form thou canst a guest divine,
Some high event the conscious gods design.
As yet, unbid they never grac'd our feast,
The solemn sacrifice call'd down the guest;
Then manifest of heav'n the vision flood,
And to our eyes familiar was the god.
Oft with some favour'd traveller they stray,
And shine before him all the desert way:
With social intercourse, and face to face,
The friends and guardians of our pious race.
So near approach we their celestial kind,
By justice, truth, and probity of mind;
As our dear neighbours of cyclopean birth
Match in fierce wrong, the saint's sons of earth.
Let no such thought (with modest grace rejoin'd
The prudent Greek) possess the royal mind.
Alas! a mortal, like thyself, am I;
No glorious native of thy azure sky:
In form, ah how unlike their heav'nly kind!
How more inferior in the gifts of mind!
Alas, a mortal! most opprest of those
Whom fate has loaded with a weight of woes;
Book VII. Homer's Odyssey. 238

By a sad train of miseries alone
Distinguish'd long, and second now to none! 290
By heav'n's high will compell'd from shore to shore;
With heav'n's high will prepar'd to suffer more.
What histories of toil could I declare?
But still long-weary'd nature wants repair;
Spent with fatigue, and shrunk with pining fast,
My craving bowels still require repast.
Howe'er the noble, suff'ring mind may grieve
Its load of anguish, and disdain to live;
Necessity demands our daily bread;
Hunger is insolent, and will be fed.

But finish, oh ye peers! what you propose,
And let the morrow's dawn conclude my woes.
Pleas'd will I suffer all the gods ordain,
To see my soi, my son, my friends, again.
That view vouchsaf'd, let instant death surprise

With ever-during shade these happy eyes!
Th' assembled peers with gen'r'al praise approv'd
His pleaded reason, and the suit he mov'd.
Each drinks a full oblivion of his cares,
And to the gifts of balmy sleep repairs.

Ulysses in the regal walls alone
Remain'd: beside him, on a splendid throne,
Divine Arete and Alcinous same.
The queen, on nearer view, the guest survey'd
Rob'd in the garments her own hands had made;
Not without wonder seen Then thus began,
Her words addressing to the god-like man:
Cam'ft thou not hither, wond'rous stranger! say,
From lands remote, and o'er a length of sea?
Tell then whence art thou? whence that princely air?
And robes like these, so recent and so fair?

Hard is the task, oh princes! you impose:
(Thus fighing spoke the man of many woes)
The long, the mournful series to relate
Of all my sorrows, sent by heav'n and fate!
Yet what you ask, attend: An island lies
Beyond these tracts, and under other skies,
Ogygia nam’d, in ocean’s wat’ry arms:
Where dwells Calypso, dreadful in her charms!
Remote from gods or men she holds her reign,
Amid the terrors of the rolling main.
Me, only me, the hand of fortune bore
Unblest! to tread that interdicted shore:
When Jove tremendous in the sable deeps
Launch’d his red lightning at our scatter’d ships:
Then, all my fleet, and all my fol’wers lost,
Sole on a plank, on boiling surges tost,
Heav’n drove my wreck th’ Ogygian isle to find,
Full nine days floating to the wave and wind.
Met by the goddess there with open arms,
She brib’d my stay with more than human charms;
Nay promis’d, vainly promis’d, to bestow
Immortal life, exempt from age and woe.
But all her blandishments successlesss prove,
To banish from my breast my country’s love.
I stay reluctant sev’n continu’d years,
And water her ambrosial couch with tears.
The eight, she voluntary moves to part,
Or urg’d by Jove, or her own changeful heart.
A raft was form’d to e’er the surging sea;
Herself supply’d the stores and rich array;
And gave the gales to waft me on the way.
In sev’nteen days appear’d your pleasing coast,
And woody mountains half in vapours lost.
Joy touch’d my soul: my soul was joy’d in vain,
For angry Neptune rouz’d the raging main;
The wild winds whistle; and the billows roar;
The splitting raft the furious tempest tore;
And storms vindictive intercept the shore.
Soon as their rage subsides, the seas I brave
With naked force, and shoot along the wave,
To reach this isle: but there my hopes were lost;
The surge impell’d me on a craggy coast.
I chose the safer sea, and chance'd to find
A river's mouth impervious to the wind,
And clear of rocks. I faint'd by the flood;
Then took the shelter of the neigh'ring wood.
'Twas night: and cover'd in the foliage deep,
Jove plung'd my senses in the death of sleep.
All night I slept, oblivious of my pain:
Aurora dawn'd, and Phoebus shin'd in vain:
Nor, 'till oblique he flop'd his evening ray,
Had Somnus dry'd the balmy dews away.
Then female voices from the shore I heard:
A maid amidst them, goddes-like, appear'd:
To her I fu'd, she pity'd my distress;
Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue less.
Who from such youth cou'd hope confid'rate care?
In youth and beauty wisdom is but rare!
She gave me life, reliev'd with just supplies.
My wants, and lent these robes that strike your eyes.
This is the truth: and oh ye pow'rs on high!
Forbid that want thou'should sink me to a lie.

To this the king: Our daughter but express
Her cares imperfect to our god-like guest.
Suppliant to her, since first he chose to pray,
Why not herself did she conduct the way,
And with her handmaids to our court convey?

Hero and king! (Ulysses thus reply'd)
Nor blame her faultless, nor suspect of pride:
She bad me follow in th' attendant train;
But fear and rev'rence did my steps detain,
Left rash suspicion might alarm thy mind:
Man's of a jealous and mistaking kind.

Far from my soul (he cry'd) the gods efface.
All wrath ill-grounded, and suspicion base!
Whate'er is honest, stranger, I approve;
And would to Phoebus, Pallas, and to Jove,
Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my son,
In such alliance couldst thou wish to join,
A palace storr'd with treasures shou'd be thine.
But if reluctant, who shall force thy stay?
Jove bids to send the stranger on his way,
And ships shall wait thee with the morning ray.
'Till then let slumber close thy careful eyes;
The wakeful mariners shall watch the skies,
And seize the moment when the breezes rise:
Then gently waft thee to the pleasing shore,
Where thy soul rests, and labour is no more.
Far as Eubaea thou' thy country lay,
Our ships with ease transport thee in a day.
Thither of old, earth's * giant-son to view,
On wings of winds with Rhadamanth they flew:
This land, from whence their morning course begun,
Saw them returning with the setting sun.
Your eyes shall witness and confirm my tale,
Our youth how dext'rous, and how fleet our sail,
When justly tim'd with equal sweep they row,
And ocean whitens in long tracts below.

Thus he. No word th' experienc'd man replies,
But thus to heav'n (and heav'nward lifts his eyes:)
O Jove! oh father! what the king accords
Do thou make perfect! sacred be his words!
Wide o'er the world Alcinous' glory shine!
Let fame be his, and ah! my country mine!
Mean time Arete, for the hour of rest
Ordains the fleecy couch, and cov'ring vest:
Bids her fair train the purple quilts prepare,
And the thick carpets spread with busy care.
With torches blazing in their hands they pass,
And finish'd all their queen's command with haste:
Then gave the signal to the willing guest:
He rofe with pleasure, and retir'd to rest.
There, soft extended to the murm'ring sound
Of the high porch, Ulysses sleeps profound!
Within, releas'd from cares, Alcinous lyes:
And fast beside were clos'd Arete's eyes.

* Titus;
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK VIII.
THE ARGUMENT.

Alcinoe calls a council, in which it is resolved to transport Ulysses into his country. After which splendid entertainments are made, where the celebrated musician and poet Demodocus plays and sings to the guests. They next proceed to the games, the race, the wrestling, discus, etc., where Ulysses casts a prodigious length, to the admiration of all the spectators. They return again to the banquet, and Demodocus sings the loves of Mars and Venus. Ulysses, after a compliment to the poet, desires him to sing the introduction of the wooden horse into Troy; which subject provoking his tears, Alcinoe inquires of his guest, his name, parentage and fortunes.
THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK VIII.

NOW fair Aurora lifts her golden ray,
And all the ruddy orient flames with day:
Alcinous, and the chief, with dawning light,
Rose instant from the slumbers of the night;
Then to the council-seat they bend their way,
And fill the shining thrones along the bay.

Mean-while Minerva in her guardian care
Shoots from the starry vault through fields of air;
In form a herald of the king she flies
From peer to peer, and thus incessant cries:
Nobles and chiefs who rule Phaeacia's states,
The king in council your attendance waits:
A prince of grace divine your aid implores,
O'er unknown seas arriv'd from unknown shores.

She spoke, and sudden with tumultuous sounds
Of thronging multitudes the shore rebounds:
At once the seats they fill: and ev'ry eye
Gaz'd as before some brother of the sky.
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
More high he treads, and more inlarg'd he moves:
She sheds celestial bloom, regard to draw,
And gives a dignity of mien, to awe,
With strength the future prize of fame to play,
And gather all the honours of the day.

Then from his glitt'ring throne Alcinous rose:
Attend, he cry'd, while we our will disclose,
Your present aid this god-like stranger craves,
Toss’d by rude tempest through a war of waves:
Perhaps from realms that view the rising day,
Or nations subject to the western ray.
Then grant, what here all sons of woe obtain,
(For here affliction never pleads in vain):
Be chosen youths prepar’d, expert to try
The vast profound, and bid the vessel fly:
Launch the tall bark, and order ev’ry oar,
Then in our court indulge the genial hour;
Infant you sailors to this task attend;
Swift to the palace, all ye peers, ascend;
Let none to strangers honours due disdain;
Be there Demodocus, the bard of fame,
Taught by the gods to please, when high he sings
The vocal lay responsive to the strings.
Thus spoke the prince; th’ attending peers obey:
In state they move; Alcinous leads the way:
Swift to Demodocus the herald flies,
At once the sailors to their charge arise:
They launch the vessel, and unfurl the sails,
And stretch the swelling canvas to the gales;
Then to the palace move: a gathering throng,
Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along:
Now all access to the dome are fill’d;
Eight boars, the choicest of the herd, are kill’d;
Two beeves, twelve fatlings from the flock they bring
To crown the feast; so wills the bounteous king.
The herald now arrives, and guides along
The sacred master of celestial song;
Dear to the muse! who gave his days to flow
With mighty blessings, mix’d with mighty woe:
With clouds of darkness quench’d his visial ray,
But gave him skill to raise the lofty lay.
High on a radiant throne sublime in state,
Encircled by huge multitudes, he sat:
With silver shone the throne; his lyre well strung
To rapt’rous sound, at hand Pontous hung:
Before his seat a polish'd table shines,
And a full goblet foams with gen'rous wings:
His food a herald bore. And now they fed;
And now the rage of craving hunger fled.

Then fir'd by all the muse, aloud he sings:
The mighty deeds of demigods and kings:
From that fierce wrath the noble song arose,
That made Ulysses and Achilles foes:
How o'er the feast they doom the fall of Troy;
The stern debate Atrides hears with joy:
For heav'n foretold the contest, when he trod
The marble threshold of the Delphic god,
Curious to learn the counsels of the sky,
Ere yet he loos'd the rage of war on Troy.

Touch'd at the song, Ulysses strait resign'd.
To soft affliction all his manly mind:
Before his eyes the purple veil he drew,
Industrious to conceal the falling dew:
But when the muse paus'd, he ceas'd to shed
The flowing tear, and rais'd his drooping head;
And lifting to the gods a goblet crown'd,
He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.

Transported with the song, the list'ning train
Again with loud applause demand the strain;
Again Ulysses veil'd his pensive head,
Again unmann'd a show's of sorrow shed:
Conceal'd he wept: the king observ'd alone
The silent tear, and heard the secret groan:
Then to the bard aloud; O cease to sing,
Dumb be thy voice, and mute th' harmonious string:
Enough the feast has pleas'd, enough the pow'r
Of heav'nly song has crown'd the genial hour!
Incessant in the games your strength display;
Contest, ye brave, the honours of the day!
That pleas'd th' admiring stranger may proclaim
In distant regions the Phaeacian fame.

None wield the gauntlet with so dire a sway,
Or swifter in the race devour the way;
None in the leap spring with so strong a bound,
Or firmer, in the wrestling, press the ground.
Thus spoke the king; th' attending peers obey:
In state they move; Alcinous leads the way:
His golden lyre Demodocus, unstrung,
High on a column in the palace hung;
And guided by a herald's guardian cares,
Majestic to the lifts of fame repairs.

Now swarms the populace, a countless throng!
Youth and hoar age; and man drives man along.
The games begin: ambitious of the prize,
Acroneus, Thoon, and Eretmeus rise;
The prize Ocyalus and Prymneus claim,
Anchialus and Ponteus, chiefs of fame;
There Proreus, Nautes, Eratreus appear,
And fam'd Amphialus, Polyneus' heir.
Euryalus like Mars terrific role,
When clad in wrath he withers hosts of foes:
Naubolides with grace unequall'd shone,
Or equall'd by Laodamas alone.
With these came forth Ambasineus the strong;
And three brave sons from great Alcinous sprung.

Rang'd in a line the ready racers stand,
Start from the goal, and vanish o'er the strand:
Swift as on wings of wind upborn they fly,
And drifts of rising dust involve the sky.
Before the rest, what space the hinds allow
Between the mule and ox from plow to plow,
Clytoneus sprung: he wing'd the rapid way,
And bore th' unrival'd honours of the day.
With fierce embrace the brawny wrestlers join;
The conquest, great Euryalus, is thine.
Amphialus sprung forward with a bound,
Superior in the leap, a length of ground.
From Elatreus' strong arm the discus flies,
And sings with unmatch'd force along the skies.
And 'Laodame whirs high, with dreadful sway,
The gloves of death, victorious in the fray.
While thus the peerage in the games contends,
In act to speak Laodamas ascends:
O friends, he cries, the stranger seems well skill'd
To try th' illustrious labours of the field:
I deem him brave; then grant the brave man's claim,
Invite the hero to his share of fame.
What nervous arms he boasts! how firm his tread!
His limbs how turn'd! how broad his shoulders spread!
By age unbroke—but all-consuming care
Destroys perhaps the strength that time would spare:
Dire is the ocean, dread in all its forms!
Man must decay, when man contends with storms.

Well halt thou spoke, (Euryalus replies)
Thine is the guest, invite him thou to rise.
Swift at the word, advancing from the crowd,
He made obeysance, and thus spoke aloud:
Vouchsafe the rev'rend stranger to display
His manly worth, and share the glorious day?
Father, arise! for thee thy port proclaims
Expert to conquer in the solemn games;
To fame arise! for what more fame can yield
Than the swift race, or conflict of the field?
Steal from corroding care one transient day,
To glory give the space thou hast to stay.
Short is the time; and lo! ev'n now the gales
Call thee abroad, and stretch the swelling sails.

To whom with sighs Ulysses gave reply:
Ah why th' ill-fitting palltime must I try?
To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;
Ill the gay sports with troubled hearts agree.
Sad from my natal hour my days have ran;
A much afflicted, much-enduring man!
Who suppliants to the king and peers, implores
A speedy voyage to his native shores.
Wide wanders, Laodame, thy erring tongue.
The sports of glory to the brave belong,
(Reverts Euryalus:) he boasts no claim
Among the great, unlike the sons of fame.
A wand'ring merchant he frequents the main,
Some mean sea-farer in pursuit of gain;
Studious of freight in naval trade well skill'd,
But dreads th' athletic labours of the field.

Incens'd Ulysses with a frown replies,
O forward to proclaim thy soul unwise!
With partial hands the gods their gifts dispense:
Some greatly think, some speak with manly sense;
Here heav'n an elegance of form denies,
But wisdom the defect of form supplies:
This man with energy of thought controuls,
And steals with modest violence our souls;
He speaks reserv'dly, but he speaks with force,
Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worse;
In public more than mortal he appears,
And as he moves the gazing crowd reveres:
While others, beauteous as th' ethereal kind,
The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.
In outward show heav'n gives thee to excel,
But heav'n denies the praise of thinking well.
I'll bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,
And, youth, my gen'rous soul resents the wrong;
Skill'd in heroic exercise, I claim
A post of honour with the sons of fame;
Such was my boast, while vigour crown'd my days,
Now care surrounds me, and my force decays;
Inur'd a melancholy part to bear,
In scenes of death, by tempest and by war.
Yet thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave;
To prove the hero———Slander flings the brave.

Then striding forward with a furious bound,
He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground;
By far more pond'rous, and more huge by far,
Than what Phaeacia's sons discharg'd in air.
Fierce from his arm th' enormous load he flings;
Sonorous thro' the shaded air it sings;
Couch'd to the earth, tempestuous as it flies,
The crowd gaze upward while it cleaves the skies.
Beyond all marks, with many a giddy round
Down-rushing, it up turns a hill of ground.
That instant Pallas, bursting from a cloud,
Fix'd a distinguishing mark, and cry'd aloud:
Ev'n he who sightless wants his visual ray,
May by his touch alone award the day:
Thy signal throw transcends the utmost bound
Of ev'ry champion, by a length of ground:
Securely bid the strongest of the train
Arise to throw: the strongest throws in vain.
She spoke; and momentary mounts the sky:
The friendly voice Ulysses hears with joy;
Then thus aloud, (elate with decent pride)
Rise ye Phaeacians, try your force, he cry'd;
If with this throw the strongest casts after vy,
Still, further still, I bid the discus fly.
Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,
Or you, the swiftest racers of the field!
Stand forth, ye wrestlers, who these pastimes grace!
I wield the gauntlet, and I run the race.
In such heroic games I yield to none,
Or yield to brave Laodamas alone:
Shall I with brave Laodamas contend?
A friend is sacred, and I stile him friend.
Ungenerous were the man, and base of heart,
Who takes the kind, and pays th' ungrateful part:
Chiefly the man, in foreign realms confin'd,
Base to his friend, to his own interest blind:
All, all your heroes I this day defy,
Give me a man, that we our might may try!
Expert in ev'ry art, I boast the skill;
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill;
Should a whole host at once discharge the bow,
My well aim'd shaft with death prevents the foe:
Alone superior in the field of Troy,
Great Philoctetes taught the shaft to fly.
From all the sons of earth unrival'd praise
I justly claim, but yield to better days,
To those fam'd days when great Alcides rose,
And Eurytus, who bad the gods be foes;
(Vain Eurytus, whose art became his crime,
Swept from the earth, he perish'd in his prime;
Sudden th' irreimemable way he trod,
Who boldly durst defy the Bowyer god.)
In fighting fields as far the spear I throw,
As flies an arrow from the well-drawn bow.
Sole in the race the contest I decline,
Stiff are my weary joints, and I resign
By storms and hunger worn; age well may fail,
When storms and hunger both at once assail.
Abash'd, the numbers hear the god-like man,
'Till great Alcinous mildly thus began:
Well haft thou spoke, and well thy gen'rous tongue
With decent pride refutes a public wrong:
Warm are thy words, but warm without offence;
Fear only fools, secure in men of sense:
Thy worth is known. Then hear our country's claim,
And bear to heroes our heroic fame;
In distant realms our glorious deeds dislay,
Repeat them frequent in the genial day;
When blest with-case, thy woes and wand'ring end,
Teach them thy comfort, bid thy sons attend;
How lov'd of Jove he crown'd our fires with praise,
How we their offspring dignify our race.
Let other realms the deathful gauntlet wield,
Or boast the glories of th' athletic field;
We in the course unrival'd speed display,
Or thro' caerulean billows plow the way,
To dress, to dance, to sing, our sole delight,
The feast or bath by day, and love by night:
Rise then, ye skil'l'd in measures; let him bear
Your fame to men that breathe a distant air;
And faithful say, To you the pow'rs belong
To race, to fail, to dance, to chat the fong.
But, herald, to the palace swift repair,
And the soft lyre to grace our pastimes bear.
Swift at the word, obedient to the king,
The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.
Up rose nine seniors, chosen to survey
The future games, the judges of the day:
With instant care they mark a spacious round,
And level for the dance th' allotted ground;
The herald bears the lyre; intent to play,
The bard advancing meditates the lay,
Skill'd in the dance, till youths, a blooming band,
Graceful before the heav'nly minstrel stand;
Light-bounding from the earth, at once they rise,
Their feet half-viewless quiver in the skies;
Ulysses gaz'd, astonish'd to survey
The glancing splendors as their sandals play.
Mean-time the bard alternate to the strings
The loves of Mars and Cytherea sings;
How the stern god enamour'd with her charms
Clasp'd the gay panting goddess in his arms,
By bribes seduc'd: and how the sun, whose eye
Views the broad heav'n's, disclos'd the lawless joy.
Stung to the soul, indignant thro' the skies
To his black forge vindictive Vulcan flies;
Arriv'd, his sinewy arms incessant place
Th' eternal anvil on the massy base.
A wondrous net he labours, to betray
The wanton lovers, as entwin'd they lay,
Indissolubly strong! then infant bears
To his immortal dome the finish'd snares.
Above, below, around, with art dispers'd,
The sure inofusure folds the genial bed;
Whose texture ev'n the search of gods deceives,
Thin as the filmy threads the spider weaves.
Then as withdrawing from the starry bow'r's,
He seigns a journey to the Lemnian shores:
His fav'rite isle! Observant Mars descries
His wish'd recess, and to the goddess flies;
He glows, he burns: the fair-hair'd queen of love
Descends smooth-gliding from the courts of Jove.
Gay blooming in full charms: her hand he prest
With eager joy, and with a sigh addrest:
Come, my below'd! and taste the soft delights:
Come, to repose the genial bed invites:
Thy absent spouse, neglectful of thy charms,
Prefers his Barb'rous Sintians to thy arms!
Then, nothing loth, th' enamour'd, fairest he led,
And sunk transported on the conscious bed.
Down rush'd the toils, inwrapping as they lay
The careless lovers in their wanton play:
In vain they strive, th' intangling snares deny
(Inextricably firm) the pow'r to fly:
Warn'd by the god who sheds the golden day,
Stern Vulcan homeward treads the starry way:
Arriv'd, he sees, he grieves, with rage he burns;
Full horribly he roars, his voice all heav'n returns.
O joye, he cry'd, oh all ye pow'rs above,
See the lewd alliance of the queen of love!
Me, awkward me she scorns, and yields her charms
To that fair letcher, the strong god of arms.
If I am lame, that slain my natal hour
By fate impos'd; such me my parent bore:
Why was I born? see how the wanton lies!
O light tormenting to an husband's eyes!
But yet I trust, this once ev'n Mars would fly
His fair one's arms—he thinks her, once, too nigh.
But there remain, ye guilty, in my pow'r,
'Till Jove refunds his shameless daughter's dow'r.
Too dear I priz'd a fair enchanting face:
Beauty unchaste is beauty in disgrace.
Mean-while the gods the dome of Vulcan throng,
Apollo comes, and Neptune comes along,
With these gay Hermes trod the starry plain;
But modestly with-held the goddess-train.
All heav'n beholds, imprison'd as they ly,
And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the sky.
Then mutual, thus they spoke: Behold an wrong,
Swift vengeance waits; and art subdues the strong!
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Dwells there a god on all th' Olympian brow
More swift than Mars, and more than Vulcan slow? 370
Yet Vulcan conquers, and the god of arms
Must pay the penalty for lawless charms.

Thus fierce they: but he who gilds the skies,
The gay Apollo thus to Hermes cries:
Wou'dst thou enchain'd like Mars, oh Hermes, ly,
And bear the shame like Mars, to share the joy? 376
O envy'd shame! (the smiling youth rejoin'd)
Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind;
Gaze all ye gods, and ev'ry goddess gaze,
Yet eager would I bless the sweet disgrace. 380

Loud laugh the rest, ev'n Neptune laughs aloud,
Yet sues importunate to loose the god:
And free, he cries, oh Vulcan! free from shame
Thy captives; I enjoin the penal claim.

Will Neptune (Vulcan then) the faithless trust? 385
He suffers who gives surety for th' unjust:
But say, if that lewd scandal of the sky
To liberty restor'd persidious fly,
Say wilt thou bear the mulct? He instant cries,
The mulct I bear, if Mars persidious flies. 390

To whom appeas'd: no more I urge delay;
When Neptune sues, my part is to obey
Then to the snares his force the god applies;
They burst; and Mars to Thrace indignant flies:
To the soft Cyprian shores the goddess moves, 395
To visit Paphos and her blooming groves,
Where to the pow'r an hundred altars rise,
And breathing odours scent the balmy skies:
Conceal'd she bathes in consecrated bow'rs,
The Graces unguents shed, ambrosial show'rs, 400
Unguents that charm the gods! she last assumes
Her wondrous robes; and full she goddess blooms.

Thus sung the bard: Ulysses hears with joy,
And loud applauses rend the vaulted sky.

Then to the sports his sons the king commands; 405
Each blooming youth before the monarch stands.
In dance unmatch'd! a wond'rous ball is brought,
(The work of Polybus, divinely wrought)
This' youth with strength enormous bids it fly,
And bending backward whirs it to the sky; 410
His brother springing with an active bound,
At distance intercepts it from the ground:
The ball dismiss'd, in dance they skim the strand;
'Turn and return, and scarce imprint the sand.
Th' assembly gazes with astonish'd eyes,
And sends in th'Oults applause to the skies.
Then thus Ulysses; Happy king, whose name.
The brightest shines in all the rolls of fame:
In subject happy! with surprisè I gaze;
Thy praise was just; their skill transcends thy praise. 420
Pleas'd with his people's fame the monarch hears,
And thus benevolent accosts the peers:
Since wisdom's sacred guidance he pursues,
Give to the stranger-guest a stranger's dues:
Twelve princes in our realm dominion share,
O'er whom supreme, imperial pow'r I bear:
Bring gold, a pledge of love, a talent bring,
A vest; a robe, and imitate your king:
Be swift to give; that he this night may share
The social feast of joy, with joy sincere. 430:
And thou, Euryalus, redeem thy wrong:
A gen'rous heart repairs a brand'rous tongue:
Th' assenting peers, obedient to the king,
In haste their heralds send the gifts to bring.
Then thus Euryalus: O prince, whose sway.
Rules this blest realm, repentant I obey!
Be his this sword; whose blade of brass displays
A ruddy gleam; whose hilt, a silver blaze;
Whose ivory sheath, inwrought with curious pride,
Adds graceful terror to the wearer's side. 440:
He said; and to his hand the sword consign'd;
And if he cry'd; my words affect thy mind,
Far from thy mind those words, ye whirlwinds bear,
And scatter them, ye storms, in empty air!
Crown, oh ye heav'ns, with joy his peaceful hours,
And grant him to his spouse and native shores!
And blest be thou, my friend, Ulysses cries,
Crown him with ev'ry joy, ye fav'ring skies;
To thy calm hours continu'd peace afford,
And never, never may't thou want this sword!
He said, and o'er his shoulder flung the blade.
Now o'er the earth ascend the evening shade:
The precious gifts th' illustrious heralds bear,
And to the court th' embody'd peers repair.
Before the queen Alcinous' sons unfold
The vests, the robes, and heaps of shining gold:
Then to the radiant thrones they move in state:
Afoft, the king in pomp, imperial fate.
Thence to the queen: O partner of our reign,
O sole belov'd! command thy menial train
A polish'd chest and stately robes to bear,
And healing waters for the bath prepare;
That bath'd, our guest may bid his sorrows cease.
Hear the sweet song, and taste the feast in peace.
A bowl that flames with gold, of wondrous frame,
Our self we give, memorial of our name:
To raise in off'ring to almighty Jove,
And every god that treads the courts above.
Instant, the queen, observant of the king,
Commands her train a spacious vase to bring.
The spacious vase with ample streams suffice,
Heap high the wood; and bid the flames arise.
The flames climb round it with a fierce embrace,
The fuming waters bubble o'er the blaze.
Herself the chest prepares: in order roll'd
The robes, the vests are rang'd, and heaps of gold:
And adding a rich dress, inwrought with art,
A gift expressive of her bounteous heart,
Thus spoke to Ithacus: To guard with bands
Insolvable these gifts, thy care demands:
Left, in thy slumbers on the watry main,
The hand of rapine make our bounty vain.
Then bending with full force, around he roll'd
A labyrinth of bands in fold on fold,
Clos'd with Circean art. A train attends 485
Around the bath: the bath the king ascends:
(Untasted joy, since that disast'rous hour;
He fail'd ill-sated from Calypso's bow'r)
Where, happy as the gods that range the sky,
He feasted ev'ry sense with ev'ry joy. 490
He bathes: the damsels, with officious toil;
Shed sweets, shed unguents in a show'r of oil:
Then o'er his limbs a gorgeous robe he spreads,
And to the feast magnificently treads.
Full where the dome its shining valves expands, 495
Nausicaa blooming as a goddess stands,
With wond'ring eyes the hero she survey'd,
And graceful thus began the royal maid:
Hail godlike stranger! and when heav'n restores
To thy fond with thy long-expected shores, 500
This ever grateful in remembrance bear,
To me thou ow'lt, to me, the vital air.
O royal maid! Ulysses strait returns,
Whose worth the splendors of thy race adorns,
So may dread Jove (whose arm in vengeance forms 505
The writhe bolt, and blackens heav'n with storms;) Restore me safe, thro' weary wand'rings tossed,
To my dear country's ever-pleasing coast,
As while the spirit in this bosom glows,
To thee, my goddess, I address my vows; 510
My life, thy gift I boast! He said, and safe
Fast by Alcinous on a throne of state.
Now each partakes the feast, the wine prepares,
 Portions the food, and each his portion shares.
The bard an herald guides: the gazing throng 515
Pay low obeys'ance as he moves along;
Beneath a sculptur'd arch he fits enthron'd,
The peers encircling form an awful round.
Then from the chine Ulysses carves with art
Delicious food, an honorary part: 520
This let the master of the lyre receive,
A pledge of love! 'tis all a wretch can give.
Lives there a man beneath the spacious skies,
Who sacred honours to the bard denies?
The muse the bard inspires, exalts his mind;
The muse indulgent loves th' harmonious kind.

The herald to his hand the charge conveys,
Not fond of flattery, nor unpleas'd with praise.

When now the rage of hunger was 'allay'd,
Thus to the lyrist wise Ulysses said:
O more than man! thy soul the muse inspires,
Or Phoebus animates with all his fires:
For who by Phoebus uninform'd, could know
The woe of Greece, and sing so well the woe?

Just to the tale, as present at the fray,
Or taught the labours of the dreadful day:
The song recalls past horrors to my eyes,
And bids proud Ilion from her ashes rise.

Once more harmonious strike the sounding string,
Th' Ithacan fabric, fram'd by Pallas, sing:

How stern Ulysses, furious to destroy,
With latent heauxs sack'd imperial Troy.

If faithful thou record the tale of fame,
The god himself inspires thy breast with flame:
And mine shall be the task, henceforth to raise

In ev'ry land thy monument of praise.

Full of the god he rais'd his lofty strain,
How the Greeks rush'd tumultuous to the main:
How blazing tents illumin'd half the skies,
While from the shores the winged navy flies:

How ev'n in Ilion's walls, in deathful bands,
Came the stern Greeks by Troy's subduing hands:
All Troy up-heav'd the Reed; of differ'rent mind,
Various the Trojans counsell'd; part confign'd

The monster to the sword, part sentence gave
To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave;
Th' unwise award to lodge it in the tow'rs,
An off'red sacred to th' immortal pow'rs:
Th' unwise prevail, they lodge it in the walls,
And by the gods decree proud Ilion falls;
Destruction enters in the treach'rous wood,
And vengeful slaughter, fierce for human blood.
He sung the Greeks stern issuing from the steed,
How Ilion burns, how all her fathers bleed:
How to thy dome, Deiphobus! ascends
The Spartan king; how Ithacus attends,
(Horrid as Mars) and how with dire alarms
He fights, subdues: for Pallas strings his arms.
Thus while he sung, Ulysses' griefs renew,
Tears bath his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew:
As some fond matron views in mortal sight
Her husband falling in his country's right:
Frantic thro' clashing swords she runs, she flies,
As ghastly pale he groans, and saints, and dies;
Close to his breast he grovels on the ground,
And bathes with floods of tears the gaping wound;
She cries, she shrieks: the fierce insulting foe
Relentless mocks her violence of woe,
To chains condemn'd as wildly she deprecates,
A widow, and a slave, on foreign shores!
So from the sluices of Ulysses' eyes
Feast fell the tears, and sighs succeeded sighs:
Conceal'd he griev'd: the king observ'd alone
The silent tear, and heard the secret groan:
Then to the bard aloud; O cease to sing,
Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful string:
To ev'ry note his tears responsive flow,
And his great heart heaves with tumultuous woe;
Thy lay too deeply moves: then cease the lay,
And o'er the banquet every heart be gay:
This social right demands; for him the fails
Floating in air, invite th' impelling gales:
His are the gifts of love: the wife and good
Receive the stranger as a brother's blood.
But, friend, discover faithful what I crave,
Artful concealment ill becomes the brave:
Book VIII.  Homer's Odyssey.

Say what thy birth, and what the name you bore,
Impos'd by parents in the natal hour?
(For from the natal hour distinctive names,
One common right, the great and lowly claims.)
Say from what city, from what regions tost,
And what inhabitants those regions boast?
So shalt thou instant reach the realm assign'd,
In wond'rous ships self-mov'd, instinct with mind:
No helm secures their course, no pilot guides;
Like man intelligent, they plow the tides,
Conscious of every coast, and every bay,
That lyes beneath the sun's all seeing ray;
Tho' clouds and darkness veil th' encumber'd sky,
Fearless thro' darkness and thro' clouds they fly:
Tho' tempests rage, tho' rolls the swelling main,
The seas may roll, the tempests rage in vain;
Ev'n the stern god that o'er the waves presides,
Safa as they pass, and safe reparts the tides,
With fury burns; while careless they convey
Promiscuous every guest to every bay.
These ears have heard my royal fire disclose
A dreadful story big with future woes,
How Neptune rag'd, and how by his command
Firm rooted in the surge a ship should stand
A monument of wrath: how mound on mound
Should bury these proud tow'rs beneath the ground.
But this the gods may frustrate or fulfill,
As suits the purpose of th' eternal will.
But say thro' what waste regions hast thou stray'd,
What customs noted, and what coasts survey'd?
Possess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men, whose bofm tender pity warms?
Say why the fate of Troy awak'd thy cares,
Why heav'd thy bosom, and why flow'd thy tears.
Just are the ways of heav'n: from heav'n proceed
The woes of man; heav'n doom'd the Greeks to bleed,
A theme of future song! Say then if lain
Some dear-lov'd brother press'd the Phrygian plain?
Or bled some friend? who bore a brother's part,
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK IX.
THE ARGUMENT.

The adventures of the Cicons, Lotophagi, and Cyclops.

Ulysses begins the relation of his adventures; how, after the destruction of Troy, he made an incursion on the Cicons, by whom they were repulsed; and, meeting with a storm, were driven to the coast of the Lotophagi. From thence they sailed to the land of the Cyclops, whose manners and situation are particularly characterized. The giant Polyphemus and his cave described: the usage Ulysses and his companions met there; and, lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.
THEN thus Ulysses: Thou whom first in sway,
As first in virtue, these thy realms obey;
How sweet the products of a peaceful reign!
The heav'n-taught poet, and enchanting strain:
The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feast,
A land rejoicing, and a people blest!
How goodly seems it, ever to employ
Man's social days in union and in joy?
The plenteous board high-heap'd with cates divine;
And o'er the foaming bowl the laughing wine.

Amid these joys, why seeks thy mind to know
Th' unhappy series of a wand'rer's woe?
Remembrance sad! whose image to review,
Alas! must open all my wounds anew.
And oh! what first, what last shall I relate,
Of woes unnumber'd, sent by heav'n and fate?

Know first the man (tho' now a wretch distrest)
Who hopes thee, monarch! for his future guest:
Behold Ulysses! no ignoble name,
Earth sounds my wisdom, and high heav'n my fame.

My native soil is Ithaca the fair,
Where high Neritus waves his woods in air:
Dulichium, Same, and Zacynthus crown'd
With shady mountains, spread their isles around;

O 2
These to the north and night's dark regions run, 25
Those to Aurora and the rising sun.
Low lies our isle, yet blest in fruitful stores;
Strong are her sons, tho' rocky are her shores;
And none, ah none so lovely to my sight,
Of all the lands that heav'n o'er spreads with light! 30
In vain Calypso long constrain'd my stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
With all her charms as vainly Circe strove,
And added magic, to secure my love.
In poms or joys, the palace or the grot,
My country's image never was forgot,
My absent parents rose before my sight,
And distant lay contentment and delight.
Hear then the woes which mighty love ordain'd
To wait my passage from the Trojan land.
The winds from Ilium to the Cicon's shore,
Beneath cold Ilium's, our vessels bore.
We boldly landed on the hostile place,
And sack'd the city, and destroy'd the race,
Their wives made captive, their possessions shar'd, 45
And ev'ry soldier found a like reward.
I then advis'd to fly; not so the rest,
Who stay'd to revel, and prolong the feast:
The fatted sheep and tallow bulls they slay,
And bowls fly round, and riot wastes the day. 50
Mean time the Cicon's, to their holds retir'd,
Call on the Cicons, with new fury fir'd;
With early morn the gather'd country swarms,
And all the continent is bright with arms;
Thick as the budding leaves or rising flow'rs
O'er spread the lawn, when spring descends in flow'rs:
All expert soldiers, skill'd on foot to dare,
Or from the bounding courser urge the war.
Now fortune changes, (so the fates ordain')
Our hour was come, to taste our share of pain. 60
Close at the ships the bloody fight began,
Wounded they wound, and man expires on man.
Long as the morning sun increasing bright
O'er heav'n's pure azure spread the growing light,
Promiscuous death the form of war confounds,
Each adverse battle gor'd with equal wounds:
But when his ev'ning wheels o'erhung the main,
Then conquest crown'd the fierce Ciconian train.
Six brave companions from each ship we lost,
The rest escape in haste, and quit the coast.
With fails outspread we fly th' unequal strife,
Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life.
Yet as we fled, our fellows rites we pay'd,
And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.

Mean-while the god, whose hand the thunder forms,
Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heav'n with storms,
Wide o'er the waste the rage of Boreas sweeps,
And night rush'd headlong on the shaded deeps,
Now here, now there, the giddy ships are born,
And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn.

We furl'd the sail, we ply'd the lab'ring oar,
Took down our masts, and row'd our ships to shore.
Two tedious days and two long nights we lay,
O'erwatch'd and batter'd in the naked bay:

But the third morning when Aurora brings,
We rear the masts, we spread the canvas wings:
Refresht'd, and careless on the deck reclin'd,
We fit, and trust the pilot and the wind.
Then to my native country had I fail'd;

But, the cape doubled, adverse winds prevail'd.
Strong was the tide, which by the northern blast
Impell'd our vessels on Cythera cast.
Nine days our fleet th' uncertain tempest bore:
Far wide in ocean, and from sight of shore:
The tenth we touch'd, by various errors tost,
The land of Lotus, and the flow'ry coast.
We climb'd the beach, and springs of water found,
Then spread our hafty banquet on the ground.
Three men were sent, deputed from the crew,
(An herald one) the dubious coast to view,
And learn what habitants posseth the place.
They went, and found a hospitable race;
Not prone to ill, nor strange to foreign guest,
They eat, they drink, and nature gives the feast;
The trees around them all their food produce,
Lotos the name, divine, nectarious juice!
(Thence call'd Lotophagi) which whoso tastes,
Infatiate riots in the sweet repasts,
Nor other home nor other care intends.
But quits his house, his country, and his friends.
The three we sent, from off' th' enchanting ground.
We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound:
The rest in haste forlook the pleasing shore,
Or, the charm tasted, had return'd no more.
Now plac'd in order on their banks, they sweep.
The sea's smooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
With heavy hearts we labour thro' the tyde,
To coasts unknown, and oceans yet untried.

The land of Cyclops first; a savage kind,
Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd;
Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe, and sow,
They all their products to free nature owe.
The soil until'd a ready harvest yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields.
Spontaneous wines from weighty clusters pour,
And Jove descends in each prolific show'r:
By these no statutes, and no rights are known,
No council held, no monarch fills the throne;
But high on hills or airy cliffs they dwell;
Or deep in caves whose entrance leads to hell.
Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
Headless of others, to his own severe.

Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coasts, there lay
An isle, whose hills their subject fields survey;
Its name Lachaea, crown'd with many a grove,
Where savage goats thro' pathless thickets rove:
No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
Or wretched hunter thro' the wintry cold.
Pursue their flight, but leave them safe to bound
From hill to hill, o'er all the desert ground:
Nor knows the soil to feed the fleecy care,
Or feels the labours of the crooked share,
But uninhabited, until'd, unseen.
It lieth, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
For there no vessel with vermilion prore,
Or bank of traffic glides from shore to shore;
The rugged race of savages, unskill'd
The seas to traverse, or the ships to build,
Gaze on the coast, nor cultivate the soil,
Unlearn'd in all the industrious arts of toil.
Yet here all products and all plants abound,
Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
Fields waving high with heavy cropts are seen,
And vines that flourish in eternal green,
Refreshing meads along the murmuring main,
And fountains streaming down the fruitful plain.
A port there is, inclos'd on either side,
Where ships may rest, unanchor'd and unty'd;
'Till the glad mariners incline to sail,
And the sea whitens with the rising gale.
High as its head, from out the cavern'd rock,
In living rills a gushing fountain broke:
Around it, and above, for ever green,
The bushing alders form'd a shady scene.
Hither some sav'ring god, beyond our thought,
Thro' all-surrounding shade our navy brought;
For gloomy night descend'd on the main,
Nor glimmer'd Phoebus in the ethereal plain:
But all unseen the clouded isle lay,
And all unseen the surge and rowling sea,
Till safe we anchor'd, in the shelter'd bay:
Our sails we gather'd, cast out cables o'er,
And slept secure along the sandy shore.
Soon as again the rosy morning shone,
Reveal'd the landscape and the scene unknown.
With wonder seiz'd we view the pleasing ground,
And walk delighted, and expatiate round.
Rouz'd by the woodland nymphs at early dawn,
The mountain goats came bounding o'er the lawn:
In haste our fellows to the ships repair,
For arms and weapons of the sylvan war.
Strait in three squadrons all our crew we part,
And bend the bow, or wing the missile dart;
The bounteous gods afford a copious prey,
And nine fat goats each vessel bears away;
The royal bark had ten. Our ships complete
We thus supply'd, (for twelve were all the fleet.)
Here, till the setting sun rowel'd down the light,
We sat indulging in the genial rite.
Nor wines were wanting: those from ample jars
We drain'd, the prize of our Ciconian wars.
The land of Cyclops lay in prospect near;
The voice of goats and bleating flocks we hear,
And from their mountains rising smokes appear.
Now sunk the sun, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things: along the sea-beat shore
Satiate we slept: but when the sacred dawn
Arising glitter'd o'er the dewy lawn,
I call'd my fellows, and these words address'd:
My dear associates, here indulge your rest;
While, with my single ship, advent'rous I
Go forth, the manners of 'yon' men to try;
Whether a race unjust, of barbarous might,
Rude, and unconscious of a stranger's right;
Or such who harbour pity in their breast,
Revere the gods, and succour the distressed?
This said, I climb'd my vessel's lofty side;
My train obey'd me, and the ship unty'd.
In order seated on their banks, they sweep
Neptune's smooth face, and cleave the yielding deep.
When to the nearest verge of land we drew,
East by the sea a lonely cave we view;
High, and with dark'ning laurels cover'd o'er,
Where sheep and goats lay slumb'ring round the shore:
Near this, a fence of marble from the rock,
Brown with o'er-arching pine, and spreading oak.
A giant-shepherd here his flock maintains
Far from the rest, and solitary reigns,
In shelter thick of horrid shade reclin'd;
And gloomy mischiefs labour in his mind.
A form enormous! far unlike the race
Of human birth, in stature, or in face:
As some lone mountain's monstrous growth he stood,
Crown'd with rough thickets, and a nodding wood.
I left my vessel at the point of land,
And close to guard it gave our crew command:
With only twelve, the boldest and the best,
I seek th' adventure, and forsaie the rest.
Then took a goatskin fill'd with precious wine,
The gift of Maron, of Euanthus' line,
(The priest of Phoebus at th' Ismalian shrine)
In sacred shade his honour'd mansion stood.
Amidst Apollo's consecrated wood:
Him and his house heav'n mov'd my mind to save,
And costly presents in return he gave;
Sev'n golden talents to perfection wrought,
A silver bowl that held a copious draught,
And twelve large vessels of unmingled wine,
Mellifluous, undecaying, and divine!
Which now some ages from his race conceal'd,
The hoary fire in gratitude reveal'd.
Such was the wine, to quench whose servent flam,
Scarce twenty measures from the living flam
To cool one cup suffic'd: the goblet crown'd
Breath'd aromatic fragrances around.
Of this an ample vafe we heav'd aboard,
And brought another with provifions flor'd.
My soul foreboded I should find the bow'r
Of some fell monster, fierce with barb'rous pow'r.
Some rustic wretch, who liv'd in heav'n's despight,
Contemning laws, and trampling on the right.
The cave we found, but vacant all within,
(His flock the giant tended on the green).
But round the grot we gaze, and all we view,
In order rang'd, our admiration drew:
The bending shelves with loads of cheeses prest,
The folded flocks each sep'rate from the rest,
(The larger here, and there the lesser lambs,
The new-fall'n young here bleating for their dams;
The kid distinguish'd from the lambkin lyes;) 260
The cavern echoes with responsive cries.
Capacious chargers all around were laid,
Full pails, and vessels of the milking trade.
With fresh provision hence our fleet to store
My friends advise me, and to quit the shore;
Or drive a flock of sheep and goats away,
Consult our safety, and put off to sea.
Their wholesome counsel rashly I declin'd,
Curious to view the man of monstrous kind,
And try what social rites a savage lends:
Dire rites, alas! and fatal to my friends!
Then first a fire we kindle, and prepare
For his return with sacrifice and pray'r.
The loaden shelves afford us full repast.
We sit expecting. Lo, he comes at last!
Near half a forest on his back he bore,
And cast the pond'rous burden at the door.
It thunder'd as it fell. We trembled then,
And sought the deep recesses of the den.
Now driv'n before him, through the arching rock,
Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd flock:
Big-udder'd ews, and goats of female kind,
(The males were penn'd in outward courts behind)
Then, heav'd on high, a rock's enormous weight
To the cave's mouth he roll'd, and clos'd the gate,
(Scarce twenty four-wheel'd cars, compact and strong,
The massy load could bear, or roll along.)
He next betakes him to his evening cares,
And sitting down to milk his flocks prepares;
Of half their udders eases first the dams,
Then to the mothers teat submits the lambs.
Half the white stream to hard'ning cheese he press,
And high in wicker baskets heap'd; the rest
Reserv'd in bowls, supply'd his nightly feast.
His labour done, he fir'd the pyle, that gave
A sudden blaze, and lighted all the cave.
We stand discover'd by the rising fires;
Askance the giant glares, and thus enquires:
What are ye guests? on what adventure, say,
Thus far ye wander through the wat'ry way?
Pirates perhaps, who seek, through seas unknown,
The lives of others, and expose your own.
His voice like thunder through the cavern sounds:
My bold companions thrilling fear confounds,
Appall'd at sight of more than mortal man!
At length, with heart recover'd, I began:
From Troy's fam'd fields sad wand'fers o'er the main,
Behold the relics of the Grecian train!
Through various seas by various perils tost,
And forc'd by storms, unwilling, on your coast,
Far from our deslin'd course, and native land:
Such was our fate, and such high Jove's command!
Nor what we are befits us to disclaim,
Atrides' friends, (in arms a mighty name)
Who taught proud Troy and all her sons to bow;
Victors of late, but humble suppliants now!
Low at thy knee thy succour we implore;
Respect us, human; and relieve us, poor.
At least some hospitable gift bestow;
'Tis what the happy to th' unhappy owe;
'Tis what the gods require: those gods revere,
The poor and stranger are their constant care:
To Jove their cause, and their revenge belongs;
He wanders with them, and he feels their wrongs.
Fools that ye are! (the savage thus replies, 325
His inward fury blazing at his eyes)
Or strangers, distant far from our abodes,
To bid me reverence or regard the gods.
Know then we Cyclops are, a race above
Those air-bred people, and their goat-nurs'd Jove: 330
And learn, our pow'r proceeds with thee and thine,
Not as he wills, but as ourselves encline.
But answ'rer, the good ship that brought ye o'er,
Where lyest the anchor'd? near or off the shore?
Thus he. His meditated fraud I find,
(Vers'd in the turns of various human kind)
And, cautious, thus: Against a dreadful rock,
Fast by your shore the gallant vessel broke,
Scarcely with these few I 'scap'd, of all my train,
By angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main; 340
The scatter'd wreck the winds blew back again.
He answ'red with his deeds. His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And dash'd like dogs against the stony floor:
The pavement swims with brains and mingled gore. 345
Torn limb from limb, he speads his horrid feast,
And fierce devours it like a mountain beast:
He sucks the marrow, and the blood he drains;
Nor entrails, flesh, nor solid bone remains.
We see the death from which we cannot move, 350
And humbled groan beneath the hand of Jove.
His ample maw with human carcase fill'd,
A milky deluge next the giant swill'd;
Then stretch'd in length o'er half the cavern'd rock,
Lay senseless and supine amidst the flock. 355
To seize the time, and with a sudden wound
'To fix the slumb'ring monster to the ground,
My soul impells me; and in act I stand
To draw the sword; but wisdom held my hand.
A deed so rash had finish'd all our fate, 360
No mortal forces from the lofty gate
Could roll the rock. In hopeless grief we lay,
And sigh, expecting the return of day.
Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
And shed her sacred light along the skies.
365
He wakes, he lights the fire, he milks the dams,
And to the mother's teat submits the lambs.
The task thus finish'd of his morning hours,
Two more he snatches, murders, and devours.
Then pleas'd and whistling, drives his flock before;
Removes the rocky mountain from the door,
And shuts again; with equal ease dispos'd,
As a light quiver's lid is op'd and clos'd.
His giant voice the echoing region fills:
His flocks, obedient, spread o'er all the hills.
375
Thus left behind, e'en in the last despair
I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my pray'r.
Revenge, and doubt, and caution work'd my breast;
But this of many counsels seem'd the best:
The monster's club within the cave I spy'd,
A tree of statelyst growth, and yet undry'd,
Green from the wood; of height and bulk so vast,
The largest ship might claim it for a mast.
This shorten'd of its top, I gave my train
A fathom's length, to shape it and to plain;
385
The narrow'r end I sharpen'd to a spire;
Whose point we Harden'd with the force of fire,
And hid it in the dust that strow'd the cave.
Then to my few companions, bold and brave,
Propos'd, who first the vent'rous deed should try;
390
In the broad orbit of his monstrous eye
To plunge the brand, and twirl the pointed wood,
When slumber next should tame the man of blood.
Just as I wish'd, the lots were cast on four:
Myself the fifth. We stand and wait the hour.
395
He comes with evening: all his fleecey flock
Before him march, and pour into the rock:
Not one, or male or female stay'd behind;
(So fortune-chanc'd, or so some god design'd.)
Then heaving high the stone's unwieldy weight,
He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
First down he sits, to milk the woolly dams,
And then permits theirudder to the lambs.
Next seiz'd two wretches more, and headlong cast,
Brain'd on the rock; his second dire repast.

I then approach'd him reeking with their gore,
And held the brimming goblet foaming o'er:
Cyclop! since human flesh has been thy feast,
Now drain this goblet, potent to digest:
Know hence what treasures in our ship we lost,
And what rich liquors other climates boast.

We to thy shore the precious freight shall bear
If home thou send us, and vouchsafe to spare.
But oh! thus furious, thirsting thus for gore,
The sons of men shall ne'er approach thy shore,
And never shalt thou taste this nectar more.

He heard, he took, and pouring down his throat
Delighted swill'd the large luxurious draught.
More! give me more, he cry'd: the boon be thine,
Whoe'er thou art, that bear'st celestial wine!

Declare thy name, not mortal is this juice,
Such as th' unbless'd Cyclopean climes produce,
(Tho' sure our vine the largest cluster yields,
And Jove's corn'd thunder serves to drench our fields)
But this descend'd from the blest abodes,

A rill of nectar, stream'd from the gods.

He said, and greedy grasp'd the heady bowl,
Thrice drain'd, and pour'd the deluge on his soul.
His sense lay cover'd with the dozy fume:
While thus my fraudulent speech I re-assume.

Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,
And plead my title: No-man is my name.
By that distinguish'd from my tender years,
'Tis what my parents call me, and my peers.

The giant then: Our promis'd grace receive,

The hospitable boon we mean to give:
When all thy wretched crew have felt my pow'r,
No-man shall be the last I shall devour.

He said: then nodding with the fumes of wine
Dropt his huge head, and snoring lay supine.
His neck obliquely o'er his shoulder hung,
Pres't with the weight of sleep, that tames the strong!
There belch'd the mingled steams of wine and blood,
And human flesh, his indigested food:
Sudden I stir the embers, and inspire.

With animating breath the seeds of fire;
Each drooping spirit with bold words repair,
And urge my train the dreadful deed to dare.
The stake now glow'd beneath the burning bed
(Green as it was) and sparkled fiery red.

Then forth the vengeful instrument I bring;
With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
Urg'd by some pres't god, they swift let fall
The pointed torment on his visual ball.
Myself above them from a rising ground.

Guide the sharp stake, and twirl it round and round.
As when a shipwright stands his workmen o'er,
Who ply the wimble, some huge beam to bore;
Urg'd on all hands it nimbly spins about,
The grain deep piercing till it scoops it out:

In his broad eye so whirls the fiery wood;
From the pierc'd pupil spouts the boiling blood:
Sing'd are his brows; the scorching lids grow black;
The gelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.

And as when arm'ers temper in the ford
The keen-edg'd pole-axe, or the shining sword,
The red-hot metal hisses in the lake,
Thus in his eyeball his's the plunging stake.
He sends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
Thro' all their inmost winding caves resound.

Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand
He tore, and dash'd on earth the goary brand:
Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
From all their dens the one-eyed race repair,
From rifted rocks, and mountains bleak in air.
All haste assembled, at his well-known roar,
Enquire the cause, and crowd the cavern door.

What hurts thee, Polypheme? what strange affright
Thus breaks our slumbers, and disturbs the night?
Does any mortal in th' unguarded hour
Of sleep, oppresses thee, or by fraud or pow'r?
Or thieves insidious the fair flock surprise?
Thus they. 'The Cyclops from his den replies:

Friends, no man kills me: no man in the hour
Of sleep, oppresses me with fraudulent pow'r. 486
If no man hurt thee, but the hand divine
Inflict disease, it fits thee to resign:
To Jove, or to thy father Neptune pray,
The brethren cry'd, and instant strode away. 490
Joy touch'd my secret soul, and conscious heart,
Pleas'd with th' effect of conduct and of art.
Mean-time the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and searches round and round:
At last, the stone removing from the gate,
With hands extended in the midst he fate;
And search'd each passing sheep, and felt it o'er
Secure to seize us ere we reach'd the door.
(Such as his shallow wit, he deem'd was mine)
But secret I revolv'd the deep design: 500
'Twas for our lives my lab'ring bosom wrought;
Each scheme I turn'd, and sharpen'd ev'ry thought:
This way and that, I cast to save my friends,
'Till one resolve my varying counsel ends.

Strong were the rams, with native purple fair, 505
Well fed, and largest of the fleecy care.
These three and three, with other bands we ty'd,
(The twining bands the Cyclop's bed supply'd)
The midmost bore a man; the outward two
Secur'd each side: so bound we all the crew.
One ram remain'd, the leader of the flock;
In his deep fleece my grasping hands I lock,
And fast beneath, in woolly curls inwove,
There cling implicit, and confide in Jove.
When rosy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales,
He drove to pasture all the lusty males:
The ewes still folded, with distended thighs
Unmilk'd, lay bleating in distressful cries.
But heedless of those cares, with anguish stung,
He felt their fleeces as they pass'd along,
(Fool that he was) and let them safely go,
All unsuspecting of their freight below.

The master-ram at last approach'd the gate,
Charg'd with his wool, and with Ulysses' fate.
Him while he past, the monster blind bespoke:
What makes my lamb the lag of all the flock?
First thou wert wont to crop the flow'ry mead,
First to the field and river's bank to lead,
And first with stately step at ev'n'ing hour
Thy fleecy fellows usher to their bow'r.

Now far the 'laid,' with pensive pace and flow
Thou mov'st, as conscious of thy master's woe!
Seest thou these lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of No-man and his wicked train)
Oh! didn't thou feel for thy afflicted lord,
And wouldn but fate the pow'r of speech afford;
Soon might'st thou tell me, where in secret here
The daftard lurks, all trembling with his fear.
Swung round and round, and dash'd from rock to rock,
His batter'd brains shou'd on the pavement smoke.

No ease, no pleasure my sad heart receives,
While such a monster as vile No-man lives.

The giant spoke, and thro' the hollow rock
Dismis'sd the ram, the father of the flock.
No sooner freed, and thro' th' enclosure past,
First I release myself; my fellows laft:
Fat sheep and goats in throngs we drive before,
And reach our vessel on the winding shore.
With joy the sailors view their friends return'd,
And hail us living, whom as dead they mourn'd.
Big tears of transport stand in ev'ry eye:
I check their fondness, and command to fly.
Aboard in haste they heave the wealthy sheep,
And snatch their oars, and rush into the deep.

Now off at sea; and from the shallows clear,
As far as human voice cou'd reach the ear;
With taunts the distantly giant I accost,
Hear me, oh Cyclop! hear, ungracious host!
'Twas on no coward, no ignoble slave,
Thou meditast thy meal in yonder cave;
But one, the vengeance fated from above
Doom'd to inflict; the instrument of Jove.
Thy barbarous breach of hospitable bands,
The god, the god revenges by my hands.

These words the Cyclop's burning rage provoke:
From the tall hill he rends a pointed rock;
High o'er the billows flew the massy load,
And near the ship came thund'ring on the flood.
It almost brush'd the helm, and fell before:
The whole sea shook, and resplendent beat the shore.
The strong concussion on the heaving tide
Roll'd back the vessel to the island's side:
Again I shov'd her off; our fate to fly,
Each nerve we stretch, and ev'ry oar we ply.
Just 'scap'd impending death, when now again
We twice as far had furrow'd back the main,
Once more I raise my voice; my friends afraid
With mild entreaties my design dissuade.
What boots the god-leaf's gait to provoke?
Whose arm may sink us at a single stroke.
Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
Old Ocean shook, and back his surges flew.
The sounding voice directs his aim again;
The rock o'erwhelms us, and we 'scap'd in vain.

But I, of mind elate, and scorning fear, thus with new taunts insult the monster's ear.
Cyclop! if any, pitying thy disgrace,
Ask who disfigur'd thus that eye-leaf's face?
Book IX. HOMER's ODYSSEY.

Say 'twas Ulysses; 'twas his deed, declare,
Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair;
Ulysses, far in fighting fields renown'd,
Before whose arm Troy tumbled to the ground.

Th' astonish'd savage with a roar replies:
Oh heav'n's! oh faith of antient prophecies!
This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold,
(The mighty seer who on these hills grew old;
Skill'd the dark fates of mortals to declare;
And learn'd in all wing'd omens of the air.)
Long since he menac'd, such was Fate's command;
And nam'd Ulysses as the destin'd hand.

I deem'd some god-like gaint to behold,
Or lofty hero, haughty, brave, and bold;
Not this weak pigmy-wretch, of mean design,
Who not by strength subdued me, but by wine.
But come, accept our gifts, and join to pray
Great Neptune's blessing on the wat'ry way:
For his I am, and I the lineage own;
Th' immortal father no less boast's the son.
His pow'r can heal me, and re-light my eye;
And only his, of all the gods on high.

Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoind')
From that vast bulk dislodge thy bloody mind,
And send thee howling to the realms of night,
As sure, as Neptune cannot give thee sight!

Thus I: while raging he repeats his cries,
With hands uplifted to the starry skies:
Hear me, Oh Neptune! thou whose arms are hurl'd
From shore to shore, and gird the solid world,
If thine I am, nor thou my birth disown,
And if th' unhappy Cyclop be thy son;
Let not Ulysses breathe his native air,
Laertes' son, of Ithaca the fair.
If to review his country be his fate,
Be it thro' toils and suff'ring, long and late,
His loft companions let him first deplore;
Some vessel, not his own, transport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign suff'ring's freed,
More near and deep domestic woes succeed!
With impreca tions thus he fill'd the air,
And angry Neptune heard th' unrighteous pray'r. 630
A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
He whirl'd it round: it fung across the main:
It fell, and brush'd the stern: the billows roar,
Shake at the weight, and refluent beat the shore.
With all our force we kept aloof to sea,
And gain'd the island where our vessels lay:
Our fight the whole collected navy cheer'd,
Who, waiting long, by turns had hop'd and fear'd.
There disembarking on the green sea-side,
We land our cattle, and the spoil divide:
Of these due shares to ev'ry sailor fall;
The master ram was voted mine by all:
And him (the guardian of Ulysses' fate)
With pious mind to heav'n I consecrate.
But the great God, whose thunder rends the skies,
Averse, beholds the smoking sacrifice;
And sees me wand'ring still from coast to coast:
And all my vessels, all my people, lost!
While thoughtless we indulge the genial rite,
As plenteous cates and flowing bowls invite; 650
'Till evening Phoebus roll'd away the light:
Stretch'd on the shore in careless ease we rest,
'Till ruddy morning purpled o'er the east.
Then from their anchors all our ships unbind,
And mount the decks, and call the willing wind. 655
Now rang'd in order on our banks, we sweep
With haftly strokes the hoarse-refounding deep;
Blind to the future, penitve with our fears,
Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.
THE ARGUMENT.

Adventures with Æolus, the Lestrigons, and Circe.

Ulysses arrives at the island of Æolus, who gives him prosperous winds, and incloses the adverse ones in a bag, which his companions untlying, they are driven back again, and rejected. Then they sail to the Lestrigons, where they lose eleven ships, and with one only remaining, proceed to the island of Circe. Eurylochus is sent first with some companions, all which, except Eurylochus, are transformed into swine. Ulysses then undertakes the adventure, and by the help of Mercury, who gives him the herb Moly, overcomes the enchantress, and procures the restoration of his men. After a year's stay with her, he prepares at her instigation for his voyage to the infernal shades.
THE
ODYSSEY.
BOOK X.

A T length we reach'd Æolia's sea-girt shore,
Where great Hippotades the sceptre bore,
A floating isle! high-rais'd by toil divine,
Strong walls of brass the rocky coast confine.
Six blooming youths, in private grandeur bred,
And six fair daughters, gra'd the royal bed:
These sons their fathers wed, and all remain
Their parents pride, and pleasure of their reign.
All day they feast, all day the bowls flow round,
And joy and music thro' the isle resound:
At night each pair on splendid carpets lay,
And crown'd with love the pleasures of the day.
This happy port affords our wand'ring fleet
A month's reception, and a safe retreat.
Full oft the monarch urg'd me to relate
The fall of Ilion, and the Grecian fate;
Full oft I told: at length for parting mov'd;
The king with mighty gifts my suit approv'd.
The adverse winds in leathern bags he brac'd,
Compress'd their force, and lock'd each struggling blast:
For him the mighty fire of gods assign'd
The tempest's lord, the tyrant of the wind;
His word alone the lift'ning storms obey,
To smooth the deep, or swell the foamy sea,
These in my hollow ship the monarch hung,
Securely set her by a silver thong,
But Zephyrus exempt, with friendly gales
He charg'd to fill and guide the swelling sails:
Rare gift! but oh, what gift to fools avails!

Nine prosperous days we ply'd the lab'ring oar;
The tenth presents our welcome native shore:
The hills display the beacon's friendly light,
And rising mountains gain upon our sight.
Then first my eyes, by watchful toils oppressed,
Comply'd to take the balmy gifts of rest;
Then first my hands did from the rudder part,
(So much the love of home possest'd my heart)
When lo! on board a fond debate arose:
What rare device those vessels might inclose?
What sum, what prize from Æolus I brought?
Whilst to his neighbour each express'd his thought.

Say, whence, ye gods, contending nations strive
Who most shall please, who most our hero give?
Long have his coffers groan'd with Trojan spoils;
Whilst we, the wretched partners of his toils,
Reproach'd by want, our fruitless labours mourn,
And only rich in barren fame return.
Now Æolus, ye see, augments his store:
But come, my friends, these mystic gifts explore.
They said: and (oh curs'd fate!) the thongs unbound!
The gushing tempest sweeps the ocean round:

Snatch'd in the whirl, the hurried navy flew,
The ocean widen'd, and the shores withdrew.
Rowz'd from my fatal sleep, I long debate
If still to live, or desperate plunge to fate:
Thus doubting, prostrate on the deck I lay.
Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.

Mean-while our vessels plow the liquid plain,
And soon the known Æolian coast regain.
Our groans the rocks remurmur'd to the main,
We leap'd on shore, and with a scanty scaft
Our thirst and hunger hastily repress'd.
Book X.  HOMER's ODYSSEY.

That done, two chosen heralds great attend
Our second progress to my royal friend;
And him amisth his jovial sons we found;
The banquet streaming, and the goblets crown'd:
There humbly stopp'd with conscions shame and awe,
Nor nearer than the gate presum'd to draw.
But soon his sons their well-known guest descri'd,
And starting from their couches loudly cry'd,
Ulysses here! what daemon cou'dst thou meet
To thwart thy passage and repel thy fleet?
Waft thou not furnish'd by our choicest care
For Greece, for home, and all thy soul held dear?
Thus they: in silence long my fate I mourn'd,
At length these words with accent low return'd:
Me, lock'd in sleep, my faithless crew bereft
Of all the blessings of your god-like gift!
But grant, oh grant our loss we may retrieve:
A favour you, and you alone can give.
Thus I with art to move their pity try'd,
And touch'd the youths, but their stern fire reply'd,
Vile wretch, begone! this instant I command
Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallowed land.
His baneful mind pollutes these blest's abodes,
Whose fate proclaims him hateful to the gods.

Thus fierce he said: we fighting went our way,
And with despoothing hearts put off to sea.
The sailors spent with toils their folly mourn'd,
But mourn in vain; no prospect of return.
Six days and nights a doubtful course we steer.
The next proud Lamos' lately tow'r's appear,
And Laestrigon's gates arise distinct in air.
The shepherd quitting here at night the plain,
Calls, to succeed his cares, the watchful swain.
But he that scorns the chains of sleep to wear,
And adds the herdsmen's to the shepherd's care,
So near the pastures, and so short the way,
His double toils may claim a double pay,
And join the labours of the night and day.
Within a long recess a bay there lyes,
Edg’d round with cliffs, high pointing to the skies;
The jutting shores that swell on either side
Contrast its mouth, and break the rushing tide.
Our eager sailors seize the fair retreat,
And bound within the port their crowded fleet;
For here retir’d the linking billows sleep,
And smiling calmness silver’d o’er the deep.
I only in the bay refus’d to moor,
And fix’d, without, my haulers to the shore.

From thence we climb’d a point, whose airy brow
Commands the prospect of the plains below;
No tracts of beasts, or signs of men we found,
But smoky volumes rolling from the ground.
Two with our herald thither we command,
With speed to learn what men posses’d the land.
They went, and kept the wheel’s smooth beaten road
Which to the city drew the mountain wood;
When lo! they met, beside a crystal spring,
The daughter of Antiphates the king;
She to Artacia’s silver streams came down,
(Artacia’s streams alone supply the town:)
The damsel they approach, and ask’d what race
The people were? who monarch of the place?
With joy the maid th’ unwary strangers heard,
And shew’d them where the royal dome appear’d.
They went; but as they ent’ring saw the queen
Of seize enormous and terrific mien,
(Not yielding to some bulky mountain’s height)
A sudden horror struck their aking light.
Swift at her call her husband scowr’d away
To wreak his hunger on the destin’d prey;
One for his food the raging glutton slew,
But two rush’d out, and to the navy flew.
Balk’d of his prey, the yelling monster flies,
And fills the city with his hideous cries.
A ghastly band of giants hear the roar,
And pouring down the mountains, crowd the shore.
Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,
And dash the ruins on the ships below:
The crackling vessels burst; hoarse groans arise,
And mingled horrors echo to the skies;
The men, like fish, they flung upon the flood,
And cram'd their filthy throats with human food.
Whilst thus their fury rages at the bay,
My sword our cables cut, I call'd to weigh;
And charg'd my men, as they from fate would fly,
Each nerve to strain, each bending oar to ply.
The sailors catch the word, their oars to seize,
And sweep with equal strokes the smoky seas;
Clear of the rocks th' impatient vessel flies,
Whilst in the port each wretch incumber'd dies.
With earnest haste my frighted sailors press,
While kindling transports glow'd at our success;
But the sad fate that did our friends destroy
Cool'd ev'ry breast, and damp'd the rising joy.
Now dropp'd our anchors in th' Æean bay,
Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the day;
Her mother Perse, of old Ocean's strain,
Thus from the sun descended, and the main;
(From the same lineage stern Æetes came,
The far-fam'd brother of th' enchantress dame)
Goddes and queen, to whom the pow'rs belong
Of dreadful magic, and commanding song.
Some god directing, to this peaceful bay
Silent we came, and melancholy lay,
Spent and o'erwatch'd. Two days and nights roll'd on,
And now the third succeeding morning shone,
I climb'd a cliff, with spear and sword in hand,
Whose-ridge o'erlook'd a shady length of land;
To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
Or cheerful voice of mortal strike the ear?
From the high point I mark'd, in distant view,
A stream of curling smoke ascending blue,
And spiry tops, the tufted trees above,
Of Circe's palace, bosom'd in the grove.
Thither to haste, the region to explore,
Was first my thought: but speeding back to shore.
I deem'd it best to visit first my crew,
And send out spies the dubious coast to view.
As down the hill I solitary go,
Some pow'r divine who pities human woe
Sent a tall flag, descending from the wood,
To cool his fervor in the crystal flood;
Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay,
Stretch'd forth, and panting in the sunny ray.
I lance'd my spear, and with a sudden wound
Transpierc'd his back, and fix'd him to the ground.
He falls, and mourns his fate with human cries:
Through the wide wound the vital spirit flies.
I drew, and casting on the river side
The bloody spear, his gather'd feet I ty'd
With twining off'rs which the bank supply'd.
An ell in length the pliant wisp I weav'd,
And the huge body on my shoulders heav'd:
Then leaning on the spear with both my hands,
Up-bore my load, and press'd the sinking sands
With weighty steps, till at the ship I threw
The welcome burden, and bespoke my crew:
Cheer up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
To glide with ghosts through Pluto's gloomy gate.
Food in the desart land, behold, is giv'n!
Live, and enjoy the providence of heav'n.
The joyful crew survey his mighty size,
And on the future banquet feast their eyes,
As huge in length extended lay the beast;
Then wash their hands, and hasten to the feast.
There, till the setting sun rowl'd down the light,
They fate indulging in the genial rite.
When evening rose, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things, we slept along the shore.
But when the rosy morning warm'd the east,
My men I summon'd, and these words address'd:
Followers and friends, attend what I propose,
Ye sad companions of Ulysses' woes!
We know not here what land before us lies,
Or to what quarter now we turn our eyes,
Or where the sun shall set, or where shall rise.
Here let us think (if thinking be not vain).
If any counsel, any hope remain.
Alas! from yonder promontory's brow,
I view'd the coast, a region flat and low;
An isle encircled with the boundless flood;
A length of thickets, and entangled wood.
Some smoke I saw amid the forest rise,
And all around it only seas and skies!

With broken hearts my sad companions stood,
Mindful of Cyclops and his human food,
And horrid Laestrygons, the men of blood.
Presaging tears apace began to rain:
But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
In equal parts I strait divide my band,
And name a chief each party to command;
I led the one, and of the other side
Appointed brave Eurylochus the guide.
Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
And fortune casts Eurylochus to go.
He march'd, with twelve men in his train:
Pensive they march, and pensive we remain.

The palace in a woody vale they found,
High rais'd of stone; a shaded space around:
Where mountain wolves and brindled lions roam,
(By magic tam'd) familiar to the dome.
With gentle blandishment our men they meet,
And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet.
As from some feast a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,
Rejoicing round, some morzel to receive,
(Such as the good man ever us'd to give:)
Domestic thus the grisly beasts drew near;
They gaze with wonder, not unmix'd with fear.
Now on the threshold of the dome they stood,
And heard a voice resounding through the wood:
Plac'd at her loom within, the goddess sung;
The vaulted roofs and solid pavement rung.
For the fair web the rising figures shine,
Immortal labour! worthy hands divine.
Polites to the rest the question mov'd,
(A gallant leader, and a man I lov'd.)
What voice celestial, chaunting to the loom—
(Or nymph, or goddess) echoes from the room?
Say shall we seek access? With that they call;
And wide unfold the portals of the hall.
The goddess rising, asks her guests to stay,
Who blindly follow where she leads the way.
Eurylochus alone of all the band,
Suspecting fraud, more prudently remain'd:
On thrones around, with downy coverings grac'd,
With semblance fair, th' unhappy men she plac'd.
Milk newly press'd, the sacred flow'r of wheat,
And honey fresh, and Parnassian wines the treat:
But venom'd was the bread, and mix'd the bowl,
With drugs of force to darken all the soul.
Soon in the luscious feast themselves they lost,
And drank oblivion of their native coast.
Instant her circling wand the goddess waves,
To hogs transforms 'em, and the fly receives.
No more was seen the human form divine,
Head, face and members bristle into swine.
Still curst with senfe, their minds remain alone,
And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
Mean-while the goddess in disdain bestows
The mast and acorn, brutal food! and strows
The fruits of cornel, as the feast, around;
Now prone and groveling on unsav'ry ground.
Eurylochus with pensive steps and slow,
Aghast returns; the messenger of woe,
And bitter fate. To speak he made essay,
In vain essay'd, nor would his tongue obey,
But speaking tears the want of words supply,
And the full soul bursts copious from his eye.
Affrighted, anxious for our fellows' fates,
We press to hear what sadly he relates:

We went, Ulysses! (such was thy command)
Thro' the lone thicket, and the desert land.
A palace in a woody vale we found
Brown with dark forests, and with shades around.
A voice celestial echo'd from the dome,
Or nymph or goddess, chanting to the loom.
Access we sought, nor was access deny'd:
Radiant she came; the portals open'd wide;
The goddess mild invites the guests to stay:
They blindly follow where she leads the way.
I only wait behind, of all the train;
I waited long, and ey'd the doors in vain:
The rest are vanish'd, none repass'd the gate;
And not a man appears to tell their fate.

I heard, and infant o'er my shoulders flung
The belt in which my weighty fauchion hung,
(A beamy blade;) then seiz'd the bended bow,
And bade him guide the way, resolv'd to go.
He, prostrate falling, with both hands embrac'd
My knees, and weeping thus his suit address'd:

O king beloved of Jove! thy servant spare.
And ah, thyself the rash attempt forbear!
Never, alas! shall never shalt return,
Or see the wretched for whose loss we mourn.
With what remains, from certain ruin fly,
And save the few not fated yet to die.

I answer'd stern: Inglorious then remain,
Here feast and loiter, and desert thy train.
Alone, unfriended, will I tempt my way;
The laws of fate compel, and I obey.

This said, and scornful turning from the shore
My haughty step, I stalk'd the valley o'er.
'Till now approaching nigh the magic bow'r,
Where dwelt th' enchantress skill'd in herbs of pow'r.
A form divine forth issu’d from the wood,
(Immortal Hermes with the golden rod)
In human semblance: On his bloomy face
Youth smil’d celestial, with each opening grace.
He seiz’d my hand, and gracious thus began:
Ah whither soam’st thou? much-enduring man!
O blind to fate! what led thy steps to rove
The horrid maze of this magic grove?
Each friend you seek in yon enclosure lies,
All lost their form, and habitants of styes.
Think’st thou by wit to model their escape?
Sooner shalt thou, a stranger to thy shape,
Fall prone their equal: First thy danger know:
Then take the antidote the gods bestow.
The plant I give thro’ all the direful bow’r
Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes
The bowl shall sparkle, and the banquet rise;
Take this, nor from the faithless feast abstain,
For temper’d drugs and poisons shall be vain.
Soon as she strikes her wand, and gives the word,
Draw forth and brandish thy refulgent sword,
And menace death: those menaces shall move
Her alter’d mind to blandishment and love.
Nor shun the blessing proffer’d to thy arms,
Ascend her bed, and taste celestial charms:
So shall thy tedious toils a respite find,
And thy lost friends return to humankind.
But swear her first by those dread oaths that tie
The pow’rs below, the blessed in the sky;
Left to the naked secret fraud-be meant,
Or magic bind thee, cold and impotent.

Thus while he spoke, the sov’reign plant he drew,
Where on th’ all bearing earth unmark’d it grew,
And shew’d its nature and its wond’rous pow’r:
Black was the root, but milky white the flow’r;
Moly the name to mortals hard to find,
But all is easy to th’ ethereal kind.
Book X. HOMER's ODYSSEY.

This Hermes gave, then gliding off the glade
Shot to Olympus from the woodland shade.
While full of thought, revolving fates to come,
I speed my passage to th' enchanted dome:
Arriv'd before the lofty gates I slay'd;
The lofty gates the goddess wide display'd:
She leads before, and to the feast invites;
I follow sadly to the magic rites.
Radiant with flarry studs, a silver seat
Receiv'd my limbs; a footstool eas'd my feet,
She mix'd the potion, fraudulent of soul;
The poison mantled in the golden bowl.
I took, and quaff'd it, confident in heav'n:
Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was giv'n.
Hence, to thy fellows! (dreadful she began)
Go, be a beast!—I heard, and yet was man.
Then sudden whirling like a waving flame
My beamy faulchion, I assault the dame.
Struck with unusual fear, the trembling cries,
She faints, she falls; she lifts her weeping eyes.
What art thou, say? from whence, from whom you
O more than human! tell thy race, thy name. (came?)
Amazing strength, these poions to sustain!
Not mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain.
Or art thou he, the man to come, (foretold
By Hermes pow'rful with the wand of gold)
The man from Troy, who wander'd ocean round;
The man for wisdom's various arts renown'd,
Ulysses? oh! thy threatening fury cease,
Sheath thy bright sword, and join our hands in peace;
Let mutual joys our mutual trust combine,
And love, and love-born confidence be thine.
And how, dread Circe! (furious I rejoin)
Can love and love-born confidence be mine?
Beneath thy charms when my companions groan,
Transform'd to beasts, with accents not their own.
O thou of fraudulent heart! shall I be led
To share thy feast-rites, or ascend thy bed;
That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent,
And magic bind me, cold and impotent?
Celestial as thob art, yet stand deny'd;
Or swear that oath by which the gods are ty'd;
Swear, in thy soul no latent frauds remain,
Swear, by the vow which never can be vain.

The goddess swore: then seiz'd my hand, and led
To the sweet transports of the genial bed.
Ministrant to their queen, with bus'ly care
Four faithful handmaids the fest rites prepare;
Nymphs sprung from fountains, or from shady woods,
Or the fair offspring of the sacred floods.

One o'er the couches painted carpets threw,
Whose purple lustre glow'd against the view;
White linen lay beneath: another plac'd
The silver stands with golden baskeis grac'd:
With dulceet bev'rage this the beaker crown'd,
Fair in the midst, with gilded cups around:
That in the tripod o'er the kindled pile
The water pours; the bubbling waters boil:
An ample vase receives the smoking wave,
And in the bath prepar'd, my limbs I lave;
Reviving sweets repair the mind's decay,
And take the painful sense of toil away.

A vest and tunic o'er me next she threw,
Fresh from the bath, and dropping balmy dew;
Then led, and plac'd me on the sov'reign seat,
With carpets spread, a footstool at my feet.
The golden ew'r a nymph obsequious brings;
Replenish'd from the cool tranlucent springs;
With copious water the bright vase supplies.

A silver laver of capacious size.
I wafh'd. The table in fair order spread,
They heap the glittering canisters with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and favour, rich repast!
Circe in vain invites the feast to share;
Absent I ponder, and absorpt in care.
While scenes of woe rose anxious in my breast,
The queen beheld me, and these words addrest:
Why fits Ulysses silent and apart? 445
Some hoard of grief close-harbour'd at his heart.
Untouch'd before thee stand the cates divine,
And unregarded laughs the rosy wine.
Can yet a doubt, or any dread remain,
When sworn that oath which never can be vain! 450
I answer'd; Goddess, humane is thy breast,
By justice sway'd, by tender pity prest:
Ill fits it me, whose friends are sunk to beasts,
To quaff thy bowls, or riot in thy feasts.
Me wouldst thou please? for them thy cares employ,
And them to me restore, and me to joy.
With that she parted: in her potent hand
She bore the virtue of the magic wand;
Then halting to the flies, set wide the door,
Urg'd forth, and drove the brattily herd before. 460
Unweildy out they rush'd, with gen'dral cry,
Enormous beasts! dishonest to the eye.
Now touch'd by counter-arms, they change again,
And stand majestic, and recall'd to men.
Those hairs of late that bristled ev'ry part, 465
Fall off, miraculous effect of art:
'Till all the form in full proportion rise,
More young, more large, more graceful to my eyes.
They saw, they knew me, and with eager pace
Clung to their master in a long embrace:
Sad, pleasing sight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
And sobs of joy re-echo'd through the bow'r:
Ev'n Circe wept, her adamantine heart
Felt pity enter, and sustain'd her part.
Son of Laertes! (then the queen began) 475
Oh much enduring, much experience'd man!
Haste to thy vessel on the sea-beat shore,
Unload thy treasure, and thy galley moor;
Then bring thy friends, secure from future harms,
And in our grottos bow thy spoils and arms. 480
She said. Obedient to her high command
I quit the place, and hasten to the strand.
My sad companions on the beach I found,
Their wistful eyes in floods of sorrow drown'd.
As from fresh pastures, and the dewy field
(When loaded cribs their ev'n ing banquet yield)
The lowing herds return; around them throng
With leaps and bounds their late imprison'd young,
Rush to their mothers with unruly joy,
And echoing hills return the tender cry:
So round me press'd, exulting at my sight,
With cries and agonies of wild delight,
The weeping sailors; nor less fierce their joy
Than if return'd to Ithaca from Troy.
Ah master! ever honour'd, ever dear,
(These tender words on ev'ry side I hear)
What other joy can equal thy return?
Not that lov'd country for whose sight we mourn,
The soil that nurs'd us, and that gave us breath:
But ah! relate our lost companions death.
I answer'd cheerful: Haste, your galley moor,
And bring our treasures and our arms ashore:
Those in yon' hollow caverns let us lay;
Then rise and follow where I lead the way.
Your fellows live: believe your eyes, and come
To take the joys of Circe's sacred dome.
With speed the joyful crew obey:
Alone Eurylochus persuades their stay.
Whither, (he cry'd) ah whither will ye run?
Seek ye to meet those evils ye should shun?
Will you the terrors of the dome explore,
In swine to grovel, or in lions roar,
Or wolf-like howl away the midnight hour
In dreadful watch around the magic bow'r?
Remember Cyclops, and his bloody deed;
The leader's rashness made the soldiers bleed.
I heard incens'd, and first resolv'd to speed
My flying faulchion at the rebel's head.
Dear as he was, by tyes of kindred bound,
This hand had stretch’d him breathless on the ground:
But all at once my interpoling train
For mercy pleaded, nor could plead in vain:
Leave here the man who dares his prince desert,
Leave to repentance and his own sad heart,
To guard the ship. Seek we the sacred shades
Of Circe’s palace, where Ulysses leads.

This with one voice declar’d, the rising train
Left the black vessel by the murm’ring main.
Shame touch’d Eurylochus his alter’d breast,
He fear’d my threats, and follow’d with the rest.

Mean-while the goddess, with indulgent cares
And social joys, the late transform’d repairs;
The bath, the feast, their fainting soul renews;
Rich in refulgent robes, and dropping balmy dews:
Bright’ning with joy their eager eyes behold
Each other’s face, and each his story told;
Then gusting tears the narrative confound,
And with their索bs the vaulted roofs resound.

When hush’d their passion, thus the goddess cries:
Ulysses, taught by labours to be wise,
Let this short memory of grief suffice.
To me are known the various woes ye bore,
In storms by sea, in perils on the shore;
Forget whatever was in fortune’s pow’r,
And share the pleasures of this genial hour.

Such be your minds as ere ye left your coast,
Or learn’d to sorrow for a country loft.
Exiles and wand’rers now, where-e’er ye go,
Too faithful memory renews your woe;
The cause remov’d, habitual griefs remain,
And the soul saddens by the use of pain.

Her kind entreaty mov’d the gen’ral breast;
Tir’d with long toil we willing sunk to rest.
We ply’d the banquet, and the bowl we crown’d,
Till the full circle of the year came round.
But when the seasons, following in their train,
Brought back the months, the days, and hours again;
As from a lethargy at once they rise,
And urge their chief with animating cries:

Is this, Ulysses, our inglorious lot?
And is the name of Ithaca forgot?
Shall never the dear land in prospect rise,
Or the lov'd palace glitter in our eyes?

Melting I heard; yet till the sun's decline
Prolong'd the feast, and quaff'd the rosy wine:
But when the shades came on at evening hour,
And all lay slumbering in the dusky-bow'r,
I came a suppliant to fair Circe's bed;
The tender moment seiz'd, and thus I said:
Be mindful, goddess, of thy promise made;
Mystic had Ulysses ever be delay'd?
Around their lords my sad companions mourn,
Each breast beats homeward, anxious to return:
If but a moment parted from thy eyes,
Their tears flow round me, and my heart complies.

Go then, (the cry'd) ah go! yet think, not I,
Not Circe, but the fates your wish deny.
Ah hope not yet to breathe thy native air?
Far other journey first demands thy care;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
And view the realms of darkness and of death.
These seek the Theban bard depriv'd of sight,
Within irradiate with prophetic light;
To whom Persephone entire and whole
Gave to retain th' unfurled soul:
The rest are forms of empty aether made,
Inpassive semblance, and a flitting shade.

Struck at the word, my very heart was dead;
Pensive I pace; my tears bedew'd the bed;
To hate the light and life my soul begun,
And saw that all was grief beneath the sun.
Compos'd at length, the gushing tears suppress,
And my toil limbs now weary'd into rest,
BOOK X. HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

How shall I tread (I cry'd) ah Circe! say,
The dark descent? and who shall guide the way? 595
Can living eyes behold the realms below?
What bark to waft me, and what wind to blow?
Thy fated rod, (the magic pow'r reply'd)
Divine Ulysses! asks no mortal guide.
Rear but the mast, the spacious sail display,
The northern winds shall wing thee on thy way.
Soon shalt thou reach old Ocean's utmost ends,
Where to the main the shelving shore descends;
The barren trees of Proserpine's black woods,
Poplars and willows trembling o'er the floods:
There fix thy vessel in the lonely bay,
And enter there the kingdoms void of day:
Where Phlegeton's loud torrents rushing down,
Hiss in the flaming gulf of Acheron;
And where, flow-rolling from the Stygian bed,
Cocytus' lamentable waters spread:
Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
And mingling streams eternal murmurs make.
First draw thy facleion, and on ev'ry side
Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide:
To all the shades around libations pour,
And o'er th' ingredients throw the ballow'd flour:
New wine and milk, with honey temper'd, bring,
And living water from the crystal spring.
Then the wan shades and feebile ghosts implore,
With promis'd off' rings on thy native shore;
A barren cow, the stateliest of the isle,
And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pyle:
These to the rest; but to the seer must bleed
A sable ram, the pride of all thy breed.
These solemn vows and holy off' rings paid
To all the phantom nations of the dead,
Be next thy care the sable sheep to place
Full o'er the pit, and hell-ward turn their face:
But from th' infernal rite thine eye withdraw,
And back to Ocean glance with rev'rend awe.
Sudden shall skim along the dusky glades
Thin airy shoals, and visionary shades.
Then give command the sacrifice to haste,
Let the slain's victims in the flames be cast,
And sacred vows, and mystic song apply'd
To grisly Pluto and his gloomy bride.
Wide o'er the pool thy saulchion way'd around
Shall drive the spectres from forbidden ground:
The sacred draught shall all the dead forbear,
'Till awful from the shades arise the seer.
Let him, oracular, the end, the way,
The turns of all thy future fate display,
Thy pilgrimage to come, and remnant of thy day,
So speaking, from the ruddy orient shone
The morn conspicuous on her golden throne,
The goddess with a radiant tunic dreft
My limbs, and o'er me cast a silken vest.
Long flowing robes of purest white array
The nymph, that added lustre to the day:
A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold;
Her waist was circled with a zone of gold.
Forth issuing then, from place to place I flew;
Rouze man by man, and animate my crew:
Rise, rise my mates! 'tis Circe gives command:
Our journey calls us; haste, and quit the land.
All rise and follow, yet depart not all,
For fate decreed one wretched man to fall.
A youth there was, Elpenor was he nam'd,
Not much for sense, nor much for courage fam'd;
The youngest of our band, a vulgar soul!
Born but to banquet, and to drain the bowl.
He, hot and careless, on a turret's height
With sleep repair'd the long debauch of night:
The sudden tumult stirr'd him where he lay,
And down he hasten'd, but forgot the way;
Full endlong from the roof the sleeper fell,
And snap'd the spinal joint, and wak'd in hell.
The rest crowd round me with an eager look;
I met them with a sigh, and thus bespoke:
Already, friends! ye think your toils are o' er;
Your hopes already touch your native shore:
Alas! far otherwise the nymph declares,
Far other journey first demands our cares;
To tread th' uncomfortable paths beneath,
The dreary realms of darkness and of death:
To seek Tiresias' awful shade below,
And thence our fortunes and our fates to know.

My sad companions heard in deep despair;
Frantic they tore their manly growth of hair;
To earth they fell; the tears began to rain;
But tears in mortal miseries are vain.
Sadly they far'd along the sea-beat shore;
Still heav'd their hearts, and still their eyes ran o' er.
The ready victims at our bark we found,
The fable ewe, and ram, together bound.
For swift as thought, the goddess had been there,
And thence had glided, viewless as the air:
The paths of gods what mortal can survey?
Who eyes their motion? who shall trace their way?
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XI.
THE ARGUMENT.

The descent into hell.

Ulysses continues his narration, how he arriv'd at the land of the Cimmerians, and what ceremonies he performed to invoke the dead. The manner of his descent, and the apparition of the shades. His conversation with Elpenor, and with Tiresias, who informs him in a prophetic manner of his fortunes to come. He meets his mother Anticlea, from whom he learns the state of his family. He sees the shades of the antient heroines, afterwards of the heroes, and converses in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a fullen distance, and disdains to answer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Sisyphus, Hercules; till he is deterred from further curiosity by the apparition of horrid spectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.
THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XI.

NOW to the shores we bend, a mournful train!
Climb the tall bark, and launch into the main:
At once the mast we rear, at once unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind:
Then pale and pensive stand, with cares oppressed,
And solemn horror saddens ev'ry breast.
A fresh'ning breeze the magic pow'r supply'd,
While the wing'd vessel flew along the tide;
Our oars we shipp'd: all day the swelling fails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales.

Now sunk the sun from his aereal height,
And o'er the shaded billows rush'd the night:
When lo! we reach'd old Ocean's utmost bounds,
Where rocks controul his waves with ever-during mounds.

There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells,
The dusky nation of Cimmeria dwells:
The sun ne'er views th' uncomfortable seats,
When radiant he advances, or retreats:
Unhappy race! whom endless night invades,
Clouds the dull air, and wraps them round in shades.

The ship we moor on these obscure abodes;
Dis-bark the sheep, an off'ring to the gods;

* Circe.
And hell-ward bending, o'er the beach descry
The dolesome passage to th' infernal sky.
The victims, vow'd to each Tartarean pow'r,
Eurylochus and Perimedes bore.
Here open'd hell, all hell I here implor'd,
And from the scabbard drew the shining sword;
And trenching the black earth on ev'ry side,
A cavern form'd, a cubic long and wide.
Now wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
Then living waters from the crystal spring;
O'er these was strow'd the consecrated flour,
And on the surface thone the holy store.
Now the wan shades we hail, th' infernal gods,
To speed our course, and waft us o'er the floods.
So shall a barren heifer from the stall
Beneath the knife upon your altars fall;
So in our palace, at our safe return,
Rich with unnumber'd gifts the pyle shall burn;
So shall a ram, the largest of the breed,
Black as these regions, to Tiresias bleed.
Thus solemn rites and holy vows we paid
To all the phantom nations of the dead.
Then dy'd the sheep; a purple torrent flow'd,
And all the cavern smok'd with streaming blood.
When lo! appear'd along the dusky coasts,
Thin, airy foals of visionary ghosts;
Fair, pensive youths, and soft enamour'd maids,
And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled shades;
Ghastly with wounds the forms of warriors slain
Stalk'd with majestic port, a martial train:
These and a thousand more swarm'd o'er the ground,
And all the dire assembly shriek'd around.
Astonish'd at the sight, aghast I stood,
And a cold fear ran th' ring through my blood.
Strait I command the sacrifice to haste,
Strait the flea'd victims to the flames are cast,
And mutter'd vows, and mystic song apply'd.
To grisly Pluto, and his gloomy bride.
Now swift I wav'd my fauchion o'er the blood;
Back started the pale thongs; and trembling flood.
Round the black trench the gore untasted flows,
'Till awful from the shades Tiresias rose.
There, wand'rering thro' the gloom I first survey'd,
New to the realms of death, Elpenor's shade:
His cold remains all naked to the sky
On distant shores unwept, unburied ly.
Sad at the sight I stand, deep fix'd in woe,
And ere I spoke the tears began to flow.
O say what angry pow'r Elpenor led
To glide in shades, and wander with the dead?
How could thy soul, by realms and seas disjoin'd,
Out-fly the nimble fail, and leave the lagging wind?
The ghost reply'd: To hell my doom I owe,
Daemons accrue, dire ministers of woe!
My feet thro' wine unfaithful to their weight,
Betray'd me tumbling from a tow'ry height;
Stagg'ring I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
Lux'd the neck joint—my soul descends to hell.
But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend,
By the soft ycle and sacred name of friend!
By thy fond comfort! by thy father's cares!
By lov'd Telemachus his blooming years!
For well I know that soon the heav'nly pow'r's
Will give thee back to-day, and Circe's shores:
There pious on my cold remains attend,
There call to mind thy poor departed friend,
The tribute of a tear is all I crave,
And the possession of a peaceful grave.
But if unheard, in vain compassion plead,
Revere the gods; the gods avenge the dead!
A tomb along the wat'ry margin raise,
The tomb with manly arms and trophies grace,
To shew posterity Elpenor was.
There high in air, memorial of my name,
Fix the smooth oar, and bid me live to fame
To whom with tears; These rites, oh mournful shade!
Due to thy ghost, shall to thy ghost be paid.
Still as I spoke the phantom seem'd to moan,
Tear follow'd tear, and groan succeede groan.
But as my waving sword the blood surrounds,
The shade withdrew, and mutter'd empty sounds.

There as the wond'rous visions I survey'd,
All pale ascends my royal mother's shade:
A queen, to Troy she saw our legions pass;
Now a thin form is all Anticlea was!
Struck at the sight I melt with filial woe,
And down my cheek the pious sorrows flow:
Yet as I shook my fauchion o'er the blood,
Regardless of her son the parent stood.

When lo! the mighty Theban I behold:
To guide his steps he bore a staff of gold;
Awful he trod! majestic was his look!
And from his holy lips these accents broke:

Why, mortal, wand'rest thou from cheerful day,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
What angry gods to these dark regions led
Thee yet alive, companion of the dead?
But sheath thy ponyard, while my tongue relates
Heavn's steadfast purpose, and thy future fates.

While yet he spoke, the prophet I obey'd,
And in the scabbard plung'd the glitt'ring blade:
Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then exprest
Dark things to come, the counsels of his breast.

Weary of light, Ulysses here explores,
A prosp'rous voyage to his native shores;
But know——by me unerring fates disclose
New trains of dangers, and new scenes of woes;
I see! I see, thy bark by Neptune tost,
For injur'd Cyclops, and his eyeball lost!
Yet to thy woes the gods decree an end,
If heav'n thou please; and how to please attend:
Where on Trinacrian rocks the ocean roars,
Graze num'rous herds along the verdant shores;
Tho' hunger prefs, yet fly the dang'rous prey,
The herds are sacred to the god of day,
Who all surveys with his extensive eye
Above, below, on earth, and in the sky!
Rob not the god, and so propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impell thy sails:
But if his herds ye seize, beneath the waves
I see thy friends o'erwhelm'd in liquid graves!
The direful wreck Ulysses scarce survives!
Ulysses at his country scarce arrives!
Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end,
New foes arrive, domestic ills attend!
These soul adult'rs to thy bride resort,
And lordly gluttons riot in thy court.
But vengeance haftes amain! these eyes behold
The deathful scene, princes on princes roll'd!
That done, a people far from sea explore,
Who ne'er knew salt, nor heard the billows roar,
Or saw gay vessel item the wat'ry plain,
A painted wonder flying on the main!
Bear on thy back an oar: with strange amaze
A shepherd meeting thee, the oar surveys,
And names a van: there fix it on the plain,
To calm the god that holds the wat'ry reign;
A threefold off'ren to his altar bring,
A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the ocean-king.
But home return'd, to each aethereal pow'r
Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
So peaceful shalt thou end thy blissful days,
And steal thyself from life by slow decays:
Unknown to pain in age resign thy breath,
When late stern Neptune points the shaft with death:
To the dark grove retiring as to rest,
Thy people blessing, by thy people blest!
Unerring truths, oh man! my lips relate;
This is thy life to come, and this is fate.
To whom unnov'd: If this the gods prepare,
What heav'n ordains the wife with courage bear.
But say, why yonder on the lonely strands,
Unmindful of her son, Anticlea stands?

Why to the ground she bends her downcast eye?
Why is she silent, while her son is nigh?
The latent cause, oh sacred seer, reveal!

Nor this, replies the seer, will I conceal.
Know, to the spectators, that thy bevrage taste,
The scenes of life recur, and actions past;
They, seal'd with truth, return the sure reply;
The rest repell'd, a train oblivions, fly.

The phantom-prophet ceas'd, and sunk from sight
To the black palace of eternal night.

Still in the dark abodes of death I stood,
When near Anticlea mov'd, and drank the blood.

Strait all the mother in her soul awakes,
And owning her Ulysses, thus she speaks:

Com'st thou, my son, alive, to realms beneath,
The dolesome realms of darkness and of death:
Com'st thou alive from pure ethereal day?

Dire is the region, dismal is the way!
Here lakes profound, there floods oppose their waves,
There the wide sea, with all his billows, raves!

Or (since to dust-proud Troy submits her tow'rs)
Com'st thou a wand'rer from the Phrygian shores?

Or say, since honour call'd thee to the field,
Haft thou thy Ithaca, thy bride, beheld?
Source of my life, I cry'd, from earth I fly

To seek Tiresias in the nether sky,
To learn my doom: for tos'd from woe to woe,
In ev'ry land Ulysses finds a foe:

Nor have these eyes beheld my native shores
Since in the dust proud Troy submits her tow'rs.

But, when thy soul from her sweet mansion fled,
Say, what distemper gave thee to the dead?
Has life's fair lamp declin'd by slow decays,
Or swift expir'd it in a sudden blaze?
Say, if my sire, good old Laertes, lives?

If yet Telemachus my son survives?
Book XI.  HOMER's ODYSSEY.

Say, by his rule is my dominion aw'd,
Or crush'd by traitors with an iron rod?
Say, if my spouse maintains her royal trufk,
Though tempted, chaste, and obstinately just;
Or if no more her absent lord she wails,
But the false woman o'er the wife prevails.

Thus I: and thus the parent shade returns:
Thee, ever thee, thy faithful comfort mourns:
Whether the night descends, or-day prevails,
Thee she by night, and thee by day-bewails.
Thee in Telemachus thy realm obey's:
In sacred groves celestial rites he pays,
And shares the banquet in superior state;
Grac'd with such honours as become the great.

Thy fire in solitude foment's his case:
The court is joyless, for thou art not there!
No costly carpets raise his hoary head,
No rich embrod'ry shines to grace his bed:
Ev'n when keen winter freezes in the skies,
Rank'd with his slaves on earth the monarch lyes:
Deep are his sighs, his visage pale, his dress
The garb of woe, and habit of distress.
And when the autumn takes his annual round,
The leafy honours scatter ring on the ground,
Regardless of his years, abroad he lyes,
His bed the leaves, his canopy the skies.
Thus cares on care his painful days consume,
And bow his age with sorrow to the tomb!

For thee, my son; I wept my life away;
For thee through hell's eternal dungeons stray;
Nor came my fate by ling'ring pains and slow,
Nor bent the silver shafted queen her bow;
No-dire disease-bereav'd me of my breath:
Thou, thou my son, wert my disease and death:
Unkindly with my love my son-conspir'd;
For thee I liv'd, for absent thee expir'd.

Thrice in my arms I strove her shade to bind;
Thrice thro' my arms she slippt like empty wind,
Or dreams, the vain illusions of the mind.
Wild with despair, I shed a copious tide
Of flowing tears, and thus with sighs reply'd:
Fly'st thou, lov'd shade, while I thus fondly mourn?
Turn to my arms, to my embraces turn!
Is it, ye pow'rs that smile at human harms!
Too great a bliss to weep within her arms?
Or has hell's queen an empty image sent,
That wretched I might ev'n my joys lament?
O son of woe! the pensive shade reclin'd,
Oh most inur'd to grief of all mankind!
'Tis not the queen of hell who thee deceives:
All, all are such, when life the body leaves;
No more the substance of the man remains,
Nor bounds the blood along the purple veins;
These the funereal flames in atoms bear,
To wander with the wind in empty air,
While the impassive soul reluctant flies
Like a vain dream to these infernal skies.
But from the dark dominion speed thy way,
And climb the steep ascent to upper day;
To thy chaste bride she wondrous story tell,
The woes, the horrors, and the laws of hell.

Thus while she spoke, in swarms hell's empress brings
Daughters and wives of heroes and of kings;
Thick, and more thick they gather round the blood,
'Ghost throng'd on ghost (a dire assembly) stood!
Dauntless my sword I seize: the airy crew,
Swift, as it flash'd along the gloom, withdrew;
Then shade to shade in mutual forms succeeds,
Her race recounts, and their illustrious deeds.

Tyro began: whom great Salomeus bred;
The royal partner of Salmoneus' bed.
For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
He pours his wat'ry store, the virgin burns;
Smooth flows the gentle stream with wanton pride
And in soft mazes rolls a silver tide:
As on his banks the maid enamour'd roves,
The monarch of the deep beholds and loves;
In her Enipeus' form and borrow'd charms,  
The am'rous god descends into her arms:  
Around a spacious arch of waves he throws,  
And high in air the liquid mountain rose:  
Thus in surrounding floods conceal'd he proves  
The pleasing transport, and compleats his loves:  
Then softly singing, he the fair address'd,  
And as he spoke, her tender hand he prest:
Hail, happy nymph! no vulgar births are ow'd.  
To the prolix raptures of a god:
Lo! when nine times the moon renew's her horn,  
Two brother-heroes shall from thee be born;  
Thy early care the future worthies claim,  
To point them to the arduous paths of fame.
But in thy breast th' impostant truth conceal,  
Nor dare the secret of a god reveal:
For know, thou Neptune, view'st! and at my nod  
Earth trembles, and the waves confess their god.
He added not, but mounting spurn'd the plain,
Then plung'd into the chambers of the main.
Now in the time's full process forth he brings  
Jove's dread vicegerents, in two future kings;
O'er proud Iolcos Pelias stretch'd his reign,
And god-like Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain:
Then fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed.
She gallant Phereus and fam'd Asklepios:
From the same fountain Amysheon rose,
Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble shout of foes:
There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
Who blest th' almighty thund'rer in her arms;
Hence sprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
Founders of Thebes; and men of mighty name;
Tho' bold in open field, they yet surround
The town with walls, and mound inflict on mound;
Here ramparts stood, there town's rose high in air,
And here through sev'n wide-portals rush'd the war.
There with soft step the fair Alcmene trod,
Who bore Alcides to the thund'ring god;
And Megara, who charm'd the son of Jove,
And soften'd his stern soul to tender love.
Sullen and sour with discontented mien
Jocasta crown'd, th' incestuous Theban queen:
With her own son she join'd in nuptial bands,
Though father's blood imbru'd his murderous hands.
The gods and men the dire offence detest,
The gods with all their furies rend his breast:
In lofty Thebes he wore th' imperial crown,
A pompous wretch! accurs'd upon a throne.
The wife fell-murder'd from a beam depends,
And her soul soul to blackest hell descends;
Than to her son the choiceest plagues she brings,
And the fiends haunt him with a thousand slings.
And now the beauteous Chloris I descrie,
A lovely shade, Amphion's youngest joy!
With gifts unnumber'd Neleus sought her arms,
Nor paid too dearly for unequall'd charms;
Great in Orchomenos; in Pylos great,
He sway'd the sceptre with imperial state.
Three gallant sons the joyfull monarch told;
Sage Nestor, Periclimenus the bold,
And Chromius last; but of the softer race,
One nymph alone, a miracle of grace.
Kings on their thrones for lovely Pero burn,
The fire denies, and kings rejected mourn,
To him alone the beauteous prize he yields,
Whose arm should ravish from Phylacian fields
The herds of Iphycus, detain'd in wrong;
Wild, furious herds, unconquerably strong!
This dares a seer, but nought the seer prevails,
In beauty's estate illustriously he fails:
Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detain's
In painful dungeons, and coercive chains;
The foe at last from durance where he lay,
His art revering, gave him back to day;
Won by prophetic knowledge to fulfill
The steadfast purpose of th' almighty will.
With graceful port advancing now I spy'd
Leda the fair, the god-like Tyndar's bride:
Hence Pollux sprung, who wields, with furious sway,
The deathful gauntlet, matchless in the fray;
And Castor, glorious on th' embattled plain,
Curb'd the proud steed, reluctant to the rein:
By turns they visit this ethereal sky,
And live alternate, and alternate die:
In hell beneath, on earth, in heav'n above,
Reign the twin-gods, the fav'rite sons of Jove.

There Ephyemia trod the gloomy plain,
Who charm'd the monarch of the boundless main;
Hence Ephialtes, hence stern Otus sprung,
More fierce than giants, more than giants strong;
The earth o'er-burden'd groan'd beneath their weight,
None but Orion e'er surpased their height:
The wondrous youths had scarce nine winters told;
When high in air, tremend'ous to behold,
Nine ells aloft they rear'd their tow'ring head,
And full nine cubits broad their shoulders spread.
Proud of their strength, and more than mortal size,
The gods they challenge, and affect the skies;
Heav'd on Olympus tottering, Ossa stood;
On Ossa, Pelion nods with all his wood:
Such were the youths! had they to manhood grown,
Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne.

But ere the harvest of the beard began
To bristle on the chin, and promise man,
His shafts Apollo aim'd; at once they found,
And stretch the giant monsters o'er the ground.

There mournful Phaedra with sad Procris moves,
Both beauteous shades, both hapless in their loves!
And near them walk'd, with solemn pace and flow,
Sad Ariadne, partner of their woe:
The royal Minos Ariadne bred;
She Theseus lov'd; from Crete with Theseus fled:
Swift to the Dian isle the hero flies,
And to'wards his Athens bears the lovely prize;
There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires,
The goddess aims her shaft, the nymph expires.
There Clymene and Maera I behold;
There Eriphyle weeps, who loosely fold
Her to the mead, her honour for the lust of gold.
But should I all recount, the night would fail,
Unequal to the melancholy tale:
And all-composing rest my nature craves;
Here in the court, or yonder on the waves;
In you I trust, and in the heav'nly pow'rs,
To land Ulysses on his native shores.

He ceas'd: but left so charming on their ear
His voice, that lift'ning still they seem'd to hear:
'Till rising up, Arete silence broke,
Stretch'd out her snowy hand, and thus she spoke:

What wond'rous man heav'n sends us in our guest!
Through all his woes the hero shines in sight:
His comely port, his ample frame, express
A manly air, majestic in distress.
He, as my guest, is my peculiar care;
You share the pleasure,—then in bounty share;
To worth in misery a reverence pay,
And with a gen'rous hand reward his flag:
For since kind heav'n with wealth our realm has blest,
Give it to heav'n, by aiding the distress.

Then sage Echeneus, whose grave, rev'rend brow
The hand of time had silver'd 'er with snow,
Mature in wisdom, rose: Your words, he cries,
Demand obedience, for your words are wise.
But let our king direct the glorious way:
To gen'rous acts: our part is to obey.
While life informs these limbs, the king reply'd,
Well to deserve, be all my cares employ'd.
But here this night the royal guest detain,
'Till the sun flames along th' ethereal plain:
Be it my task to send, with ample stores,
The stranger from our hospitable shores.
Tread you my steps; 'tis mine to lead the race,
The first in glory, as the first in place.
To whom the prince: This night with joy I stay,
O monarch great in virtue as in sway!
If thou the circling year my stay controul,
To raise a bounty noble as thy soul;
The circling year I wait, with ampler flores
And fitter pomp to hail my native shores;
Then by my realms due homage would be paid;
For wealthy kings are loyal obey'd!
O king! for such thou art, and sure thy blood
Through veins, he cry'd, of royal fathers flow'd;
Unlike those vagrants who on fallhood live,
Skill'd in smooth tales, and artful to deceive;
Thy better soul abhors the liar's part,
Wife is thy voice, and noble is thy heart.
Thy words like music ev'ry breast controul,
Steal through the ear, and win upon the soul;
Soft, as some song divine, thy glory flows,
Nor better could the muse record thy woes.

But say, upon the dark and dismal coast
Saw'st thou the worthies of the Grecian host,
The godlike leaders who, in battle slain,
Fell before Troy, and nobly prest the plain?
And lo! a length of night behind remains,
The ev'ning stars still mount th' ethereal plains:
Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,
Thy woes on earth, the wond'rous scenes in hell,
'Till in the vault of heav'n the stars decay,
And the sky reddens with the rising day.

O worthy of the pow'r the gods assign'd,
Ulysses thus replies, a king in mind!
Since yet the early hour of night allows
Time for discourse, and time for lost repose,
If scenes of misery can entertain,
Woes I unfold, of woes a dismal train.
Prepare to hear of murder and of blood;
Of god-like heroes who uninjur'd stood
Amidst a war of spears in foreign lands,
Yet bled at home, and bled by female hands.
Now summon'd Proserpine to hell's black hall
The heroine shades; they vanish'd at her call;
When lo! advanc'd the forms of heroes slain
By stern Ægysthus, a majestic train,
And high above the rest Atrides press the plain.
He quaff'd the gore; and strait his soldier knew,
And from his eyes pour'd down the tender dew;
His arms he stretch'd; his arms the touch deceive,
Nor in the fond embrace, embraces give:
His substance vanish'd, and his strength decay'd,
Now all Atrides is an empty shade.

Mov'd at the sight, I for a space resign'd
To soft affliction all my manly mind:
At last with tears—O what relentless doom,
Imperial phantom, bow'd thee to the tomb?
Say, while the sea, and while the tempest raves,
Has fate oppress'd thee in the roaring waves,
Or nobly seiz'd thee in the dire alarms
Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms?

The ghost returns: O chief of humankind
For active courage and a patient mind;
Not while the sea, nor while the tempest raves,
Has fate oppress'd me on the roaring waves;
Nor nobly seiz'd me in the dire alarms
Of war and slaughter, and the clash of arms.
Stab'd by a mur'd'rous hand Atrides dy'd,
A foul adul'trer, and a faithless bride;
Ev'n in my mirth and at the friendly feast,
O'er the full bowl, the traitor stab'd his guest;
Thus by the gory arm of slaughter falls
The stately ox, and bleeds within the stalls,
But not with me the direful murder ends,
These, these expir'd! their crime, they were my friends;
Thick as the boars which some luxurious lord
Kills for the feast, to crown the nuptial board.
When war has thunder'd with its loudest toms,
Death thou hast seen in all her ghastly forms;
In duel met her, on the lists'ed ground,
When hand to hand they wound return for wound;
But never have thy eyes astonish'd view'd
So vile a deed, so dire a scene of blood.
Ev'n in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
Glows in our veins, and opens ev'ry soul,
We groan, we faint; with blood the dome is dy'd,
And o'er the pavement floats the dreadful tide—
Her breast all gore, with lamentable cries,
The bleeding innocent Cassandra dies!
Then though pale death froze cold in ev'ry vein,
My sword I strive to wield, but strive in vain;
Nor did my trait'rous wife these eyelids close,
Or decently in death my limbs compose.
O woman, woman, when to ill thy mind
Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:
And such was mine! who basely plung'd her sword
Through the fond bosom where she reign'd ador'd!
Alas! I hop'd, the toils of war o'ercome,
To meet soft quiet and repose at home;
Delusive hope! O wife, thy deeds disgrace
The perjur'd sex, and blacken all the race;
And should posterity one virtuous find,
Name Clytemnestra, they will curse the kind.
O injur'd shade! I cry'd, what mighty woes
To thy imperial race from woman rose!
By woman here thou tread'st this mournful strand,
And Greece by woman lyes a desart land.
Warn'd by my ills, beware, the shade replies,
Nor trust the sex that is so rarely wise:
When earnest to explore thy secret breast,
Unfold some trifle, but conceal the rest.
But in thy comfort cease to fear a foe,
For thee she feels sincerity of woe:
When Troy first bled beneath the Grecian arms
She shone unrival'd with a blaze of charms,
Thy infant son her fragrant bosom prest,
Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breast;
But now the years a num'rous train have ran;
The blooming boy is ripen'd into man;
Thy eyes shall see him burn with noble fire,
The fire shall blest his son, the son his fire.
But my Orestes never met these eyes,
Without one look the murder'd father dies.

Then from a wretched friend this wisdom learn,
Ev'n to thy queen disguis'd, unknown, return;
For since of womankind so few are just,
Think all are false, nor ev'n the faithful trust.

But say, resides my son in royal port,
In rich Orchomenos, or Sparta's court?
Or say in Pyle? for yet he views the light,
Nor glides a phantom through the realms of night.

Then I: 'Thy suit is vain; nor can I say
If yet he breathes in realms of cheerful day,
Or pale and wan beholds these nether skies.
Truth I revere: for wisdom never lies.

Thus in a tide of tears our sorrows flow,
And add new horror to the realms of woe:
'Till side by side along the dreary coast
Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghost.
A friendly pair! near these the Pylian stray'd,
And tow'ring Ajax, an illustrious shade!
War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
None, but Pelides brighter shone in arms.

Through the thick gloom his friend Achilles knew,
And as he speaks, the tears descend in dew.

Com'st thou alive to view the Stygian bounds,
Where the was spectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'st the dark and dismal way to tread,
Throng'd with pale ghosts, familiar with the dead?

To whom with sighs: I pass the dreadful gates
To seek the Thibyan, and consult the fates:
For still distress I rove from coast to coast,
Lost to my friends, and to my country lost.

* Antilochus.
Book XI. H O M E R ' s O D Y S S E Y.

But sure the eye of time beholds no name
So blest as thine in all the rolls of fame;
Alive, we hail'd thee with our guardian gods;
And dead, thou rul'st a king in these abodes.

Talk not of ruling in this dol'rous gloom;
Not think vain words, he cry'd, can ease my doom:
Rather I chuse laboriously to bear
A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
A slave to some poor hind that toils for bread,
Than reign the scepter'd monarch of the dead.

But say, if in my steps my son proceeds,
And emulates his god-like father's deeds;
If at the clash of arms, and shout of foes,
Swells his bold heart, his bosom nobly glows?
Say, if my sire, the rev'rend Peleus, reigns
Great in his Pthia, and his throne maintains;
Or weak and old, my youthful arm demands,
To fix the sceptre steadfast in his hands?

O might the lamp of life rekindled burn,
And death release me from the silent urn!

This arm that thunder'd o'er the Phrygian plain,
And swell'd the ground with mountains of the plain,
Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,
Crush the proud rebel, and assert his claim.

Illustrious shade! I cry'd, of Peleus' fates

No circumstance the voice of fame relates;
But hear with pleas'd attention the renown;
The wars and, wisdom of thy gallant son:
With me from Scyros to the field of fame,
Radiant in arms, the blooming hero came:

When Greece assembled all her hundred states,
To ripen councils, and decide debates,

Heav'n's! how he charm'd us with a flow of sense,
And won the heart with manly eloquence!

He first was seen of all the peers to rise;

The third in wisdom where they all were wise;
But when, to try the fortune of the day,
Host mid tow'r'd host in terrible array,
Before the van, impatient for the fight,
With martial port he strode, and stern delight; 630
Heaps srow'd on heaps beneath his faulchion groan'd,
And monuments of dead deform'd the ground.
The time would fail should I in order tell
What foes were vanquish'd, and what numbers fell;
How, lost through love, Eurypylus was slain, 635
And round him bled his bold Caetean train.
To Troy no hero came of nobler line,
Or if of nobler, Memnon, it was thine.

When Ilion in the horse receiv'd her doom,
And unseen armies ambush'd in its womb; 640
Greece gave her latent warriors to my care,
'Twas mine on Troy to pour th' imprison'd war:
Then when the boldest bosom beat with fear,
When the stern eyes of heroes drop'd a tear;
Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd,
Flush'd in his cheek, or sall'y'd in his blood;
Indignant in the dark recce's he stands,
Pants for the battle, and the war demands;
His voice breath'd death, and with a martial air
He grasp'd his sword, and shook his glitt'ring spear. 650
And when the gods our arms with conquest crown'd,
When Troy's proud bulwarks smok'd upon the ground,
Greece to reward her soldier's gallant toils
Heap'd high his navy with unnumber'd spoils.

Thus great in glory from the din of war,
Safe he return'd without one hostile scar;
Though spears in ion tempests rain'd around,
Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltless of an wound.

While yet I spoke, the shade with transport glow'd,
Rose in his majesty, and nobler trod; 660
With haughty stalk he sought the distant glades
Of warrior kings, and join'd th' illustrious shades.

Now without number ghost by ghost arose,
All wailing with unutterable woes.

Alone, apart, in discontented mood
A gloomy shade! the fallen Ajax stood; 665
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For ever sad, with proud disdain he pin'd,
And the lost arms for ever stung his mind:
Though to the contest Thetis gave the laws,
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cause.
O, why was I victorious in the strife?
O dear-bought honour with so brave a life!
With him the strength of war, the soldiers pride,
Our second hope to great Achilles dy'd!
Touch'd at the sight from tears I scarce refrain,
And tender sorrow thrills in ev'ry vein;
Penitve and sad I stand, at length accord;
With accents mild, th' inexorable ghost:
Still burns thy rage? and can brave souls relent:
Ev'n after death? relent, great shade, relent!
Perish those arms which by the gods decree.
Aeac'sd our army with the loss of thee!
With thee we fell; Greece wept thy hapless fates;
And shook astonish'd through her hundred fates;
Not more, when great Achilles prest the ground,
And breath'd his manly spirit through the wound.
O deem thy fall not ow'd to man's decree!
Jove hated Greece, and punish'd Greece in thee!
Turn then, oh peaceful turn! thy wrath controul,
And calm the raging tempest of thy soul.

While yet I speak, the shade disdains to stay,
In silence turns, and sullen stalks away.
Touch'd at his own retreat, through deepest night;
Thro' hell's black bounds I had pursu'd his flight,
And forc'd the stubborn spectre to reply;
But wondrous visions drew my curious eye:
High on a throne tremend'ous to behold,
Stern Minos waves a mace of burnish'd gold;
Around, ten thousand thousand spectres stand
Through the wide dome of Dis, a trembling band!
Still as they plead, the fatal lots he rouls,
Absolves the just, and dooms the guilty souls.
There huge Orion of portentous size,
Swift thro' the gloom a giant-hunter flies.
A pond'rous mace of brass with direful sway
Aloft he whirls, to crush the savage prey;
Stern beaks in trains that by his truncheon fell,
Now gristy forms, shoot o'er the lawns of hell.

There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erspreads nine acres of infernal ground;
Two rav'rous vultures furious for their food
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,
Incessant gore the liver in his breast;
Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal feast.
For as o'er Panope's enam'ld plains
Latona journey'd to the Pythian fanes,
With haughty love th' audacious monster strove
To force the goddess, and to rival Jove.

There Tantalus along the Stygian bounds
Pours out deep groans, (with groans all hell resounds)
Ev'n in the circling floods refreshment craves,
And pines with thirst amidst a sea of waves;
When to the water he his lip applies,
Back from his lip the treach'rous water flies.
Above, beneath, around his hapless head,
Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage spread;
There figs sky-dy'd a purple hue disclose,
Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,
There dangling pears exalted scents unfold,
And yellow apples ripen into gold:
The fruit he strives to seize: but blasts arise,
Toss it on high, and whirl it to the skies.

I turn'd my eye, and as I turn'd survey'd
A mournful vision! the Sisyphian shade:
With many a weary step, and many a groan,
Up the high hill he heaves a huge round stone:
The huge round stone resulting with a bound,
Thunders impetuous down, and smokes along the ground.
Again the restless orb his toil renewes,
Duft mounts in clouds, and sweat descends in dews.

Now I the strength of Hercules behold,

A tow'ring spectre of gigantic mold,
A shadowy form! for high in heav’n’s abodes
Himself resides, a god among the gods:
There in the bright assemblies of the skies,
The nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
Here hov’ring ghosts, like fowl, his shade surround,
And clang their pinions with terrific sound;
Gloomy as night he stands, in act to throw
Th’ aerial arrow from the twanging bow.
Around his breast a wondrous zone is rowld;
Where woodland monsters grin in fretted gold.
There fallen lions sternly seem to roar,
The bear to growl, to foam the tuskly boar,
There war, and havoc, and destruction stood,
And vengeful murder red with human blood!
Thus terribly adorn’d the figures shine,
Inimitably wrought with skill divine.
The mighty ghost advance’d with awful look,
And turning his grim visage, sternly spoke:

O exercis’d in grief! by arts refin’d!
O taught to bear the wrongs of base mankind!
Such, such was I! still toil from care to care,
While in your world I drew the vital air;
Ev’n I who from the lord of thunders rose,
Bore toils, and dangers, and a weight of woes;
To a base monarch still a slave confin’d,
(The hardiest bondage to a gen’rous mind!)
Down to these worlds I trod the dismal way,
And dragg’d the three mouth’d dog to upper way;
Ev’n hell I conquer’d, through the friendly aid
Of Maia’s offspring and the martial maid.
Thus he; nor deign’d for our reply to stay,
But turning falk’d with giant strides away.
Curious to view the kings of antient days,
The mighty dead that live in endless praise,
Resolv’d I stand; and haply had survey’d
The god-like Theseus, and Perithous’ shade;
But swarms of spectres rose from deepest hell;
With bloodless visage, and with hideous yell.

T 3
They scream, they shriek; sad groans and dismal sounds
Stun my scar'd ears, and pierce hell’s utmost bounds.
No more my heart the dismal din sustains,
And my cold blood shags shiv'ring in my veins;
Left Gorgon rising from th' infernal lakes,
With horrors arm'd, and curls of hissing snakes,
Should fix me, fixed at the monstrous fight,
A stony image, in eternal night!
Strait from the direful coast to purer air
I speed my flight, and to my mates repair.
My mates ascend the ship; they strike their oars;
The mountains lessen, and retreat the shores:
Swift o'er the waves we fly; the fresh'ning gales
Sing through the shrouds, and stretch the swelling sails.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XII.
THE ARGUMENT.

The Sirens, Scylla, and Charybdis.

He relates, how after his return from the shades, he was sent by Circe on his voyage, by the coast of the Sirens, and by the fright of Scylla and Charybdis: the manner in which he escaped those dangers: how, being cast on the island Trinacria, his companions destroyed the oxen of the sun; the vengeance that followed: how all perished by shipwreck, except himself, who, swimming on the mast of the ship, arrived on the island of Calypso; with which his narration concludes.
THUS o'er the rowling surge the vessel flies,
Till from the waves th' Æcean hills arise.
Here the gay Morn resides in radiant bow'rs,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing Hours;
Here Phoebus rising in th' ethereal way,
Thro' heav'n's bright portals pours the beamy day.
At once we fix our haulers on the land,
At once descend, and press the desert sand;
There worn and wasted, lose our cares in sleep,
To the hoarse murmurs of the rowling deep.

Soon as the morn restor'd the day, we paid
Sepulchral honours to Elenor's shade.
Now by the axe the rushing forest bends,
And the huge pyle along the shore ascends.
Around we stand, a melancholy train!
And a loud groan re-echoes from the main.
Fierce o'er the pyre, by fanning breezes spread,
The hungry flame devours the silent dead.
A rising tomb, the silent dead to grace,
Fast by the roarings of the main we place;
The rising tomb a lofty column bore,
And high above it rode the tap'ring oar.

Mean-time the * goddes our return survey'd
From the pale ghosts, and hell's tremend'ous shade.

* Circe.
Swift she descends: a train of nymphs divine
Bear the rich viands and the gen'rous wine:
In act to speak the pow'r of magic stands,
And graceful thus accosts the lifting bands:
O sons of woe! decreed by adverse fates
Alive to pass through hell's eternal gates!
All, soon or late, are doom'd that path to tread:
More wretched you! twice number'd with the dead!
This day adjourn your cares; exalt your souls,
Indulge the taste, and drain the sparkling bowls:
And when the morn unveils her saffron ray,
Spread your broad sails, and plow the liquid way.
Lo! this night, your faithful guide, explain
Your woes by land, your dangers on the main.

The goddess spoke. In feasts we waste the day,
'Till Phoebus downward plung'd his burning ray;
Then sable night ascends, and balmy rest
Seals ev'ry eye, and calms the troubled breast.
Then curious she commands me to relate
The dreadful scenes of Pluto's dreary state.
She sat in silence while the tale I tell,
The wond'rous visions, and the laws of hell.

Then thus: The lot of man the gods dispose;
These ills are past; now hear thy future woes.
O prince attend! some fav'ring pow'r be kind,
And print th' important story on thy mind!

Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plow the seas;
Their song is death, and makes destruction plente.
Unblest the man, whom music wins to stay
Nigh the curst shore, and listen to the lay!
No more that wretch shall view the joys of life,
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife!
In verdant meads they sport, and wide around
Ly human bones, that whiten all the ground;
The ground polluted floats with human gore,
And human carnage taints the dreadful shore.

† Circe.
Fly swift the dang'rous coast; let ev'ry ear
Be stop'd against the song! 'tis death to hear!
Firm to the mast with chains thyself be bound,
Nor trust thy virtue to th' enchanting sound.
If mad with transport, freedom thou demand,
Be ev'ry fetter strain'd, and added band to band.

These seas o'erpass'd, be wise! but I refrain
To mark distinct thy voyage o'er the main:
New horrors rise! let prudence be thy guide,
And guard thy various passage through the tide.

High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
The boiling billows thund'ring roll below;
Through the vast waves the dreadful wonders move,
Hence nam'd Erratic by the gods above.
No bird of air, nor dove of swiftest wing,
That bears ambrosia to th' ethereal king,
Shuns the dire rocks: in vain she cuts the skies,
The dire rocks meet, and crush her as she flies:
Not the fleet bark, when prosp'rous breezes play,
Plows o'er that roaring surge its desper'ate way;
O'erwhelm'd it sinks: while round a smoke expires,
And the waves flashing seem to burn with fires:
Scarce the fam'd Argo pass'd these raging floods,
The sacred Argo, fill'd with demigods!
Ev'n she had sunk, but Jove's imperial bride
Wing'd her fleet sail, and push'd her o'er the tide.

High in the air the rock its summit shrouds
In brooding tempests and in roulmg clouds;
Loud storms around and mist's eternal rise,
Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the skies.
When all the broad expansion, bright with day,
Glows with th' autumnal or the summer ray,
The summer and the autumn glows in vain,
The sky for ever low'rs, for ever clouds remain.
Impervious to the step of man it stands,
Tho' born by twenty feet, tho' arm'd with twenty hands;
Smooth as the polish of the mirror rise
The flipp'ry sides, and shoot into the skies.
Full in the centre of this rock display'd,
A yawning cavern casts a dreadful shade:
Nor the fleet arrow from the twanging bow,
Sent with full force, could reach the depth-below.
Wide to the west the horrid gulf extends,
And the dire passage down to hell descends.
O fly the dreadful fight! expand thyails,
Ply the strong oar, and catch the nimble gales;
Here Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
Tremendous peal! abhorred by man and gods!
Hideous her voice, and with less terrors roar
The whelps of lions in the midnight hour.
Twelve feet deform'd and foul the fiend dispers'd;
Six horrid necks she rears, and six terrific heads;
Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth;
Jaggy they stand, the gaping den of death:
Her parts obscene the raging billows hide;
Her bosom terribly o'erlooks the tide.
When stung with hunger she embroils the flood,
The sea-dog and the dolphin are her food;
She makes the huge leviathan her prey,
And all the monsters of the wat'ry way:
The swiftest racer of the azure plain
Here fills her sails and spreads her oars in vain;
Fell Scylla rises, in her fury roars,
At once six mouths expands, at once six men devours.
Close by, a rock of less enormous height
Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dangerous freight;
Full on its crown a fig's green branches rise,
And shoot a leafy forest to the skies;
Beneath, Charybdis holds her boisterous reign
'Midst roaring whirlpools, and absorbs the main;
Thrice in her guls the boiling seas subside,
Thrice in dire thunders she refinds the tide.
Oh! if thy vessel plow the direful waves
When seas retreating roar within her caves,
Ye perish all! though he who rules the main
Lends his strong aid, his aid he lends in vain.
Ah shun the horrid gulf! by Scylla fly;
'Tis better six to lose, than all to die.

I then: O nymph propitious to my pray'r,
Goddes divine, my guardian pow'r, declare.

Is the soul fiend from human vengeance freed?
Or if I rise in arms, can Scylla bleed?

Then she: O worn by toils, oh broke in sight!
Still are new toils and war thy dear delight?
Will martial flames for ever fire thy mind,
And never, never be heav'n resign'd?

How vain thy efforts to avenge the wrong?
Deathless the pest! impenetrably strong!
Furious and fell! tremendous to behold!
Ev'n with a look she withers all the bold!

She mocks the weak attempts of human might;
O fly her rage! thy conquest is thy sight.

If but to seize thy arms thou mak'st delay,
Again the Fury vindicates her prey,
Her six mouths yawn, and six are snatch'd away.

From her foul womb Cratacis gave to air
This dreadful pest! to her direct thy pray'r,
To curb the monster in her dire abodes,
And guard thee through the tumult of the floods.

Thence to Trinacria's shore you bend your way,
Where graze thy herds, illustrious source of day!

Sev'n herds, sev'n flocks enrich the sacred plains,
Each herd, each flock full fifty heads contains;
The wond'rous kind a length of age survey,
By breed increase not, nor by death decay.

Two sister-goddesses possess the plain,
The constant guardians of the woolly train;
Lampetie fair, and Phaeathusa young,
From Phoebus and the bright Neaera sprung:

Here watchful o'er the flocks, in shady bow'rs
And flow'ry meads, they waste the joyous hours.
Rob not the god! and so propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impell thy sails;
But if thy impious hands the flocks destroy,
The gods, the gods avenge it, and ye die! 175
'Tis thine alone (thy friends and navy lost).
Through tedious toils to view thy native coast.
She ceased: and now arose the morning ray;
Swift to her dome the goddess held her way.
Then to my mates I measur'd back the plain,
Climb'd the tall bark, and rush'd into the main;
Then bending to the stroke, their oars they drew
To their broad breasts, and swift the galley flew.
Up-sprung a brisker breeze; with fresh'ning gales
The friendly goddess stretch'd the swelling sails: 185
We drop our oars; at ease the pilot guides;
The vessel light along the level glides;
When rising sad and slow, with pensive look,
Thus to the melancholy train I spoke:
'O friends, oh ever partners of my woes! 190
Attend while I what heav'n foredooms disclose;
Hear all! fate hangs o'er all! on you it lyes
To live, or perish; to be safe, be wise!
In flow'ry meads the sportive Sirens play,
Touch the soft lyre, and tune the vocal lay:
Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
The gods allow to hear the dang'rous sound.
Hear and obey; if freedom I demand,
Be ev'ry fetter strain'd, be added band to band.
While yet I spoke the winged galley flies, 200
And lo! the Siren shores like mills arise.
Sunk were at once the winds; the air above,
And waves below, at once forgot to move:
Some daemon calm'd the air, and smooth'd the deep,
Hush'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to sleep.
Now ev'ry sail we furl, each oar we ply;
Lash'd by the stroke the frothy waters fly.
The dusky wax with busy hands I mold,
And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd:
Th' aereal region now grew warm with day, 210
The wax di'solv'd beneath the burning-ray;
Then ev'ry ear I barr'd against the strain,
And from access of frenzy lock'd the brain.
Now round the mast my mates the setters roll'd;
And bound me limb by limb, with fold on fold. 215.
Then bending to the stroke, the active train
Plunge all at once their oars, and cleave the main.

While to the shore the rapid vessel flies,
Our swift approach the Siren quire descries;
Celestial music warbles from their tongue,
And thus the sweet deludes the song:

O stay, oh pride of Greece! Ulysses, stay!
O cease thy course, and listen to our lay!
Blest is the man ordain'd our voice to hear;
The song instructs the soul, and charms the ear. 225
Approach! thy soul shall into raptures rise!
Approach! and learn new wisdom from the wise!
We know what'er the kings of mighty name
Atchiev'd at Ilium in the field of fame;
What'er beneath the sun's bright journey lyes. 230
O stay, and learn new wisdom from the wise!

Thus the sweet charmers warbled o'er the main;
My soul takes wing to meet the heav'nly strain;
I give the sign, and struggle to be free:
Swift row my mates, and shoot along the sea; 235
New chains they add, and rapid urge the way,
Till dying off, the distant sounds decay:
Then scudding swiftly from the dang'rous ground,
The deasen'd ear unlock'd, the chains unbound.

Now all at once tremendous scenes unfold; 240
Thunder'd the deeps, the smoking billows roll'd!
Tumultuous waves embroil'd the bellowing flood;
All trembling, deasen'd, and aghast we stood!
No more the vessel plow'd the dreadful wave,
Pear seiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave; 245
Each dropp'd his oar: but swift from man to man
With look serene I turn'd, and thus began:
O friends! oh often try'd in adverse storms!
With ills familiar in more dreadful storms!
Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay,  
Yet safe return'd——Ulysses led the way.  
Learn courage hence! and in my care confide:  
Lo! still the same Ulysses is your guide!  
Attend my words! your oars incessant ply;  
Strain ev'ry nerve, and bid the vessel fly.  
If from yon juggling rocks and wavy war  
Jove safety grants, he grants it to your care.
And thou whose guiding hand directs our way,  
Pilot, attentive listen and obey!  
Bear wide thy course, nor plow those angry waves  
Where rolls yon smoke, yon tumbling ocean raves;  
Steer by the higher rock; lest whirl'd around  
We sink, beneath the circling eddy drown'd.
While yet I speak, at once their oars they seize,  
Stretch to the stroke, and brush the working seas.  
Cautious the name of Scylla I suppress;  
That dreadful sound had chill'd the boldest breast.
Mean-time, forgetful of the voice divine,  
All dreadful bright my limbs in armour shine;  
High on the deck I take my dang'rous stand,  
Two glittering jav'ins lighten in my hand;  
Prepar'd to whirl the whizzing spear I stay,  
'Till the fell fiend arise to seize her prey.  
Around the dungeon, studious to behold  
The hideous pest, my lab'ring eyes I roll'd;  
In vain! the dismal dungeon dark as night  
Veils the dire monster, and confounds the sight.
Now thro' the rocks, appal'd with deep dismay,  
We bend our course, and item the des'rate way;  
Dire Scylla there a scence of horror forms,  
And here Charybdis fills the deep with storms.  
When the tide rushes from her rumbling caves  
The rough rock roars; tumultuous boil the waves;  
They toss, they foam, a wild confusion raise,  
Like waters bubbling o'er the fiery blaze;  
Eternal mists obscure th' aerial plain,  
And high above the rock she spouts the main;
When in her guls the rushing sea subsides,
She drains the ocean with the refluent tides:
The rock rebellows with a thund'ring sound; 299
Deep, won'drous deep, below appears the ground.
Struck with despair, with trembling hearts we view'd
The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood;
When lo! fierce Scylla swoop'd to seize her prey,
Stretch'd her dire jaws, and swept six men away; 295
Chiefs of renown! loud echoing shrieks arise;
I turn and view them quiv'ring in the skies;
They call, and aid with out-stretch'd arms implore:
In vain they call! those arms are stretch'd no more.
As from some rock that over-hangs the flood,
The silent fisher casts th' insidious food,
With fraudulent care: he waits the fishy prize;
And sudden lifts it quiv'ring to the skies:
So the foul monster lifts her prey on high,
So pant the wretches, struggling in the sky;
In the wide dungeon she devours her food,
And the flesh trembles while she churns the blood.
Worn as I am with griefs, with care decay'd,
Never, I never scene so dire survey'd!
My shiv'ring blood congeal'd, forgot to flow,
Aghast I stood, a monument of woe!
Now from the rocks the rapid vessel flies,
And the hoarse din like distant thunder dies:
To Sol's bright isle our voyage we pursue;
And now the glitt'ring mountains rise to view.
There sacred to the radiant god of day
Graze the fair herds, the flocks promiscuous stray:
Then suddenly was heard along the main
To low the ox, to bleat the woolly train;
Strait to my anxious thoughts the sound convey'd
The words of Circe and the Theban shade;
Warn'd by their awful voice these shores to shun,
With cautious fears oppress, I thus begun:
O friends! oh ever exercis'd in care!
Hear heav'n's commands, and reverence what ye hear!
To fly these shores the prescient Theban shade
And Circe warns; O be their voice obey'd!
Some mighty woe relentless heav'n forebodes:
Fly the dire regions, and revere the gods!
While yet I spoke, a sudden sorrow ran
'Thou every breast, and spread from man to man,
Thy wrathful thus Eurylochus began:
O cruel thou! some Fury sure has fleld'd
That stubborn soul, by toil untaught to yield!
From sleep debarr'd, we sink from woes to woes;
And, cruel, envied thou a short repose?
Still must we restless rove, new seas explore,
The sun descending, and so near the shore?
And lo! the night begins her gloomy reign,
And doubles all the terrors of the main.
Oft in the dead of night loud winds arise,
Lash the wild surge, and bluster in the skies;
Oh should the fierce south-west his rage display!
And tos with rising storms the wat'ry way,
'Tho' gods descend from heav'n's aerial plain
To lend us aid; the gods descend in vain:
Then while the night displays her awful shade,
Sweet time of slumber! be the night obey'd!
Haste ye to land: and when the morning ray
Sheds her bright beams, pursue the destin'd way.
A sudden joy in ev'ry bosom rose;
So will'd some daemon, minister of woes!
To whom with grief—O swift to be undone,
Constrain'd I act what wisdom bids me shun.
But yonder herds and yonder flocks forbear:
Attend the heav'n's, and call the gods to hear:
Content, in innocent repast display,
By Circe giv'n, and fly the dang'rous prey.
Thus I: and while to shore the vessel flies,
With hands uplifted they attest the skies;
Then where a fountain's gurgling waters play,
They rush to land, and end in feasts the day.
They feed; they quaff; and now (their hunger fled)
Sigh for their friends devour'd, and mourn the dead.
Nor cease the tears, till each in slumber shares
A sweet forgetfulness of human cares.

Now far the night advanced her gloomy reign,
And setting stars roll'd down the azure plain:
When, at the voice of Jove, wild whirlwinds rise;
And clouds and double darkness veil the skies;

The moon, the stars, the bright ethereal host,
Seem as extinct, and all their splendors lost;
The furious tempest roars with dreadful sound:
Air thunders, rolls the ocean, groans the ground.

All night it raged; when morning rose, to land
We haul'd our bark, and moor'd it on the strand,
Where in a beauteous grotto's cool recess
Dance the green Nereids of the neighboring seas.

There while the wild winds whistled o'er the main,
Thus careful I address the list'ning train:

O friends be wise! nor dare the flocks destroy
Of these fair pastures: if ye touch, ye die.
Warn'd by the high command of heav'n, be aw'd;
Holy the flocks, and dreadful is the god!

That god who spreads the radiant beams of light,
And views wide earth and heav'n's unmeasur'd height.

And now the moon had run her monthly round,
The south-east blast'ring with a dreadful sound;
Unhurt the beehives, untouch'd the woolly train.

Low thro' the grove, or range the flow'ry plain;
Then fail'd our food; then fish we make our prey,
Or foul, that screaming haunt the wat'ry way.
'Till now from sea or flood no succour found,

Famine and meager want besieg'd us round.
Penfive and pale from grove to grove I stray'd,
From the loud storms to find a sylvan shade;
There o'er my hands the living wave I pour;
And heav'n, and heav'n's immortal thrones adore,
To calm the roarings of the stormy main,
And grant me peaceful to my realms again.
Then o'er my eyes the gods soft slumber shed,
While thus Eurylochus arising said:
O friends! a thousand ways frail mortals lead:
To the cold tomb; and dreadful all to tread;
But dreadful most, when by a slow decay
Pale hunger wastes the manly strength away.
Why cease ye then t' implore the pow'rs above,
And offer hecatombs to thund'ring Jove?
Why seize ye not yon' beeves and fleecy prey?
Arisè unanimous; arise and slay! And if the gods ordain a safe return,
To Phoebus shrines shall rise, and altars burn.
But should the pow'rs that o'er mankind preside,
Decree to plunge us in the whelming tide,
Better to rush at once to shades below,
Than linger life away, and nourish woe!

Thus he: the beeves around securely stray,
When swift to ruin they invade the prey:
They seize; they kill!—but for the rite divine,
The barley fail'd, and for libations, wine.
Swift from the oak they strip the shady pride;
And verdant leaves the flow'ry cake supply'd...

With pray'r they now address th' ethereal train,
Slay the selected beeves, and sla the slain:
The thighs, with fat involv'd, divide with art,
Strow'd o'er with morsels cut from ev'ry part.
Water, instead of wine, is brought in urns,
And pour'd profanely as the victim burns.
The thighs thus offer'd, and the entrails dress,
They roast the fragments, and prepare the feast.
'Twas then soft slumber fled my troubled brain.

Back to the bark I speed along the main.
When lo! an odour from the feast exhales,
Spreads o'er the coast, and scents the tainted gales;
A chilly fear congeal'd my vital blood.
And thus obtesting 'gan I mourn'd aloud:
'O fire of men and gods, immortal Jove!
Oh all ye blissful pow'rs that reign above!
Why were my cares beguil'd in short repose?
O fatal slumber, paid with lasting woes!
A deed so dreadful all the gods alarms,
Vengeance is on the wing, and heav'n in arms!
Mean-time Lampetie mounts th' aereal way,
And kindles into rage the god of day.

Vengeance, ye pow'rs, he cries, and thou whose hand
Aims the red bolt, and hurls the writhen brand!
Slain are those herds which I with pride survey,
When thro' the ports of heav'n I pour the day,
Or deep in ocean plunge the burning ray.
Vengeance, ye gods! or I the skies forego,
And bear the lamp of heav'n to shades below.

To whom the thund'ring pow'r: O source of day!
Whose radiant lamp adorns the azure way,
Still may thy beams through heav'n's bright portals rise,
The joy of earth, and glory of the skies;
Lo! my red arm I bare, my thunders guide,
To dash th' offenders in the whelming tide.

To fair Calypso from the bright abodes,
Hermes convey'd these councils of the gods:

Mean-time from man to man my tongue exclaims,
My wrath is kindled, and my soul in flames.
In vain! I view perform'd the direful deed,
Beeves, slain by heaps, along the ocean bleed.

Now heav'n gave signs of wrath; along the ground
Crept the raw hides, and with a bellowing sound
Roar'd the dead limbs; the burning entrails gree'n'd.
Six guilty days my wretched mates employ
In impious feasting, and unhallow'd joy;
The seventh arose, and now the fire of gods
Rein'd the rough storms, and calm'd the tolling floods:
With speed the bark we climb; the spacious sails
Loos'cd from the yards invite th' impelling gales:
Past sight of shore, along the surge we bound,
And all above is sky, and ocean all around!

When lo! a murky cloud the thund'rer forms
Full o'er our heads, and blackens heav'n with storms.
Night dwells o'er all the deep: and now out flies
The gloomy west, and whistles in the skies.
    The mountain billows roar: the furious blast
Howls o'er the shroud, and rends it from the mast: 480
    The mast gives way, and crackling as it bends,
Tears up the deck; then all at once descends:
    The pilot by the tumbling ruin slain,
Dash'd from the helm falls headlong in the main.
Then Jove in anger bids his thunders roll,
And forky lightnings flash from pole to pole;
    Fierce at our heads his deadly bolt he aims,
Red with uncommon wrath, and wrapt in flames:
    Full on the bark it fell; now high, now low,
Toss'd and re-toss'd, it reel'd beneath the blow; 490
At once into the main the crew it hooch:
    Sulphureous odours rose, and smould'ring smoke.
Like fowl that haunt the floods, they sink, they rise,
    Now loft, now seen, with shrieks and dreadful cries;
And strive to gain the bark; but Jove denies. 495
Firm at the helm I stand, when fierce the main
Rush'd with dire noise, and dash'd the sides in twain;
    Again imperious drove the furious blast,
Snapt the strong helm, and bore to sea the mast.
Firm to the mast with cords the helm I bind
    And ride aloft, to providence resign'd,
Through tumbling billows, and a war of wind.
    Now sunk the west, and now a southern breeze,
More dreadful than the tempest; lash'd the seas;
For on the rocks it bore where Scylla raves,
    And dire Charybdis rolls her thund'ring waves.
All night I drove; and at the dawn of day
    Fast by the rocks beheld the desp'rate way:
Just when the sea within her gulf subsides,
    And in the roaring whirlpools rush the tides.
Swift from the float I vaulted with a bound,
    The lofty fig-tree seiz'd, and clung around.
So to the beam the bat tenacious clings,
    And pendant round it clasps his leathern wings.
Book XII. HOMER's ODYSSEY.

High in the air the tree its boughs display'd,
And o'er the dungeon cast the dreadful shade;
All unsustain'd between the waves and sky,
Beneath my feet the whirling billows fly.
What time the judge forsakes the noisy bar
To take repast, and stills the wordy war;
Charybdis rumbling from her inmost caves,
The mast refounded on her resolute waves.
Swift from the tree, the floating mast to gain,
Sudden I drop'd amidst the flashing main;
Once more undaunted on the ruin rode,
And oar'd with lab'ring arms along the flood.
Unseen I pass'd by Scylla's dire abodes:
So Jove decreed, (dread fire of men and gods)
Then nine long days I plow'd the calmer seas,
Heav'd by the surge and wafted by the breeze.
Weary and wet th' Ogygian shores I gain,
When the tenth sun descended to the main.
There in Calypso's ever-fragrant bow'r's
Refresh'd I lay, and joy beguil'd the hours.

My following fates to thee, oh king! are known,
And the bright partner of thy royal throne.

Enough: in misery can words avail?
And what so tedious as a twice-told tale?
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XIII.
THE ARGUMENT.

The arrival of Ulysses in Ithaca.

Ulysses takes his leave of Alcinous and Arete, and embarks in the evening. Next morning the ship arrives at Ithaca; where the sailors, as Ulysses is yet sleeping, lay him on the shore with all his treasures. On their return, Neptune changes their ship into a rock. In the mean time, Ulysses awaking, knows not his native Ithaca, by reason of a mist which Pallas had cast round him. He breaks into loud lamentations; till the goddess, appearing to him in the form of a shepherd, discovers the country to him, and points out the particular places. He then tells a feigned story of his adventures, upon which she manifests herself, and they consult together of the measures to be taken to destroy the suitors. To conceal his return, and disguise his person the more effectually, she changes him into the figure of an old beggar.
The Odyssey
Book XIII.

He ceas'd; but left so pleasing on their ear
His voice, that list'ning still they seem'd to hear
A pause of silence hush'd the shady rooms:
The grateful conference then the king resumes.

Whatever toils the great Ulysses past,
Beneath this happy roof they end at last;
No longer now from shore to shore to roam,
Smooth seas, and gentle winds, invite him home.
But hear me, princes! whom these walls inclose,
For whom my chanter sings, and goblet flows:
With wines unmix'd; (an honour due to age,
To cheer the grave, and warm the poet's rage.)
Though labour'd gold and many a dazzling vest
Ly heap'd already for our god-like guest;
Without new treasures let him not remove;
Large, and expressive of the public love:
Each peer a tripod, each a vase bestow,
A gen'r'al tribute, which the state shall owe.
This sentence pleas'd: then all their steps address'd
To sep'rate mansions, and retir'd to rest.
Now did the rosy-finger'd morn arise,
And shed her sacred light along the skies.
Down to the haven and the ships in haste
They bore the treasures, and in safety plac'd.
The king himself the vases rang'd with care:
Then bad his followers to the feast repair.
A victim ox beneath the sacred hand
Of great Alcinous falls, and stains the sand.
To Jove th' eternal, (pow'r above all pow'rs!
Who wings the winds, and darkens heav'n with show'rs)
The flames ascend: 'till'en'ing they prolong
The rites, more sacred made by heav'nly song:
For in the midst, with public honours grac'd,
Thy lyre divine, Demodocus! was plac'd.
All, but Ulysses, heard with fix'd delight:
He sat, and ey'd the sun, and wish'd the night;
Slow seem'd the sun to move, the hours to roll,
His native home deep imag'd in his soul.
As weary plowman spent with stubborn toil,
Whose oxen long have torn the furrow'd soil,
See's with delight the sun's declining ray,
When home, with seeble knees, he bends his way
To late repast, (the day's hard labour done:)
So to Ulysses welcome set the sun.
Then instant, to Alcinous and the rest,
(The Scherian states) he turn'd, and thus address:

O thou, the first in merit and command!
And you the peers and princes of the land!
May ev'ry joy be yours! nor this the least,
When due libation shall have crown'd the feast,
Safe to my home to send your happy guest.
Compleat are now the bounties you have giv'n,
Be all those bounties but confirm'd by heav'n!
So may I find, when all my wand'ring cease,
My confor't blameless, and my friends in peace.

On you ev'ry bliss, and ev'ry day
In home-felt joys delighted roll away;
Your selves, your wives, your long descending race,
May ev'ry god enrich with ev'ry grace!
Sure sixt on virtue may your nation stand,
And public evil never touch the land!
His words well weigh’d, the gen’ral voice approv’d.
Benign, and instant his dismission mov’d.
The monarch to Pontonous gave the sign,
To fill the goblet high with rosy wine:
Great Jove the father first (he cry’d) implore;
Then send the stranger to his native shore.

The luscious wine th’ obedient herald brought;
Around the mansion flow’d the purple draught:
Each from his seat to each immortal pours,
Whom glory circles in th’ Olympian bow’rs.
Ulysses sole with air majestic stands,
The bowl presenting to Arete’s hands;
Then thus: O queen farewell! be still possest
Of dear remembrance, blessing still and blest!
’Till age and death shall gently call thee hence,
(Sure fate of ev’ry mortal excellence!)
Farewell! and joys successive ever spring
To thee, to thine, the people and the king!

Thus he; then parting prints the sandy shore
To the fair port: a herald march’d before,
Sent by Alcinous: of Arete’s train.
Three chosen maids attend him to the main;
This does a tunic and white vest convey,
A various casket that of rich inlay,
And bread and wine the third: The cheerful mates
Safe in the hollow deck dispose the cates:
Beneath the seats, soft painted robes they spread,
With linen cover’d, for the hero’s bed.
He climb’d the lofty stern; then gently press
The swelling couch, and lay compos’d to rest.

Now plac’d in order, the Phaeacian train
Their cables loose, and launch into the main:
At once they bend and strike their equal oars,
And leave the sinking hills, and less’ning shores.
While on the deck the chief in silence lyes,
And pleasing lumber’s steal upon his eyes.

As fiery coursers in the rapid race,
Urg’d by fierce drivers through the dusty space.

X 3.
Toes their high heads, and scour along the plain; 100
So mounts the bounding vessel o'er the main.
Back to the stern the parted billows flow,
And the black ocean foams and roars below.

Thus with spread sails the winged galley flies;
Lefs swift an eagle cuts the liquid skies:
Divine Ulysses was her sacred load,
A man, in wisdom equal to a god!
Much danger, long and mighty toils he bore,
In storms by sea, and combats on the shore;
All which soft sleep now banish'd from his breast,
110
W rapt in a pleasing, deep, and death like rest.

But when the morning-star with early ray
Flam'd in the front of heav'n, and promis'd day;
Like distant clouds the mariner descries
Fair Ithaca's emerging hills arise.
Far from the town a spacious port appears;
Sacred to Phorcys's pow'r, whose name it bears;
Two craggy rocks projecting to the main,
The roaring winds tempestuous rage restrain;
Within, the waves in softer murmurs glide;
120
And ships secure without their haullers ride;
High at the head a branching olive grows,
And crowns the pointed cliffs with shady boughs.
Beneath, a gloomy grotto's cool recess
Delights the Nereids of the neigh'ring seas;
Where bowls and urns were form'd of living stone,
And mafly beams in native marble shone;
On which the labours of the nymphs were roll'd,
Their webs divine of purple mix'd with gold.
Within the cave the cluff'ring bees attend
130
Their waxen works, or from the roof depend:
Perpetual waters o'er the pavement glide;
Two marble doors unfold on either side;
Sacred the south, by which the gods descend,
But mortals enter at the northern end.

Thither they bent, and haul'd their ship to land,
(The crooked keel divides the yellow sand)
Book XIII. Homer's Odyssey

Ulysses sleeping on his couch they bore,
And gently plac'd him on the rocky shore.
His treasures next, Alcinous' gifts, they laid
In the wild olive's unfrequented shade,
Secure from theft: then launch'd the bark again,
Refund'd their oars, and measur'd back the main.
Nor yet forgot old Ocean's dread supreme
The vengeance vow'd for eyeless Polyphem:
Before the throne of mighty Jove he stood;
And fought the secret counsels of the god.

Shall then no more, O fire of gods! be mine
The rights and honours of a pow'r divine?
Scorn'd ev'n by man, and (oh severe disgrace!) By soft Phaeacians, my degenerate race!
Against yon' destin'd head in vain I swore,
And menace'd vengeance, ere he reach'd his shore:
To reach his natal shore was thy decree;
Mild I obey'd, for who shall war with thee?
Behold him landed, careless and asleep,
From all th' eluded dangers of the deep!
Lo where he lyes, amidt a shining store
Of brafs, rich garments, and refulgent ore:
And bears triumphant to his native isle
A prize more worth than Ilion's noble spoil.

To whom the father of th' immortal pow'rs,
Who swells the clouds, and gladdens earth with show'rs:
Can mighty Neptune thus of man complain?
Neptune, tremend'ous o'er the boundless main!
Rever'd and awful ev'n in heav'n's abodes,
Ancient and great! a god above the gods!
If that low race offend thy pow'r divine,
(Weak, daring creatures!) is not vengeance thine?
Go then, the guilty at thy will chastise.

He said: the shaker of the earth replies;
This then I doom; to fix the gallant ship
A mark of vengeance on the sable deep:
To warn the thoughtless self-considing train,
No more unlicens'd thus to brave the main.
Full in their port a shady hill shall rise,
If such thy will.—We will it; Jove replies:
Ev'n when with transport black'ning all the strand,
The swarming people hail their ship to land,
Fix her for ever, a memorial-stone.

Still let her seem to fail, and seem alone;
The trembling clouds shall see the sudden shade
Of whelming mountains overhang their head.

With that, the god whose earthquakes rock the ground
Fierce to Phaeacia cross'd the vast profound.
Swift as a swallow sweeps the liquid way,
The winged pinnace shot along the sea.
The god arrests her with a sudden stroke,
And roots her down an everlasting rock.
Aghast the Scherians stand in deep surprise;
All press to speak, all question with their eyes.
What hands unseen the rapid bark restrain!
And yet it swims, or seems to swim, the main!
Thus they, unconscious of the deed divine:
'Till great Aeolus rising own'd the sign.
Behold the long predestin'd day! (he cries)
Oh certain faith of ancient prophecies!
These ears have heard my royal fire disclose
A dreadful story, big with future woes;
How mov'd with wrath that careless we convey
Promiscuous ev'ry guest to ev'ry bay,
Stern Neptune rag'd; and how by his command
Eirm rooted in the sarge a ship should stand;
(A monument of wrath!) and mound on mound
Should hide our walls or whelm beneath the ground.

The fates have follow'd as declar'd the seer.
Be humbled, nations! and your monarch hear.
No more unlicensed'rd brave the deeps, no more:
With ev'ry stranger pass from shore to shore;
On angry Neptune now for mercy call:

To his high name let twelve black oxen fall:
So may the god reverse his purpos'd will,
Nor o'er our city hang the dreadful hill.
The monarch spoke: they trembled and obey'd,
Forth on the sands the victim oxen led:
The gather'd tribes before the altars stand,
And chiefs and rulers, a majestic band.
The king of ocean all the tribes implore;
The blazing altars redden'd all the shore.

Mean-while Ulysses in his country lay,
Releas'd from sleep, and round him might survey
The solitary shore, and rolling sea.
Yet had his mind through tedious absence lost
The dear remembrance of his native coast:
Besides, Minerva, to secure her care,
Diffus'd around a veil of thick'ning air:
For so the gods ordain'd, to keep unseen
His royal person from his friends and queen,
Till the proud suitors for their crimes afford
An ample vengeance to their injur'd lord.

Now all the land another prospect bore,
Another port appear'd, another shore,
And long continu'd ways, and winding floods,
And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown woods.
Pensive and slow, with sudden grief oppress'd:
The king arose, and beat his careful breast,
Cast a long look o'er all the coast and main,
And sought, around, his native realm in vain:
Then with creas'd eyes flood fix'd in woe,
And as he spoke the tears began to flow.

Ye gods! (he cry'd) upon what barren coast,
In what new region is Ulysses tost?
Poffess'd by wild barbarians fierce in arms,
Or men whose bosom tender pity warms?
Where shall this treasure now in safety ly?
And whither, whither its sad owner fly?
Ah why did I Alcinous' grace implore?
Ah why forfake Phaeacia's happy shore?
Some suffering prince perhaps had entertain'd,
And safe restor'd me to my native land.
Is this the promis'd, long-expected coast,
And this the faith Phæacia's rulers boast?
Oh righteous gods! of all the great, how few
Are just to heav'n, and to their promise true!
But he, the pow'r to whose all-seeing eyes
The deeds of men appear without disguise,
'Tis his alone t' avenge the wrongs I bear:
For still th' opprest'd are his peculiar care.

To count these presents, and from thence to prove
Their faith, is mine: the rest belongs to Jove.

Then on the sands he rang'd his wealthy store,
The gold, the veils, the tripods number'd o'er:
All these he found, but still in error lost
Disconsolate he wanders on the coast,
Sighs for his country, and laments again
To the deaf rocks, and hoarse-refounding main.
When lo! the guardian goddess of the wife,
Celestial Pallas, stood before his eyes;
In show a youthful swain of form divine,
Who seem'd descended from some princely line.

A graceful robe her slender body drest,
Around her shoulders flew the waving veil,
Her decent hand a shining jav'l'in bore,
And painted sandals on her feet she wore.
To whom the king: Whoe'er of human race
Thou art, that wander'lt in this desert place;
With joy to thee, as to some god, I bend;
To thee my treasures and myself commend.
O tell a wretch in exile doom'd to stray,
What air I breathe, what country I survey?
The fruitful continent's extremest bound,
Or some fair isle which Neptune's arms surround?

From what far clime, said she, remote from fame,
Arriv'lt thou here a stranger to our name?
Thou seest an island not to those unknown
Whose hills are brighten'd by the rising sun,
Nor those that plac'd beneath his utmost reign.
Behold him sinking in the western main.
The rugged soil allows no level space
For flying chariots or the rapid race;
Yet not ungrateful to the peasant's pain,
Suffices fulness to the swelling grain:
The loaded trees their various fruits produce,
And clut'ring grapes afford a gen'rous juice:
Woods crown our mountains, and in ev'ry grove
The bounding goats and frisking heifers rov'd:
Soft rains and kindly dews refresh the field,
And rising springs eternal verdure yield.
Ev'n to those shores is Ithaca renown'd,
Where Troy's majestic ruins throw the ground.

At this the chief with transport was poss'd,
His panting heart exulted in his breast:
Yet well dissembling his untimely joys,
And veiling truth in plausible disguise,
Thus, with an air sincere, in fiction bold,
His ready tale th' inventive hero told:
Oft have I heard in Crete this island's name;
For 'twas from Crete, my native soil, I came,
Self-banish'd thence. I sail'd before the wind,
And left my children and my friends behind.

From fierce Idomeneus' revenge I flew,
Whose son, the swift Orsilochus, I slew:
(With brutal force he seiz'd my Trojan prey,
Due to the toils of many a bloody day)
Unseen I 'scap'd; and, favour'd by the night,
In a Phoenician vessel took my flight,
For Pylae or Elis bound: but tempests tost,
And raging billows drove us on your coast.
In dead of night an unknown port we gain'd,
Spent with fatigue, and slept secure on land.
But ere the rosy morn renew'd the day,
While in th' embrace of pleasing sleep I lay,
Sudden, invited by auspicious gales,
They land my goods, and hoist their flying sails.
Abandon'd here, my fortune I deplore,
A hapless exile on a foreign shore.
Thus while he spoke, the blue-ey'd maid began
With pleasing smiles to view the god-like man:
Then chang'd her form; and now, divinely bright,
Jove's heav'nly daughter stood conf'd to fight;
Like a fair virgin in her beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.

O still the same Ulysses! she rejoin'd,
In useful craft successfully refin'd!
Artful in speech, in action, and in mind!
Suffic'd it not, that thy long labours past,
Secure thou seest thy native shore at last?
But this to me? who, like thyself, excel
In arts of counsel, and dissembling well;
To me, whose wit exceeds the pow'rs divine,
No less than mortals are surp ass'd by thine.

Know'st thou not me? who made thy life my care,
Thro' ten years wand'ring, and thro' ten years war;
Who taught thee arts, Alcinous to persuade,
To raise his wonder, and engage his aid;
And now appear thy treasuries to protect,
Conceal thy person, thy designs direct,
And tell what more thou must from fate expect.

Domestic woes far heavier to be born!
The pride of fools, and slaves insulting scorn.
But thou be silent, nor reveal thy state:
Yield to the force of unrelisht fate,
And bear unmov'd the wrongs of base mankind,
The last and hardest conquest of the mind.

Goddess of wisdom! Ithrac replies,
He who discerns thee must be truly wise,
So seldom view'd, and ever in disguise!
When the bold Argives led their warring pow'rs
Against proud Ilion's well defended tow'rs,
Ulysses was thy care, celestial maid!
Grec'd with thy fight, and favour'd with thy aid.
But when the Trojan piles in ashes lay,
And bound for Greece we plow'd the wat'ry way;
Our fleet dispers'd, and driv'n from coast to coast,
Thy sacred presence from that hour I lost;
'Till I beheld thy radiant form once more,
And heard thy counsels on Phaeacia's shore.
But, by th' almighty author of thy race,
Tell me, oh tell! is this my native place?
For much I fear, long tracts of land and sea
Divide this coast from distant Ithaca;
The sweet delusion kindly you impose,
To sooth my hopes, and mitigate my woes.

Thus he. The blue-ey'd goddess thus replies:
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wise! 375
Who vers'd in fortune, fear the flatt'ring show,
And taste not half the bliss the gods bestow.
The more shall Pallas aid thy just desires,
And guard the wisdom which herself inspires.
Others, long absent from their native place,
Strait seek their home, and fly with eager pace
To their wives arms, and children's dear embrace;
Not thus Ulysses; he decrees to prove
His subjects faith, and queen's suspected love;
Who mourn'd her lord twice ten revolving years,
And waits the days in grief, the nights in tears.
But Pallas knew (thy friends and navy loft)
Once more 'twas giv'n thee to behold thy coast:
Yet how could I with adverse fate engage,
And mighty Neptune's unrelenting rage?
Now lift thy longing eyes, while I restore
The pleasing prospect of thy native shore.
Behold the port of Phorcys! Senc'd around
With rocky mountains, and with olives crown'd:
Behold the gloomy grot! whose cool recefs
Delights the Nereids of the neighb'ring seas;
Whose now-neglected altars, in thy reign
Blush'd with the blood of sheep and oxen slain:
Behold! where Neritus the clouds divides,
And shakes the waving foressts on his sides.
So spake the goddess, and the prospect clear'd,
The mists dispers'd, and all the coast appear'd.
The king with joy confess'd his place of birth,
And on his knees salutes his mother earth:
Then with his suppliant hands upheld in air,
Thus to the sea-green sisters sends his pray'r:
All hail! ye virgin-daughters of the main!
Ye streams, beyond my hopes beheld again!
To you once more your own Ulysses bows;
Attend his transports, and receive his vows!
If Jove prolong my days, and Pallas crown
The growing virtues of my youthful son,
To you shall rites divine be ever paid,
And grateful off'rings on your altars laid.

Then thus Minerva: From that anxious breast
Dismiss those cares, and leave to heav'n the rest.
Our talk be now thy treasur'd stores to save,
Deep in the close recesses of the cave:
Then future means consult.———She spoke, and trod
The shady grot, that bright'ned with the god.
The closest caverns of the grot she sought;
The gold, the brasse, the robes Ulysses brought;
These in the secret gloom the chief dispos'd:
The entrance with a rock the goddess clos'd.

Now seated in the olive's sacred shade
Confer the hero and the martial maid.
The goddess of the azure eyes began:
Son of Laertes! much experienc'd man!
The suitor-train thy earliest care demand,
Of that luxurious race to rid the land:
Three years thy house their lawless rule has seen,
And, proud addresses to the matchless queen.
But the thy absence mourns from day to day,
And only bleed's, and silent wastes away:
Elusive of the bridal hour, she gives
Fond hopes to all, and all with hopes deceives.
To this Ulysses: Oh celestial maid!
Prais'd be thy counsel, and thy timely aid:
Else had I seen my native walls in vain,
Like great Atrides just restor'd and slain.
Vouchsafe the means of vengeance to debate,
And plan with all thy arts the scene of fate.
Then, then be present, and my soul inspire,
As when we wrapt Troy's heav'n-built walls in fire.
Though leagu'd against me hundred heroes stand,
Hundreds shall fall, if Pallas aid my hand.
She answer'd: In the dreadful day of fight
Know I am with thee, strong in all my might.
If thou but equal to thyself be found,
What gasping numbers then shall press the ground!
What human victims stain the feastful floor!
How wide the pavements float with guilty gore!
It fits thee now to wear a dark disguise,
And secret walk unknown to mortal eyes.
For this, my hand shall wither ev'ry grace,
And ev'ry elegance of form and face;
O'er thy smooth skin a bark of wrinkles spread,
Turn hoar the auburn honours of thy head.
Disfigure ev'ry limb with coarse attire,
And in thy eyes extinguish all the fire.
Add all the wants and the decays of life,
 Estrange thee from thy own, thy son, thy wife;
From the loath'd object ev'ry sight shall turn,
And the blind suitors their destruction scorn.
Go first the master of thy herds to find,
True to his charge, a loyal swain and kind:
For thee he sighs; and to the royal heir
And chaste Penelope extends his care.
At the Còracian rock he now resides,
Where Arethusa's fable water glides:
The fable water and the copious mast
Swell the fat herd; luxuriant; large repast!
With him rest peaceful in the rural cell,
And all you ask his faithful tongue shall tell.
Me into other realms my cares convey,
To Sparta, still with female beauty gay.
For know, to Sparta, thy lov'd offspring came,
To learn thy fortunes from the voice of fame.

At this the father, with a father's care:
Must he too suffer? he, oh goddess! bear
Of wand'rings and of woes a wretched share?
Through the wild ocean plow the dang'rous way,
And leave his fortunes and his house a prey?
Why would'st not thou, oh all-enlighten'd mind!
Inform him certain, and protect him kind?

To whom Minerva: Be thy soul at rest;
And know, whatever heav'n ordains is best.

To fame I sent him to acquire renown,
To other regions is his virtue known.
Secure he first, near great Atrides plac'd;
With friendships strengthen'd, and with honours grac'd.
But lo! an ambush waits his passage o'er:
Fierce foes insidious intercept the shore:
In vain! far sooner all the mur'drous brood
This injur'd land shall fatten with their blood.

She spake: then touch'd him with her pow'rful wand:
The skin shrank up, and wither'd at her hand:
A swift old age o'er all his members spread;
A sudden frost was sprinkled on his head;
Nor longer in the heavy eye ball shin'd
The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind.
His robe, which spots indelible befarse,
In rags dishonestly flutters with the air:
A flag's torn hide is lapt around his reins;
A rugged staff his trembling hand sustains;
And at his side a wretched scrip was hung,
Wide patch'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.
So look'd the chief, so mov'd! to mortal eyes
Object uncouth! a man of miseries!

While Pallas, cleaving the wide fields of air,
To Sparta flies, Telemachus her care.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XIV.
THE ARGUMENT.

The conversation with Eumaeus.

Ulysses arrives in disguise at the house of Eumaeus, where he is received, entertained, and lodged, with the utmost hospitality. The several discourses of that faithful old servant, with the feigned story told by Ulysses to conceal himself, and other conversations on various subjects, take up this entire book.
BUT he, deep-musing, o'er the mountains stray'd,
Through mazy thickets of the woodland shade,
And cavern'd ways, the shaggy coat along,
With cliffs and nodding forests over-hung.
Eumaeus at his sylvan lodge he sought,
A faithful servant, and without a fault.
Ulysses found him, busied as he fate
Before the threshold of his rustic gate.
Around the mansion in a circle shone
A rural portico of rugged stone:
(In absence of his lord, with honest toil
His own industrious hands had rais'd the pile:)
The wall was stone from neigh'ring quarries born,
Encircled with a fence of native thorn,
And strong with pales, by many a weary stroke
Of stubborn labour hewn from heart of oak;
Frequent and thick. Within the space were rear'd
Twelve ample cells, the lodgment of his herd.
Full fifty pregnant females each contain'd;
The males without (a smaller race) remain'd;
Doom'd to supply the suitors wasteful feast,
A stock by daily luxury decreas'd;
Now scarce four hundred left. These to defend,
Four savage dogs, a watchful guard, attend.
Here sat Eumaeus, and his cares apply'd.  
To form strong bulkins of well-seafoa'd hyde.  
Of four assistants who his labour share,  
Three now were absent on the rural care;  
The fourth drove victims to the suitor-train:  
But he, of antient faith, a simple swain,  
Sigh'd while he furnish'd the luxurious board,  
And wearied heaven with wishes for his lord.

Soon as Ulysses near th' enclosure drew,  
With open mouths the furious mastives flew:  
Down sat the sage; and, cautious to withstand,  
Let fall th' offensive truncheon from his hand.  
Sudden, the master runs; aloud he calls;  
And from his hasty hand the leather falls;  
With show'rs of stones he drives them far away;  
The scatt'ring dogs around at distance bay.

Unhappy stranger! (thus the faithful swain  
Began with accent, gracious and humane)  
What sorrow had been mine, if at my gate  
Thy rev'rend age had met a shameful fate!  
Enough of woes already have I known;  
Enough my master's sorrows and my own.  
While here, (ungrateful task!) his herds I feed,  
Ordain'd for lawless rioters to bleed;  
Perhaps supported at another's board;  
Far from his country roams my hapless lord!  
Or sigh'd in exile forth his latest breath,  
Now cover'd with th' eternal shade of death!

But enter this my homely roof; and see  
Our woods not void of hospitaility.  
Then tell me whence thou art, and what the share  
Of woes and wand'ring thou wert born to bear?

He said; and seconding the kind request,  
With friendly step precedes his unknown guest.  
A shaggy goat's soft hide beneath him spread,  
And with fresh rushes heap'd an ample bed.  
Joy touch'd the hero's tender soul, to find  
So just reception from a heart so kind:
And oh, ye gods! with all your blessings grace
(He thus broke forth) this friend of human race!
The swain reply'd: It never was our guise
To slight the poor, or aught humane despise.
For Jove unfolds our hospitable door;
'Tis Jove that sends the stranger and the poor.
Little, alas! is all the good I can,
A man oppress'd, dependent, yet a man:
Accept such treatment as a swain affords,
Slave to the insolence of youthful lords!
Far hence is by unequal gods remov'd
That man of bounties, loving and belov'd!
To whom whate'er his slave enjoys is ow'd;
And more, had fate allow'd, had been bestowed:
But fate condemn'd him to a foreign shore!
Much have I sorrow'd, but my master more.
Now cold he lies, to death's embrace resign'd:
Ah perish Helen! perish all her kind!
For whose curs'd cause, in Agamemnon's name,
He trod so fatally the paths of fame.
His vest succeeded then girding round his waste,
Forth rush'd the swain with hospitable haste,
Strait to the lodgments of his herd he ran,
Where the fat porkers slept beneath the sun:
Of two, his cutlass launch'd the spouting blood;
These quarter'd, sing'd, and fix'd on forks of wood,
All hafty on the hissing coals he threw;
And smoking back the tasteful viands drew,
Broachers and all; then on the board display'd,
The ready meal before Ulysses laid,
(With flour imbrownd) next mingled wine yet new,
As luscious as the bee's nectarous dew:
Then sat companion of the friendly feast,
With open look, and thus bespoke his guest:
Take with free welcome what our hands prepare,
Such food as falls to simple servants share:
The best our lords consume; those thoughtless peers,
Rich without bounty, guilty without fears!
Yet sure the gods their impious acts detest,
And honour justice and the righteous breast.
Pirates and conquerors, of harden'd mind,
The foes of peace, and scourges of mankind,
To whom offending men are made a prey.
When Jove in vengeance gives a land away;
Ev'n these, when of their ill-got spoil possessed,
Find sure tormentors in the guilty breast;
Some voice of God close whispering from within,
'Wretch! this is villany, and this is sin.'

But these, no doubt, some oracle explore,
That tells, The great Ulysses is no more:
Hence springs their confidence, and from our sighs
Their rapine strengthens, and their riots rise:
Constant as Jove the night and day bestows,
Bleeds a whole hecatomb, a vintage flows.
None match'd this hero's wealth of all who reign
O'er the fair islands of the neighbour main,
Nor all the monarchs whose far-dreaded sway
The wide-extended continents obey:
First on the main land, of Ulysses' breed
Twelve herds, twelve flocks, on ocean's margin feed;
As many stalls for shaggy goats are rear'd;
As many lodgments for the sulky herd;
Those foreign keepers guard: and here are seen
Twelve herds of goats that graze our utmost green;
To native pastors is their charge assign'd,
And mine the care to feed the briefly kind:
Each day the fattest bleeds of either herd,
All to the suitors wasteful board preferr'd.

Thus he, benevolent: his unknown guest
With hunger keen devours the sav'ry feast;
While schemes of vengeance ripen in his breast,
Silent and thoughtful while the board he ey'd,
Eumaeus pours on high the purple tide;
The king with smiling looks his joy express'd,
And thus the kind inviting host address'd:
Book XIV. HOMER'S ODYSSEY. 263

Say now, what man is he, the man deplor'd,
So rich, so potent, whom you style your lord;
Late with such affluence and possessions blest,
And now in honour's glorious bed at rest?
Whoever was the warrior, he must be
To fame no stranger, nor perhaps to me;
Who (so the gods and so the fates ordain'd)
Have wander'd many a sea and many a land.

Small is the faith the prince and queen ascribe
(Reply'd Enmaeus) to the wand'ring tribe:
For needy strangers still to flatter fly,
And want too oft betrays the tongue to lye.
Each vagrant traveller that touches here
Deludes with fallacies the royal ear,
To dear remembrance makes his image rise,
And calls the springing sorrows from her eyes.
Such thou may'st be. But he whose name you crave
Moulders in earth, or welters on the wave,
Or food for fish, or dogs, his reliques ly,
Or torn by birds are scatter'd through the sky.
So perish'd he; and left (for ever lost)
Much woe to all, but sure to me the most.
So mild a master never shall I find:
Lest dear the parents whom I left behind,
Lest soft my mother, lest my father kind.
Not with such transport would my eyes run o'er,
Again to hail them in their native shore,
As lov'd Ulysses once more to embrace,
Restor'd and breathing in his natal place.
That name, for ever dread, yet ever dear,
Ev'n in his absence I pronounce with fear;
In my respect he bears a prince's part,
But lives a very brother in my heart.

Thus spoke the faithful swain; and thus rejoin'd
The master of his grief, the man of patient mind:
Ulysses, friend, shall view his old abodes,
(Distrustful as thou art) nor doubt the gods.
Nor speak I rashly, but with faith aver'd,
And what I speak attesting heav'n has heard.
If so, a cloak and vesture be my meed:
Till his return no title shall I plead,
Though certain be my news, and great my need.
Whom want itself can force untruths to tell,
My soul detests him as the gates of hell:
Thou first be witness, hospitable Jove!
And ev'ry god inspiring social love!
And witness ev'ry household pow'r that waits
Guard of these fires, and angel of these gates!
Ere the next moon increase, or this decay,
His ancient realms Ulysses shall survey,
In blood and dust each proud oppressor mourn,
And the loft glories of his house return.
Nor shall that meed be thine, nor ever more
Shall lov'd Ulysses hail this happy shore,
(Reply'd Eumaeus :) to the present hour
Now turn thy thought, and joys within our pow'r.
From sad reflection let my soul repose;
The name of him awakes a thousand woes.
But guard him, gods! and to these arms restore!
Not his true confort can desire him more;
Not old Laertes, broken with despair;
Not young Telemachus, his blooming heir.
Alas, Telemachus! my sorrows flow
Afresh for thee, my second cause of woe!
Like some fair plant set by a heav'nly hand,
He grew, he flourish'd, and he blest the land;
In all the youth his father's image shin'd,
Bright in his person, brighter in his mind.
What man or god deceiv'd his better sense,
Far on the swelling seas to wander hence?
To distant Pylos, hapless! 'is he gone,
To seek his father's fate, and find his own!
For traytors wait his way, with dire design
To end at once the great Arcebian line.
But let us leave him to their wills above; The fates of men are in the hand of Jove. And now, my venerable guest! declare Your name, your parents, and your native air? Sincere from whence begun your course relate, And to what ship I owe the friendly freight? Thus he; and thus (with prompt invention bold) The cautious chief his ready story told:
On dark reserve what better can prevail, Or from the fluent tongue produce the tale, Than when two friends, alone, in peaceful place Confer, and wines and cates the table grace; But most the kind inviter's cheerful face? Thus might we sit, with social goblets crown'd, Till the whole circle of the year goes round; Not the whole circle of the year would close My long narration of a life of woes. But such was heav'n's high will! Know then I came From sacred Crete, and from a fire of fame: Castor Hylacides (that name he bore) Belov'd and honour'd in his native shore; Blest in his riches, in his children more. Sprung of a hand-maid, from a bought embrace, I shar'd his kindness with his lawful race; But when that fate which all must undergo From earth remov'd him to the shades below, The large domain his greedy sons divide, And each was portion'd as the lots decide. Little, alas! was left my wretched share, Except a house, a covert from the air. But what by niggard fortune was deny'd, A willing widow's copious wealth supply'd. My valour was my plea, a gallant mind, That, true to honour, never lagg'd behind, (The sex is ever to a soldier kind.) Now wasting years my former strength confound, And added woes have bow'd me to the ground;
Yet by the stibble you may guess the grain,
And mark the ruins of no vulgar man.

Me Pallas gave to lead the martial storm,
And the fair ranks of battle to deform;
Me Mars inspir'd to turn the foe to flight,
And tempt the secret ambush of the night.
Let ghastly death in all his forms appear;
I saw him not; it was not mine to fear.

Before the rest I rais'd my ready steel;
The first I met, he yielded, or he fell.
But works of peace my soul disdain'd to bear.
The rural labour or domestic care.

To raise the mast, the missile dart to wing,
And send swift arrows from the bounding string,
Were arts the gods made grateful to my mind;
Those gods, who turn (to various ends design'd)
The various thoughts and talents of mankind.

Before the Grecians touch'd the Trojan plain,
Nine times commander or by land or main,
To foreign fields I spread my glory far,
Great in the praise, rich in the spoils of war:
Thence charg'd with riches, as increas'd in fame.
To Crete return'd, an honourable name.

But when great Jove that direful war decreed,
Which rouse'd all Greece, and made the mighty bleed;
Our states myself and Idomen employ
To lead their fleets, and carry death to Troy.

Nine years we war'd, the tenth saw Ilion fail;
Homeward we sail'd, but heav'n dispers'd us all.
One only month my wife enjoy'd my stay;
So will'd the god who gives and takes away.

Nine ships I mann'd, equipp'd with ready stores,
Intent to voyage to th' Egyptian chasses;
In feast and sacrifice my chosen train
Six days consum'd; the sev'nth we plow'd the main.
Crete's ample fields diminish in our eye;
Before the Boreal-blasts the vessels fly;
Safe through the level seas we sweep our way;  
The steer-man governs, and the ships obey. 
The fifth fair morn we stem th' Egyptian tide, 
And tilting o'er the bay the vessels ride: 
To anchor there my fellows I command, 
And spies-commission to explore the land. 
But sway'd by lust of gain, and headlong will, 
The coasts they ravage, and the natives kill. 
The spreading clamour to their city flies, 
And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise. 
The red'ning dawn reveals the circling fields 
Horrid with bristly spears and glancing shields, 
Jove thunder'd on their side. Our guilty head 
We turn'd to flight: the gathering vengeance spread 
On all parts round; and heaps on heaps by dead. 
I then explor'd my thought, what course to prove. 
(And sure the thought was dictated by Jove; 
Oh had he left me to that happier doom, 
And sav'd a life of miseries to come!) 
The radiant helmet from my brows unlace'd; 
And low on earth my shield and javelin cast; 
I meet the monarch with a suppliant's face, 
Approach his chariot; and his knees embrace.
He heard, he sav'd, he plac'd me at his side; 
My state he pity'd, and my tears he dry'd, 
Restrain'd the rage the vengeful foe express, 
And turn'd the deadly weapons from my breast. 
Pious! to guard the hospitable site, 
And fearing Jove, whom mercy's works delight. 
In Egypt thus with peace and plenty blest, 
I liv'd (and happy still had liv'd) a guest: 
On sev'n bright years successive blessings wait; 
The next chang'd all the colour of my fate. 
A false Phoenician of insidious mind, 
Vers'd in vile arts, and foe to humankind, 
With semblance fair invites me to his home; 
I seiz'd the proffer (ever fond to roam:)

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Domestic in his faithless roof I stay'd,  
'Till the swift sun his annual circle made.  
To Lybia then he meditates the way,  
With guileful art a stranger to betray,  
And fell to bondage in a foreign land:  
Much doubting, yet compell'd I quit the strand.  
Through the mid seas the nimble pinnace sails,  
Aloof from Crete, before the northern gales:  
But when remote her chalky cliffs we lost,  
And far from ken of any other coast,  
When all was wild expanse of sea and air,  
Then doom'd high Jove due vengeance to prepare:  
He hung a night of horrors o'er their head,  
(The shaded ocean blacken'd as it spread)  
He launch'd the fiery bolt; from pole to pole  
Broad burst the lightnings, deep the thunders roll;  
In giddy rounds the whirling ship is toss'd,  
And all in clouds of smoth'ring sulphur lost.  
As from a hanging rock's tremend'ous height,  
The sable crows with intercepted flight  
Drop endlong; screa'd, and black with sulph'rous hue,  
So from the deck are hurl'd the ghastly crew.  
Such end the wicked found! but Jove's intent  
Was yet to save th' oppress'd and innocent.  
Plac'd on the mast (the last recourse of life)  
With winds and waves I held unequal strife;  
For nine long days the billows tilting o'er,  
The tenth soft wafts me to Thesprotia's shore.  
The monarch's son a shipwreckt wretch reliev'd,  
The fire with hospitable rites receiv'd,  
And in his palace like a brother plac'd,  
With gifts of price and gorgeous garments grac'd.  
While here I sojourn'd, oft I heard the fame  
How late Ullysse to the country came;  
How lov'd, how honour'd in this court he stay'd,  
And here his whole collected treasure lay'd:  
I saw myself the vast unnumbert'd store  
Of steel elab'rate, and resplendent ore,
And brass high-heap'd amidst the regal dome;
Immense supplies for ages yet to come!
Mean-time he voyag'd to explore the will
Of Jove on high Dlbota's holly hill,
What means might best his safe return avail,
To come in pomp, or bear a secret fail?
Full oft has Phidon, whilst he pour'd the wine,
Attesting solemn all the pow'rs divine,
That soon Ulysses would return, declar'd;
The sailors waiting, and the ships prepar'd.
But first the king dismiss'd me from the shores,
For fair Dulichium crown'd with fruitful stores,
To good Acastus' friendly care confign'd:
But other counsels pleas'd the sailors' mind:
New frauds were plotted by the faithless trait,
And misery demand'd me once again.
Soon as remote from shore they plow the wave,
With ready hands they rush to seize their slave;
Then with these tatter'd rags they wrapt me round,
(Stiplt of my own) and to the vessel bound.
At eve, at Ithaca's delightful land.
The ship arriv'd: forth-issuing on the land,
They sought repast, while to th' unhappy kind,
The pitying gods themselves my chains unbind.
Soft I descended, to the sea apply'd
My naked breast, and shot along the tide.
Soon past beyond their sight, I left the flood,
And took the spreading shelter of the wood.
Their prize escap'd the faithless pirates mourn'd;
But deem'd inquiry vain, and to their ship return'd.
Screen'd by protecting gods from hostile eyes,
They led me to a good man and a wise;
To live beneath thy hospitable care,
And wait the woes heav'n dooms me yet to bear.

Unhappy guest! whose sorrows touch my mind! (Thus good Emaeus with a sigh rejoind')
For real suff'ring since I grieve sincere,
Check not with fallacies the springing tear.
Nor turn the passion into groundless joy
For him, whom heav'n has destin'd to destroy.  
Oh! had he perish'd on some well-fought day,
Or in his friends embraces dy'd away!
That grateful Greece with streaming eyes might raise
Historic marbles, to record his praise:
His praise, eternal on the faithful stone,
Had with transmissive honours grac'd his son.
Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory last!
While pensive in this solitary den,
Far from gay cities, and the ways of men,
I linger life; nor to the court repair,
But when the constant queen commands my care;
Or when, to taste her hospitable board,
Some guest arrives, with rumours of her lord;
And these indulge their want, and those their woe.
And here the tears, and there the goblets flow.
By many such have I been warn'd; but chief
By one Ætolian robb'd of all belief,
Whose hap it was to this our roof to roam,
For murder banish'd from his native home.
He swore, Ulysses on the coast of Crète.
Staid but a season to rest his fleet;
A few revolving months should waft him o'er,
Fraught with bold. warriors and a boundless store.
O thou! whom age has taught to understand,
And heav'n has guided with a fav'ring hand!
On god or mortal to obtrude a lie.
Forbear, and dread to flatter, as to die.
Not for such ends my house and heart are free,
But dear respect to love, and charity.
And why, oh swain of unbelieving mind!
(Thus quick reply'd the wisest of mankind)
Doubt you my oath? yet more my faith to try,
A solemn compact let us ratify,
And witness ev'ry pow'r that rules the sky.)
If here Ulysses from his labours rest,
Be then my prize a tunic and a vest;
And, where my hopes invite me, strait transport
In safety to Dulichium's friendly court.
But if he greets not thy desiring eye,
Hurl me from yon' dread precipice on high;
The due reward of fraud and perjury.

Doubtless, oh guest! great laud and praise were mine,
(Reply'd the swain for spotless faith divine)
If, after social rites and gifts bestow'd,
I stain'd my hospitable hearth with blood.
How would the gods my righteous toils succeed,
And blest the hand that made a stranger bleed?
No more——th' approaching hours of silent night
First claim refection, then to rest invite;
Beneath our humble cottage let us haste.
And here, unenvy'd, rural dainties taste.

Thus commun'd these: while to their lowly dome.
The full-fed swine return'd with ev'n'ing home;
Compell'd, reluctant, to their serv'al eyes,
With din obstrep'rous, and ungrateful cries.
Then to the slaves:——Now from the herd the best
Select, in honour of our foreign guest:
With him, let us the genial banquet share,
For great and many are the griefs we bear;
While those who from our labours heap their board,
Blaspheme their feeder, and forget their lord.

Thus speaking, with dispatchful hand he took
A weighty ax, and clef't the solid oak;
This on the earth he pil'd; a boar full-fed
Of five years age, before the pile was led:
The swain, whom acts of piety delight,
Observant of the gods, begins the rite;
First shears the forehead of the bristly boar,
And suppliant stands, invoking ev'ry pow'r.
To speed Ulysses to his native shore:
A knotty stake, then aiming at his head,
Down drop'd he groaning, and the spirit fled.
The scorching flames climb round on ev'ry side:
Then the frag'd members they with skill divide;
On these, in rolls of fat involv'd with art,
The choicest morsels lay from ev'ry part.
Some in the flames, bestowed with flour; they threw:
Some cut in fragments from the forks they drew;
These while on several tables they dispose;
As priest himself the blameless rustic rose:
Expert the destin'd victim to dis-part.
In seven just portions, pure of hand and heart;
One sacred to the Nymphs apart they lay;
Another to the winged son of May:
The rural tribe in common share the rest;
The king the chine, the honour of the feast,
Who sat delighted at his servant's board;
The faithful servant joy'd his unknown lord:
Oh be thou dear (Ulysses cry'd) to Jove,
As well thou claim'st a grateful stranger's love!

He then thy thanks, (the bounteous swain reply'd)
Enjoyment of the good the gods provide.
From God's own hand descend our joys and woes;
These he decrees, and he but suffers those:
All pow'r is his, and whatsoe'er he wills,
The will itself, omnipotent, fulfills.
This said, the first-fruits to the gods he gave;
Then pour'd of offer'd wine the sable wave:
In great Ulysses' hand he plac'd the bowl;
He sat, and sweet reflection cheer'd his soul.
The bread from canisters Melaulius gave,
(Eumaeus' proper treasure bought this slave.
And led from Taphos, to attend his board,
A servant added to his absent lord.)
His task it was the wheaten loaves to lay,
And from the banquet take the bowls away.
And now the rage of hunger was repriest,
And each betakes him to his couch to rest.

Now came the night, and darkness cover'd o'er
The face of things; the winds began to roar!
The driving storm the wat'ry west-wind pours,
And Jove descends in deluges of show'rs.
Studious of rest and warmth, Ulysses lies,
Foreseeing from the first the storm would rise;
In meer necessity of coat and cloak,
With artful preface to his host he spoke:

'Hear me, my friends! who this good banquet grace;
'Tis sweet to play the fool in time and place;
And wine can of their wits the wise beguile,
Make the sage frolic, and the serious smile,
The grave in merry measures frisk about,
And many a long repented word bring out.
Since to be talkative I now commence,
Let witcast off the fallen yoke of sense.

Once I was strong, (would heav'n restore those days!)
And with my betters claim'd a share of praise.
Ulysses, Menelaus led forth a band,
And join'd me with them, ('twas their own command)
A deathful ambush for the foe to lay.

Beneath Troy walls by night we took our way;
There, clad in arms, along the marshes spread,
We made the o'er-fringed bank our bed.

Full soon th' inclemency of heav'n I feel;
Nor had these shoulders cov'ring, but of steel.
Sharp blew the north; snow-whit'ning all the fields
Froze with the blast, and gath'ring glaz'd our shields.

There all but I, well fenc'd with cloak and veil,
Lay cover'd by their ample shields at rest:
Fool that I was! I left behind my own;
The skill of weather and of winds unknown,
And trusted to my coat and shield alone.
When now was wasted more than half the night,
And the stars faded at approaching light;

Sudden I jogg'd Ulysses, who was laid
Fast by my side, and shiv'ring thus I said:

Here longer in this field I cannot ly,
The winter pinches, and with cold I die.
And die ashamed (oh wisest of mankind!)
The only fool who left his cloak behind.

He thought, and answer'd; hardly waking yet,
Sprung in his mind the momentary wit;
(That wit, which or in council or in fight,
Still met th' emergence, and determin'd right)
Hush thee, he cry'd, (soft-whispering in my ear)
Speak not a word, lest any Greek may hear—
And then (supporting on his arm his head)
Hear me, companions! (thus aloud he said)
Methinks too distant from the fleet we ly:
Ev'n now a vision stood before my eye,
And sure the warning vision was from high;
Let from among us some swift couriers rise,
Haste to the gen'ral, and demand supplies.

Up-started Thoas strict, Andraemon's son:
Nimbly he rose, and cast his garment down;
Instant the racer vanish'd off the ground;
That instant in his cloak I wrapp'd me round:
And safe I slept, 'til brightening dawning shone
The morn, conspicuous on her golden throne.

Oh were my strength as then, as then my age!
Some friend would fence me from the winter's rage.
Yet tatter'd as I look, I challenge'd then
The honours and the offices of men:
Some master, or some servant would allow
A cloak and velt—-but I am nothing now!

Well hast thou spoke (rejoin'd th' attentive swain)
Thy lips let fall no idle word, or vain!
Nor garment shalt thou want, nor aught beside;
Meet, for the wand'ring supplicant to provide.
But in in the morning take thy clothes again,
For here one velt suffices ev'ry swain;
No change of garments to our minds is known:
But when return'd, the good Ulysses' son
With better hand shall grace with fit attires
His guest, and send thee where thy soul desires.
The honest herdsman rose, as this he said,
And drew before the hearth the stranger's bed:
The fleecy spoils of sheep, a goat's rough hide
He spreads, and adds a mantle thick and wide;
With store to heap above him, and below,
And guard each quarter as the tempests blow.
There lay the king, and all the rest supine;
All, but the careful master of the swine:
Forth hasted he to tend his bristly care;
Well arm'd, and senc'd against nocturnal air:
His weighty faulchion o'er his shoulder ty'd:
His shaggy cloak a mountain goat supply'd:
With his broad spear, the dread of dogs and men,
He seeks his lodging in the rocky den.
There to the tusky herd he bends his way,
Where, screen'd from Boreas, high o'er-arch'd they lay.
THE ODDSEY

OF HOMER

BOOK XV.

A.
THE ARGUMENT.

The return of Telemachus.

The goddess Minerva commands Telemachus in a vision to return to Ithaca. Pisistratus and he take leave of Menelaus, and arrive at Pylos, where they part; and Telemachus sets sail, after having received on board Theoclymenus the soothsayer. The scene then changes to the cottage of Eumaeus, who entertains Ulysses with a recital of his adventures. In the mean time Telemachus arrives on the coast, and sending the vessel to the town, proceeds by himself to the lodge of Eumaeus.
NOW had Minerva reach'd those ample plains,
Fam'd for the dance, where Menelaus reigns;
Anxious she flies to great Ulysses' heir,
His instant voyage challenge'd all her care.
Beneath the royal portico display'd,
With Nestor's son, Telemachus was laid:
In sleep profound the son of Nestor lyes;
Not thine, Ulysses! care unfold his eyes:
Restless he griev'd, with various scenes oppress,
And all thy fortunes roll'd within his breast.
When, O Telemachus! (the goddess said)
Too long in vain, too wildly hast thou stray'd:
Thus leaving careless thy paternal right
The robbers pride, the prey to lawless might:
On fond pursuits neglectful while you roam,
Ev'n now the hand of rapine sacks the dome.
Hence to Atrides, and his leave implore
To launch thy vessel for thy natal shore:
Ply, whilst thy mother virtuous yet withholds
Her kindred's wishes, and her sire's commands;
Through both, Eurymachus pursues the dame,
And with the noblest gifts affords his claim.
Hence therefore, while thy stores thy own remain;
Thou know'st the practice of their female train.
Lost in the children of the present spouse,
They flight the pledges of the former vows;
Their love is always with the lover past;
Still the succeeding flame expells the last.
Let o'er thy house some chosen maid preside,
Till heav'n decrees to bless thee in a bride.
But now thy more attentive ears incline,
Observe the warnings of a pow'r divine:
For thee their shares the suitor-lords shall lay
In Samos' lands, or freights of Ithaca;
To seize thy life shall lurk the murd'rous band,
Ere yet thy footsteps press thy native land.
No——sooner far their riot and their luft
All-cov'ring earth shall bury deep in dust!
Then distant from the scatter'd islands steer,
Nor let the night retard thy full career;
Thy heav'nly guardian shall instruct the gales
To smooth thy passage, and supply thy fails:
And when at Ithaca thy labour ends,
Send to the town thy vessel with thy friends,
But seek thou first the master of the swine,
(For still to thee his loyal thoughts incline)
There pass the night: while he his course pursues
To bring Penelope the wish'd-for news,
That thou safe failing from the Pylian strand,
Art come to bless her in thy native land.
Thus spoke the goddess, and resumed her flight
To the pure regions of eternal light.
Mean while Phisistratus he gently shakes,
And with these words the slumbering youth awakes:
Rise, son of Nestor! for the road prepare,
And join the harnass'd courser to the car.
What cause, he cry'd, can justify our flight,
To tempt the dangers of forbidding night?
Here wait we rather, till approaching day
Shall prompt our speed, and point the ready way.
Nor think of flight before the Spartan king
Shall bid farewell, and bounteous presents bring;
Gifts, which to distant ages safely stow'd.
The sacred act of friendship shall record.

Thus he. But when the dawn befront break'd the east,
The king from Helen rose, and sought his guest.
As soon as his approach the hero knew,
The splendid mantle round him first he threw,
Then o'er his ample shoulders whir'd the cloak,
Respectful met the monarch, and bespoke:

Hail, great Atrides! 'tis favour'd of high Jove!
Let not thy friends in vain for licence move.
Swift let us measure back the wat'ry way,
Nor check our speed, impatient of delay.

If with desire so strong thy bosom glows,
Ill, said the king, should I thy wish oppose;
For oft in others freely I reprove.
The ill-tim'd efforts of officious love:
Who love too much, hate in the like extreme;
And both the golden mean alike condemn:

Alike he thwarts the hospitable end,
Who drives the free, or stays the hasty friend;
Take friendship's laws are by this rule express'd,
Welcome the coming, speed the parting guest.
Yet stay, my friends! and in your chariot take
The noblest presents that our love can make:
Mean time commit we to our women's care,
Some choice domestic viands to prepare;
The trav'ler rising from the banquet gay,
Eludes the labours of the tedious way.

Then if a wider course shall rather please,
Through spacious Argos, and the realms of Greece,
Atrides in his chariot shall attend,
Himself thy convoy to each royal friend.
No prince will let Ulysses' heir remove
Without some pledge, some monument of love:
These will the chaldron, these the tripod give,
From those the well-pair'd mules we shall receive,
Or bowl emboss'd, whose golden figures live.
To whom the youth, for prudence fam'd, reply'd:
O monarch, care of heav'n! thy peoples pride! 101
No friend in Ithaca my place supplies,
No pow'rful hands are there, no watchful-eyes:
My stores expos'd and fenceless house demand
The speedi'est succour from my guardian hand; 105
Left in a search too anxious and too vain
Of one joy lost, I lose what yet remain.

His purpose when the gen'rous warrior heard,
He charg'd the household cates to be prepar'd.
Now with the dawn, from his adjoining home, 110
Was Boethoedes Ereoneus come;
Swift as the word he forms—the rising blaze,
And o'er the coals the smoking fragments lays:
Mean-time the king, his son, and Helen, went:
Where the rich wardrobe breath'd a costly scent. 115
The king select'd from the glitt'ring rows
A bowl; the prince a silver beaker chose.
The beauteous queen revolv'd with careful eyes;
Her various textures of unnumber'd dyes,
And chose the largest; with no vulgar art 120:
Her own fair hands embroider'd ev'ry part:
Beneath the rest it lay divinely bright,
Like radiant Helper o'er the gems of night.
Then with each gift they hasten'd to their guest,
And thus the king Ulysses' heir address'd: 125

Since fix'd are thy resolves, may thund'ring Jove
With happiest omens thy desires approve!
This silver bowl, whose costly margins shine
Enchas'd with gold, this valu'd gift be thine;
To me this present, of Vulcanian frame, 130
From Sidon's hospitable monarch came;
To thee we now consign the precious load,
The pride of kings, and labour of a god.
Then gave the cup; while Megapente brought
The silver vase with living sculpture wrought. 135
The beauteous queen, advancing next, display'd
The shining veil, and thus endearing said:
Accept, dear youth, this monument of love,
Long since, in better days, by Helen wove:
Safe in thy mother's care the vesture lay,
To deck thy bride, and grace thy nuptial day.
Till mean-time, may'st thou, with happiest speed regain
Thy stately palace, and thy wide domain.
She said, and gave the veil: with grateful look
The prince the variegated present took.
And now, when through the royal dome they pass'd,
High on a throne the king each stranger plac'd.
A golden ew'r thy attendant damsel brings
Replete with water from the crystal springs;
With copious streams the shining vase supplies
A silver laver of capacious size.
They wash. The tables in fair order spread,
The glitt'ring canisters are crown'd with bread;
Viands of various kinds allure the taste,
Of choicest sort and favour: rich repast!
Whilst Eteoneus portions out the shares,
Atrides' son the purple draught prepares.
And now (each fated with the genial feast,
And the short rage of thirst and hunger, ceast)
Ulysses' son, with his illustrious friend,
The horses join, the polish'd car ascend,
Along the court the fiery steeds rebound,
And the wide portal echoes to the sound.
The king precedes: a bowl with fragrant wine
(Libation destin'd to the pow'rs divine)
His right-hand held: before the steeds he stands,
Then, mix'd with pray'rs, he utters these commands:
Farewel! and prosper, youths! Let Nestor know
What grateful thoughts still in this bosom glow,
For all the proofs of his paternal care,
Through the long dangers of the ten-years' war.
Ah! doubt not our report (the prince rejoin'd)
Of all the virtues of thy gen'rous mind!
And oh! return'd might we Ulysses meet!
To him thy presents shew, thy words repeat.
How will each speech his grateful wonder raise!
How will each gift indulge us in thy praise!

Scarce ended thus the prince, when on the right:
Advanç'd the bird of Jove; auspicious sight!
A milk white fowl his clinching talons bore,
With care, domestic pamper'd at the floor.
Peasants in vain with threat'ning cries pursue;
In solemn speed the bird majestic flew
Full dexter to the car: the prosperous sight
Fill'd ev'ry breast with wonder and delight.

But Nettor's son the cheerful silence broke,
And in these words the Spartan chief bespoke:
Say if to us the gods these omens send,
Or fates peculiar to thyself, postend?

Whilst yet the monarch pause'd, with doubts opprest,
The beauteous queen reliev'd his lab'ring breast.

Hear me, the cry'd, to whom the gods have giv'n
To read this sign, and mystic sense of heav'n.
As thus the plumpy sov'reign of the air
Left on the mountain's brow his callow care,
And wander'd through the wide ethereal way
To pour his wrath on yon' luxurious prey;
So shall thy god-like father, tos'd in vain
Through all the dangers of the boundless main,
Arrive, (or is perchance already come)
From slaughter'd gluttons to release the dome.

Oh! if this promis'd bliss by thund'ring Jove,
(The prince reply'd) stand fix'd in fate above;
To thee, as to some god, I'll temples raise,
And crown thy altars with the costly blaze.

He said; and bending o'er his chariot, flung
Athwart the fiery steeds the smarting thong:
The bounding shafts upon the harness play,
Till night descending intercepts the way.

To Diocles, at Phaërae they repair,
Whose boasted fire was sacred Alpheus' heir;
With him all night the youthful strangers stay'd,
Nor found the hospitable rites unpay'd.
But soon as morning from her orient bed
Had ting’d the mountains with her earliest red,
They join’d the steeds, and on the chariot sprung;
The brazen portals in their passage rung.
To Pylos soon they came; when thus begun
To Neftor’s heir Ulysses god-like son:
Let not Pilstratus in vain be prest,
Nor unconsenting hear his friend’s request;
His friend by long hereditary claim,
In toils his equal, and in years the same.
No farther from our vessel, I implore,
The courfers drive; but lash them to the shore.
Too long thy father would his friend detain;
I dread his profer’d kindness urg’d in vain.

The hero paus’d, and ponder’d this request,
While love and duty war’d within his breast:
At length resolv’d he turn’d his ready hand,
And lash’d his panting courfers to the strand.
There, while within the poop with care he stor’d
The regal presents of the Spartan lord;
With speed begone, (sai’d he) call ev’ry mate,
Ere yet to Neftor I the tale relate:
’Tis true, the fervour of his gen’rous heart
Brooks no repulse, nor could’st thou soon depart:
Himself will seek thee here, nor wilt thou find
In words alone the Pylian monarch kind.
But when arriv’d he thy return shall know,
How will his breast with honest fury glow?
This said, the sounding strokes his horse’s fire,
And soon he reach’d the palace of his fire.

Now (cry’d Telemachus) with speedy care
Hoife ev’ry sail, and ev’ry oar prepare.
Swift as the word his willing mates obey,
And seize their seats, impatient for the sea.

Mean-time the prince with sacrifice adores
Minerva, and her guardian aid implores;
When lo! a wretch ran breathless to the shore,
New from his crime, and reeking yet with gore.
A seer he was, from great Melanippe sprung,  
Melampus, who in Pylos flourisht'd long,  
'Till, urg'd by wrongs, a foreign realm he chose,  
Far from the hateful cause of all his woes.  

Neleus his treasures one long year detains;  
As long he groan'd in Phylechas his chains:  
Mean-time, what anguish and what rage combin'd,  
For lovely Pero rack'd his lab'ring mind!  
Yet 'scap'd he death; and, vengeful of his wrong,  
To Pylos drove, the lowing herds along:  

Then (Neleus vanquish'd, and consign'd the fair  
'To Bias' arms) he sought a foreign air;  
Argos the rich for his retreat he chose,  
There form'd his empire, there his palace rose.  

From him Amphaiates and Manius came:  
The first begot Oicleus great in fame,  
And he Amphiaratus, immortal name!  
The people's favour, and divinely wise,  
Belov'd by Jove and him who gilds the skies.  
Yet short his date of life! by female pride he dies.  

From Manius Cilias, whom Aurora's love  
Snatch'd for his beauty to the spheres above;  
And Polyphidès, on whom Phoebus shine  
With fullest rays, Amphiaratus now gone;  
In Hypernea's groves he made abode,  
And taught mankind the counsels of the god.  
From him spring Theoclymenus, who found  
(The sacred wine yet foaming on the ground)  
Telemachus: whom, as to heav'n he press'd:  

His ardent vows, the stranger thus address'd:  

O thou that dost thy happy course prepare  
With pure libations and with solemn pray'r!  
By that dread pow'r to whom thy vows are paid,  
By all the lives of these, thy own dear head;  
Declare sincerely to no foe's demand  
Thy name, thy lineage, and paternal land.  

Prepare then, said Telemachus, to know  
A tale from falsehood free, not free from woe.
From Ithaca, of royal birth, I came,
And great Ulysses (even honour'd name!)
Was once my sire: though now for ever lost
In Stygian gloom he glitters a penitent ghost!
Whose fate enquiring, through the world we row:
The last, the wretched proof of filial love.

The stranger then: Nor shall I aught conceal,
But the dire secret of my fate: reveal.
Of my one tribe an Argive wretch I slew;
Whose pow'rful friends the luckless deed pursue
With unrelenting rage, and force from home
The blood-stain'd exile, e'er doom'd to roam.
But hear, oh hear me: o'er you' azure flood;
Receive the suppliant! spare, my destin'd blood!

Stranger (reply'd the prince) securely rest:
Affianc'd in due faith; henceforth our guest.
'Thus affable, Ulysses' god-like heir
'*Takes from the stranger's hand the glitt'ring spear:
He climbs the ship, ascends the stern with haste,
And by his side the guest accepted plac'd.
The chief his orders gives: th' obedient band
With due observance waits the chief's command:
With speed the mast they rear, with speed unbind
The spacious sheet, and stretch it to the wind.
Minerva calls; the ready gales obey
With rapid speed to whirl them over the sea.
Crunus they pass'd, next Chalcis roll'd away,
When thick'ning darknes clos'd the doubtful day;
The silver Phaea's glitt'ring rills they lost,
And skim'd along by Elis' sacred coast.
Then cautious thro' the rocky reaches wind,
And turning sudden, shun the death design'd.

Mean-time the king, Eumaeus, and the rest
Sat in the cottage, at their rural feast:
The banquet past, and satiate ev'ry man,
To try his host: Ulysses thus began:

Yet one night more, my friends, indulge your guest;
The last I purpose in your walls to rest:
To-morrow for myself I must provide,
And only ask your counsel, and a guide:
Patient to roam the street, by hunger led,
And bless the friendly hand that gives me bread.  
There in Ulysses' roof I may relate
Ulysses' wand'ring to his royal mate;
Or mingling with the suitors haughty train,
Not undeserving, some support obtain.
Hermes to me his various gifts imparts,
Patron of industry and manual arts:
Few can with me in dext'rous works contend,
The pyre to build, the stubborn oak to rend;
To turn the tasteful viand o'er the flame;
Or foam the goblet with a purple stream.
Such are the tasks of men of mean estate,
Whom fortune dooms to serve the rich and great.

Alas! (Eumaeus with a sigh rejoind')
How sprung a thought so monstrous in thy mind?  
If on that godless race thou wouldst attend,
Fate owes thee sure a miserable end!
The wrongs and blasphemies ascend the sky,
And pull descending vengeance from on high.
Not such, my friend, the servants of their feast:
A blooming train in rich embroid'ry drest,
With earth's whole tribute the bright table bends,
And smiling round celestial youth attends.
Stay then: no eye askance beholds thee here;
Sweet is thy converse to each social ear;
Well pleas'd, and pleasing, in our cottage rest,
Till good Telemachus accepts his guest
With genial gifts, and change of fair attires,
And safe conveys thee where thy soul desires.

To him the man of woes: O gracious Jove!  
Reward this stranger's hospitable love,
Who knows the son of sorrow to relieve,
Cheers the sad heart, nor lets affliction grieve,
Of all the ills unhappy mortals know,
A life of wand'ring is the greatest woe.
On all their weary ways wait care and pain,
And pine and penury, a meagre train.
To such a man since harbour you afford,
Relate the farther fortunes of your lord;
What cares his mother’s tender breast engage,
And fire, forsaken on the verge of age;
Beneath the sun prolong they yet their breath,
Or range the house of darkness and of death?

To whom the swain: Attend what you enquire.
Laertes lives, the miserable sire
Lives, but implores of ev’ry pow’r to lay
The burden down, and wishes for the day.
Torn from his offspring in the eve of life,
Torn from th’ embraces of his tender wife,
Sole, and all comfortless he wastes away,
Old-age untimely posting ere his day.
She too, sad mother! for Ulysses lost
Pin’d out her bloom, and vanish’d to a ghost.
(So dire a fate, ye righteous gods! avert,
From ev’ry friendly, ev’ry feeling heart!)
While yet she was, tho’ clouded o’er with grief,
Her pleasing converse minister’d relief:
With Climene, her youngest daughter, bred,
One roof contain’d us, and one table fed.
But when the softly-stealing pace of time
Crept on from childhood into youthful prime,
To Samos’ isle she sent the wedded pair;
Me to the fields, to tend the rural care;
Array’d in garments her own hands had wove,
Nor less the darling object of her love.
Her hapless death my brighter days o’ercast,
Yet providence deserts me not at last;
My present labours food and drink procure,
And more, the pleasure to relieve the poor.
Small is the comfort from the queen to hear
Unwelcome news, or vex the royal ear;
Blank and discountenanced the servants stand,
Nor dare to question where the proud command:
No profit springs beneath usurping pow'rs;  
Want feeds not there where luxury devours,  
Nor harbours charity where riot reigns:
  "The suff'ring chief at this began to melt;
And, oh Eumaeus! thou (he cries) hast felt
The spite of fortune too! her cruel hand
Snatch'd thee an infant from thy native land!
Snatch'd from thy parents arms, thy parent's eyes,
To early wants! a man of miseries!
Thy whole sad story, from its first, declare:
Sunk the fair city by the rage of war,
Where once thy parents dwelt? or did they keep,
In humbler life, the lowing herds and sheep?
So left perhaps to tend the fleecy train,
Rude pyrates seiz'd, and shipp'd thee o'er the main?
Doom'd a fair prize to grace some prince's board,
The worthy purchase of a foreign lord.
  If then my fortunes can delight my friend,
A story fruitful of events, attend:
Another's sorrow may thy ear enjoy,
And wine the lengthen'd intervals employ:
Long nights the now-declining year bestows;
A part we consecrate to soft repose,
A part in pleasing talk we entertain;
For too much rest itself becomes a pain.
Let those whom sleep invites, the call obey,
Their cares resuming with the dawning day:
Here let us feast, and to the feast be join'd:
Dilcourage, the sweeter banquet of the mind;
Review the series of our lives, and taste
The melancholy joy of evils past:
  For he who much has suffer'd, much will know;
And pleas'd remembrance builds delight on woe.
  Above Ortygia lyes an isle of fame,
Far hence remote, and Syria is the name;
(There curious eyes inscrib'd with wonder trace
The sun's diurnal, and his annual race)
Not large, but fruitful; sord'd with grass to keep
The bellowing oxen, and the bleating sheep;
Her sloping hills the mantling vines adorn,
And her rich vallies wave with golden corn. 445
No want, no famine the glad natives know,
Nor sink by sickness to the shades below;
But when a length of years unnerves the strong,
Apollo comes, and Cynthia comes along.
They bend the silver bow with tender skill,
And void of pain, the silent arrows kill.
Two equal tribes this fertile land divide,
Where two fair cities rise with equal pride,
But both in constant peace, one prince obey,
And Ctefius there, my father, holds the sway. 455
Freighted, it seems, with toys of ev'ry sort
A ship of Sidon anchor'd in our port;
What-time it chanc'd the palace entertain'd,
Skill'd in rich works, a woman of their land.
This nymph, where anchor'd the Phoenician train,
To wash her robes descending to the main,
A smooth-tongu'd sailor won her to his mind;
(For love deceives the best of woman-kind.)
A sudden trust from sudden liking grew;
She told her name, her race, and all she knew. 465
I too (the cry'd) from glorious Sidon came,
My father Arybas, of wealthy name;
But snatch'd by pyrates from my native place,
The Taphians told me to this man's embrace.
Haste then (the false-designing youth reply'd) 470
Haste to thy country, love shall be thy guide:
Haste to thy father's house, thy father's breast;
For still he lives, and lives with riches blest.
"Swear first (the cry'd) ye sailors! to restore
A wretch in safety to her native shore." 475
Swift as the ask'd, the ready sailors swore.
She then proceeds: Now let our compact made
Be nor by signal nor by word betray'd,
Nor near me any of your crew descry'd
By road frequented, or by fountain-side.
Be silence still our guard. The monarch's spies
(For watchful age is ready to surmise)
Are still at hand; and this reveal'd must be
Death to yourselves, eternal chains to me.
Your vessel loaded, and your traffic past,
Dispatch a wary messenger with haste:
Then gold and costly treasures will I bring,
And more, the infant offspring of the king.
Him, child-like wand'ring forth, I'll lead away,
(A noble prize!) and to your ship convey.
Thus spoke the dame, and homeward took the road.

A year they traffic, and their vessel load.
Their stores compleat, and ready now to weigh,
A spy was sent, their summons to convey:
An artist to my father's palace came,
With gold and amber chains, elab'rate frame:
Each female eye the glitt'ring links employ,
They turn, review, and cheapen ev'ry toy.
He took th' occasion as they flood intent,
Gave her the sign, and to his vessel went.
She strait pursu'd, and seiz'd my willing arm;
I follow'd smiling, innocent of harm.
Three golden goblets in the porch he found,
(The guests not enter'd, but the table crown'd)
Hid in her fraud'ful bosom, these she bore.
Now set the fan, and darken'd all the shore.
Arriving then, where tilting on the tides
Prepar'd to launch the freighted vessel rides;
Aboard they heave us, mount their decks, and sweep
With level oar along the glassy deep.
Six calm days and six smooth nights we sail,
And constant Jove supply'd the gentle gale.
The sev'nth, the fraud'ful wretch, (no cause desery'd)
'Touch'd by Diana's vengeful arrow, dy'd.
Down dropt the caitiff-corpse, a worthless load,
Down to the deep; there roll'd the future food
Of fierce sea-wolves, and monsters of the flood.
An helpless infant I remain'd behind;
Thence born to Ithaca by wave and wind;
Sold to Laertes, by divine command;
And now adopted to a foreign land.
To him the king: Reciting thus thy cares.
My secret soul in all thy sorrows shares:
But one choice blessing (such was Jove's high will)
Has sweeten'd all thy bitter draughts of ill:
Torn from thy country to no hapless end,
The gods have, in a master, giv'n a friend.
Whatever frugal nature needs is thine,
(For she needs little) daily bread and wine.
While I, so many wand'ring past and woes,
Live but on what thy poverty bestows.
So past in pleasing dialogue away
The night; then down to short repose they lay;
'Till radiant rose the messenger of day.
While in the port of Ithaca, the band
Of young Telemachus approach'd the land;
Their sails they loos'd, they lash'd the mast aside,
And cast their anchors, and the cables ty'd:
Then on the breezy shore descending, join
In grateful banquet o'er the rosy wine.
When thus the prince: Now each his course pursues;
I to the fields, and to the city you,
Long absent hence; I dedicate this day
My swains to visit; and the works survey.
Expect me with the morn, to pay the skies
Our debt of safe return, in feast and sacrifice.
Then Theoclymenus: But who shall lend,
Mean-time, protection to thy stranger friend?
Strait to the queen and palace shall I fly,
Or yet more distant, to some lord apply?
The prince return'd; Renown'd in days of yore.
Has stood our father's hospitable door;
No other roof a stranger should receive,
Nor other hands than ours the welcome give.

B. h 3.
But in my absence riot fills the place,
Nor bears the modest queen a stranger's face;
From noiseful revel far remote the flies;
But rarely seen, or seen with weeping eyes.
No—let Eurymachus receive my guest,
Of nature courteous, and by far the best;
He wooes the queen with more respectful flame,
And emulates her former husband's fame:
With what success, 'tis Jove's alone to know,
And the hop'd nuptials turn to joy or woe.

Thus speaking, on the right up soar'd in air
The hawk, Apollo's swift-wing'd messenger;
His deathful pounces tore a trembling dove;
The clotted feathers scatter'd from above
Between the hero and the vessel pour.
Thick plumage, mingled with a sanguine show's.

Th' observing augur took the prince aside,
Seiz'd by the hand, and thus prophetic cry'd:
Yon bird that dexter cuts th' aerial road,
Rose ominous, nor flies without a god:
No race but thine shall Ithaca obey,
To thine, for ages, heav'n decrees the sway.
Succeed the omen, gods! (the youth rejoin'd).
Soon shall my bounties speak a grateful mind,
And soon each envy'd happiness attend
The man, who calls Telemachus his friend.

Then to Piraeus——Thou whom time has prov'd
A faithful servant, by thy prince belov'd!
Till we returning shall our guest demand,
Accept this charge, with honour, at our hand.

To this Piraeus: Joyful I obey,
Well pleas'd the hospitable rites to pay.
The presence of thy guest shall best reward
(If long thy stay) the absence of my lord.
With that, their anchors he commands to weigh,
Mount the tall bark, and launch into the sea.
All with obedient haste forsake the shores;
And plac'd in order, spread their equal oars.
Then from the deck the prince his sandals takes;
Pois'd in his hand the pointed jav'lín shakes.
They part; while less'ning from the hero's view,
Swift to the town the well-row'd galley flew:
The hero trod the margin of the main,
And reach'd the mansion of his faithful swain.
THE ARGUMENT.

The discovery of Ulysses to Telemachus.

Telemachus arriving at the lodge of Eumaeus, sends him to carry Penelope the news of his return. Minerva appearing to Ulysses, commands him to discover himself to his son. The princes, who had lain in ambush to intercept Telemachus in his way, their project being defeated, return to Ithaca.
THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XVI.

Soon as the morning blush'd along the plains,
Ulysses, and the monarch of the swains,
Awake the sleeping fires, their meal prepare,
And forth to pasture send the briskly care.
The prince's near approach the dogs descry,
And fawning round his feet, confess their joy.
Their gentle blandishment the king survey'd,
Heard his resounding step, and instant said:
Some well-known friend (Eumaeus) bends this way;
His steps I hear; the dogs familiar play.

While yet he spoke, the prince advancing drew
Nigh to the lodge, and now appear'd in view.
Transported, from his seat Eumaeus sprung,
Drop'd the full bowl, and round his bosom hung:
Kissing his cheek, his hand, while from his eye
The tears rain'd copious in a show'r of joy.
As some fond sire who ten long winters grieves,
From foreign climes an only son receives,
(Child of his age) with strong paternal joy
Forward he springs, and clasps the favourite boy:
So round the youth his arms Eumaeus spread,
As if the grave had giv'n him from the dead.
And is it thou? my ever dear delight!
O art thou come to bless my longing sight!
Never, I never hop'd to view this day,
When o'er the waves you plow'd the desip'rate way.
Enter my child! beyond my hopes restor'd,
O give these eyes to feast upon my lord.
Enter, oh seldom seen! for lawles' pow'rs
Too much detain thee from these sylvan bow'rs.

The prince reply'd; Eumaeus, I obey;
To seek thee, friend, I hither took my way.
But say, if in the court the queen reside
Severely chaste, or if commenç'd a bride?

Thus he: and thus the monarch of the swains;
Severely chaste Penelope remains,
But lost to ev'ry joy, she wastes the day
In tedious cares, and weeps the night away.

He ended, and (receiving as they pass
The javelin, pointed with a star of brads)
They reach'd the dome; the dome with marble shin'd.
His seat Ulysses to the prince resign'd.
Not so——(exclaims the prince with decent grace)
For me, this house shall find an humbler place:
T' usurp the honours due to silver hairs
And rev'rend strangers, modest youth forbears.
Instant the swain the spoils of beasts supplies,
And bids the rural throne with offers rise.
There fate the prince: the feast Eumaeus spread;
And heap'd the shining canisters with bread.
Thick o'er the board the plenteous viands lay,
The frugal remnants of the former day.
Then in a bowl he tempers gen'rous wines,
Around whose verge a mimic ivy twines.
And now, the rage of thirst and hunger fled,
Thus young Ulysses to Eumaeus said:

Whence, father, from what shore this stranger, say?
What vessel bore him o'er the wat'ry way?
To human step our land impervious lyes,
And round the coast circumfluent oceans rise.
The swain returns: A tale of sorrows hear;
In spacious Crete he drew his natal air:
Long doom'd to wander o'er the land and main,
For heav'n has wove his thread of life with pain.
Half-breathless 'scapeing to the land, he flew
From Thespis' mariners, a murd'rous crew!
To thee, my son, the suppliant I resign;
I gave him my protection, grant him thine.

Hard task, he cries, thy virtue gives thy friend,
Willing to aid, unable to defend.
Can strangers safely in the court reside,
'Midst the swell'd insolence of lust and pride?
Ev'n I unsafe: the queen in doubt to wed,
Or pay due honours to the nuptial bed!
Perhaps she weds regardless of her fame,
Deaf to the mighty Ulyssæan name.
However, stranger! from our grace receive
Such honours as b'est a prince to give;
Sandals, a sword, and robes, respect to prove,
And safe to sail with ornaments of love.
Till then, thy guest amid the rural train
Far from the court, from danger far, detain.
'Tis mine with food the hungry to supply,
And clothe the naked from th' inclement sky.
Here dwell in safety from the suitors wrongs,
And the rude insults of ungovern'd tongues.
For shouldst thou suffer, pow'rless to relieve
I must behold it, and can only grieve.
The brave encompass'd by an hostile train,
O'erpower'd by numbers, is but brave in vain.

To whom, while anger in his bosom glows,
With warmth replies the man of mighty woes:
Since audience mild is deign'd, permit my tongue
At once to pity and resent thy wrong.
My heart weeps blood, to see a soul so brave
Live to base insolence of pow'r a slave.
But tell me, dost thou, prince, dost thou behold
And hear their midnight revels uncontroul'd?
Say, do thy subjects in bold faction rise,
Or priests in fabled oracles advise?
Or are thy brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,
Turn'd mean defectors in the needful hour?
O that I were from great Ulysses sprung,
Or that these wither'd nerves like thine were strung;
Or heav'n's! might he return! (and soon appear)
He shall, I trust; a hero scorns despair)
Might he return, I yield my life a prey
To my worst foe, if that avenging day
Be not their last: but should I lose my life
Oppress'd by numbers in the glorious strife,
I chuse the nobler part; and yield my breath,
Rather than bear dishonour worse than death;
Than see the hand of violence invade
The rev'rend stranger, and the spotless maid;
Than see the wealth of kings consum'd in waste,
The drunkards revel, and the gluttons feast.

Thus he, with anger flashing from his eye;
Sincere the youthful hero made reply:
Nor leagu'd in factious arms my subjects rise,
Nor priests in fabled oracles advise;
Nor are my brothers, who should aid thy pow'r,
Turn'd mean defectors in the needful hour.
Ah me! I boast no brother; heav'n's dread king
Gives from our flock an only branch to spring:
Alone Laertes reign'd Arcebus' heir,
Alone Ulysses drew the vital air,
And I alone the bed connubial graced,
The unblest offspring of a fire unblest!
Each neighbour'ing realm conducive to our woe
Sends forth her peers, and ev'ry peer a foe:
The court proud Samos and Dulichium fills,
And lofty Zacinth crown'd with shady hills.
Ev'n Ithaca and all her lords invade
Th' imperial scepter, and the regal bed:
The queen averse to love, yet aw'd by pow'r,
Seems half to yield, yet flies the bridal hour:
Mean-time their licence uncontroul'd I bear;
Ev'n now they envy me the vital air:
But heav'n will sure revenge, and gods there are.
But go, Eumaeus! to the queen impart
Our safe return, and ease a mother's heart
Yet secret go; for num'rous are my foes,
And here at least I may in peace repose.

To whom the swain: I hear, and I obey:
But old Laertes weeps his life away,
And deems thee lost: shall I my speed employ.
To bless his age, a messenger of joy?
The mournful hour that tore his son away
Sent the sad fire in solitude to stray;
Yet buffed with his slaves, to ease his woe,
He drefs'd the wine, and bade the garden blow,
Nor food nor wine refus'd: but since the day
That you to Pylos plow'd the wat'ry way,
Nor wine nor food he ta'les; but funk in woes,
Wild springs the vine, no more the garden blows.
Shut from the walks of men, to pleasure lost,
Pen'five and pale, be wanders half a ghost.

Wretched old man! (with tears the prince returns)
Yet cease to go—what man so blest but mourns?
Were ev'ry with indulg'd, by favoring skies,
This hour should give Ulysses to my eyes.
But to the queen with speed, dispatchful hear
Our safe return, and back with speed repair:
And let some hand-maid of her train return
To good Laertes, in his rural court.

While yet he spoke, impatient of delay
He brac'd his sandals on, and strode away:
Then from the heav'n the martial goddess flies
Through the wide fields of air, and cleaves the skies;
In form a virgin in soft beauty's bloom,
Skill'd in th' illustrious labours of the loom.
Alone to Ithacus the flood display'd,
But unapparent as a viewless shade
Escap'd Telemachus: (the pow'rs above,
Seen or unseen, o'er earth at pleasure move.)
The dogs intelligent confess'd the tread
Of pow'r divine, and howling, trembling fled.
The goddess beck'ning waves her deathless hands;
Dauntless the king before the goddess stands.

Then why (she said) O favour'd of the skies! Why to thy god-like son this long disguise?
Stand forth reveal'd: with him thy cares employ
Against thy foes: be valiant, and destroy!
Lo! I descend in that avenging hour,
To combat by thy side, thy guardian pow'r.

She said, and o'er him waves her wand of gold:
Imperial robes his manly limbs infold;
At once with grace divine his frame improves;
At once with majesty enlarg'd he moves:
Youth flush'd his red'ning cheek, and from his brows
A length of hair in fable ringlets flows;

The black'ning chin receives a deeper shade:
Then from his eyes up-sprung the warrior-maid.

The hero re-ascent: the prince o'er-aw'd
Scarce lifts his eyes, and bows as to a god.

Then with surprise (surprise chaftlis'd by fears)
How art thou chang'd! (he cry'd) a god appears!
Far other vests thy limbs majestic grace!
Far other glories lighten from thy face!
If heav'n be thy abode, with pious eare

Lo! I the ready sacrifice prepare;
Lo! gifts of labour'd-gold adorn thy shrine,
To win thy grace: O save us, pow'r divine!

Few are my days, Ulysses made reply,
Nor I, alas! descendent of the sky.
I am thy father. O my son! my son!
That father for whose sake thy days have run
One scene of woe; to endless cares consign'd,
And outrag'd by the wrongs of base mankind.

Then, rushing to his arms, he kis'd his boy
With the strong raptures of a parent's joy.
Tears bathe his cheek, and tears the ground bedew:
He strain'd him close as to his breast he grew.
Ah me! (exclaims the prince with fond desire)
Thou art not—no, thou canst not be my sire.
Heav'n such illusion only can impose, 215  
By the false joy to aggravate my woes.  
Who but a god can change the gen'r al doom,  
And give to wither'd age a youthful bloom?  
Late, worn with years, in weeds obscene you trod, 220  
Now, cloth'd in majesty, you move a god!  

Forbear, he cry'd; for heav'n reserve that name,  
Give to thy father but a father's claim:  
Other Ulysses shalt thou never see;  
I am Ulysses, I (my son) am he. 225  
Twice ten sad years o'er earth and ocean toil,  
'Tis giv'n at length to view my native coast.

Pallas, unconquer'd maid, my frame surrounds  
With grace divine: her pow'r admits no bounds;  
She o'er my limbs old age and wrinkles shed; 230  
Now strong as youth; magnificent I tread.

The gods with ease frail men depress or raise,  
Exalt the lowly, or the proud debase.

He spoke and sat. The prince with transport flew,  
Hung round his neck, while tears his cheek bedew;  
Nor less the father pour'd a social flood;  
They wept abundant, and they wept aloud.

As the bold eagle with fierce sorrow stung,  
Or parent vultur, mourns her ravish'd young;  
They cry, they scream, their unsledg'd brood a prey 240  
To some rude churl; and born by stealth away;  
So they aloud: and tears in tides had run,

The prince thus interrupts the solemn woe:  
What ship transported thee, O father, say?  
And what blest hands have oar'd thee on the way?

All, all, (Ulysses instant made reply)  
I tell thee all, my child, my only joy!

Phaeacians bore me to the port assign'd, 250  
A nation ever to the stranger kind;  
Wra pt in th' embrace of sleep, the faithful train  
O'er seas convey'd me to my native reign:  

C c 3
Embroider'd vestures, gold, and brass are laid
Conceal'd in caverns in the sylvan shade,
Hither, intent the rival rout to slay,
And plan the scene of death, I bend my way:
So Pallas wills—But thou, my son, explain
The names and numbers of that audacious train;
'Tis mine to judge if better to employ
Assistent force, or singly to destroy.
O'er earth (returns the prince) resounds thy name,
Thy well-try'd wisdom, and thy martial fame:
Yet at thy words I start, in wonder lost;
Can we engage, not decades, but an host?
Can we alone in furious battle stand
Against that num'rous and determin'd band?
Hear then their numbers: from Dulichium came
Twice twenty six, all peers of mighty name;
Six are their menial train: twice twelve the host.
Of Samos: twenty from Zaoynthus coast:
And twelve our country's pride; to these belong:
Medon and Phemius skil'd in heav'ly song.
Two few's from day to day the revels wait,
Exact of taste, and serve the feast in state.
With such a foe th' unequal fight to try,
Were by false-courage unrevg'd to die.
Then what assistent pow'rs you boast, relate,
Ere yet we mingle in the stern debate.
Mark well: my voice, (Ulysses strain replies:)
What need of aids, if favour'd by the skies;
If shielded to the dreadful fight we move,
By mighty Pallas, and by thund'ring Jove?
Sufficient they (Telemachus rejoin'd)
Against the banded pow'rs of all mankind:
They, high enthron'd above the rolling clouds,
Wither the strength of man, and awe the gods.
Such aids expect, he cries, when strong in might
We rise terrific to the task of fight.
But thou, when morn salutes th' aereal plain,
The court revisit and the lawless train:
Me thither in disguise Eumaeus leads,
An aged mendicant in tatter'd weeds.
There, if base scorn insult my rev'rend age,
Bear it, my son! repress thy rising rage:
If outrag'd, cease that outrage to repel;
Bear it, my son! howe'er thy heart rebel.
Yet strive by pray'r and counsel to restrain
Their lawless insults, tho' thou strive in vain:
For wicked ears are deaf to wisdom's call,
And vengeance strikes whom heav'n has doom'd to fall:
Once more attend: when she, whose pow'r inspires
The thinking mind, my soul to vengeance fires,
I give the sign; that instant, from beneath,
Aloft convey the instruments of death;
Armour and arms; and, if mistrust arise,
Thus veil the truth in plausible disguise:
"These glitt'ring weapons, ere he fail'd to Troy
Ulysses view'd with stern heroic joy;
Then, beaming o'er th'illum'in'd wall they shone:
Now dust dishonours all their lustre gone.
I bear them hence (to Jove my soul inspires)
From the pollution of the fuming fires;
Left when the bowl inflames, in vengeful mood
Ye rush to arms, and stain the feast with blood:
Oft ready swords in luckless hour incite
"The hand of wrath, and arm it for the fight."
Such be the plea, and by the plea deceive:
For Jove infatuates all, and all believe.
Yet leave for each of us a sword to wield,
A pointed javelin, and a fenceful shield.
But by my blood that in thy bosom glows,
By that regard a son his father owes;
The secret, that thy father lives, retain.
Lock'd in thy bosom from the household train;
Hide it from all; ev'n from Eumaeus hide,
From my dear father, and my dearer bride.
One care remains, to note the loyal few.
Whose faith yet lasts among the menial crew;
And noting, ere we rise in vengeance, prove
Who loves his prince; for sure you merit love.

To whom the youth: To emulate I aim
The brave and wife, and my great father's fame.
But re-consider, since the vilest err,
Vengeance resolv'd 'tis dang'rous to defer.
What length of time must we consume in vain,
Too curious to explore the menial train?
While the proud foes, industrious to destroy
Thy wealth in riot, the delay enjoy.

Suffice it in this exigence alone
To mark the damsels that attend the throne:
Dispers'd the youth resides; their faith to prove
Jove grants henceforth, if thou hast spoke from Jove.

While in debate they waste the hours away,
Th' associates of the prince repass'd the bay;
With speed they guide the vessel to the shores;
With speed debarking land the naval stores;
Then faithful to their charge, to Clytius bear,
And trust the presence to his friendly care.

Swift to the queen a herald flies t' impart
Her son's return, and ease a parent's heart;
Left a sad prey to ever musing cares,
Pale grief destroy what time a while forbears.

Th' uncautious herald with impatience burns,
And cries aloud, Thy son, oh queen, returns:
Eumaeus sage approach'd th' imperial throne,
And breath'd his mandate to her ear alone,
Then meafur'd back the way.—The suitor band
Stung to the soul, abash'd, confounded stand;
And issuing from the dome, before the gate,
With clowned looks, a pale assembly late.

At length Eurymachus: Our hopes are vain;
Telemachus in triumph fails the main.
Haste, rear the mast, the swelling shroud display;
Haste, to our ambush'd friends the news convey!
Sscarce had he spoke, when turning to the strand
Amphinomus survey'd th' associate band;
Full to the bay within the winding shores
With gather'd fails they stood, and listed oars.
O friends! he cry'd, elate with rising joy,
See to the port secure the vessel fly!
Some god has told them, or themselves survey
The bark escap'd; and measure back their way.
Swift at the word descending to the shores,
They moor the vessel and unlace the stores:
Then moving from the strand, apart they fate,
And tell and frequent, form'd a dire debate.
Lives then the boy? he lives, (Antinous cries)
The care of gods and favorite of the skies.
All-night we watch'd, till with her orient wheels
Aurora flam'd above the eastern hills,
And from the lofty brow of rocks by day
Took in the ocean with a broad survey:
Yet safe he fails! the pow'r's coelestial give
To shun the hidden snare of death, and live.
But die he shall, and thus condemn'd to bleed
Be now the scene of instant death decreed?
Hope ye success? undaunted crush the foe.
Is he not wise? know this, and strike the blow.
Wait ye, till he to arms in council draws
The Greeks, averse too justly to our cause?
Strike, ere the fates conven'd the foe betray,
Our murd'rous ambush on the wat'ry way.
Or chuse ye vagrant from their rage to fly
Outcasts of earth, to breathe an unknown sky?
The brave prevent misfortune; then be brave;
And bury future danger in his grave.
Returns he? ambush'd we'll his walk invade,
Or where he hides in solitude and shade:
And give the palace to the queen a dow'r,
Or him she blesses in the bridal hour.
But if submissive you resign the sway,
Slaves to a boy, go, flatter and obey.
Retire we instant to our native reign,
Nor be the wealth of kings consum'd in vain. 405
Then wed whom choice approves: the queen be giv'n
To some blest prince, the prince decreed by heav'n.

Abash'd, the suitor-train his voice attends;
'Till from his throne Amphinomus descends,
Who o'er Dulichium stretch'd his spacious reign; 410
A land of plenty, blest with ev'ry grain:
Chief of the numbers who the queen address'd,
And tho' displeasing, yet displeasing least.
Soft were his words; his actions wisdom sway'd;
Graceful a while he paus'd, then mildly said: 415
O friends forbear! and be the thought withstood:
'Tis horrible to shed imperial blood!
Consult we first th' all-seeing pow'rs above,
And the sure oracles of righteous Jove.
If they assent, ev'n by this hand he dies; 420
If they forbid, I war not with the skies.

He said: the rival train his voice approv'd,
And rising instant to the palace mov'd.
Arriv'd, with wild tumultuous noise they fate
Recumbent on the shining thrones of state. 425

Then Medon, conscious of their dire debates,
The murd'rous council to the queen relates.
Touch'd at the dreadful story she descends;
Her hafty steps a damsel-train attends.
Full where the dome its shining valves expands, 430
Sudden before the rival pow'rs she stands:
And veiling decent with a modest shade
Her cheek, indignant to Antinous said:
O void of faith! of all bad men the worst!
Renown'd for wisdom, by th' abuse accruf! 435
Mistaking fame proclaims thy gen'rous mind!
Thy deeds denote thee of the basest kind.
Wretch! to destroy a prince that friendship gives,
While in his guest his murd'rer he receives:
Nor dread superior Jove, to whom belong 440.
The cause of suppliants, and revenge of wrong.
Haft thou forgot (ungrateful as thou art)
Who sav’d thy father with a friendly part?
Lawless he ravag’d with his martial pow’rs
The Taphian pyrates on Thespota’s shores;
Enrag’d, his life, his treasures they demand;
Ulysses sav’d him from th’ avenger’s hand.
And would thou evil for his good repay?
His bed dishonour, and his house betray?
Afflict his queen? and with a murd’rous hand
Destroy his heir?—but cease, ’tis I command.

Far hence those fears, (Eurymachus reply’d)
O prudent princess! bid thy soul conside.
Breathes there a man who dares that hero slay,
While I behold the golden light of day?
No: by the righteous pow’rs of heav’n I swear,
His blood in vengeance smokes upon my spear.
Ulysses, when my infant days I led,
With wine suffic’d me, and with dainties fed:
My gen’rous soul abhors th’ ungrateful part,
And my friend’s son lives dearest to my heart.
Then fear no mortal arm: if heav’n destroy,
We must resign; for man is born to die.

Thus smooth he ended, yet his death conspir’d:
Then sorrowing, with sad step the queen retir’d,
With streaming eyes all comfortless deplor’d,
Touch’d with the dear remembrance of her lord;
Nor ceas’d, till Pallas-bid her sorrows fly,
And in soft slumber seal’d her flowing eye.

And now Eumaeus, at the ev’ning hour,
Came late-returning to his sylvan bow’r.
Ulysses and his son had drest with art
A yearling boar, and gave the gods their part.
Holy repast! That instant from the skies
The martial goddes to Ulysses flies:
She waves her golden wand, and re-assumes
From ev’ry feature ev’ry grace that blooms;
At once his vestures change; at once she sheds
Age o’er his limbs, that trembles as he treads.
Left to the queen the swain with transport fly,
Unable to contain th’ unruly joy.
When near he drew; the prince breaks forth; Proclaim
What tidings, friend! what speaks the voice of fame?
Say, if the suitors measure back the main,
Or still in ambush thirst for blood in vain?
Whether, he cries, they measure back the flood,
Or still in ambush thirst in vain for blood,
Escap’d my care: where lawless suitors sway,
Thy mandate born, my soul disdain’d to stay.
But from th’ Hermaean height I cast a view,
Where to the port a bark high-bounding flew:
Her freight a shining band; with martial air
Each pois’d his shield, and each advanc’d his spear;
And if aright these searching eyes survey,
Th’ eluded suitors fleem the wat’ry way.
The prince, well pleas’d to disappoint their wiles,
Steals on his fire a glance, and secret smiles.
And now a short repast prepar’d, they fed,
’Till the keen rage of craving hunger fled:
Then to repose withdrawn, apart they lay,
And in soft sleep forgot the cares of day.
THE ODYSSSEY OF HOMER. BOOK XVII.
THE ARGUMENT.

Telemachus, returning to the city, relates to Penelope the sum of his travels. Ulysses is conducted by Eumaeus to the palace, where his old dog Argus acknowledges his master, after an absence of twenty years, and dies with joy. Eumaeus returns into the country, and Ulysses remains among the suitors, whose behaviour is described.
THE

ODYSSEY.

BOOK XVII.

Soon as Aurora, daughter of the dawn,
Sprinkled with roseate light the dewy lawn;
In haste the prince arose, prepar'd to part;
His hand impatient grasps the pointed dart;
Fair on his feet the polish'd sandals shine;
And thus he greets the master of the swine:

My friend, adieu: let this short stay suffice;
I haste to meet my mother's longing eyes,
And end her tears, her sobs, and her sighs.
But thou attentive, what we order heed;
This hapless stranger to the city lead;
By public bounty let him there be fed;
And bless the hand that stretches forth the bread.
To wipe the tears from all afflicted eyes
My will may covet, but my pow'r denies.
If this raise anger in the stranger's thought;
The pain of anger punishes the fault.
The very truth I undisguis'd declare;
For what so easy as to be Sincere?

To this Ulysses: 'What the prince requires
Of swift removal seconds my desires.
To want-like mine the peopled town can yield
More hopes of comfort than the lonely field.
Nor fits my age to tills the labour'd lands,
Or stoop to tasks a rural lord demands.'
Adieu! but since this ragged garb can bear
So ill th' inclemencies of morning air,
A few hours space permit me here to stay;
My steps Eumaeus shall to town convey,
With riper beams when Phoebus warms the day.

Thus he: nor aught Telemachus reply'd,
But left the mansion with a lofty stride:
Schemes of revenge his pond'ring breast elate,
Revolving deep the suitors' sudden fate.
Arriving now before th' imperial hall,
He props his spear against the pillar'd wall;
Then like a lion o'er the threshold bounds;
The marble pavement with his step resounds:
His eye first glanc'd where Euryclea spreads
With furry spoils of beasts the splendid beds:
She saw, she wept, she ran with eager pace,
And reach'd her master with a long embrace.
All-crowded round the family appears,
With wild entrancement and ecstatic tears.
Swift from above descends the royal fair;
(Her beauteous cheeks the blush of Venus wear
Chasten'd with coy Diana's pensive air)
Hangs o'er her son; in his embraces dies;
Rains kisses on his neck, his face, his eyes:
Few words she spoke, tho' much she had to say,
And scarce those few, for tears, could force their way:
Light of my eyes! he comes! unhop'd-for joy!
Has heav'n from Pylos brought my lovely boy?
So snatch'd from all our cares!—Tell, haft thou known
Thy father's fate? and tell me all thy own.
Oh dearest, most rever'd of womankind!
Cease with those tears to melt a manly mind,
(Reply'd the prince) nor be our fates deplor'd,
From death and treason to thy arms restor'd.
Go bathe, and rob'd in white, ascend the tow'rs;
With all thy handmaids thank th' immortal pow'rs;
To ev'ry god vow hecatombs to bleed,
And call Jove's vengeance on their guilty deed a
While to th' assembled council I repair;
A stranger sent by heav'n attends me there;
My new accepted guest I haste to find,
Now to Piraeus' honour'd charge consign'd.

The matron heard; nor was his word in vain:
She bath'd; and rob'd in white, with all her train,
To ev'ry god vow'd hecatombs to bleed;
And call'd Jove's vengeance on the guilty deed.
Arm'd with his lance the prince then pass'd the gate;
Two dogs behind, a faithful guard, await:
Pallas his form with grace divine improves:
The gazing crowd admires him as he moves.

Him, gath'ring round, the haughty suitors greet
With semblance fair; but inward deep deceit:
Their false addresses gen'rous he deny'd,
Pass'd o'er, and fate by faithful Mentor's side;
With Antiphus, and Halitherses sage,
(His father's counsellors, rever'd for age)
Of his own fortunes, and Ulysses' fame,
Much ask'd the seniors; till Piraeus came.
The stranger guest pursu'd him close behind;
Whom when Telemachus beheld, he join'd.

He, (when Piraeus ask'd for slaves to bring
The gifts and treasures of the Spartan king)
Thus thoughtful answer'd: Those we shall not move,
Dark and unconscious of the will of Jove;
We know not yet the full event of all:
Stabb'd in his palace if your prince must fall;
Us and our house if treason must o'erthrow;
Better a friend posse'ss them, than a foe:
If death to these, and vengeance heav'n decree,
Riches are welcome then, not else, to me.

Till then, retain the gifts — The hero said;
And in his hand the willing stranger led.
Then dis array'd, the shining bath they fought,
With magnificent smooth, of polish'd marble wrought;
Obdient handmaids with assiduit toil:
Supply the limpid wave, and fragrant oil.
Then o'er their limbs resulgent robes they threw,
And fresh from bathing, to their seats withdrew.
The golden ew'r a nymph attendant brings,
Replenish'd from the pure translucent springs;
With copious streams that golden ew'r supplies.
A silver layer of capacious size.
They wash; the table, in fair order spread;
Is pil'd with viands and the strength of bread.
Full opposite, before the folding gate,
The penlive mother sits in humble state;
Lowly the fate, and with dejected view.
The fleecy threds her ivory fingers drew.
The prince and stranger shar'd the genial feast,
'Till now the rage of thirst and hunger ceas'd.
When thus the queen: My son! my only friend!
Say, to my mournful couch shall I ascend?
(The couch deserted now a length of years,
The couch for ever, water'd with my tears)
Say, wilt thou not, (e'er yet the suitor-crew.
Return, and riot shakes our walls anew)
Say, wilt thou not the least account afford,
The least glad tidings of my absent lord?
To her the youth: We reach'd the Pylian plains,
Where Nectors, shepherd of his people, reigns.
All arts of tenderness to him are known,
Kind to Ulysses' race as to his own;
No father, with a fonder grasp of joy,
Strains to his bosom his long-absent boy.
But all unknown, if yet, Ulysses breathe,
Or glide a spectre in the realms beneath.
For farther search, his rapid steeds transport.
My lengthen'd journey to the Spartan court.
There Argive Helen I beheld, whose charms
(So heav'n decreed) engag'd the great in arms.
My cause of coming told, he thus rejoind';
And still his words live perfect in my mind:
Heav'n's! would a soft, ing'rious, daftard train
An absent hero's nuptial joys profane!
So with her young, amid the woodland shades,
A tim'rous hind the lion's court invades,
Leaves in that fatal lair her tender fawns,
And climbs the cliff, or feeds along the lawns;
Mean-time returning, with remorseless sway
The monarch-savage rends the panting prey:
With equal fury, and with equal fame
Shall great Ulysses re-assert his claim.
O Jove! supreme! whom men and gods revere!
And thou whose lustre gilds the rowling sphere!
With pow'r congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial maid!
Such to our with the warrior soon restore,
As when, contending on the Lebian shore
His prowess Philomelides confess'd,
And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor bless'd:
Then soon th' invaders of his bed and throne
Their love presumptuous shall by death atone.
Now what you question of my ancient friend,
With truth I answer; thou the truth attend.
Learn what I heard the sea-born seer relate,
Whose eye can pierce the dark recess of fate.
Sole in an isle, imprison'd by the main,
The sad survivor of his num'rous train,
Ulysses lyes; detain'd by magic charms,
And press'd unwilling in Calypso's arms.
No sailors there, no vessels to convey,
Nor oars to cut th' immeasurable sea——
This told Atrides, and he told no more.
Thence safe I voyag'd to my native shore.
He ceas'd; nor made the penive queen reply,
But droop'd her head, and drew a secret sigh.
When Theoclymenus the seer began:
Oh suff'ring comfort of the suff'ring man!
What human knowledge could, those kings might tell;
But I the secrets of high heav'n reveal.
Before the first of gods be this declar'd,
Before the board whose blessings we have tir'd;
Witness the genial rites, and witness all
This house holds sacred in her ample wall!
Ev'n now this infant great Ulysses, laid
At rest, or wand'ring in his country's shade;
Their guilty deeds, in hearing, and in view,
Secret revolves; and plans the vengeance due.
Of this sure auguries the gods bestow'd,
When first our vessel anchor'd in your road.

Succeed those omens, heav'n! (the queen rejoin'd)
So shall our bounties speak a grateful mind;
And ev'ry envy'd happiness attend.
The man who calls Penelope his friend.

Thus commun'd they: while in the marble court
(Scene of their insolence) the lords retort;
Athwart the spacious square each tries his art
To whirl the disk, or aim the missile dart.

Now did the hour of sweet repast arrive,
And from the field the victim flocks they drive:
Medon the herald (one who pleas'd them best;
And honour'd with a portion of their feast)
To bid the banquet interrupts their play.
Swift to the hall they haste; aside they lay
Their garments, and succint, the victims lay.
Then sheep, and goats, and briskly porkers bleat,
And the proud steer was o'er the marble spread.

While thus the copious banquet they provide
Along the road converting side by side,
Proceed Ulysses and the faithful swain:

When thus Eumaeus, gen'rous and humane:
To town, observant of our lord's behest,
Now let us speed, my friend, no more my guest!
Yet like myself I wish'd thee here preferr'd,
Guard of the flock, or keeper of the herd.
But much to raise my master's wrath I fear;
The wrath of princes ever is severe.
Then heed his will, and be our journey made
While the broad beams by Phoebus are display'd,
Or ere brown ev'n'ing spreads her chilly shade. 215
Just thy advice, (the prudent chief rejoin'd)
And such as suits the dictate of my mind.
Lead on: but help me to some staff to stay
My feeble step, since rugged is the way.
Across his shoulders then the scrip he flung,
Wide patch'd, and fasten'd by a twisted thong:
A staff Eumaeus gave. Along the way
Clearly they fare: behind the keepers stay:
These with their watchful dogs (a constant guard)
Supply his absence, and attend the herd. 225
And now his city strikes the monarch's eyes,
Alas, how chang'd! a man of miseries!
Propt on a staff, a beggar old and bare,
In rags dishonest fluttering with the air!
Now pass'd the rugged road, they journey down
The cavern'd way descending to the town,
Where from the rock, with liquid lapse, distills
A limpid fount, that, spread in parting rills,
Its current thence to serve the city brings:
An useful work, adorn'd by antient kings. 235
Neritus, Ithacus, Polyctor there
In sculptur'd stone immortaliz'd their care,
In marble urns receiv'd it from above,
And shaded with a green surrounding grove;
Where silver alders in high arches twin'd,
Drink the cool stream, and tremble to the wind.
Beneath, sequester'd to the nymphs, is seen
A mossy altar, deep embower'd in green;
Where constant vows by travellers are paid,
And holy horrors solemnize the shade. 240
Here with his goats, (not vow'd to sacred flame,
But pamper'd luxury) Melanthius came;
Two grooms attend him. With an envious look
He ey'd the stranger, and imperious spoke:
The good old proverb how this pair fulfil!

One rogue is utter to another still,
Heav'n with a secret principle endued
Mankind to seek their own similitude.
Where goes the swine-herd with that ill-look'd guest,
That giant-glutton, dreadful at a feast?

Full many a poet have those broad shoulders worn,
From ev'ry great man's gate repuls'd with scorn;
To no brave prize aspr'd the worthless swain,
'Twas but for scraps he ask'd, and ask'd in vain.

To beg, then work, he better understands;
Or we perhaps might take him off thy hands.
For any office could the slave be good,
To cleanse the fold, or help the kids to food;
If any labour those big joints could learn,
Some whey, to wash his bowels, he might earn.

To cringe, to whine, his idle hands to spread,
Is all by which that graceless swan is fed.
Yet hear me! if thy impudence but dare
Approach yon' walls, I prophesy thy fare:
Dearly, full dearly shalt thou buy thy bread,
With many a footstool thund'ring at thy head.

He thus: not insolent of word alone,
Spurn'd with his rustic heel his king unknown;
Spurn'd, but not mov'd: he like a pillar stood,
Nor stirr'd an inch, contemptuous, from the road.

Doubtful, or with his staff to strike him dead,
Or greet the pavement with his worthless head.
Short was that doubt; to quell his rage, hur'd.
The hero stood self-conquer'd, and endur'd.

But hateful of the wrench Eumaces heav'd.

His hands obstending, and this pray'r conceiv'd:
Daughters of Jove! who from th' ethereal bow's
Descend to swell the springs, and feed the flow'r's!
Nymphs of this fountain! to whose sacred names
Our rural victims mount in blazing flames!

To whom Ulysses' piety preferr'd
The yearly firstlings of his flock, and herd!
Succeed my wish; your votary restore:  
Oh be some god his convoy to our shore!
Due pains shall punish then this slave's offence,  
And humble all his airs of insolence,
Who, proudly stalking, leaves the herds at large,  
Commences courtier, and neglects his charge.

What matters he, (Melanthius sharp rejoins)  
This crafty miscreant big with dark designs?  
The day shall come, nay 'tis already near,  
When, slave! to fell thee at a price too dear,
Must be my care: and hence transport thee o'er,  
(A load and scandal to this happy shore.)
Oh! that as surely great Apollo's dart,  
Or some brave suitor's sword, might pierce the heart  
Of the proud son, as that we stand this hour  
In lasting safety from the father's pow'r.

So spake the wretch; but burning farther fray,  
Turn'd his proud feet, and left them on their way.  
Strait to the seatful palace he repair'd,  
Familiar enter'd, and the banquet shar'd;  
Beneath Euryalus, his patron-lord;
He took his place, and plenty heap'd the board.

Mean-time they heard, soft-circling in the sky,  
'Sweet airs ascend, and heavenly minstrelsy;
(For Phemius to the lyre attun'd the strain;)  
Ulysses heard, then address'd the swain:
Well may this palace admiration claim,  
Great, and respondent to the master's fame!

Stage above stage th' imperial structure stands,  
Holds the chief honours and the town commands:  
High walls and battlements the courts inclose,  
And the strong gates defy a host of foes,  
Far other cares its dwellers now employ;  
The throng'd assembly, and the feast of joy:  
I see the smokes of sacrifice aspire,  
And hear (what graces ev'ry feast) the lyre.

Then thus Eumaeus: Judge we which were best;  
Amidst yon' revellers a sudden guest.
Chuse you to mingle, while behind I slay?
Or I first ent'ring introduce the way?
Wait for a space without, but wait not long;
This is the house of violence and wrong:
Some rude insult thy rev'rend age may bear;
For like their lawless lords the servants are.

Just is, oh friend! thy caution, and address
(Reply'd the chief) to no unheedful breast;
The wrongs and injuries of base mankind
Fell to my sense, and always in my mind.
The bravely patient to no fortune yields:
On rolling oceans, and in fighting fields,
Storms have I past, and many a stern debate;
And now in humbler scene submit to fate.
What cannot Want? the best she will expose,
And I am learn'd in all her train of woes;
She fills with navies, hosts, and loud alarms
The sea, the land, and shakes the world with arms!

Thus near the gates, conferring, as they drew,
Argus, the dog, his antient master knew;
He, not unconscious of the voice and tread,
Lifts to the sound his ear, and rears his head.
Bred by Ulysses, nourish'd at his board,
But ah! not fated long to please his lord!
To him his swiftness and his strength were vain;
The voice of glory call'd him o'er the main.
Till then in ev'ry sylvan chase renown'd,
With Argus, Argus, rung the woods around;
With him the youth pursu'd the goat or fawn,
Or trac'd the mazy lev'ret o'er the lawn.

Now left to man's ingratitude he lay,
Un-hous'd, neglected, in the public way;
And where on heaps the rich manure was spread,
Obscene with reptiles, took his fardid bed.

He knew his lord; he knew, and strove to meet,
In vain he strove, to crawl, and kiss his feet;
Yet (all he could) his tail, his ears, his eyes
Salute his master, and confess his joys.
Book XVII. HOMER's ODYSSEY

Soft pity touch'd the mighty master's soul;
Adown his cheek a tear unbidden stole,
Stole unperceiv'd; he turn'd his head, and dry'd
The drop humane; then thus impassion'd cry'd:

What noble beast in this abandon'd state
Lyes here all helpless at Ulysses' gate?
His bulk and beauty speak no vulgar praise;
If, as he seems, he was in better days,
Some care his age deserves: or was he priz'd
For worthless beauty? therefore now despis'd?
Such dogs and men there are, mere things of state,
And always cherish'd by their friends, the great,

Not Argus so, (Eumaeus thus rejoin'd)
But serv'd a master of a nobler kind,
Who never, never shall behold him more!
Long, long since perish'd on a distant shore!
Oh had you seen him, vig'rous, bold and young,
Swift as a stag, and as a lion strong;
Him no fell savage on the plain withfo'd,
None 'scap'd him, bosom'd in the gloomy wood;
His eye how piercing! and his scent how true,
To wind the vapour in the tainted dew!

Such, when Ulysses left his natal coast;
Now years un-nerve him, and his lord is lost!
The women keep the gen'rous creature bare,
A flock and idle race is all their care:
The master gone, the servants what restrain's?
Or dwells humanity where riot reigns?
Jove fix'd it certain, that whatever day
Makes man a slave, takes half his worth away.

This said, the honest herd'sman strode before:
The muffing monarch pafes at the door.
The dog, whom fate had granted to behold
His lord, when twenty tedious years had roll'd,
Takes a last look, and having seen him, dies;
So clos'd for ever faithful Argus' eyes!

And now Telemachus, the first of all,
Observ'd Eumaeus ent'ring in the hall;
Distant he saw, across the shady dome;
Then gave a sign, and beckon'd him to come.
There stand an empty seat, where late was plac'd,
In order due, the steward of the feast,
(Who now was busied carving round the board ;)
Eumaeus took, and plac'd it near his lord.
Before him instant was the banquet spread,
And the bright basket pil'd with loaves of bread.
Next came Ulysses, lowly at the door,
A figure despicable, old, and poor,
In squalid vest with many a gaping rent,
Propt on a staff, and trembling as he went.
Then, resting on the threshold of the gate,
Against a cypress pillar lean'd his weight;
(Smooth'd by the workman to a polish'd plain)
The thoughtful son beheld, and call'd his swain:
These viands, and this bread, Eumaeus! bear,
And let yon mendicant our plenty share:
Then let him circle round the suitors' board,
And try the bounty of each gracious lord.
Bold let him ask, encourag'd thus by me;
How ill, alas! do want and shame agree!
His lord's command the faithful servant bears;
The seeming beggar answers with his pray'rs:
Blest be Telemachus! in ev'ry deed
Inspire him, Jove! in ev'ry wish succeed!
This said, the portion from his son convey'd
With smiles receiving, on his nicip he laid.
Long as the minstrel swept the sounding wire,
He fed, and ceas'd when silence held the lyre.
Soon as the suitors from the banquet rose,
Minerva prompts the man of mighty woes
To tempt their bounties with a suppliant's art,
And learn the generous from th' ignoble heart;
(Not but his soul, resentful as humane,
Dooms to full vengeance all th' offending train ;)
With speaking eyes, and voice of plaintive found,
Humble he moves, imploring all around.
Book XVII: Homer's Odyssey

The proud feel pity, and relief bestow.
With such an image touch'd of human woe;
Enquiring all, their wonder they confess,
And eye the man, majestic in distress.

While thus they gaze and question with their eyes,
The bold Melanthius to their thought replies:
My lords! this stranger of gigantic port
The good Eumaeus usher'd to your court.
Full well I mark'd the features of his face,
Tho' all unknown his clime, or noble race.

And in this present, swineherd! of thy hand?
Bring'lt thou these vagrants to infest the land?
(Returns Antinous with retorted eye.)
Objest uncouth! to check the genial joy.
Enough of these our court already grace,
Of giant stomach, and of famish'd face.

Such guests Eumaeus to his country brings;
To share our feast, and lead the life of kings.

To whom the hospitable swain rejoind'd:
Thy passion, prince, belies thy knowing mind.
Who calls from distant nations to his own;
The poor, distinguish'd by their wants, alone?
Round the wide world are sought those men divine;
Who public structures raise, or who design;
I hope to whose eyes the gods their ways reveal,
On bless'd with salutary arts to heal;
But chief to poets such respect belongs,
By rival nations courted for their songs.
These states invite, and mighty kings admire,
Wide as the sun displays his vital fire.

It is not so, with want! how few that feed.
A wretch unhappy, merely for his need!
Unjust to me and all that serve the state,
To love Ulysses is to raise thy hate.
For me, suffice the approbation, won,
Of my great mistress, and her god-like son.

To him Telemachus: No more incense
The man by nature prone to insolence:

E e 2
Injurious minds just answers but provoke—
Then turning to Antinous, thus he spoke:
Thanks to thy care, whose absolute command.
Thus drives the stranger from our court and land.
Heav'n bless its owner with a better mind!
From envy free, to charity inclin'd.
This both Penelope and I afford:
Then, prince! be bounteous of Ulysses' board.
To give another's is thy hand so slow?
So much more sweet, to spoil, than to bestow?
Whence, great Telemachus! this lofty strain?
(Antinous cries with insolent disdain)
Portions like mine if ev'ry suitor gave,
Our walls this twelvemonth should not see the slave.
He spoke, and lifting high above the board
His pond'rous footstool, shook it at his lord.
The rest with equal hand conferr'd the bread;
He fill'd his scrip, and to the threshold sped;
But first before Antinous stopt, and said,
Beflow, my friend! thou dost not seem the worst
Of all the Greeks, but prince-like and the first;
Then as in dignity, be first in worth.
And shall praise thee thro' the boundless earth.
Once I enjoy'd in luxury and state
Whate'er gives man the envy'd name of great;
Wealth, servants, friends, were mine in better days;
And hospitality was then my praise;
In ev'ry sorrowing soul I pour'd delight,
And poverty stood smiling in my sight.
But Jove, all-governing, whose only will
Determines fate, and mingleth good with ill,
Sent me (to punish my pursuit of gain)
With roving pyrates o'er the Egyptian main:
By Egypt's silver flood our ships we moor;
Our spies commission'd strait the coast explore;
But impotent of mind, with lawless will
The country savage, and the natives kill.
The spreading clamour to their city flies,
And horse and foot in mingled tumult rise:
The redning dawn reveals the hostile fields
Horrid with brightly spears, and gleaming shields:
Jove thunder'd on their side; our guilty head
We turn'd to flight; the gath'ring vengeance spread
On all parts round, and heaps on heaps lay dead,
Some few the foes in servitude detain;
Death ill-exchang'd for bondage and for pain!
Unhappy me a Cyprian took a board,
And gave to Dnetor, Cyprus' haughty lord:
Hither, to 'scape his chains, my course I steer,
Still curs'd by fortune, and insulted here!

To whom Antinous thus his rage exprest:
What god has plag't us with this gormand guest?
Unless at distance, wretch! thou keep behind,
Another isle than Cyprus more unkind,
Another Egypt shalt thou quickly find.
From all thou beg'st, a bold audacious slave;
Nor all can give so much as thou canst crave.
Nor wonder I, at such profusion shown;
Shameless they give, who give what's not their own.

The chief, retiring: Souls, like that in thee,
Ill suit such forms of grace and dignity.
Nor will that hand to utmost need afford
The smallest portion of a wasteful board.
Whose luxury whole patrimonies sweeps,
Yet starving want amidst the riot weeps.

The haughty suitor with resentment burns,
And sowerly smiling, this reply returns:
Take that, ere yet thou quit this princely throng:
And dumb for ever be thy fland'rous tongue!
He said, and high the whirling tripod flung.
His shoulder-blade receiv'd the ungentle shock;
He stood, and mov'd not, like a marble rock;
But shook his thoughtful head, nor more complain'd,
Sedate of soul, his character sustain'd,
And inly form'd revenge: then back withdrew;
Before his feet the well-fill'd scrip he throw'd,
And thus with semblance mild address't the crew:

May what I speak your princely minds approve,
Ye peers and rivals in this noble love!
Not for the hurt I grieve, but for the cause.
If, when the sword our country's quarrel draws,
Or if defending what is justly dear,
From Mars impartial some broad wound we bear,
The gen'rous motive dignifies the scar.

But for mere want, how hard to suffer wrong!
Want brings enough of other ills along!
Yet if injustice never be secure,
If fiends revenge, and gods affright the poor,
Death shall lay low the proud aggressor's head,
And make the dust Antinous' bridal bed.

Peace, wretch! and eat thy bread without offence;
(The suitor cry'd), or force, shall drag thee hence,
Scourge thro' the public street, and cast thee there,
A mangled carcasse for the hounds to tear.

His furious deed the gen'ral anger mov'd;
All, ev'n the worst, condemn'd; and some reprov'd:
Was ever chief for wars like these renown'd?
Ill fits the stranger and the poor to wound.
Unblest thy hand! if in this low dignifie
Wander, perhaps, some inmate of the skies?
They (curious oft of mortal actions) deign
In forms like these, to round the earth and main,
Just and unjust recording in their mind,
And with sure eyes inspecting all mankind.

Telemachus, absorb'd in thought severe,
Nourish'd deep anguish, tho' he shed no tear.
But the dark brow of silent sorrow shook:
While thus his mother to her virgins spoke:

"On him and his may the bright god of day
That base, inhospitable blow repay!"

The nurse replies: "If Jove receives my pray'r,
"Not one survives to breathe to-morrow's air."

"And inly form'd revenge: then back withdrew;"
"Before his feet the well-fill'd scrip he throw'd;"
"And thus with semblance mild address't the crew:"

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"On him and his may the bright god of day
That base, inhospitable blow repay!"

The nurse replies: "If Jove receives my pray'r,
"Not one survives to breathe to-morrow's air."
All, all are foes, and mischief is their end;
Antinous most to gloomy death a friend,
(Replies the queen;) the stranger begg'd their grace,
And melting pity soften'd ev'ry face;
From ev'ry other hand redress he found,
But fell Antinous answer'd with a wound.

Amidst her maids thus spoke the prudent queen,
Then bade Eumaeus call the pilgrim in.
Much of th' experience'd man I long to hear;
If or his certain eye, or lifting ear,
Have learnt the fortunes of my wand'ring lord.
Thus she, and good Eumaeus took the word:
A private audience if thy grace impart,
The stranger's words may ease the royal heart:
His sacred eloquence in balm distills,
And the sooth'd heart with secret pleasure fills.

Three days have spent their beams, three nights have run;
Their silent journey, since his tale begun,
Unfinish'd yet, and yet I thirst to hear!
As when some heav'n-taught poet charms the ear,
(Suspending sorrow with celestial strain)
Breath'd from the gods to soften human pain.
Time steals away with unregard'd wing,
And the soul hears him, tho' he cease to sing.

Ulysses late he saw, on Cretan ground,
(His father's guest) for Minos' birth renown'd.
He now but waits the wind, to waft him o'er,
With boundless treasure, from Thestrotia's shore.
To this the queen: The wand'rer let me hear,
While yon luxurious race indulge their cheer,
Devour the grazing ox and browzing goat,
And turn my gen'rous vintage down their throat.
Eor where's an arm, like thine, Ulysses, strong,
To curb wild riot, and to punish wrong?
She spoke. Telemaeus then sneez'd aloud;
Constrain'd, his nostril echo'd thro' the crowd.
The smiling queen the happy omen blest:
"So may these impious fall, by fate oppress!"
Then to Eumaeus: Bring the stranger, fly!
And if my questions meet a true reply,
Grac'd with a decent robe he shall retire,
A gift in season which his wants require.

Thus spoke Penelope. Eumaeus flies
In duteous haste, and to Ulysses cries:
The queen invites thee, venerable guest!
A secret instinct moves her troubled breast
Of her long absent lord from thee to gain
Some light, and soothe her soul's eternal pain.
If true, if faithful thou, her grateful mind
Of decent robes a present has design'd;
So finding favour in the royal eye,
Thy other wants her subjects shall supply.

Fair truth alone (the patient man reply'd)
My words shall dictate, and my lips shall guide.
To him, to me, one common lot was giv'n,
In equal woes, alas! involv'd by heav'n.

Much of his fates I know; but check'd by fear
I stand: the hand of violence is here:
Here boundless wrongs the starry skies invade,
And injur'd suppliants seek in vain for aid.

Let for a space the pensive queen attend,
Nor claim my story 'till the sun descend;
Then in such robes as suppliants may require,
Compos'd and cheerful by the genial fire,
When loud uproar and lawless riot cease,
Shall her pleas'd ear receive my words in peace.

Swift to the queen returns the gentle swain:
And, say (she cries) does fear, or shame, detain
The cautious stranger? with the begging kind
Shame suits but ill. Eumaeus thus rejoin'd:

He only asks a more propitious hour,
And shuns (who wou'd not?) wicked men in pow'r;
At ev'n mild (meet season to confer)
By turns to question, and by turns to hear.
Whoe'er this guest (the prudent queen replies)
His ev'ry step and ev'ry thought is wise.
For men like these on earth he shall not find,
In all the miscreant race of humankind.
Thus she. Eumaeus all her words attends,
And parting, to the suitor pow'r's descends;
There seeks Telmemachus, and thus apart
In whispers breathes the fondness of his heart:
The time, my lord, invites me to repair
Hence to the lodge; my charge demands my care.
These sons of murder thirst thy life to take;
O guard it, guard it, for thy servant's sake!
Thanks to my friend, (he cries;) but now the hour
Of night draws on, go seek the rural bow'r:
But first refresh: and at the dawn of day
Mither a victim to the gods convey.
Our life to heav'n's immortal pow'r's we trust,
Safe in their care, for heav'n protects the just.
Observant of his voice, Eumaeus sate
And fed recumbent on a chair of state.
Then instant rose, and as he mov'd along
'Twas riot' all amid the suitor-throng,
They feast, they dance, and raise the mirthful song.
'Till now declining tow'rd the close of day,
The sun obliquely shot his dewy ray.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XVIII.
THE ARGUMENT.

The fight of Ulysses and Irus.

The beggar Irus insults Ulysses: the suitors promote the quarrel, in which Irus is worsted, and miserably handled. Penelope descends, and receives the presents of the suitors. The dialogue of Ulysses with Eurymachus.
WHILE fix'd in thought the pensive hero sate,
   A mendicant approach'd the royal gate;
A furious vagrant of the giant kind,
The stain of manhood, of a coward mind;
From feast to feast, insatiate to devour
He flew, attendant on the genial hour;
When on his mother's knees a babe he lay,
She nam'd Arnaeus on his natal day,
But Irus his associates call'd the boy,
Præcis'd the common messenger to fly,
Irus, a name expressive of th' employ.
   From his own roof with meditated blows
He strove to drive the man of mighty woes.
   Hence dotard, hence! and timely speed thy way,
Left, dragg'd in vengeance, thou repent thy stay!
See how with odds assent you' princely train!
But honouring age, in mercy I refrain:
In peace away! lest if persuasions fail,
This arm with blows more eloquent prevail.
   To whom with stern regards: O insolvency,
Indecently to rail without offence!
What bounty gives, without a rival share;
I ask, what harms not thee, to breathe this air:
Alike on alms we both precarious live:
And canst thou envy when the great relieve?
Know from the bounteous heav'ns all riches flow,
And what man gives, the gods by man bestow:
Proud as thou art, henceforth no more be proud,
Left I imprint my vengeance in thy blood;
Oid as I am, should once my fury burn,
How wouldst thou fly, nor even in thought return!
More woman-glutton! (thus the churl reply'd)
A tongue so flippant, with a throat so wide!
Why cease I, gods! to dash those teeth away,
Like some vile boar's, that greedy of his prey
Uproots the bearded corn? rise, try the fight,
Gird well thy loins, approach, and feel my might:
Sure of defeat, before the peers engage;
Unequal fight! when youth contends with age.
Thus in a wordy war, their tongues display
More fierce intents, preluding to the fray:
Antinous hears, and in a jovial vein,
Thus with loud laughter to the suitor-train:
This happy day in mirth, my friends, employ,
And lo! the gods conspire to crown our joy.
See ready for the fight, and hand to hand,
Yon' surly mendicants contentious stand:
Why urge we not to blows? Well-pleas'd they spring
Swift from their seats, and thick'ning form a ring.
To whom Antinous: Lo! enrich'd with blood
A kid's well-fatted entrails (tasteful food!)
On glowing embers ly; on him bestow
The choicest portion who subdues his foe;
Grant him unravel'd in these walls to stay,
The sole attendant on the genial day.
The lords applaud: Ulysses then with art,
And fears well-feign'd, disguis'd his dauntless heart:
Worn as I am with age, decay'd with woe,
Say, is it baseness, to decline the foe?
Hard conflict! when calamity and age
With vig'rous youth, unknown to cares, engage!
Yet, fearful of disgrace, to try the day
Imperious hunger bids, and I obey;
But swear, impartial arbiters of right,
Swear, to stand neutral while we cope in fight.

The peers assent: when strait his sacred head
Telemachus uprais'd, and sternly said;

 Stranger, if prompted to chastise the wrong
Of this bold insolent, confide, be strong!
Th' injurious Greek that dares attempt a blow;
That instart makes Telemachus his foe;
And these * my friends shall guard the sacred ties
Of hospitality, for they are wise.

Then girding his strong loins, the king prepares
To close in combat, and his body bares;
Broad spread his shoulders, and his nervous thighs
By just degrees like well-turn'd columns rise:
Ample his chest, his arms are round and long,
And each strong joint Minerva knits more strong,
(Attendant on her chief:) the suitor-croud.

With wonder gaze, and gazing speak aloud:
Irus, alas! shall Irus be no more!
Black fate impends, and this th' avenging hour!
Gods! how his nerves a matchless strength proclaim:
Swell o'er his well-strong limbs, and brace his frame!

Then pale with fears, and sick'ning at the sight.
They dragg'd th' unwilling Irus to the sight;
From his blank visage fled the coward blood;
And his flesh trembled as aghast he stood.

O that such baseness should disgrace the light!
O hide it, death, in everlasting night!

(Exclaims Antinous) can a vig'rous foe
Meantly decline to combat age and woe?
But hear me, wretch! if reverant in the fray,
That huge bulk yield this ill-contested day,
Instart thou fail'd, to Echæus resign'd,
A tyrant, fiercest of the tyrant kind;
Who casts thy mangled ears and nose a prey
To hungry dogs, and lops the man away.

P. f. 2

* Antinous and Euymachus.
While with indignant scorn he sternly spoke,
In ev'ry joint the trembling Iros shook;
Now front to front each frowning champion stands,
And poises high in air his adverse hands.
The chief yet doubts, or to the shades below
To fell the giant at one vengeful blow,
Or save his life; and soon his life to save
The king resolves, for mercy sways the brave.
That instant Iros his huge arm extends;
Full on his shoulder the rude weight descends:
The sage Ulysses, fearful to disclose
The hero latent in the man of woe.
Cheek'd half his might; yet rising to the stroke,
His jaw-bone dash'd; the crashing jaw-bone broke:
Down dropp'd he stupid from the running wound,
His feet extended quiv'ring beat the ground;
His mouth and nostrils spout a purple flood,
His teeth all shatter'd rush immix'd with blood.
The peers transported as outstretched he lies,
With bursts of laughter rend the vaulted skies.
Then dragg'd along, all bleeding from the wound,
His length of carcass trailing prints the ground;
Rais'd on his feet, again he reels, he falls,
'Till propp'd reclining on the palace walls:
Then to his hand a staff the victor gave,
And thus with just reproach address'd the slave:
There terrible, affright the dogs, and reign
A dreaded tyrant o'er the bestial train!
But mercy to the poor and stranger show,
Left heav'n in vengeance send some mightier woe.
Scornful he spoke, and o'er his shoulder flung
The broad patch'd scrip; the scrip in tatters hung
Ill join'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.
Then turning short, disdain'd a further stay,
But to the palace measur'd back the way.
There as he refiled, gath'ring in a ring
The peers with smiles address'd their unknown king:
Stranger, may Jove, and all th' aerial pow'rs,
With ev'ry blessing crown thy happy hours!
Our freedom to thy prowess’ d arm we owe,
From bold intrusion of thy coward foe;
Instaht the flying sail the slave shall wing
To Echi tus, the monster of a king.

While pleas’d he hears, Antímons bears the food;
A kid’s well fatted entrails, rich with blood:
The bread from canisters of shining mold,
Amphinomus, and wines that laugh in gold.
And oh! (he mildly cries) may heav’n display
A beam of glory o’er thy future day!
Alas! the brave too oft is doom’d to bear
The gripe of poverty, and flings of care.

To whom with thought mature the king replies:
The tongue speaks wisely, when the soul’s wise;
Such was thy father! in imperial state,
Great without vice; that oft attends the great:
Nor from the fire art thou the son declin’d;
Then hear my words, and grave them in thy mind!
Of all that breathes, or grov’ling creeps on earth,
Most vain is man! calamitous by birth.
To-day with pow’r elate, in strength he blooms;
The haughty creature on that pow’r presumes:
Anon from heav’n a sad reverse he feels;
Untaught to bear, ‘gainst heav’n the wretch rebels.
For man is changeable as his bliss or woe,
Too high when prosperous, when distress too low.
There was a day, when with the scornful great
I swell’d in pomp and arrogance of state;
Proud of the pow’r that to high birth belongs;
And us’d that pow’r to justify my wrongs.
Then let not man be proud: but firm of mind,
Bear the best humbly, and the worst resign’d;
Be dumb when heav’n afflicts! unlike you’ train
Of haughty spoilers, insolently vain;
Who make their queen and all her wealth a prey:
But vengeance and Ulysses wing their way.
O may’t thou, favour’d by some guardian pow’r,
Ear, far be distant in that deathful hour?
For sure I am, if Jern Ulysses breathe,
Thee lawless riots end in blood and death.

Then to the gods the rosy juice he pours,
And the drain'd goblet to the chief restores.

Stung to the soul, o'ercast with holy dread,
He shook the graceful honours of his head;
His boding mind the future woe foretells,
In vain! by great Telemachus he falls,
For Pallas seals his doom: all sad he turns
To join the peers, resumes his throne, and mourns.

Meanwhile Minerva with instinctive fires,
Thy soul, Penelope, from heav'n inspires,
With flatter'ring hopes the suitors to betray,
And seem to meet, yet by the bridal day,
Thy husband's wonder, and thy son's to raise,
And crown the mother and the wise with praise.
Then while the streaming sorrow dims her eyes,
Thus with a transient smile the matron cries:

Eurynome! to go where riot reigns
I feel an impulse, though my soul disdains;
To my lov'd son the snares of death to show,
And in the traitor-friend unmask the foe;
Who smooth of tongue, of purpose insincere,
Hides fraud in smiles, while death is ambushed there.

Go warn thy son, nor be the warning vain,
(Reply'd the sagest of the royal train)
But bath'd, anointed, and adorn'd descend;
Pow'rful of charms, bid ev'ry grace attend;
The tide of flowing tears a while suppress;
Tears but indulge the sorrow, not repress.
Some joy remains: to thee a son is giv'n,
Such as in fondnes's parents ask of heav'n.

Ah me! forbear, returns the queen, forbear;
Oh! talk not, talk not of vain beauty's care!

No more I bathe, since he no longer sees
Those charms, for whom alone I wish'd to please.
The day that bore Ulysses from this coast,
Blasted the little bloom these cheeks could boast.
But instant bid Antoone descend,
Instant Hippodame our steps attend;
Ill suits it female virtue to be seen
Alone, indecent, in the walks of men.

Then while Eurynome the mandate bears,
From heav'n Minerva shoots with guardian cares:
O'er all her senses, as the couch she prest,
She pours a pleasing, deep, and death-like rest.
With ev'ry beauty ev'ry feature arms,
Bids her cheeks glow, and lights up all her charms.
In her love-darting eyes awakes the fires.
(Immortal gifts! to kindle soft desires)
From limb to limb an air majestic sheds,
And the pure iv'ry o'er her bosom spreads.
Such Venus shone, when with a meastr'd bound
She smoothly gliding swims the harmonious round.
When with the Graces in the dance she moves,
And fires the gazing gods with ardent loves.

Then to the skies her flight Minerva sends,
And to the queen the damsel-train descends:
Wak'd at their steps, her flowing eyes unclose;
The tear she wipes, and thus renews her woes:

Howe'er 'tis well, that sleep a while can free,
With soft forgetfulness, a wretch like me!
Oh! were it giv'n to yield this transient breath,
Send, oh Diana! send the sleep of death!
Why must I waste a tedious life in tears,
Nor bury in the silent grave my cares?
O my Ulysses! ever honour'd name!
For thee I mourn till death dissolves my frame.

Thus wailing, slow and sadly she descends,
On either hand a damsel-train attends:
Full where the dome its shining valves expands,
Radiant before the gazing peers she stands;
A veil translucent o'er her brow display'd,
Her beauty seems, and only seems, to fade:
Sudden she lightens in their dazzled eyes,
And sudden flames in ev'ry bosom rise;
They send their eager souls with ev'ry look,
’Till silence thus th’ imperial matron broke:
O why! my son, why now no more appears
That warmth of soul that urg’d thy younger years?
Thy riper days no growing worth impart,
A man in stature, still a boy in heart!
Thy well-knit frame, unprofitably strong,
Speaks thee an hero, from an hero sprung:
But the just gods in vain those gifts bellow,
O wise alone in form, and brave in show!
Heav’n! could a stranger feel oppression’s hand
Beneath thy roof, and could’st thou tamely stand?
If thou the stranger’s righteous cause decline,
His is the suff’rance, but the shame is thine.
To whom, with filial awe, the prince returns:
That gen’rous soul with just resentment burns;
Yet taught by time, my heart has learn’d to glow
For others good, and melt at others woe:
But impotent these riots to repel;
I bear their outrage, tho’ my soul rebel:
Helpless amid the snares of death I tread,
And numbers leagu’d in impious union dread:
But now no crime is theirs: this wrong proceeds
From Irus; and the guilty Irus bleeds.
O would to Jove! or her whose arms display
The shield of Jove! or him who rules the day!
That yon’ proud suitors, who licentious tread
These courts, within these courts like Irus bled:
Whose loose head-tott’ring as with wine oppress,
Obliquely drops, and nodding knocks his breast;
Pow’rless to move, his stagg’ring feet deny.
The coward wretch the privilege to fly.
Then to the queen Eurymachus replies:
O justly lov’d, and not more fair than wise!
Should Greece thro’ all her hundred states survey
Thy finish’d charms; all Greece would own thy sway,
In rival crowds contest the glorious prize,
Dispeopling realms to gaze upon thy eyes.
O woman! loveliest of the lovely kind,
In body perfect, and complete in mind!
Ah me! (returns the queen,) when from this shore
Ulysses sail'd, then beauty was no more!
The gods decreed these eyes no more should keep
Their wonted grace, but only serve to weep.
Should he return, whate'er my beauties prove,
My virtues last; my brightest charm is love.
Now, grief, thou all art mine! the gods o'ercast
My soul with woes, that long, ah long must last!
Too faithfully my heart retains the day
That sadly tore my royal lord away:
He grasp'd my hand, and, Oh my spouse! I leave
Thy arms, (he cry'd) perhaps to find a grave:
Fame speaks the Trojans bold; they boast the skill
To give the feather'd arrow wings to kill,
To dart the spear, and guide the rushing car
With dreadful impis thee, the walkes of war:
My sentence is gone forth, and his decreed.
Perhaps by righteous heav'n that I must bleed!
My father, mother, all, I trust to thee;
To them, to them transfer the love of me.
But when my son grown man, the royal sway
Resign, and happy be thy bridal day!
Such were his words; and Hymen now prepares
To light his torch, and give me up to cares;
Th' afflicting hand of wrathful love to bear:
A wretch the most complete that breathes the air!
Fall'n ev'n below the rights to woman due!
Careless to please, with insolence ye wound;
The generous lovers, studious to succeed.
Bid their whole herds and flocks in banquets bleed;
By precious gifts the yow sincere display:
You, only you, make her ye love your prey.
Well pleas'd Ulysses hears his queen deceive
The suitors train, and raises a thirst to give:
False hopes she kindles, but those hopes betray;
And promises, yet elude the nuptial day.
While yet she speaks, the gay Antinous cries;
Offspring of kings, and more than woman wise!

'Tis right; 'tis man's prerogative to give,
And custom bids thee without shame receive;
Yet never, never from thy dome we move.

'Till Hymen lights the torch of spousal love.
The peers dispatch their heralds to convey
The gifts of love; with speed they take the way.
A robe Antinous gives of shining dyes,
The varying hues in gay confusion rise
Rich from the artist's hand! twelve clasps of gold,
Cloth the less'ning waist the vest infold.

Down from the swelled loins the vest unbound
Floats in bright waves redundant o'er the ground.
A bracelet rich with gold, with amber gay,
That shot effulgence like the solar ray;

Eurymachus presents; and ear-rings bright,
With triple flares, that cast a trembling light.

Pisander bears a necklace, wrought with art;
And ev'ry peer, expressive of his heart,
A gift beflows: this done, the queen ascends,
And slow behind, her damsel-train attends.

Then to the dance they form the vocal strain,
Till Hesperus leads forth the stately train;
And now he raises, as the day-light fades,
His golden circlet in the deep'ning shades:

Three vases heap'd with copious fires display
O'er all the palace a fictitious day;
From space to space the torch wide-beaming burns,
And sprightly damsels trim the rays by turns.
To whom the king: Ill suits your sex to stay
Alone with men; ye modest maids, away!

Go, with the queen the spindle guide, or call
(The partners of her cares) the silver wooll;
Be it my task the torches to supply
Ev'n till the morning lamp adorns the sky;

Ev'n till the morning, with unwearied care,
Sleepless I watch; for I have learn'd to bear.
Scornful they heard: Melanitho fair and young,
(Melanitho, from the loins of Dolius sprung,
Who with the queen her years an infant led,
With the soft fondness of a daughter bred)
Chiefly derides: regardless of the cares
Her queen endures, polluted joys she shares
Nocturnal with Eurymachus: with eyes
That speak disdain, the wanton thus replies:
Oh! whither wanders thy dissipated brain,
Thou bold intruder on a princely train?
Hence to the vagrant's rendezvous repair;
Or shun in some black forge the midnight air.
Proceeds this boldness from a turn of soul,
Or flows licentious from the copious bowl?
In that vanquished Irsus swells thy mind?
A foe may meet thee of a braver kind,
Who short'ning with a storm of blows thy stay,
Shall send thee howling all in blood away.
To whom with frowns: O impudent in wrong!
Thy lord shall curb that insolence of tongue;
Know, to Telemachus I tell th' offence:
The scourge, the scourge shall lash thee into sense.
With conscious shame they hear the stern rebuke,
Nor longer durst sustain the sovereign look.

Then to the servile task the monarch turns
His royal hands; each torch refulgent burns
With added day: mean-while, in museful mood,
Absorpt in thought, on vengeance fix'd he flood.
And now the martial maid, by deeper wrongs
To rouse Ulysses, points the suitors tongues:
Scornful of age, to taint the virtuous man,
Thoughtless and gay, Eurymachus began:
Hear me (he cries) confederates and friends!
Some god, no doubt, this stranger kindly sends;
The shining baldness of his head survey,
It aids our torch-light, and reflects the ray.
Then to the king that levell'd haughty Troy:
Say, if large hire can tempt thee to employ
Those hands in work; to tend the rural ware, To dress the walk, and form th' embow'ring shade? So food and Refreshment constant will I give. But idly thus thy soul prefers to live, And starve by idling, not by work to thrive.

To whom, incit'd: Should we, O prince, engage In rival tasks, beneath the burning rage Of summer suns; were both constrain'd to wield, Foodless, the scythe along the burden'd field; Or should we labour while the ploughshare wounds With steers of equal strength th' allowed grounds; Beneath my labours how thy wond'ring eyes Might see the sable field at once arise! Should Jove dire war unloose, with spear and shield, And nodding helm. I tread th' ensanguined field, Fierce in the van: then wouldst thou, wouldst thou, say, Misname me glutton in that glorious day? No, thy ill-judging thoughts the brave disgrace, 'Tis thou injurious art, not I am base.

Proud to seem brave among a coward-train! But know thou art not valorous, but vain. Gods! Should the steed Ulysses rise in might, These gates would seem too narrow for thy flight.

While yet he speak's, Eurymachus replies, With indignation flaming from his eyes:
Slave, I with justice might deserve the wrong, Should I not punish that opprobrious tongue; Irrev'rend to the great, and uncontrold, Art thou from wine, or innate folly, bold? Perhaps these outrages from Iras flow, A worthless triumph o'er a worthless foe!

He said, and with full force a footstool threw: Whirl'd from his arm with erring rage it flew. Ulysses, cautious of the vengeful foe, Scoops to the ground, and disappoints the blow. Not so a youth who deals the goblet round, Full on his shoulder it inflicts a wound; Dash'd from his hand the sounding goblet flies, He shrieks, he reels, he falls, and breathless lies.
Then wild uproar and clamour mounts the sky,
Till mutual thus the peers indignant cry;
O had this stranger sunk to realms beneath,
To the black realms of darkness and of death,
Ere yet he trod these shores! to strife he draws
Peer against peer; and what the weighty cause?
A vagabond! for him the great destroy,
In vile ignoble jars, the feast of joy!
To whom the stern Telemachus uprose!
Gods! what wild fury from the goblet flows?
Whence this unguarded openness of soul,
But from the licence of the copious bowl?
Or heav’n delusion sends. But hence, away!
Force I forbear; and without force obey.
Silent, abash’d, they hear the stern rebuke,
Till thus Amphinomus the silence broke:
True are his words; and he whom truth offends,
Not with Telemachus, but truth contends.
Let not the hand of violence invade
The rev’rend stranger, or the spotless maid:
Retire we hence! but crown with rosy wine
The flowing goblet to the pow’rs divine:
Guard he his guest beneath whose roof he stands;
This justice, this the social right demands.
The peers assent; the goblet Mulius crown’d
With purple juice, and bore in order round;
Each peer successive his libation pours
No the blest gods that fill th’ aereal bow’rs;
Then swill’d with wine, with noise the crowds obey,
And rushing forth tumultuous reel away.
THE ARGUMENT.

The discovery of Ulysses to Euryclea.

Ulysses and his son remove the weapons out of the armory. Ulysses's conversation with Penelope gives a spirited account of his adventures; then assures her he had formerly entertained her husband in Crete, and describes exactly his person and dress; affirms to have heard of him in Phaeacia and Thesprotia, and that his return is certain, and within a month. He then goes to bathe, and is attended by Euryclea, who discovers him to be Ulysses by the scar upon his leg, which he formerly received in hunting the wild boar on Parnassus. The poet inserts a digression, relating that accident, with all its particulars.
CONSULTING secret with the blue-ey'd maid,
Still in the dome divine Ulysses laid:
Revenge mature for act inflam'd his breast;
And thus the son the servent fire address't:
Instant convey those steely stores of war
To distant rooms, dispos'd with secret care:
The cause demanded by the suitor-train;
To soothe their fears a specious reason feign'd:
Say, since Ulysses left his natal coast,
Obscure with smoke, their beamy lustre lost,
His arms deform'd the roof they wont adorn:
From the glad walls inglorious lumber torn.
Suggest, that Jove the peaceful thought inspir'd,
Left they by flight of swords to fury fir'd,
Dishonest wounds, or violence of soul,
Defame the bridal-feast, and friendly bowl.

The prince obedient to the sage command,
To Eurylea thus: The female band
In their apartments keep; secure the doors
These swarthy arms among the covert stores
Are seemlier hid; my thoughtless youth they blame,
Imbrownd with vapour of the smould'ring flamce.

In happy hour, (pleas'd Eurylea cries)
Tutor'd by early woes, grow early wise!
Inspect with sharpen'd sight, and frugal care;
Your patrimonial wealth, a prudent heir.

G g.3
But who the lighted taper will provide,
(The female train retir'd) your toils to guide?
Without infringing hospitable right,
This guest (he cry'd) shall bear the guiding light: 30
I cheer no lazy vagrants with repast;
They share the meal that earn it ere they taste.
He said; from female ken the strait secures
The purpos'd deed, and guards the bolted doors:
Auxiliar to his son, Ulysses bears
The plumy-crested helms, and pointed spears,
With shields indented deep in glorious wars.
Minerva viewless on her charge attends,
And with her golden lamp his toil befriends:
Not such the sickly beams, which unsincere
Gild the gross vapour of this nether sphere!
A present deity the prince confess'd,
And rap'd with ecstasies the fire address'd:
What miracle thus dazzles with surprise!
Distinct in rows the radiant columns rise:
The walls, where-e'er my wond'ring light I turn,
And roofs, amidst a blaze of glory burn!
Some visitant of pure ethereal race,
With his bright presence deigns the dome to grace.

Be calm, replies the fire; to none impart,
But oft revolve the vision in thy heart:
Celestial, mantled in excess of light,
Can visit unapproach'd by mortal sight.
Seek thou repose; whilst here I sole remain,
'T explore the conduct of the female train:
The pensive queen perchance desires to know
The series of my toils to soothe her woe.

With tapers flaming day his train attends,
His bright alcove th' obsequious youth ascends:
Soft slumb'rous shades his drooping eye-lids close,
Till on her eastern throne Aurora glows.
Whilst, forming plans of death, Ulysses said
In council secret with the martial maid;
Attendant nymphs in beauteous order wait
The queen, descending from her bow'r of state.
Her cheeks the warmer blush of Venus wear,
Chaste'n'd with coy Diana's pensive air.
An iv'ry seat with silver ringlets grac'd;
By fam'd Icmaius wrought, the menials plac'd:
With iv'ry silver'd thick the foot-stool shone,
O'er which the panther's various hide was thrown:
The sov'reign seat with graceful air she pres'd;
To different tasks their toil the nymphs address'd:
The golden goblet some, and some reftor'd
From stains of luxury the polish'd board;
These to remove th' expiring embers came,
While those with unctuous sir foment the flame.
'Twas then Melantho with imperious mien:
Renew'd th' attack, incontinent of spleen:
Avaunt, she cry'd, offensive to my sight!
Deem not in ambush here to lurk by night;
Into the woman-state asquint to pry;
A day-devourer, and an ev'n-ing-spy!
Vagrant, begone! before this blazing brand:
Shall urge—and wav'd it hissing in her hand.
Th' insulted hero rouls his wrathful eyes;
And, why so turbulent of soul? he cries:
Can these lean shrivel'd limbs unnerv'd with age,
These poor, but honest rags, enkindle rage?
In crowds we wear the badge of hungry fate,
And beg, degraded from superior state!
Constrain'd! a rent-charge on the rich I live;
Reduce'd to crave the good I once could give:
A palace, wealth, and slaves I late possess'd,
And all that makes the great be call'd the bless'd:
My gate, an emblem of my open soul,
Embrac'd the poor, and dealt a bounteous dole.
Scorn not the sad reverse, injurious maid!
'Tis Jove's high will, and be his will obey'd!
Nor think thyself exempt: that rosy prime
Must share the gen'rul doom of with'ring time:
To some new channel soon the changeful tide
Of royal grace th' offended queen may guide;
And her lov'd lord unplume thy tow'ring pride.
Or were he dead, 'tis wisdom to beware;
Sweet blooms the prince beneath Apollo's care;
Your deeds with quick impartial eye surveys,
Potent to punish what he cannot praise.

Her keen reproach had reach'd the sov'reign's ear;
Loquacious insolent! (she cries) forbear:
To thee the purpose of my soul I told,
Venial discourse unblam'd with him to hold:
The storied labours of my wand'ring lord,
To soothe my grief he haply may record.
Yet him, my guest, thy venom'd rage hath stung;
Thy head shall pay the forfeit of thy tongue!
But thou on whom my palace-cares depend,
Eurynome, regard the stranger-friend:
A feast soft-spread with fury spoils prepare,
Due-distant for us both to speak and hear.

The menial fair obeys with duteous haste:
A feast adorn'd with fury spoils she plac'd:
Due-distant for discourse the hero slates:
When thus the sov'reign from her chair of state:
Reveal, obsequious, to my first demand,
Thy name, thy lineage, and thy natal land;
He thus: O queen whose far-refounding fame
Is bounded only by the starry frame;
Consummate pattern of imperial sway,
Whose pious rule a warlike race obey!
In wavy gold thy summer vales are dress'd:
Thy autumn's bend with copious fruit oppress'd:
With flocks and herds each grassy plain is stor'd:
And fish of ev'ry sin thy seas afford:
Their affluent joys the grateful realms confess;
And bless the pow'r that still delights to bless.
Gracious permit this pray'r, imperial dame!
Forswear to know my lineage, or my name:
Urge not this breast to heave, these eyes to weep;
In sweet oblivion let my sorrow sleep!
My woes awak'd will violate your ear,
And to this gay cenforious train appear
A winy vapour melting in a tear.

Their gifts the gods refum'd (the queen rejoin'd,
Exterior grace, and energy of mind,
When the dear-partner of my nuptial joy,
Auxiliar troops combin'd, to conquer Troy.
My lord's protecting hand alone would raise
My drooping verdure, and extend my praise!
Peers from the distant Samian shore refort;

Here with Dulichians join'd, besiege the court:
Zacynthus, green with ever-shady groves,
And Ithaca, presumptuous boast their loves:
Obluding on my choice a second lord,
They press the Hymenean rite abhor'red.

Mis-rule thus mingling with domestic cares,
I live regardless of my state-affairs:
Receive no stranger-guest, no poor relieve;
But ever for my lord in secret grieve!

This art, instinct by some coelestial pow'r,
I try'd, elusive of the bridal hour:
"Ye peers, I cry, who press to gain a heart,
Where dead Ulysses claims no future part;
Rebate your loves, each rival suit suspend,
'Till this funereal web-my labours end:
Cease, till to good Laertes I bequeathe
A pall of state, the ornament of death.
For when to fate he bows, each Grecian dame
With just reproach were licens'd to defame,
Shou'd he, long honour'd in supreme command,
"Want the last duties of a daughter's hand."
The fiction pleas'd! their loves I long elude;
The night still ravell'd what the day renew'd;
Three years successful in my art conceal'd,
My ineffectual fraud the fourth reveal'd.
Befriended by my own domestic spies,
The wooff unwrought the suitor-train surprize.
From nuptial rites they now no more recede,
And fear forbids to falsify the brede.
My anxious parents urge a speedy choice,
And to their suff'rage gain the filial voice:
For rule mature, Telemachus deplores
His dome dishonour'd, and exhausted stores——
But, Stranger! as thy days seem full of fate,
Divide discourse, in turn thy birth relate:
Thy port asserts thee of distinguish'd race;
No poor un-father'd product of disgrace.
Princes! he cries, renew'd by your command,
The dear remembrance of my native land,
Of secret grief unveals the fruitful source,
And tears repeat their long-forgotten course!
So pays the wretch, whom fate constrains to roam,
The dues of nature to his natal home——
But inward on my soul let sorrow prey;
Your sov'reign will my duty bids obey.
Crete awes the circling waves, a fruitful soil!
And ninety cities crown the sea-born isle:
Mix'd with her genuine sons, adopted names
In various tongues avow their various claims:
Cydonians, dreadful with the bended yew,
And bold Pelasgi boast a native's due:
The Dorians, plum'd amidst the files of war,
Her foodful glebe with fierce Achaians share:
Cnossus, her capital of high command;
Where scepter'd Minos with imperial hand
Divided right; each ninth revolving year
By Jove receiv'd, in council to confer.
His son Deucalion bore successive sway;
His son, who gave me first to view the day!
The royal bed an elder issue blest,
Idomeneus, whom Ilian fields attest
Of matchless deed: untrain'd to martial toil.
I liv'd inglorious in my native isle.
Book XIX. HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

Studious of peace; and Aethon is my name.
'Twas then to Crete the great Ulysses came;
For elemental war, and wintry Jove,
From Malea's gusty cape his navy drove
To bright Lucina's fane; the shelvy coast
Where loud Amnisus in the deep is lost.
His vessels moor'd, (an incommmodious port!)
The hero speeded to the Cnossian court:
Ardent the partner of his arms to find;
In leagues of long commutual friendship join'd.
Vain hope! ten suns had warm'd the western strand,
Since my brave brother with his Cretan band
Had fail'd for Troy: but to the genial feast
My honour'd roof receiv'd the royal guest:
Beeves for his train the Cnossian peers assign,
A public treat, with jars of gen'rous wine.
Twelve days, while Boreas vex'd th' aereal space,
My hospitable dome he deign'd to grace:
And when the north had cess'd the stormy roar,
He wing'd his voyage to the Phrygian shore.
Thus the fam'd hero, perfected in wiles,
With fair similitude of truth beguiles
The queen's attentive ear: dissolv'd in woe,
From her bright eyes the tears unbounded flow.
As snows collected on the mountain freeze;
When milder regions breathe a vernal breeze,
The fleecy pile obeys the whisp'ring gales,
Ends in a stream, and murmurs thro' the vales:
So, melted with the pleasing tale he told,
Down her fair cheek the copious torrent roll'd:
She to her present lord laments him lost.
And views that object which she wants the most!
With'ring at heart to see the weeping fair,
His eyes look stern, and cast a gloomy stare;
Of horn the stiff relentless balls appear,
Or globes of iron fix'd in either sphere;
Firm wisdom interdicts the soft'ning tear.

A speechless interval of grief ensues,
'Till thus the queen the tender theme renew's:

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Stranger! that e'er thy hospitable roof
Vulcan's grac'd, confirm by faithful proof:
Delineate to my view my warlike lord,
His form, his habit, and his train record.
'Tis hard, he cries, to bring to sudden light
Ideas that have wing'd their distant flight:
Rare on the mind those images are trac'd,
Whose footsteps twenty winters have deface'd:
But what I can, receive——In ample mode,
A robe of military purple flow'd.
O'er all his frame: illustrious on his breast,
The double-clasping gold the king confess'd.
In the rich woof a hound Mosaic drawn
Bore on full stretch, and seiz'd a dappled swan:
Deep in the neck his fangs indent their hold;
They pant, and struggle in the moving gold.
Fine as a filmy web, beneath it shone
A vest, that dazzled like a cloudless sun:
The female train who round him throng'd to gaze,
In silent wonder sigh'd unwilling praise.
A sabre, when the warrior press'd to part,
I gave, enamel'd with Vulcanian art:
A mantle purple-ting'd; and radiant vest,
Dimension'd equal to his size, express'd
Affection grateful to my honour'd guest.
A fav'rite herald in his train I knew,
His visage solemn sad, of sable hue:
Short woolly curls o'er fleec'd his bending head,
O'er which a promontory-shoulder spread:
Eurybates! in whose large soul alone
Ulysses view'd an image of his own.
His speech the tempest of her grief restor'd;
In all he told she recognis'd her lord:
But when the storm was spent in plenteous show'r's,
A pause inspiriting her languish'd pow'r's;
O thou, she cry'd, whom first inclement fate
Made welcome to my hospitable gate!
With all thy wants the name of poor shall end; Henceforth live honour'd, my domestic friend!
The vest much envy'd on your native coast, And regal robe with figur'd gold embroft,
In happier hours my artful hand employ'd,
When my lov'd lord this blissful bow'r enjoy'd:
The fall of Troy, erroneous and forlorn,
Doom'd to survive, and never to return!

Then he, with pity touch'd: O royal dame!
Your ever-anxious mind, and beauteous frame,
From the devouring rage of grief reclaim.
I not the fondness of your soul reprove
For such a lord! who crown'd your virgin-love
With the dear blessing of a fair increase;
Himself adorn'd with more than mortal grace:
Yet while I speak, the mighty woe suspend;
Truth forms my tale; to pleasing truth attend.
The royal object of your dearest care,
Breathes in no distant clime the vital air:
In rich Thesprotia, and the nearer bound
Of Thessaly, his name I heard renown'd:
Without respite, to that friendly shore
Welcom'd with gifts of price, a sumless store!
His sacrilegious train, who dar'd to prey
On herds devoted to the god of day,
Were doom'd by Jove, and Phoebus' just decree,
To perish in the rough Trinacrian sea.
To better fate the blameless chief ordain'd,
A floating fragment of the wreck regain'd,
And rode the storm; 'till by the billows tost,
He landed on the fair Phaeacian coast.
That race, who emulate the life of gods,
Receive him joyous to their blest abodes:
Large gifts confer, a ready sail command
To speed his voyage to the Grecian strand.
But your wise lord, (in whose capacious soul
High schemes of pow'r in just succession roll,)
His Ithaca refus'd from fav'ring fate,
'Till copious wealth might guard his regal state.
Phedon the fact affirm'd, whose sov'reign sway
Th' Esphorian tribes, a duteous race, obey:
And bade the gods this added truth attest,
(While pure libations crown'd the genial feast)
That anchor'd in his port the vessels stand,
To waft the hero to his natal land.
I for Dulichium urge the wat'ry way,
But first the Ulyssian wealth survey:
So rich the value of a store so vast
Demands the pomp of centuries to waste!
The darling object of your royal love,
Was journey'd thence to Dodonean Jove;
By the sure precept of the sylvan shrine,
To form the conduct of his great design:
Irresolute of soul, his state to throw'd
In dark disguise, or come a king avow'd?
Thus lives your lord; nor longer doom'd to roam,
Soon will he grace this dear paternal dome.
By Jove, the source of good, supreme in pow'r!
By the blest genius of this friendly bow'r!
I ratify my speech; before the sun
His annual longitude of heav'n shall run;
When the pale empress of yon' starry train
In the next month renews her faded wane,
Ulysses will assert his rightful reign.
What thanks! what boon! (reply'd the queen) are due,
When time shall prove the storied blessing true:
My lord's return shou'd fate no more retard,
Envy shall sicken at thy vast reward.
But my prophetic fears, alas! prefage,
The wounds of destiny's relentless rage:
I long must weep! nor will Ulysses come,
With royal gifts to send you honour'd home!
Your other task, ye menial train, forbear:
Now wash the stranger, and the bed prepare.
With splendid palls the downy fleece adorn:
Up-rising early with the purple morn,
His snews shrunk with age, and stiff with toil,
In the warm bath foment with fragrant oil.
Then with Telemachus the social feast
Partaking free, my sole invited guest;
Whoe'er neglects to pay distinction due,
The breach of hospitable right may rue.
The vulgar of my sex I most exceed
In real fame, when most humane my deed:
And vainly to the praise of queen aspire,
If, stranger! I permit that mean attire,
Beneath the feastful bow'r. A narrow space
Confines the circle of our destin'd race;
'Tis ours, with good the scanty round to grace.
Those who to cruel wrong their state abuse,
Dreaded in life, the mutter'd curse pursues;
By death disrob'd of all their savage pow'r,
Then, licens'd rage her hateful prey devours.
But he whose in-born worth his acts commend,
Of gentle soul, to human race a friend;
The wretched he relieves diffuse his fame,
And distant tongues extol the patron-name.
Princes, (he cry'd,) in vain your bounties flow
On me, confirm'd, and obblinate in woe.
When my lov'd Crete receiv'd my final view,
And from my weeping eyes her cliffs withdrew;
These tatter'd weeds (my decent robe resign'd)
I chose, the liv'ry of a woeful mind!
Nor will my heart corroding cares abate
With splendid palls, and canopies of state:
Low couch'd on earth, the gift of sleep I scorn,
And catch the glances of the waking morn.
The delicacy of your courtly train
To wash a wretched wand'r'r woud disdain;
But if, in tract of long experience try'd,
And sad similitude of woes ally'd.
Some wretch reluctant views aerial light,
To her mean hand assign the friendly rite.

Pleas'd with his wife reply, the queen rejoin'd:
Such gentle manners, and so sage a mind,
In all who grac'd this hospitable bow'r
I ne'er discern'd, before this social hour.
Such servant as your humble choice requires,
To light receiv'd the lord of my desires,
New from the birth; and with a mother's hand:
His tender bloom to manly growth sustain'd:
Of matchless prudence, and a duteous mind;
Though now to life's extremest verge declin'd,
Of strength superior to the toil assign'd.

Rise, Euryclea! with officious care
For the poor friend the cleansing bath prepare;
This debt his correspondent fortunes claim,
Too like Ulysses, and perhaps the same!
Thus old with woes my fancy paints him now!
For age untimely marks the careful brow.

Infant obsequious to the mild command,
Sad Euryclea rose: with trembling hand
She veils the torrent of her tearful eyes;
And thus impassion'd to herself replies:

Son of my love, and monarch of my cares!
What pangs for thee this wretched bosom bears!
Are thus by Jove who constant beg his aid
With pious deed, and pure devotion, paid?

He never dar'd defraud the sacred fane,
Of perfect hecatombs in order slain:
There oft implor'd his tutelary pow'r,
Long to protract the sad sepulchral hour;
That form'd for empire with paternal care,
His realm might recognize an equal heir.
O destin'd head! The pious vows are loft;
His God forgets him on a foreign coast!

Perhaps, like thee, poor guest! in wanton pride
The rich insult him, and the young deride!
Conscious of worth revil'd, thy gen'rous mind
The friendly rite of purity declin'd:
My will concurring with my queen's command,
Accept the bath from this obsequious hand.
A strong emotion shakes my anguish'd breast:
In thy whole form Ulysses seems express:
Of all the wretched harbour'd on our coast,
None imag'd e'er like thee my master loft.

Thus half discover'd thro' the dark disguise,
With cool composure feign'd, the chief replies:
You join your suffrage to the public vote;
The fame you think, have all beholders thought.

He said: replenish'd from the purest springs,
The lavery strait with busy care the brings:
In the deep vase, that shone like burnish'd gold,
The boiling fluid temperates the cold.
Mean-time revolving in his thoughtful mind
The scar, with which his manly knee was sign'd;
His face averting from the crackling blaze,
His shoulders, intercept th' unfriendly rays.
'Thus cautious, in th' obscure he hop'd to fly
The curious search of Euryclea's eye.
Cautious in vain! nor ceas'd the dame to find
The scar, with which his manly knee was sign'd.

This, on Parnassus combating the boar,
With glancing rage the tusky savage tore.
Attended by his brave maternal race,
His grand sire sent him to the sylvan chase,
Autolycus the bold, (a mighty name
For spotless faith, and deeds of martial fame:
Hermes his patron-god those gifts bestow'd,
Whose shrine with weanling lambs he wont to load);
His course to Ithaca this hero sped,
When the first product of Laertes' bed
Was new disclos'd to birth: the banquet ends,
When Euryclea from the queen descends,
And to his fond embrace the babe commends.
"Receive, the cries, your royal daughter's son;
And name the blessing that your pray'rs have won."
Then thus the hoary chief: "My victor arms
Have aw'd the realms around with dire alarms:
A sure memorial of my dreaded fame
The boy shall bear; Ulysses be his name!
And when with filial love the youth shall come
To view his mother's soil, my Delphic dome
With gifts of price shall send him joyous home."
Lur'd with the promis'd boon, when youthful prime.
Ended in man, his mother's natal clime
Ulysses sought; with fond affection dear
Amphithea's arms receiv'd the royal heir:
Her antient * lord an equal joy posseft;
Instant he bade prepare the genial feast:
A gleam to form the sumptuous banquet bled,
Whose stately growth five flow'ry summers fed;
His sons divide, and rost with artful care
The limbs; then all the tasteful viands share.
Nor ceas'd discourse (the banquet of the soul)
'Till Phoebus wheeling to the western goal
Resign'd the skies, and night involv'd the pole.
Their drooping eyes the slumb'rous shade oppress,
Sated they rost; and all retir'd to rest.

Soon as the morn, new-rob'd in purple light,
Fierc'd with her golden shafts the rear of night;
Ulysses, and his brave maternal race
The young Autolycus, assay the chase.
Paranassus, thick perplex'd with horrid shades,
With deep-mouth'd hounds the hunter-troop invades;
What time the sun, from ocean's peaceful beam,
Darts o'er the lawn his horizontal beam.
The pack impatient snuff the tainted gale;
The thorny wilds the wood-men fierce assail;
And foremost of the train, his cornel spear
Ulysses wav'd, to route the savage war.
Deep in the rough recesfes of the wood,
A lofty cope, the growth of ages, flood:
Nor winter's boreal blast, nor thund'rous show'r,
Nor solar ray, could pierce the shady bow'r.
With wither'd foliage strew'd, a heapy store;
The warm pavilion of a dreadful boar,
Rous'd by the hounds and hunters' mingling cries,
The savage from his leasy founder flies:
With fiery glare his sanguine eye-balls shine,
And bristles high impale his horrid chine.
Young Ithacus, advance'd, desies the foe,
Roiling his lifted lance in act to throw:
The savage renders vain the wound decreed,
And springs impetuous with opponent speed!
His tucks oblique he aim'd the knee to goar;
Alope they glance'd, the snowy fibres tore,
And bar'd the bone: Ulysses undismay'd,
Soon with redoubled force the wound repay'd;
To the right shoulder-joint the spear apply'd,
His further flank with streaming purple dy'd:
On earth he rush'd with agonizing pain;
With joy, and vast surprise, th' applauding train.
Vlew'd his enormous bulk extended on the plain.
With bandage firm Ulysses' knee they bound;
Then chauoting mystic lay's, the closing wound
Of sacred melody confesse'd the force;
The tides of life regain'd their azure course.
Then back they led the youth with loud acclaim.
Autolycus, enamour'd with his fang,
Confirm'd the cure: and from the Delphic dome
With added gifts return'd him glorious home.
He safe at Ithaca with joy receiv'd,
Relates the chace, and early praise atchiev'd.
Deep o'er his knee infesam'd remain'd the fear:
Which noted token of the woodland war
When Euryclea sound, th' ablution ceas'd;
Down dropp'd the leg, from her slack hand releas'd.
The mingled fluids from the vase redound;
The vase reclining floats the floor around!
Smiles dew'd with tears the pensive strike express'd
Of grief, and joy, alternate in her breast.
Her flutt'ring words in melting murmurs dy'd;
At length abrupt—My son!—my king!—the cry'd.
His neck with fond embrace infoldings fast,
Fall on the queen her raptur'd eyes she cast,
Ardent to speak the monarch safe restor'd:
But studious to conceal her royal lord,
Minerva fix'd her mind on views remote,
And from the present blis's abstracts her thought.
His hand to Euryclea's mouth apply'd,
Art thou sore doom'd my pest? the hero cry'd:
Thy milky founts my infant lips have drain'd;
And have the fates thy babbling age ordain'd
To violate the life thy youth sustain'd?
An exile have I told, with weeping eyes,
Full twenty annual suns in distant skies:
At length return'd, some god inspires thy breast
To know thy king, and here I stand confess.
This heav'n-discover'd truth to thee consign'd,
Reserve, the treasure of thy inmost mind:
Else if the gods my vengeful arm sustain
And prostrate to my sword the suitor-train;
With their lewd mates, thy undistinguish'd age
Shall bleed, a victim to vindictive rage.

Then thus rejoin'd the dame, devoid of fear:
What words; my son, have pass'd thy lips severe?
Deep in my soul the truth shall lodge secure,
With ribs of steel, and marble heart immur'd.
When heav'n, auspicious to thy right avow'd
Shall prostrate to thy sword the suitor-crowd;
The deeds I'll blazon of the menial fair;
The lewd to death devote, the virtuous spare.
Thy aids avails me not, the chief reply'd;
My own experience shall their doom decide.
Book XIX. Homer's Odyssey

A witness-judge precludes a long appeal:
Suffice it thee thy monarch to conceal.

He said: obsequious with redoubled pace
She to the fount conveys th' exhausted vafe:
The bath renew'd, the ends the pleasing toil
With plenteous unction of ambrosial oil.
Adjusting to his limbs the tatter'd vest,
His former seat receiv'd the stranger guest;
Whom thus with pensive air the queen address:

Tho' night, dissolving grief in grateful ease,
Your drooping eyes with soft oppression seize;
A while, reluctant to her pleasing force,
Suspend the restful hour with sweet discourse.
The day (ne'er brighten'd with a beam of joy!)
My menials, and domestic cares employ:
And, unattended by sincere repose,
The night afflicts my ever-wakeful woes:
When nature's hush'd beneath her brooding shade,
My echoing griefs the starry vault invade.
As when the months are clad in flow'ry green,
Sad Philomel, in bow'ry shades unseen,
To vernal airs attunes her varied strains;
And Itylus sounds warbling o'er the plains:
Young Itylus, his parents darling joy!
Whom chance mis-led the mother to destroy:
Now doom'd a wakeful bird to wail the beauteous boy.
So, in nocturnal solitude forlorn,
A sad variety of woes I mourn!
My mind reflective, in a thorny maze
Devious, from care to care incessant strays.
Now, wav'ring doubt succeeds to long despair;
Shall I my virgin nuptial-vow revere;
And joining to my son's my menial train,
Partake his councils, and assist his reign?
Or, since mature in manhood, he deprecates
His dome dishonour'd, and exhausted store;
Shall I, reluctant! to his will accord;
And from the peers select the noblest lord?
So by my choice avow'd, at length decide
These waltzful love-debates, a mourning bride?— 625
A visionary thought I'll now relate,
Illustrate, if you know, the shadow'd fate.
A team of twenty geese, (a snow-white train!)
Fed near the limpid lake with golden grain,
Amuse my pensive hours. The bird of Jove 630
Fierce from his mountain-eyrie downward drove;
Each fav'rite fowl he pounce'd with deathful sway,
And back triumphant wing'd his airy way.
My pitying eyes effus'd a plenteous stream,
To view their death thus imag'd in a dream:
With tender sympathy to soothe my soul;
A troop of matrons, fancy-form'd, condole,
But whilst with grief and rage my bosom burn'd,
Sudden the tyrant of the skies return'd:
Parch'd on the battlements he thus began, 640
(In form an eagle, but in voice a man-)
O queen! no vulgar vision of the sky
I come, prophetic of approaching joy:
View in this plumy form thy victor lord;
The geese (a glutton race) by thee deplor'd,
Portend the suitors fated to my sword:
This said, the pleasing feather'd omen ceas'd,
When from the downy bands of sleep releas'd,
Fell by the limpid lake my swan-like train
I found, insatiate of the golden grain.
The vision self explain'd (the chief replies)
Sincere reveals the sanction of the skies:
Ulysses speaks his own return decreed,
And by his sword the suitors sure to bleed.
Hard is the task, and rare, (the queen rejoin'd,) 655
Impending destinies in dreams to find:
Immur'd within the silent bow'r of sleep,
Two portals firm the various phantoms keep:
Of iv'ry one; whence flit to mock the brain
Of winged flies a light fantastic train:
The gate oppos'd, pellucid valves adorn,
And columns fair incas'd with polish'd horn;
Where images of truth for passage wait,
With visions manifest of future fate.
Not to this troop, I fear, that phantom soar'd,
Which spoke Ulysses to his realm restor'd;
Delusive semblance!—But my remnant life
Heav'n shall determine in a gameful strife:
With that fam'd bow Ulysses taught to bend,
For me the rival archers shall contend.
As on the lifted field he us'd to place:
Six beams, oppos'd to six in equal space;
Elanc'd a-far by his unerring art,
Sure thro' six circlets flew the whizzing dart.
So, when the sun restores the purple day,
Their strength and skill the suitors shall assay:
To him the spousal honour is decreed,
Who thro' the rings directs the feather'd reed.
Torn from these walls (where long the kinder pow'rs
With pomp and joy have wing'd my youthful hours!)
On this poor breast no dawn of bliss shall beam;
The pleasure past supplies a copious theme
For many a dreary thought, and many a doleful dream!
Propose the sportive lot, (the chief replies.)
Nor dread to name yourself the bowyer's prize.
Ulysses will surprize th' unfinish'd game
Avow'd, and satisfy the suitors' claim.
To whom with grace serene the queen rejoin'd:
In all thy speech what pleasing force I find!
O'er my suspended woe thy words prevail,
I part reluctant from the pleasing tale.
But heav'n, that knows what all territrials need,
Repose to night, and toil to day decreed:
Grateful vicissitude! yet me withdrawn,
Wakeful to weep and watch the tardy dawn
Establish'd use enjoins: to rest and joy
Establish'd, since dear Ulysses fail'd to Troy!
Mean-time instructed is the menial tribe
Your couch to fashion as yourself prescribe.

Thus affable, her bow'r the queen ascends;
  The sov'reign step a beauteous train attends:
There imag'd to her soul Ulysses rose;
Down her pale cheek new-streaming sorrow flows:
'Till soft oblivious shade Minerva spread,
And o'er her eyes ambrosial slumber shed.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XX.
THE ARGUMENT.

While Ulysses lies in the vestibule of the palace, he is witness to the disorders of the women. Minerva comforts him, and casts him asleep. At his awaking he desires a favourable sign from Jupiter, which is granted. The feast of Apollo is celebrated by the people, and the suitors banquet in the palace. Telemachus exerts his authority amongst them; notwithstanding which, Ulysses is insulted by Cteisiphon, and the rest continue in their excesses. Strange prodigies are seen by Theoclymenus the augur, who explains them to the destruction of the wooers.
THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XX.

An ample hide divine Ulysses spread,
And form'd of fleecy-skins his bubble bed;
The remnants of the spoil the suitors crowd:
In festal devour'd, and victims vow'd.
Then o'er the chief, Beryntome the chaste
With duteous care a downy carpet cast;
With dire revenge his thoughtful bosom glows,
And ruminating wrath, he roars within.

As thus pavilion'd in the vole he lay,
Scenes of lowd loves his wituell eyes display'd.
Whilst to noftinal joys impure, repair
With wanton glee, the prostituted hair.
His heart with rage this new obloquy stung:
Wavirg his thoughts in dubius-balance hung;
Or, instant should he quench the guilty flame
With their own blood, and intercept the shame;
Or to their lust indulge a last embrace,
And let the peers conspire the disgrace?
Round his sweet heart the murm'rous fary rowls;
As o'er her youth the mother-madiff growls;
And bays the stranger groom: so wrath compress
Recoiling, mutter'd thunder in his breast.
Poor suff'ring heart! (he cry'd) Support the pain
Of wounded honour, and thy rage restrain.
Not fiercer wees thy forlitude could soil,
When the brave partners of thy ten years toil.
Dire Polyphemus devour'd: I then was freed
By patient prudence from the death decreed.

Thus anchor'd safe on reason's peaceful coast,
Tempers of wrath his soul no longer tost;
Refles his body rolls, to rage resign'd:
As one who long with pale-ey'd famine pin'd,
The sav'ry cates on glowing embers cast
Incessant turns, impatient for repast:
Ulysses so, from side to side devolv'd,
In self-debate the suitors' doom resolv'd.

When in the form of mortal nymph array'd,
From heav'n defends the Jove born martial maid;
And hov'ring o'er his head in view confess'd,
The goddess thus her fav'rite care addres'd:

Oh thou, of mortals most inur'd to woes!
Why stound those eyes unfriended of repose?
Beneath thy palace-roof forget thy care;
Blest in thy queen! blest in thy blooming heir!
Whom, to the gods when suppliant fathers bow,

They name the standard of their dearest vow.

Just is thy kind reproach, (the chief rejoin'd)
Deeds full of fate distract my various mind,
In contemplation rapt. This hostile crew
What single arm hath prowess to subdue?

Or if by Jove's and thy auxiliar aid
They're doom'd to bleed; O say, coelestial maid!
Where shall Ulysses shun, or how sustain
Nations embattled to revenge the slain?

Oh impotence of faith! (Minerva cries)

If man on frail unknowing man relies,
Doubt you the gods? Lo Pallas' self descends,
Inspires thy counsels, and thy toils attends.

In me affianc'd, fortify thy breast,
Tho' myriads leagu'd thy rightful claim contest;
My sure divinity shall bear the shield,
And edge thy sword to reap the glorious field.
Now pay the debt to craving nature due,
Her faded pow'rs with balmy rest renew.
HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

She ceas'd: ambrosial numbers leap his eyes; His care dissipates in visionary joys:
The goddes, pleas'd, regains her natal home.
Not so the queen! the downy bands of sleep
By grief relax'd, she wak'd again to weep;
A gloomy pensive'd of dumb despair;
Then thus her fate invok'd with fervent pray'r:
Diana! speed thy deathful ebon dart,
And cure the pangs of this convulsive heart.
Snatch me, ye whirlwinds! far from human race;
Toss'd through the void illimitable space:
Or if dismounted from the rapid cloud,
Me with his whelming wave let ocean shroud!
So; Pandarus, thy hopes, were orphans fair Were doom'd to wander through the devious air;
Thyself unthink'd and thy comfort dy'd,
But four cockatoos both your cares supply'd,
Venus in tender delicacy tears
With honey, milk, and wine, their infant years;
Imperial Juno, to their youth assign'd
A form majestick, and sagacious mind;
With shapely growth Diana graec'd their bloom,
And Pallas taught the texture of the loom.
But whilst, to learn their lots in nuptial love,
Bright Cytherea fought the bow'r of Jove;
(The god supreme to whose eternal eye
The registers of fate expanded ly)
Wing'd Harpies snatch'd th' unguarded charge away,
And to the fates bore a grateful pray'r:
Be such my lot! or thou Diana speed
Thy shaft, and send me joyful to the dead.
To seek my lord among the warrior-train,
Ere second vows my bridal faith profane.
When woe the waking sense alone assails,
Whilst night extends her soft oblivious veil,
Of other wretches care the torture ends:
No truce the warfare of my soul suspend'd!
The night renews the day-distraffing theme,
And airy terrors fable ev'ry dream.
The last alone a kind illusion wrought,
And to my bed my lov'd Ulysses brought,
In manly bloom, and each majestic grace;
As when for Troy he left my fond embrace:
Such raptures in my beating bosom rise,
I deem it sure a vision of the skies.

Thus, whilst Aurora mounts her purple throne,
In audible laments she breathes her moan.
The sounds assault Ulysses' wakeful ear;
Misjudging of the cause, a sudden fear
Of his arrival known, the chief alarms;
He thinks the queen is raising to his arms.
Up-springing from his couch, with active haste
The fleece and carpet in the dome he plac'd;
(The hide, without, imb'd the morning air,) And thus the gods invok'd with ardent pray'r:
Jove, and ethereal thrones! with heav'n to friend,
If the long series of my woes shall end;
Of human race now rising from repose,
Let one a blissful omen here disclose;
And to confirm my faith, propitious Jove!
Vouchsafe the sanction of a sign above.

Whilst lowly thus the chief adoring bows,
The pitying god his guardian aid ayows.
Loud from a sapphire sky his thunder sounds:
With springing hope the hero's heart rebounds.
Soon, with consummate joy to crown his pray'r,
An omen'd voice invades his ravish'd ear.
Beneath a pile that close the dome adjoin'd,
Twelve female slaves the gift of Ceres grind;
Task'd for the royal board to bolt the bran
From the pure flour (the growth and strength of man.)
Discharging to the day the labour due,
Now early to repose the rest withdrew;
One maid, unequal to the task affign'd,
Still turn'd the toilsome mill with anxious mind;
And thus in bitterness of soul divin'd:
Rather of gods and men! whose thunders roul
O'er the cerulean vault, and shake the pole;
Whoe'er from heav'n has gain'd this rare oftent,
(Of granted vows a certain signal sent)
In this blest moment of accepted pray'r,
Piteous, regard a wretch consum'd with care!
Instant, O Jove! confound the suitor-train,
For whom o'er-toil'd I grind the golden grain:
Far from the dome the lewd devourers cast,
And be this festival decreed their last!
Big with their doom denounce'd in earth and sky,
Ulysses' heart dilates with secret joy.
Mean time the menial train with unctuous wood
Heap'd high the genial hearth, Vulcanian food:
When, early dress'd, advance'd the royal heir;
With manly grasp he wav'd a martial spear,
A radiant sabre grac'd his purple zone,
And on his foot the golden sandal shone.
His steps impetuous to the portal press'd;
And Euryclea thus he there address'd:
Say thou, to whom my youth its nurture owes,
Was care for due refection, and repose,
Bestow'd the stranger guest? or waits he griev'd,
His age not honour'd, nor his wants reliev'd?
Promiscuous grace on all the queen confers;
(In woes bewild'rd, oft the wifest errs.)
The wordy vagrant to the dole aspires,
And modest worth with noble scorn retires.
She thus: O cease that ever-honour'd name
To blemish now; it ill deserves your blame.
A bowl of gen'rous wine suffic'd the guest;
In vain the queen the night-refection prest;
Nor wou'd he court repose in downy state,
Unblest, abandon'd to the rage of fate!
A hide beneath the portico was spread,
And fleecy skins compos'd an humble bed:
A downy carpet cast with duteous care,
Secur'd him from the keen nocturnal air.
His cornel javelin pois'd, with regal part,
To the sage Greeks conven'd in Themis' court,
Forth-issuing from the dome, the prince repair'd:
Two dogs of chase, a lion-hearted guard,
Behind him fiercely barked. Without delay
The dame divides the labours of the day;
Thus urging to the toils the menial train:
What marks of luxury, the marble slain!
Its wonted lattice let the floor regain;
The seats with purple clothe in order due;
And let the abler save sponge the board renew:
Let some refresh the vase's fillied mold;
Some bid the goblets boast their native gold;
Some to the spring, with each a jar repair;
And copious waters pure for bathing bear:
Dispatch! for soon the suitors will alay
The lunar feast rites to the god of day.

She said; with duteous haste a busy fair
Of twenty virgins to the spring repair:
With varied toils the rest adorn the dome:
Magnificent, and blithe, the suitors come.
Some wield the sounding ax; the doddled oak
Divide, obedient to the forceful strokes.
Soon from the fount, with each a brimming urn,
(Eumaeus in their train) the maids return.
Three porkers for the feast, all brawny chink'd,
He brought; the choicest of the tumult kind:
In lodgments first secure his care he view'd,
Then to the king this friendly speech renew'd:
Now say sincere, my guest! the suitors train
Still treat thy worth, with lordly, dull disdain;
Or speaks the indeed, abonuaceous mind humane?

Some pitying god (Ulysses sad reply'd)
With vollied vengeance black their tow'r'ring pride!
No conscious blushing, no sense of right restrains
The tides of lust that swell their boiling veins:
From vice to vice their appetites are top,
All cheaply fated at another's cost!
While thus the chief his woes indignant told,
Melanthius, master of the bearded fold,
The goodliest goats of all the royal herd
Spontaneous to the suitors’ feast preferr’d:
Two grooms assitant bore the victims bound;
With quav’ring cries the vaulted roofs resounded:
And to the chief austere, aloud began
The wretch unfriendly to the race of man:
Here, vagrant, still? offensive to my lords!
Blows have more energy than airy words;
These arguments I’ll use: nor conscious shame,
Nor threats, thy bold intrusion will reclaim.
On this high feast the meanest vulgar boast
A plenteous board! Hence! seek another hest!
Rejoinder to the churl the king disdain’d,
But shook his head, and rising wrath restrain’d.

From Cephalenia cross the surgy main,
Philaeius late arriv’d, a faithful swain.
A steer ungrateful to the bull’s embrace,
And goats he brought, the pride of all their race;
Imported in a shallop not his own:
The dome re-echo’d to their mingled moan,
Strait to the guardian of the brisly kind.
He thus began, benevolent of mind:
What guest is he, of such majestic air?
His lineage and paternal clime declare:
Dim thro’ th’ eclipse of fate, the rays divine
Of sov’reign state with faded splendor shine.
If monarchs by the gods are plung’d in woe,
To what abyss are we for doom’d to go!
Then affable he thus the chief address’d,
Whilst with pathetic warmth his hand he press’d:
Stranger! may fate a milder aspect shew,
And spin thy future with a whiter clue!
O Jove! for ever deaf to human cries,
The tyrant, not the father of the skies!
Unpious of the race thy will began,
The fool of fate, thy manufacture, man,
With penury, contempt, repulse, and care. 295
The gauling load of life is doptned to bear.
Ulysses from his state a wand’rer still,
Upbraids thy pow’r, thy wisdom, or thy will:
O monarch ever dear!—O man of woe!
Fresh flow my tears, and shall for ever flow!
260
Like thee, poor stranger guest, day’d his home!
Like thee, in rags, obscene desceed to roam!
Or haply perish’d on some distant coast,
In Stygian gloom, he glides a pensive ghost!
O, grateful for the good his bounty gave,
I’ll grieve, till sorrow link me to the grave!
265
His kind protecting hand, my youth preferr’d,
The regent of his Cephallenian herd:
With vast increase beneath my care it spreads;
A stately breed! and blackens for the moods.
270
Constrain’d, the choicest beavers I hence import,
To cram these cormorants that crowd his court:
Who in partition seek his realm to share;
Nor human right, nor wrath divine severe.
275
Since here resolv’d oppressive these reside,
Contending doubts my anxious heart divide:
Now, to some foreign clime inclin’d to fly.
And with the royal herd protection buy:
Then, happier thoughts return the nodding sable,
Light mounts despair, alternate hopes prevail:
280
In op’ning prospects of ideal joy
My king returns; the proud usurpers die.
To whom the chief: In thy capacious mind.
Since daring zeal with cool debate is join’d;
Attend a deed already ripe in fate:
285
Attest, oh Jove, the truth I now relate!
This sacred truth attest each genial pow’r;
Who blest the board, and guard this friendly bow’r?
Before thou quit the dome (not long delay’d)
Thy with produc’d in act, with pleas’d survey, 290
Thy wond’ring eyes shall view: his rightful reign.
By arms avow’d Ulysses shall regain,
And to the shades devote the suitor train.
O Jove supreme! (the raptur'd swain replies.)
With deeds consummate soon the promis'd joys.
These aged nerves; with new-born vigor strung,
In that blest cause thou'd imitate the young——
Allegis Eumaeus to the pray'r addrest;
And equal ardors fire his loyal breast.

Mean-time the suitors urge the prince's fate;
And deathful arts employ the dire debate;
When in his city tour, the bird of Jove
Truss'd with his finewy pounce a trembling dove;
Sinister to their hope! this omen ey'd
Amphinomus; who thus proaging cry'd:

The gods from force and fraud the prince defend;
O peers! the sanguinary scheme suspend;
Your future thought let stately fate employ;
And give the present hour to genial joy.

From council trait th'affenting peerage ceast;
And in the dome prepar'd the genial feast:
Dish-robd, their veils apart in order lay,
Then all with speed succinct the victims slay;
With sheep and shaggy goats the porkers bled,
And the proud feast was on the marble spread.

With fire prepar'd, they deal the morsels round;
Wine, rosy bright, the brimming goblets crown'd;
By sage Eumaeus born; the purple tide
Melanthius from an ample jar supply'd;
High canisters of bread Phileides plac'd;
And eager all devour the rich repast;
Dispos'd apart; Ulysses shares the treat!
A trivet-table, and ignoble feast;
The prince appoints; but to his fire assigns
The tasteful inwards, and nectarous wines.
Partake, my guest; (he cry'd,) without control
The social feast, and drain the cheering bowl:
Dread not the raider's laugh, nor ruffian's rage;
No vulgar roof protects thy honour'd age;
This dome a refuge to thy wrongs shall be,
From my great fire too soon devolv'd to me!
Your violence and scorn, ye suitors, cease,
Left arms avenge the violated peace.
Aw'd by the prince, so haughty, brave, and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, amazement chain'd the tongue.
Be patient, peers! (at length Antinous cries;)
The threats of vain imperious youth despise:
Would Jove permit the meditated blow,
That stream of eloquence should cease to flow.
Without reply vouchsaf'd, Antinous ceas'd:
Mean-while the pomp of festive increase'd:
By heralds rank'd, in marshall'd order move
The city tribes, to pleas'd Apollo's grove:
Beneath the verdure of which awful shade,
The lunar hecatomb they grateful laid;
Partook the sacred feast, and ritual honours paid.
But the rich banquet in the dome prepar'd,
(An humble side-board set) Ulysses shar'd.
Observant of the prince's high behest,
His menial train attend the stranger-guest;
Whom Pallas with unpard'ning fury stir'd,
By lordly pride and keen reproach inspir'd.
A Samian peer, more studious than the rest
Of vice, who teem'd with many a dead-born jest;
And urg'd, for title to a confort queen,
Unnumber'd acres, arable and green;
(Ctesippus nam'd) this lord Ulysses ey'd,
And thus burst out, imposthumeate with pride:
The sentence I propose, ye peers, attend;
Since due regard must wait the prince's friend,
Let each a token of esteem bestow:
This gift acquits the dear respect I owe;
With which he nobly may discharge his feat,
And pay the menials for the master's treat.
He said: and of the steer before him plac'd,
That finewy fragment at Ulysses cast,
Where to the pattern-bone by nerves combin'd,
The well-horn'd foot indissolubly join'd;
Which whizzing high, the wall unseemly sign'd.
The chief, indignant, grins a ghastly smile; Revenge and scorn within his bosom boil:
When thus the prince, with pious rage inflam'd:
Had not th' inglorious wound thy malice aim'd:
Fall'n guiltles's of the mark, my certain spear
Had made thee buy the brutal triumph dear:
Nor shou'd thy fire a queen his daughter boast,
The suitor now had vanish'd in a ghost:
No more, ye lewd compeers, with lawless pow'r
Invade my dome, my herds and flocks devour:
For genuine worth, of age mature to know,
My grape shall redden, and my harvest grow.
Or if each other's wrongs ye still support,
With rapes and riots to profane my court;
What single arm with numbers can contend?
On me let all your lifted swords descend,
And with my life such vile dishonours end.

A long cessation of discourse ensu'd,
By gentler Agelaus thus renew'd:
A just reproof, ye peers! your rage restrain
From the protected guest, and menial train:
And, prince, to stop the source of future ill,
Assent yourself, and gain the royal will.
Whilst hope prevail'd to see your fire restor'd,
Of right the queen refus'd a second lord:
But who so vain of faith, so blind to fate,
To think he still survives to claim the state?
Now press the sov'reign dame with warm desire
To wed, as wealth or worth her choice inspire:
The lord, selected to the nuptial joys,
Far hence will lead the long-contended prize:
Whilst in paternal pomp, with plenty blest,
You reign, of this imperial dome possest.

Sage and serene Telemachus replies:
By him at whose behest the thunder flies!
And by the name on earth I most revere,
By great Ulysses, and his woes I swear!
(Who never must review his dear domain; 
Inroll'd, perhaps, in Pluto's dreary train.)
Where'er her choice the royal dame avows,
My bridal gifts shall load the future spouse:
But from this duteous my parent-queen to chase!
From me, ye gods! avert such dire disgrace.
But Pallas clouds with intellectual gloom
The suitors' souls, infinite of their doom!
A mirthful phrenzy seiz'd the fated crowd;
The roofs resounded with causeless laughter loud:
Flocking in gore, portentous to survey!
In each disfigure'd vase the viands lay:
Then down each cheek the tears spontaneous flow,
And sudden sighs precede approaching woe.
In vision rap'd, the Hyperesian seer
Uprose, and thus divin'd the vengeance near:
O race to death devote! with Stygian shade
Each destin'd peer impending fates invade:
With tears your wan disfigured cheeks are crown'd;
With sanguine drops the walls are rubied round:
Thick swarms the spacious hall with howling ghosts,
To people Orcus, and the brinn; coasts!
Nor gives the sun his golden orb to roll,
But universal night usurps the pole!
Yet warn'd in vain, with laughter loud elate
The peers reproach the sure divine of fate;
And thus Eurymachus: The dotard's mind
To ev'ry sense is lost, to reason blind:
Swift from the dome conduct the slave away;
Let him in open air behold the day.

Tax not (the heav'n illumin'd seer rejoin'd)
Of rage, or folly, my prophetic mind;
No clouds of error dim th' ethereal rays,
Her equal pow'r each faithful sense obeys.
Unguided hence my trembling steps I bend,
Far hence, before you ho'ring death descends;

* Theoclymenus.
Left, the ripe harvest of revenge begun,
I share the doom ye suitors cannot shun.

This said, to sage Piraeus sped the seer,
His honour'd host, a welcome inmate there.

O'er the protracted feast the suitors sit,
And aim to wound the prince with pointless wit:
Cries one, with scornful leer and mimic voice,
Thy charity we praise, but not thy choice;

Why such profusion of indulgence shown
To this poor, tim'rous, toil-detesting drone?
That other feeds on planetary schemes,
And pays his host with hideous noon-day dreams.

But, prince! for once at least believe a friend,
To some Sicilian mart these courtiers send,
Where, if they yield their freight across the main,
Dear fell the slaves! demand no greater gain.

Thus jovial they; but nought the prince replies;
Full, on his fire he roll'd his ardent eyes;

Impatient strait to flesh his virgin-sword,
From the wise chief he waits the deathful word.

Nigh in her bright alcove, the pensive queen
To see the circle sat, of all unseen.

Sated at length they rise, and bid prepare
An eve repast, with equal cost and care;

But vengeful Pallas with preventing speed
A feast proportion'd to their crimes decreed;
A feast of death! the feast'ers doom'd to bleed!
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XXI.
THE ARGUMENT.

The bending of Ulysses' bow.

Penelope, to put an end to the solicitation of the suitors, proposes to marry the person who should first bend the bow of Ulysses, and shoot through the ringlets. After their attempts have proved ineffectual, Ulysses, taking Eumaeus and Philaeus apart, discovers himself to them; then returning, desires leave to try his strength at the bow, which, though refused with indignation by the suitors, Penelope and Telemachus cause it to be delivered to his hands. He bends it immediately, and shoots through all the rings. Jupiter, in the same instant, thunders from heaven; Ulysses accepts the omen, and gives a sign to Telemachus, who stands ready armed at his side.
AND Pallas now, to raise the rivals fires,
With her own art Penelope inspires:
Who now can bend Ulysses' bow, and wing
The well aim'd arrow thro' the distant ring,
Shall end the strife; and win th' imperial dame;
But discord and black death await the game!

The prudent queen the lofty stair ascends,
At distance due a virgin-train attends;
A brazen key she held, the handle turn'd,
With steel and polish'd elephant adorn'd;
Swift to the inmost room she bent her way,
Where safe repos'd the royal treasures lay;
There shone high-heap'd the labour'd brass and ore,
And there the bow which great Ulysses bore,
And there the quiver, where now guiltless slept
Those-winged deaths that many a matron wept.

This gift, long since when Sparta's shores he trod,
On young Ulysses Iphitus bestow'd:
Beneath Orsilochus his roof they meet;
One loss was private; one a public debt:
Messenia's state from Ithaca detains
Three hundred sheep, and all the shepherd swains:
And to the youthful prince to urge the laws,
The Ring and elders trust their common cause.
But Iphitus, employ'd on other cares,
Search'd the wide-country for his wand'ring mares,
And mules, the strongest of the lab'ring kind;
Hapless to search! more hapless still to find!
For journeying on to Hercules at length,
The lawless wretch, the man of brutal strength,
Deaf to heav'n's voice, the social rite transgress'd.
And for the beauteous mares destroy'd his guest.
He gave the bow; and on Ulysses' part
Receiv'd a pointed sword and missile dart:
Of luckless friendship on a foreign shore.
Their first, last pledges! for they met no more.
The bow, bequeath'd by this unhappy hand,
Ulysses bore not from his native land,
Nor in the front of battle taught to bend,
But kept, in dear memorial of his friend.
Now gently winding up the fair ascent,
By many an easy step, the matron went;
Then o'er the pavements glides with grace divine,
(With polish'd oak the level pavements shine)
The folding gates a dazzling light display'd,
With pomp of various architrave o'erlaid.
The bolt, obedient to the silken string,
Forsakes the staple as the pull's the ring;
The wards respondent to the key turn round;
The bars fall back; the flying valves resound;
Loud as a bull makes hill and valley ring,
So roar'd the lock when it releas'd the spring.
She moves majestic thro' the wealthy room,
Where treasur'd garments call a rich perfume.
There from the column where aloft it hung,
Reach'd, in its splendid case, the bow unstrung:
Across her knees she laid the well-known bow,
And pensive fate, and tears began to flow.
To full satiety of grief she mourns;
Then silent, to the joyous hall returns,
To the proud suitors bears in pensive state
Th' unbended bow, and arrows wing'd with fate.
Behind, her train the polish'd cittern brings,
Which held th' alternate brass and silver rings.
Full in the portal the chaste queen appears,
And with her veil conceals the coming tears:
On either side awaits a virgin fair;
While thus the matron, with majestic air:

Say you, whom these forbidden walls inclose,
For whom my victims bleed, my vintage flows;
If these neglected, faded charms can move?
Or is it but a vain pretence, you love?

If I the prize, if me you seek to wife,
Hear the conditions, and commence the strife.
Who first Ulysses' wondrous bow shall bend,
And thro' twelve ringlets the fleet arrow send,
Him will I follow, and forsake my home,
For him forsake this lov'd, this wealthy dome,
Long, long the scene of all my past delight,
And still to last the vision of my night!

Graceful she said, and bad Eumaeus show
The rival peers the ringlets and the bow.
From his full eyes the tears unbidden spring,
Touch'd at the dear memorials of his king.
Philaetius too relents, but secret shed
The tender drops. Antinous saw, and said:

Hence to your fields, ye rustics! hence away,
Nor stain with grief the pleasures of the day;
Nor to the royal heart recall in vain
The sad remembrance of a perish'd man.
Enough her precious tears already flow—

Or share the feast with due respect, or go
To weep abroad, and leave us to the bow:
No vulgar task! ill suits this courtly crew
That stubborn horn which brave Ulysses drew.
I well remember (for I gaz'd him o'er
While yet a child) what majestic he bore!
And still (all infant as I was) retain
The port, the strength, the grandeur of the man!

He said, but in his soul fond joys arise,
And his proud hopes already win the prize.
To speed the flying shaft thro' ev'ry ring,
Wretch! is not thine: the arrows of the king
Shall end those hopes, and fate is on the wing!

Then thus Telemachus: Some god I find
With pleasing phrenzy has possest my mind;
When a lov'd mother threatens to depart,
Why with this ill-tim'd gladness leaps my heart?
Come then, ye suitors! and dispute a prize
Richer than all the Achajen state supplies,
Than all proud Argos, or Mycaene knows;
Than all our isles or continents enclose:
A woman matchless, and almost divine,
Fit for the praise of ev'ry tongue but mine.
No more excuses then, no more delay;
Haste to the trial——Lo! I lead the way.
I too may try, and if this arm can wing.
The feather'd arrow thro' the destin'd ring,
Then if no happier knight the conquest boast,
I shall not sorrow for a mother's loft.
But blest in her, poisest these arms alone,
Heir of my father's strength, as well as throne,
He spoke; then rising, his broad sword unbound,
And cast his purple garment on the ground.
A trench he open'd; in a line he plac'd
The level axes, and the points made fast,
(His perfect skill the wond'ring gazers ey'd,
The game as yet unseen, as yet untry'd.)
Then, with a manly pace, he took his stand;
And grasp'd the bow, and twang'd it in his hand.
Three times, with beating heart, he made essay:
Three times, unequal to the task, gave way:
A modest boldness on his cheek appear'd;
And thrice he hop'd, and thrice again he fear'd.
The fourth had drawn it. The great fire with joy
Beheld, but with a sign forbade the boy.
His ardor strait th' obedient prince suppress;
And artful, thus the suitor-train address'd:
Oh lay the cause on youth yet immature!
(For hea'n forbid, such weakness should endure)
How shall this arm unequal to the bow,
Retort an insult, or repel a foe?
But you! whom heav'n with better nerves has blest,
Accept the trial, and the prize contest.
He cast the bow before him, and apart
Against the polish'd quiver prop'd the dart.
Resuming then his seat, Epitheus's son,
The bold Antinous, to the rest begun:
"From where the goblet first begins to flow,
From right to left, in order take the bow;
And prove your several strengths."—The princes heard;
And first Leiodes, blameless priest, appear'd;
The eldest born of Oenop's noble race,
Who next the goblet held his holy place:
He, only he, of all the suitor throng,
Their deeds detested, and abjurd the wrong.
With tender hands the stubborn horn he strains,
The stubborn horn resifted all his pains!
Already in despair he gives it o'er;
Take it who will, (he cries) I strive no more.
What num'rous deaths attend this fatal bow!
What souls and spirits shall it send below!
Better indeed to die, and fairly give
Nature her debt, than disappointed live,
With each new fun to some new hope a prey,
Yet still to-morrow failer than to-day.
How long in vain Penelope we sought?
This bow shall ease us of that idle thought,
And send us with some humbler wife to live,
Whom gold shall gain, or destiny shall give.

Thus speaking, on the floor the bow he plac'd,
(With rich inlay the various floor was grace'd)
At distance far the feather'd shaft he throws,
And to the seat returns from whence he rose.
To him Antinous thus with fury said,
What words ill omen'd from thy lips have fled?
Thy coward function ever is in fear;
Thou arms are dreadful which thou cannot bear.
Why should this bow be fatal to the brave,
Because the priest is born a peaceful slave?
Mark then what others can—He ended there,
And bade Melanthius a vast pile prepare;
He gives it instant flame: then fast beside
Spreads o'er an ample board a bullock's hide.
With melted lard they soak the weapon o'er,
Chafe ev'ry knot, and supple ev'ry pore.
Vain all their art, and all their strength as vain;
The bow inflexible resists their pain.
The force of great Eurymachus alone
And bold Antinous, yet untry'd, unknown:
Those only now remain'd; but those confess'd
Of all the train the mightiest and the best.

Then from the hall, and from the noisy crew,
The masters of the herd and flock withdrew.
The king observes them: he the hall forsakes,
And, past the limits of the court, o'er takes.
Then thus with accent mild Ulysses spoke:
Ye faithful guardians of the herd and flock!
Shall I the secret of my breast conceal,
Or (as my soul now dictates) shall I tell?
Say, should some fav'ring god restore again
The lost Ulysses to his native reign;
How beat your hearts? what aid would you afford?
To the proud suitors, or your antient lord?

Philaetius thus: Oh were thy word not vain!
Would mighty Jove restore that man again!
These aged sinews with new vigour strung
In his blest cause should emulate the young.
With equal vows Eumaeus too implor'd
Each pow'r above, with wishes for his lord.

He saw their secret souls, and thus began:
Those vows the gods accord: behold the man!
Your own Ulysses! twice ten years detain'd
By woes and wand'ring from this hapless land:
At length he comes; but comes despis'd, unknown, and finding faithful you, and you alone.
All else have cast him from their very thought,
Ev'n in their wishes and their pray'r's forgot!
Hear then, my friends! if Jove this arm succeed,
And give you' impious revelers to bleed,
My care shall be to bless your future lives
With large possession and with faithful wives;
Fust by my palace shall your domes ascend,
And each on young Telemachus attend,
And each be call'd his brother and my friend.
To give you firmer faith, now trust your eye:
Lo! the broad scar indented on my thigh,
When with Autolyclus's sons, of yore,
On Parnass' top I chas'd the tusk'y boar.

His ragged vest then drawn aside disclos'd
The sign conspicuous, and the scar expos'd:
Eager they view'd; with joy they stood amaz'd;
With tearful eyes o'er all their master gaz'd:
Around his neck their longing arms they cast,
His head, his shoulders, and his knees embrac'd:
Tears followed tears; no word was in their pow'r,
In solemn silence fell the kindly show'r.
The king too weeps, the king too grasps their hands,
And moveless, as a marble fountain, stands.

Thus had their joy wept down the setting sun;
But first the wise man cease'd, and thus begun:
Enough——-on other cares your thought employ,
For danger waits on all untimely joy.
Full many foes, and fierce, observe us near:
Some may betray, and-yonder walls may hear.
Re-enter them not all at once, but stay
Some moments you, and let me lead the way.
To me, neglected as I am, I know
The haughty suitors will deny the bow;
But thou, Eumaeus, as 'tis born away,
Thy master's weapon to his hand convey.

L 1
At ev'ry portal let some matron wait,
And each lock fast the well-compacted gate:
Close let them keep, whate'er invades their car;
Tho' arms, or shouts, or dying groans they hear. 255
To thy strict charge, Philaeus, we confign
The court's main gate: to guard that pass be thine.
This said, he first return'd: the faithful swains
At distance follow, as their king ordains.
Before the flame Eurymachus now stands, 260
And turns the bow, and chases it with his hands;
Still the tough bow unmov'd. The lofty man
Sigh'd from his mighty soul, and thus began:
I mourn the common cause; for, oh my friends!
On me, on all, what grief, what shame attends? 265
Not the loft nuptials can affect me more,
(For Greece has beauteous dames on ev'ry shore;)
But baffled thus! confess'd so far below
Ulysses' stregth, as not to bend his bow!
How shall all ages our attempt deride,
Our weakness scorn? Antinous thus reply'd:
Not so, Eurymachus: that no man draws
The wond'rous bow, attend another cause.
Sacred to Phoebus is the solemn day,
Which thoughtles we in games would waste away: 275
Till the next dawn this ill-tim'd strife forgo,
And here leave fix'd the singlets in a row.
Now bid the few'r approach, and let us join
In due libations, and in rites divine;
So end our night; before the day shall spring, 280
The choicest off'nings let Melanthius bring;
Let then to Phoebus' name the fatted thighs
Feed the rich smoakes high-curling to the skyes.
So shall the patron of these arts bestow
(For his the gift) the skill to bend the bow. 285
They heard well-pleas'd: the ready heralds bring
The cleansing waters from the limpid spring:
The goblet high with rofy wine they crown'd,
In order circling to the peers around.
That right compleat, up-rose the thoughtful man,
And thus his meditated scheme began:
If what I ask your noble minds approves.
Ye peers and rivals in the royal love!
Chief, if it hurt not great Antinous' ear;
(Whose sage decision I with wonder hear)
And if Eurymachus the motion please:
Give heav'n this day, and rest the bow in peace:
To-morrow let your arms dispute the prize;
And take it he, the favour'd of the skies!
But since 'till then this trial you delay,
Trust it one moment to my hands to-day:
Fain would I prove, before your judging eyes,
What once I was, whom wretched you disdise;
If yet this arm its antient force retain;
Or if my woes, (a long-continu'd train)
And wants and insults, make me less than man.
Rage flash'd in lightning from the suitors eyes,
Yet mix'd with terror at the bold emprise.
Antinous then: O miserable guest!
Is common sense quite banish'd from thy breast!
Suffic'd it not within the palace plac'd
To sit distinguish'd, with our presence grac'd,
Admitted here with princes to consort,
A man unknown, a needy wanderer?
To copious wine this insolence we owe;
And much thy betters wine can overthrow:
The great Eurytion when this frenzy stung,
Pirithous' roofs with frantic riot rang:
Boundless the Centaur rag'd; 'till one and all
The heroes rose, and dragg'd him from the hall.
His nose they shorten'd, and his ears they slit,
And sent him sober'd home, with better wit.
Hence with long war the double race was curst,
Fatal to all, but to th' aggressor first.
Such fate I prophesy our guest attends.
If here this interdicted bow he bends:

L l. 2.
Nor shall these walls such insolence contain;
The first fair wind transports him o'er the main:
Where Echecus to death the guilty brings,
(The worst of mortals, ev'n the worst of kings.)
Better than that, if thou approve our cheer,
Cease the mad strife, and share our bounty here.

To this the queen her just dislike express:
'Tis impious, prince! to harm the stranger-guest,
Safe to insult who bears a suppliant's name,
And some respect Telemachus may claim.
What if 'tis immortals on the man bestow
Sufficient strength to draw the mighty bow?
Shall I, a queen, by rival chiefs ador'd,
Accept a wand'ring stranger for my lord?
A hope so idle never touch'd his brain:
Then ease your bosoms of a fear so vain.
Far be he banish'd from this frailty scene
Who wrongs his princess, with a thought so mean.
O fair! and wisest of so fair a kind!
(Respectful thus Eurymachus rejoind')
Mov'd by no weak furnace, but sense of shame,
We dread the all-assigning voice of fame;
We dread the cenure of the meanest slave,
The weakest woman: all can wrong the brave.

Behold what wretches to the bed pretend
Of that brave chief whose bow they cou'd not bend!
In came a beggar of the skolling crew,
And did what all those princes could not do.
Thus will the common voice our deed desfame,
And thus posterity upbraid our name.

To whom the queen: If fame engage your views,
Forbear those acts which infamy pursues;
Wrong and oppression no renown can raise;
Know, friend! that virtue is the path to praise.
The stature of our guest, his port, his face,
Speak him descended from no vulgar race.
To him the bow, as he desires, convey;
And to his hand if Phoebus give the day,
Hence, to reward his merit, he shall bear
A two-edg'd faulchion and a shining spear,
Embroider'd sandals, a rich cloak and vest,
And safe conveyance to his port of rest.

O royal mother! ever honour'd name!
Permit me (cries Telemachus) to claim
A son's just right. No Grecian prince but I.
Has pow'r this bow to grant, or to deny.
Of all that Ithaca's rough hills contain,
And all wide Edis' courser-breeding plain,
To me alone my father's arms descend.
And mine alone they are, to give or lend;
Retire, oh queen! thy household task resume,
'Tend, with thy maids, the labours of the loom;
The bow, the darts, and arms of chivalry,
These cares to man belong, and most to me.

Mature beyond his years, the queen admir'd.
His sage reply, and with her train retir'd:
There in her chamber, as she sat apart,
Revolv'd his words, and plac'd them in her heart.
On her Ulysses-then the fix'd her soul,
Down her fair cheek the tears abundant roll,
'Till gentle Pallas, piteous of her cries,
In slumber clos'd her silver-streaming eyes.

Now thro' the press the bow Eumaens bore,
And all was riot, noise, and wild uproar.
Hold, lawless rustic! whither wilt thou go?
To whom, infestate, dost thou bear the bow?
Exil'd, for this to some sequester'd den,
Far from the sweet society of men,
To thy own dogs a prey thou shalt be made;
If heav'n and Phoebus lends the suitors aid.

Thus they. Aghast he laid the weapon down,
But bold Telemachus thus urg'd him on:
Proceed, false slave, and slay their empty words;
What! hopes the fool to please so many lords?
Young as I am, thy prince's vengeful hand,
Stretch'd forth in wrath, shall drive thee from the land.
Oh! could the vigour of this arms well
Th' oppressive suitors from my walls expell!
Then what a shoal of baseless men should go
To fill with tumult the dark courts below!
The suitors with a fearful side survey
The youth, indulging in the genial day.
Eumaeus, thus encourag’d, hastes to bring
The strife-full bow, and gives it to the king.
Old Euryclea calling then aside,
Hear what Telemachus enjoins (he cry’d)
At ev’ry portal let some matron wait,
And each lock fast the well-compacted gate;
And if unusual sounds invade their ear,
If arms, or shouts, or dying groans they hear,
Let none to call or issue forth presume,
But close attend the labours of the loom.
Her prompt obedience on his order waits;
Clos’d in an instant were the palace gates.
In the same moment forth Philaetius flies,
Secures the court, and with a cable ties
The utmost gate; (the cable strongly wrought
Of Byblos’ reed, a ship from Egypt brought;)
Then unperceiv’d and silent, at the board
His seat he takes, his eyes upon his lord.
And now his well-known bow the master bore,
Turn’d on all sides, and view’d it o’er and o’er;
Left time or worms had done the weapon wrong,
Its owner absent, and entry’d so long.
While some deriding:———How he turns the bow!
Some other like it sure the man must know,
Or else would copy; or in bows he deals;
Perhaps he makes them, or perhaps he steals.
Heav’n to this wretch (another cry’d) be kind!
And bless, in all to which he stands inclin’d,
With such good fortune as he now shall find.
Heedless he heard them; but disdain’d reply;
The bow perusing with exactest eye.
Book XXI. HOMER's ODYSSEY.

Then, as some heav'ny minstrel, taught to sing
High notes responsive to the trembling string,
To some new strain when he adapts the lyre,
Or the dumb lute refits with vocal wire,
Relaxes, strains, and draws them to and fro;
So the great master drew the mighty bow;
And drew with ease. One hand aloft display'd
The bending horns, and one the string essay'd.
From his essaying hand the string let fly,
Twang'd short and sharp, like the shrill swallow's cry:
A gen'ral horror ran thro' all the race,
Sunk was each heart, and pale was ev'ry face.
Signs from above ensu'd: th' unfolding sky
In light'ning burst: Jove thunder'd from on high.
Fir'd at the call of heav'n's almighty Lord,
He snatch'd the shaft that glitter'd on the board:
(Fast by, the rest lay sleeping in the sheath,
But soon to fly the messengers of death.)

Now sitting as he was, the chord he drew,
Thro' ev'ry ringlet levelling his view;
Then notch'd the shaft, releast, and gave it wing;
The whizzing arrow vanish'd from the string,
Sung on direct, and thredded ev'ry ring.
The solid gate its fury scarcely bounds;
Pierc'd thro' and thro', the solid gate resounds.

Then to the prince: Nor have I wrought thee shame;
Nor err'd this hand unfaithful to its aim;
Nor prov'd the toil too hard; nor have I lost
That antient vigour, once my pride and boast;
Il I deserv'd these haughty peers' disdain;
Now let them comfort their dejected train.
In sweet repast the present hour employ,
Nor wait till ev'n'ning for the genial joy.
Then to the lute's soft voice prolong the night,
Music, the banquet's most refin'd delight.

He said; then gave a nod; and at the word
Telemachus girds on his shining sword.
Fast by his father's side he takes his stand;
The beamy jav'lin lightens in his hand.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER BOOK XXII.
THE ARGUMENT.

The death of the suitors.

Ulysses begins the slaughter of the suitors by the death of Antinous. He declares himself, and lets fly his arrows at the rest. Telemachus assists, and brings arms for his father, himself, Eumaeus, and Philaeius. Melantheus does the same for the wooers. Minerva encourages Ulysses in the shape of Mentor. The suitors are all slain, only Medon and Phemius are spared. Melantheus and the unfaithful servants are executed. The rest acknowledge their master with all demonstrations of joy.
THEN fierce the hero o'er the threshold strud;
Stript of his rags, he blaz'd out like a god.
Fall in their face the lifted bow he bore,
And quiver'd deaths, a formidable store!
Before his feet the ratling shov'r he threw,
And thus terrific to the suitor crew:
One vent'rous game this hand has won to-day;
Another, princes! yet remains to play;
Another mark our arrow must attain.
Phoebus assist! nor be the labour vain.
Swift as the word the parting arrow sings,
And bears thy fate, Antinous, on its wings:
Wretch that he was, of unprophetic soul!
High in his hands he rear'd the golden bowl;
Ev'n then to drain it lengthen'd out his breath;
Chang'd to the deep, the bitter draught of death:
For fate who fear'd amidst a faithful band?
And fate to numbers by a single hand!
Full thro' his throat Ulysses' weapon past,
And pierc'd the neck. He falls, and breathes his last.
The tumbling goblet the wide floor o'erflows,
A stream of gore burst spouting from his nose;
Grim in convulsive agonies he sprawls:
Before him spurn'd, the loaded table falls,
And spreads the pavement with a mingled flood
Of floating meats, and wine, and human blood.
Amaz'd, confounded, as they saw him fall,
Uprose the throngs tumultuous round the hall;
O'er all the dome they cast a haggard eye;
Each look'd for arms in vain; no arms were nigh:
Aim'd thou at princes! (all amaz'd they said)
Thy last of games unhappy hail thou play'd;
Thy erring shaft has made our bravest bleed;
And death, unlucky guest, attends thy deed.
Vultures shall tear thee.—Thus incens'd they spoke,
While each to chance ascrib'd the wondrous stroke,
Blind as they were! for death ev'n now invades
His deslin'd prey, and wraps them all in shades.
Then, grimly frowning, with a dreadful look,
That wither'd all their hearts, Ulysses spoke:
Dogs! ye have had your day: ye fear'd no more
Ulysses vengeful from the Trojan shore;
While to your lust and spoil a guardless prey,
Our house, our wealth, our helpless handmaids lay:
Not so content, with bolder phrenzy fit'd,
Ev'n to our bed presumptuous you aspir'd:
Laws or divine or human fall'd to move,
Of shame of men, or dread of gods above;
Heedless alike of infamy or praise,
Or fame's eternal voice in future days:
The hour of vengeance, wretches, now is come,
Impending fate is yours, and instant doom.
Thus dreadful he. Confus'd the feitors stood;
From their pale cheeks recedes the flying blood;
Trembling they sought their guilty heads to hide,
Alone the bold Eurymachus reply'd.
If, as thy words import, (he thus began)
Ulysses lives, and thou the mighty man,
Great are thy wrongs, and much hast thou sustain'd
In thy spoil'd palace, and exhausted land;
The cause and author of those guilty deeds,
Lo! at thy feet unjust Antinous bleeds.
Not love, but wild ambition was his guide,
To slay thy son, thy kingdoms to divide,
These were his aims, but juster love deny'd.
Since cold in death th' offender lies, oh spare
Thy suppliant people, and receive their pray'r!
Brass, gold, and treasures shall the spoil defray,
Two hundred oxen ev'ry prince shall pay:
The waste of years refunded in a day.

'Till then thy wrath is just——Ulysses burn'd
With high disdain, and sternly thus return'd:
All, all the treasures that enrich'd our throne
Before your rapines, join'd with all your own,
If offer'd, vainly shoul'd for mercy call;
'Tis you that offer, and I scorn them all;
Your blood is my demand, your lives the prize,
'Till pale as yonder wretch each suitor lies.
Hence with those coward terms: or fight or fly,
This choice is left ye, to resist or die;
And die I trust ye shall.—He sternly spoke:
With guilty fears the pale assembly shook.
Alone Eurymachus exhorts the train:
Yon' archer, com'rades, will not shoot in vain;
But from the threshold shall his darts be sped,
(Who e'er he be) 'till ev'ry prince ly dead.
Be mindful of yourselves, draw forth your swords,
And to his shafts obtend these ample boards,
(So need compells.) Then all united strive
The bold invader from his post to drive;
The city rouz'd shall to our rescue haste,
And this mad archer soon have shot his last.

Swift as he spake, he drew his truant sword,
And like a lion rush'd against his lord:
The wary chief the rushing foe represt,
Who met the point, and forc'd it in his breast:
His failing hand deserts the lifted sword,
And prone he falls extended o'er the board!
Before him wide, in mixt effusion roll
Th' untaasted viands, and the jovial bowl.
Full thro' his liver past the mortal wound,
With dying rage his forehead beats the ground;

M m
He spurn'd the seat with fury as he fell,
And the fierce soul to darkness div'd, and hell.

Next bold Amphinomus his arm extends
To force the pass: the god like man defends.
Thy spear, Telemachus! prevents th' assault,
The brazen weapon driving thro' his back,
Thence thro' his breast its bloody passage tore:
Flat falls he thund'ring on the marble floor,
And his crush'd forehead marks the stone with gore.
He left his jav'lin in the dead, for fear
The long incumbrance of the weighty spear
To the fierce foe advantage might afford,
To rush between, and use the shortened sword.

With speedy ardour to his fire he flies,
And, Arm, great father! arm (in haste he cries)
Lo, hence I run for other arms to wield,
For missile jav'lin's, and for helm and shield;
Fast by our side let either faithful swain
In arms attend us, and their part sustain.

Haste and return (Ulysses made reply)
While yet th' auxiliar shafts this hand supply;
Left thus alone, encounter'd by an host,
Driv'n from the gate, th' important pass be lost.

With speed Telemachus obeys, and flies
Where pil'd on heaps the royal armour lies;
Four brazen helmets, eight resplendent spears,
And four broad bucklers, to his fire he bears:
At once in brazen panoply they shone,
At once each serv vant brac'd his armour on;
Around their king a faithful guard they stand,
While yet each shaft flew deathful from his hand:
Chief after chief expir'd at ev'ry wound,
And swell'd the bleeding mountain on the ground.

Soon as his fere of flying fates was spent,
Against the wall he set the bow unbent:
And now his shoulders bear the massy shield,
And now his hands two beamy jav'lin's wield;
He frowns beneath his nodding plume, that play'd
O'er the high crest, and cast a dreadful shade.

There stood a window near, whence looking down
From o'er the porch, appear'd the subject town,
A double strength of valves secur'd the place,
A high and narrow, but the only pass:
The cautious king, with all-preventing care,
To guard that outlet, plac'd Eumeus there.

When Agelaus thus: Has none the sense
'To mount yon' window, and alarm from thence
The neighbour town? the town shall force the door,
And this bold archer soon shall shoot no more;
Melanthius then: That outlet to the gate
So near adjoins, that one may guard the strait.
But other methods of defence remain,
Myself with arms can guard all the train;
Stores from the royal magazine I bring,
And their own darts shall pierce the prince and king.

He said; and mounting up the lofty staire,
Twelve shields, twelve lances, and twelve helmets bears:
All arm, and sudden round the hall appears
A blaze of bucklers, and a wood of spears.
The hero stands oppress'd with mighty woe,
On ev'ry side he sees the labour grow:
Oh curs'd event! and oh unlook'd for aid!
Melanthius or the woument have betray'd
Oh my dear son! the father, with a sigh;
Then ceas'd. The filial virtue made reply:
Falseness is folly, and 'tis just to own
The fault committed: this was mine alone;
My haste neglected yonder door to bar,
And hence the villain has supply'd their war.
Run, good Eumeus, then, and (what before
I thoughtless err'd in) well secure that door:
Learn if by female fraud this deed were done,
Or (as my thought misgives) by Dolius' son.

While yet they spoke, in quest of arms again
To the high chamber stole the faithless swain;
Not unobserv'd. Eumaeus watchful ey'd,
And thus address'd Ulysses near his side:
The miscreant we suspected takes that way;
Him, if this arm be pow'rful, shall I slay?
Or drive him hither, to receive the meed,
From thy own hand, of this detested deed?

Not so (reply'd Ulysses) leave him there;
For us sufficient is another care,
Within the stricture of this palace wall
To keep inclos'd his masters till they fall.
Go you and seize the felon; backward bind
His arms and legs, and fix a plank behind;
On this, his body by strong cords extend,
And on a column near the roof suspend;
So study'd tortures his vile days shall end.

The ready swains obey'd with joyful haste;
Behind the felon unperceiv'd they past,
As round the room in quest of arms he goes:
(The half-shut door conceal'd his lurking foes)
One hand sustain'd a helm, and one the shield
Which old Laertes wont in youth to wield,
Cover'd with dust, with dryness chapt and worn,
The brass corroded, and the leather torn;
Thus laden, o'er the threshold as he kept,
Fierce on the villain from each side they leapt;
Back by the hair the trembling daftard drew,
And down reluctant on the pavement threw.

Active and pleas'd, the zealous swains fulfil
At ev'ry point their master's rigid will:
First, fast behind, his hands and feet they bound,
Then streighten'd cords involv'd his body round;
So drawn aloft, athwart the column ty'd,
The howling felon swung from side to side.

Eumaeus scooter, then with keen disdain:
There pass thy pleasing night, oh gentle swain!
On that soft pillow, from that envy'd height
First may'ft thou see the springing dawn of light;
So timely rise, when morning streaks the east,
To drive thy victims to the suitors feast.
This said, they left him, tortur'd as he lay,
Secur'd the door, and hasty strode away:
Each, breathing death, resum'd his dang'rous post
Near great Ulysses; four against an host.
When lo! descending to her hero's aid,
Jove's daughter Pallas, war's triumphant maid:
In Mentor's friendly form she join'd his side;
Ulysses saw, and thus with transport cry'd:

Come, ever welcome, and thy succour lend;
Oh ev'ry sacred name in one! my friend!
Early we lov'd, and long our loves have grown.
What-e'er through life's whole series I have done
Or good or grateful, now to mind recall,
And aiding this one hour, repay it all.
Thus he; but pleasing hopes his bosom warm
Of Pallas latent in the friendly form.
The adverse host the phantom-warrior ey'd,
And first, loud threat'ning, Agelaus cry'd;

Mentor, beware; nor let that tongue persuade
Thy frantic arm to lend Ulysses aid;
Our force, successful shall our threat make good,
And with the fire's and son's commix thy blood.
What hop'st thou here? Thee first the sword shall slay
Then lop thy whole posterity away;

Far, hence thy banish'd comfort shall we send;
With his, thy forfeit lands and treaure blend;
Thus, and thus only, shalt thou join thy friend.

His barb'rous insult ev'n the goddess fires,
Who thus the warrior to revenge inspires:

Art thou Ulysses? where then shall we find
The patient body and the constant mind;
That courage, once the Trojans daily dread,
Known nine long years, and felt by heroes dead?
And where that conduct, which reveng'd the lust
Of Priam's race, and laid proud Troy in dust?
If this, when Helen was the cause, were done,
What for thy country now, thy queen, thy son?
Rise then in combat, at my side attend;
Observe what vigour gratitude can lend,
And foes how weak; oppos'd against a friend!

She spoke; but willing longer to survey
The fire and son's great acts, with held the day;
By farther toils detreed the brave to try,
And levell'd pois'd the wings of victory:
Then with a change of form eludes their sight,
Perch'd like a swallow on a rafter's height,
And unperceiv'd enjoys the rising sight.

Damaitor's son, bold Agelaus, leads
The guilty war; Eurynomus succeeds;
With thefe Pifander, great Polyfôr's son,
Sage Polybus and stern Amphimedon,
With Démoptolemus: these six survive,
The best of all the shafts had left alive.

Amidst the carnage desp'rate as they stand,
Thus Agelaus rous'd the lagging band:
The hour is come, when you' fierce man no more
With bleeding princes shall bestrow the floor:
Lo! Mentor-leaves him with an empty bowl;
The four remain, but four against an host.
Let each at once discharge the deadly dart,
One sure of six shall reach Ulysses' heart:
Thus shall one stroke the glory lost regain:
The rest must perish, their great leader slain.

Then all at once their mingled lances threw,
And thirsty all of one man's blood they flew;
In vain! Minerva turn'd them in her breath,
And scatter'd short, or wide, the points of death;
With deaden'd sound, one on the threshold falls,
One strikes the gate, one rings against the walls;
The storm past innocent. The godlike man
Now loiter trod, and dreadful thus began:
'Tis now, brave friends, our turn, at once to throw
(So speed them heav'n!). our jav'lin's at the foe.
That impious race to all their past misdeeds
Would add our blood. Injustice still proceeds.
  He spoke: at once their fiery lances flew:
Great Demoptolymus, Ulysses flew;
Euryades receiv'd the prince's dart;
The goatherd's quiver'd in Pifander's heart;
Fierce Elatus by thine, Eumaeus, falls;
Their fall in thunder echoes round the walls.
The rest retreat. The victors now advance,
Each from the dead resumes his bloody lance.
Again the foe discharge the steely bow'r;
Again made frustrate by the virgin pow'r:
Some, turn'd by Pallas, on the threshold fall;
Some wound the gate, some ring against the wall;
Some weak, or pond'rous with the brazen head,
Drop harmless, on the pavement sounding dead.

Then bold Amphimedon his jav'lins cast;
Thy hand, Telemachus, it lightly raz'd;
And from Ctesippus' arm the spear elanc'd,
On good Eumaeus' shield and shoulder glanc'd;
Not lessen'd of their force, so slight the wound,
Each sung along, and drop'd upon the ground.
Fate doom'd thee next; Eurydamus, to bear.
Thy death, ennobled by Ulysses' spear.
By the bold son Amphimedon was slain;
And Polybus renown'd the faithful swain.
Pierc'd through the breast the rude Ctesippus bled;
And thus Philaeitus glory'd o'er the dead:

There end thy pompous vaunts and high disdain,
Oh sharp in scandal, voluble and vain!
How weak is mortal pride! To heav'n alone
Th' event of actions, and our fates are known.
Scoffer, behold what gratitude we bear;
The victim's heel is answer'd with this spear.
Ulysses brandish'd high his vengeful steel,
And Damastorides that instant fell;
Fell by, Leocritus expiring lay,
The prince's jav'lin tore its bloody way.
Through all his bowels: down he tumbles prone;
His batter’d front and brains besmear the stone.

Now Pallas shines confess’d; aloft she spreads

The arm of vengeance o’er their guilty heads;
The dreadful Ægis blazes in their eye;
Amaz’d they see, they tremble, and they fly:
Confus’d, distracted, through the rooms they fling,
Like oxen madden’d by the breeze’s fling,

When sultry days, and long, succed the gentle spring.

Not half so keen, fierce vulturs of the chase
Stoop from the mountains on the feather’d race,

When the wide field extended snares be set,
With conscious dread they shun the quiv’ring net:

No help, no flight; but wounded ev’ry way;
Headlong they drop: the fowlers seize the prey.
On all sides thus they double wound on wound;

In prostrate heaps the wretches beat the ground,
Unmanly shrieks precede each dying groan,
And a red deluge floats the reeking stone.

Liones first before the victor falls.
The wretched augur thus for mercy calls:
O gracious hear, nor let thy suppliant bleed:

Still undishonour’d or by word or deed
 Thy house, for me, remains; by me repress’d
Full oft was check’d th’ injustice of the rest:
Averse they hear’d me when I counsel’d well,
Their hearts were harden’d, and they justly fell.
Oh spare an augur’s consecrated head,

Nor add the blameless to the guilty dead.

Priest as thou art! for that detested band

Thy lying prophecies deceive’d the land:
Against Ulysses have thy vows been made;
For them thy daily orisons were paid:

Yet more, ev’n to our bed thy pride aspires:
One common crime one common fate requires.

Thus speaking, from the ground the sword he took
Which Agelaus’ dying hand forsook;
Full through his neck the weighty faulchion sped:
Along the pavement roll'd the muttering head.
Phemius alone the hand of vengeance spar'd,
Phemius the sweet, the heav'n-instructed bard.
Beside the gate the rev'rend minstrel stands;
The lyre, now silent, trembling in his hands;
Doubious to supplicate the chief, or fly
To Jove's inviolable altar nigh,
Where oft Laertes holy vows had paid,
And oft Ulysses smoking victims laid.
His honour'd harp with care he first set down,
Between the laver and the silver throne:
Then prostrate stretch'd before the dreadful man,
Persuasive, thus, with accent soft began:
O king! to mercy be thy soul inclin'd,
And spare the poet's ever-gentle kind.
A deed like this thy future fame would wrong,
For dear to gods and men is sacred song.
Self-taught I sing: by heav'n and heav'n alone
The genuine seeds of poesy are sown;
And (what the gods bestow) the lofty lay,
To gods alone, and god-like worth, we pay.
Save then the poet, and thyself reward;
'Tis thine to merit, mine is to record.
That here I sung, was force and not desire;
This hand reluctant touch'd the warbling wire:
And let thy son attest, nor fordid pay
Nor servile flattery stain'd the moral lay.

The moving words Telemachus attends,
His fire approaches, and the bard defends:
Oh mix not, father, with those impious dead
The man divine! forbear that sacred head.
Medon the herald too our arms may spare,
Medon, who made my infancy his care;
If yet he breathes, permit thy son to give
Thus much to gratitude, and bid him live.

Beneath a table, trembling with dismay,
Couch'd close to earth, unhappy Medon lay,
Wrept in a new-slain one's ample hide:
Swift at the word he call his keen aside.
Sprung to the prince, embrace'd his knee with tears, 405
And thus with grateful voice address'd his ears:
   O prince! O friend! lo here thy Medon stands;
Ah stop the hero's unrested hands!
Incens'd too jufully by that impious brood,
Whose guilty glories now are set in blood. 410
To whom Ulysses with a pleasing eye:
Be bold. on friendship and my son rely;
Live, an example for the world to read;
How much more safe the good than evil deed:
Thou, with the heav'n-taught bard, in peace resort 415
From blood and carnage to yon open court:
Me other work requires.—With tim'rous awe
From the dire scene th' exempted two withdraw,
Scarce sure of life, look round, and trembling move
To the bright altars of protector Jove. 420

Mean'While Ulysses search'd the dome, to find
If yet there live of all th' offending kind.
Not one! complete the bloody tale he found,
All steep'd in blood, all gasping on the ground.
So, when by hollow shores the fisher train 425
Sweep with their arching nets the hearty main,
And scarce the weary toils the copious draught contain,
All naked of their element, and bare,
The fishes pant, and gasp in thinner air;
Wide over the lands are spread the stiff'ning prey, 430.
'Till the warm sun exhales their soul away.

And now the king commands his son to call
Old Euryclea to the deathful hall:
The son observant not a moment stays;
The aged governess with speed obeys:
The sounding portals instant they display;
The matron moves, the prince directs the way.
On heaps of death the stern Ulysses stood,
All black with dust, and cover'd thick with blood.
Book XXII. HOMER’s ODYSSEY.

So the grim lion from the slaughter comes,
Dreadful he glares, and terribly he foam’s,
His breast with marks of carnage painted o’er,
His jaws all dropping with the bull’s black gore.

Soon as her eyes the welcome object met,
The guilty fall’n, the mighty deed complete;
A scream of joy her feeble voice effay’d:
The hero check’d her, and compos’dly said:
Woman, experienc’d as thou art, controul
Indecent joy, and seal thy secret soul.
T’ insult the dead is cruel and unjust;
Fate, and their crime, have sunk them to the dust.
Nor heeded these the ceniture of mankind,
The good and bad were equal in their mind.
Justly the price of worthlessness they paid,
And each now wails an un lamented shade.
But thou, sincere, oh Eurydice! say,
What maids dis honour us, and what obey?

Then she: In these thy kingly walls remain
(My son) full fifty of the handmaid train,
Taught by my care to cull the fleece, or weave,
And servitude with pleasing tasks deceive.
Of these, twice six pursue their wicked way,
Nor me nor chaste Penelope obey;
Nor fits it that Telemachus command
(Young as he is) his mother’s female hand.
Hence to the upper chambers let me fly,
Where flumbers lost now close the royal eye;
There wake her with the news,— the matron cry’d.
Not so (Ulysses more sedate reply’d)
Bring first the crew who wrought these guilty deeds.
In haste the matron parts: the king proceeds:

Now to dispose the dead, the care remains
To you, my son, and you, my faithful swains;
Th’ offending females to that task we doom,
To wash, to scent, and purify the room.
These (cv’ry table cleans’d, and cv’ry throne,
And all the melancholy labour done)
Drive to yon' court, without the palace wall, 480
There the revenging sword shall smite them all;
So with the suitors let them mix in dust,
Stretch'd in a long oblivion of their lust.

He said: the lamentable train appear;
Each vents a groan, and drops a tender tear;
Each heav'd her mournful burden, and beneath
The porch, depos'd the ghastly heaps of death.

The chief severe, compelling each to move,
Urg'd the dire task imperious from above.
With thirsty sponge they rub the tables o'er,
The swains unite their toil) the walls, the floor
Wash'd with th' effusive wave, are purg'd of gore.

Once more the palace set in fair array,
To the base court the females take their way;
There compass'd close between the dome and wall,
(Their life's last scene) they trembling wait their fall.

Then thus the prince: To these shall we afford
A fate so pure, as by the martial sword;
To these, the nightly prostitutes to shame,
And base revilers of our house and name?

Thus speaking, on the circling wall he strung
A ship's tough cable, from a column hung; 500
Near the high top be strain'd it strongly round,
Whence no contending foot could reach the ground.

Their heads above, connected in a row,
They beat the air with quiv'ring feet below.
Thus on some tree hung struggling in the snare,
The doves or thrushes flap their wings in air.
Soon fled the soul impure, and left behind
The empty corse to waver with the wind.

Then forth they led Melanthius, and began
Their bloody work: they lop'd away the man.
Morzel for dogs! then trimm'd with brazen sheers
The wretch, and shorten'd of his nose and ears;
His hands and feet last felt the cruel fleel:

He roar'd, and torments gave his soul to hell——
They wash, and to Ulysses take their way,
So ends the bloody bus'ness of the day.

To Euryclea then address'd the king:
Bring hither fire, and hither sulphur bring,
To purge the palace: then the queen attend,
And let her, with the matron-train, descend;
The matron-train, with all the virgin band,
Assemble here, to learn their lord's command.

Then Euryclea: Joyful I obey,
But cast those mean dishonest rags away;
Permit me first thy royal robes to bring:
Ill suits this garb the shoulders of a king.
"Bring sulphur strait and fire," (the monarch cries)
She hears, and at the word obedient flies.
With fire and sulphur, cure of noxious fumes,
He purg'd the walls and blood-polluted rooms.

Again the matron springs with eager pace,
And spreads her lord's return from place to place.
They hear, rush forth, and instant round him stand,
A gazing throng, a torch in ev'ry hand.
They saw, they knew him, and with fond embrace
Each humbly kisst'd his knee, or hand, or face;
He knows them all; in all such truth appears,
Ev'n he indulges the sweet joy of tears.
THE ODYSSEY OF HOMER

BOOK XXIII.
THE ARGUMENT.

Euryclea awakes Penelope with the news of Ulysses's return, and the death of the suitors. Penelope scarcely credits her, but supposes some god has punished them, and descends from her apartment in doubt. At the first interview of Ulysses and Penelope, she is quite unsatisfied. Minerva restores him to the beauty of his youth; but the queen continues incredulous, till by some circumstances she is convinced, and falls into all the transports of passion and tenderness. They recount to each other all that has past during their long separation. The next morning Ulysses arming himself and his friends, goes from the city to visit his father.
THE
ODYSEY.
BOOK XXIII.

THEN to the queen, as in repose she lay,
The nurse, with eager rapture, speeds her way;
The transports of her faithful heart supply
A sudden youth, and give her wings to fly.

And sleeps my child? the rev'rend matron cries: 5
Ulysses lives! arise, my child, arise!
At length appears the long-expected hour!
Ulysses comes! The suitors are no more!
No more they view the golden light of day;
Arise and bless thee with the glad survey!

Touch'd at his words, the mournful queen rejoind,
Ah! whither wanders thy distemper'd mind?
The righteous pow'res who tread the starry skies,
The weak enlighten, and confound the wise,
And human thought, with unresisted sway, 15
Depress or raise, enlarge or take away:
Truth, by their high decree, thy voice forsakes,
And folly with the tongue of wisdom speaks.
Unkind, the fond illusion to impose:
Was it to flatter, or deride my woes?

Never did I a sleep so sweet enjoy,
Since my dear lord left Ithaca for Troy:
Why must I wake to grieve, and curse thy shore,
O Troy?—may never tongue pronounce thee more!
Be gone: another might have felt our rage,
But age is sacred, and we spare thy age.

N n 3
To whom with warmth: My soul a lie disdains;
Ulysses lives, thy own Ulysses reigns:
That stranger, patient of the suitors' wrongs,
And the rude licence of ungovern'd tongues,
He, he is thine! thy son, his latent guest
Long knew, but lock'd the secret in his breast;
With well-concerted art to end his woes,
And burst at once in vengeance of the foes.

While yet she spoke, the queen in transport sprung
Swift from the couch, and round the matron hung;
Fast from her eye descends the rolling tear,
Say, once more say, is my Ulysses here?
How could that num'rous and outrageous band
By one be slain, though by an hero's hand?
I saw it not, she cries, but heard alone,
When death was busy, a loud dying groan;
The damsel train turn'd pale at ev'ry wound,
Immur'd we sat, and catch'd each passing sound.
When death had seiz'd her prey, thy son attends,
And at his nod the damsel train descends;
There terrible in arms Ulysses stood,
And the dead suitors almost swam in blood;
Thy heart had leap'd the hero to survey,
Stern as the furiy lion o'er his prey,
Glorious in gore!—now with sulphureous fires,
The dome he purges, now the flame aspire;—
Heap'd by the dead without the palace walls—
Haste, daughter, haste, thy own Ulysses calls!
Thy ev'ry with the bounteous gods below,
Enjoy the present good, and former woe.
Ulysses lives his vanquish'd foes to see;
He lives to thy Telemachus and thee!

Ah no! with sighs Penelope rejoin'd,
Excess of joy disturbs thy wand'ring mind;
How blest this happy hour, should he appear,
Dear to us all, to me supremely dear!
Ah no! some god the suitors' deaths decreed;
Some god descends, and by his hand they bled,
Blind to contemn the stranger's righteous cause,
And violate all hospitable laws!
The good they hated, and the pow'rs defy'd;
But heav'n is just, and by a god they dy'd.
For never must Ulysses view this shore;
Never! the lov'd Ulysses is no more!

What words, the matron cries, have reach'd my ears?
Doubt we his presence; when he now appears?
Then hear conviction: ere the fatal day
That forc'd Ulysses o'er the wa'try way.
A boar fierce-rushing in the sylvan war
Plow'd half his thigh; I saw, I saw the fear,
And wild with transport had reveal'd the wound;
But ere I spoke, he rose, and check'd the sound.
Then, daughter, haste away! and if a lie
Flow from this tongue, then let thy servant die!

To whom with dubious joy the queen replies:
Wise is thy soul, but errors seize the wife;
The works of gods what mortal can survey?
Who knows their motives? who shall trace their way?
But learn we instant how the suitors trod.
The paths of death, by man or by a god.

Thus speaks the queen, and no reply attends,
But with alternate joy and fear descends;
At ev'ry step debates, her lord to prove!
Or rushing to his arms, confess her love!

Then gliding through the marble valves in state,
Oppos'd, before the shining fire she sat:
The monarch, by a column high enthron'd,
His eye withdrew, and fix'd it on the ground;
Curious to hear his queen the silence break:
Amaz'd she sat, and impotent to speak;
O'er all the man her eyes she rolls in vain,
Now hopes, now fears, now knows, then doubts again.
At length Telemachus:——Oh who can find
A woman like Penelope unkind!

Why thus in silence? why with winning charms
Thus flow to fly with rapture to his arms?
Stubborn the breast that with no transport glows,
When twice ten years are past of mighty woes:
To softness lost, to spousal love unknown,
The gods have form'd that rigid heart of stone!
O my Telemachus! the queen rejoind,
Distraughting fears confound my lab'ring mind;
Pow'rless to speak, I scarce uplift my eyes,
Nor dare to question: doubts on doubts arise.
O deign he, if Ulysses, to remove
These boding thoughts, and what he is, to prove!

Plead'd with her virtuous fears, the king replies:
Indulge, my son, the cautions of the wise;
Time shall the truth to sure remembrance bring:
This garb of poverty belies the king;
No more.—This day our deepest care requires,
Cautious to act what thought mature inspires.
If one man's blood, though mean, distain our hands,
The homicide retreats to foreign lands;
By us, in heaps th' illustrious peerage falls,
Th' important deed our whole attention calls.

Be that thy care, Telemachus replies,
The world conspires to speak Ulysses wise;
For wisdom all is thine! lo I obey,
And dauntless follow where you lead the way;
Nor shalt thou in the day of danger find
Thy coward son degenerate lag behind.

Then instant to the bath, the monarch cries,
Bid the gay youth and sprightly virgins rise,
Thence all descend in pomp and proud array,
And bid the dome refund the mirthful lay;
While the sweet lyrift airs of rapture sings,
And forms the dance responsive to the strings.
That hence th' eluded passengers may say,
Lo! the queen weds! we hear the spousal lay!
The suitors' death unknown, till we remove
Far from the court, and act inspir'd by Jove.

Thus spoke the king: Th' observant train obey,
At once they bathe, and dress in proud array;
The lyrist strikes the string; gay youths advance,
And fair-zon'd damsels from the sprightly dance.
The voice, attun'd to instrumental sounds,
Ascends the roof; the vaulted roof rebounds;
Not unobserv'd: the Greeks cluded say,
Lo! the queen weds! we hear the spousal lay!
Inconstant! to admit the bridal hour.
Thus they—but nobly chaste she weds no more.

Mean-while the weary'd king the bath ascends;
With faithful cares Eurynome attends,
O'er ev'ry limb a show'r of fragrance sheds:
Then drest in pomp, magnificent he treads.
The warrior goddess gives his form to shine
With majestly enlarg'd, and grace divine.
Back from his brows in wavy ringlets fly
His thick large locks, of Hyacinthine dye.
As by some artist to whom Vulcan gives
His hea'ny skill, a breathing image lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wond'rous mold,
And the pale silver glows with fusile gold:
So Pallas his heroic form improves
With bloom divine, and like a god he moves;
More high he treads; and issuing forth in state,
Radiant before his gazing comfort state.
And oh, my queen! he cries; what pow'r above Has steel'd that heart, averse to spousal love!
Canst thou, Penelope, when heav'n restores
Thy lost Ulysses to his native shores,
Canst thou, oh cruel! unconcern'd survey
Thy lost Ulysses, on this signal day?
Haste, Euryclea, and dispatch'sfspread
For me, and me alone; th' imperial bed:
My weary nature craves the balm of rest:
But heav'n with adamant has arm'd her breast:
Ah no! she cries; a tender heart I bear,
A foe to pride; no adamant is there:
And now, ev'n now it melts! for sure I see
Once more Ulysses, my belov'd, in thee!
Fix'd in my soul, as when he fail'd to Troy,
His image dwells: then haste the bed of joy!
Haste, from the bridal bow'r the bed translate,
Fram'd by his hand, and be it drest in state!

Thus speaks the queen, still dubious with disguise;
Touch'd at her word, the king with warmth replies,
Alas for this! what mortal strength can move
Th' enormous burden; who but heav'n above!
It mocks the weak attempts of human hands;
But the whole earth must move, if heav'n commands.
Then hear sure evidence, while we display
Words seal'd with sacred truth, and truth obey:
This hand the wonder fram'd; an olive spread
Full in the court its ever-verdant head.
Vanish as some mighty column's bulk on high
The huge trunk rove, and heav'n'd into the sky;
Around the tree I rais'd a nuptial bow'r,
And roof'd defensive of the storm and show'r;
The spacious vault, with art inwrought, conjoins;
And the fair dome with polish'd marble shines.
I lopp'd the branchy head; aloft in twain
Sever'd the bole, and smooth'd the shining grain;
Then polts, capacious of the frame, I raise,
And bore it regular from space to space;
Athwart the frame at equal distance lay
Thongs of tough hides, that boast a purple dye;
Then polishing the whole, the finish'd mold
With silver shone, with elephant, and gold.
But if o'erturn'd by rude, ungovern'd hands,
Or still inviolate the olive stands,
'Tis thine, oh queen, to say: and now impart;
If fears remain, or doubts distract thy heart.

While yet he spoke, her power's of life decay,
She flickers, trembles, falls, and faints away.
At length recover'd to his arms she flew,
And strain'd him close, as to his breast she grew;
The tears pour'd down amain; and, Oh, she cries,
Let not against thy spouse thine anger rife!
O ver'd in ev'ry turn of human art,
Forgive the weakness of a woman's heart!
The righteous Pow'rs that mortal lots dispise,
Decree us to sustain a length of woes;
And from the flow'r of life, the bliss deny
To bloom together, fade away, and die.
O let me, let me not thine anger move,
That I forbore, thus, thus, to speak my love;
Thus in fond kissons, while the transport warms,
Pour out my soul, and die within thy arms!
I dreaded fraud! men, faithless men, betray
Our easy faith, and make the sex their prey:
Against the fondness of my heart I strove,
'Twas caution, oh my lord! not want of love.
Like me had Helen fear'd, with wanton charms:
Ere the fair mischief set two worlds in arms,
Ere Greece rose dreadful in th' avenging day,
Thus had she fear'd, she had not gone astray.
But heav'n, averse to Greece, in wrath decreed
That she should wander, and that Greece should bleed:
Blind to the ills that from injustice flow,
She colour'd all our wretched lives with woe.
But why these forrows, when my lord arrives?
I yield, I yield! my own Ulysses lives!
The secrets of the bridal bed are known
To thee, to me, to Aëtoris alone,
(My father's present in the spousal hour,
The sole attendant on our genial bow'r.)
Since what no eye has seen, thy tongue reveal'd,
Hard and distrustful as I am, I yield.
Touch'd to the soul, the king with rapture hears,
Hangs round her neck, and speaks his joy in tears.
As to the shipwreck'd mariner, the shores,
Delightful rise, when angry Neptune roars,
Then, when the forge in thunder mounts the sky,
And gulph'd in crowds at once the sailors die;
If one more happy, while the tempest raves,
Out lives the tumult of conflicting waves,
All pale, with ooze deform'd, he views the strand, And plunging forth with transport grasps the land.
The ravish'd queen with equal rapture glows,
Clasps her lov'd lord, and to his bosom grows.
Nor had they ended till the morning ray:
But Pallas backward held the rising day,
The wheels of night retarding, to detain
The gay Aurora in the wavy main:
Whose flaming steeds, emerging through the night,
Beam o'er the eastern hills with streaming light.

At length Ulysses with a sigh replies:
Yet fate, yet cruel fate repose denies;
A labour long, and hard, remains behind;
By heav'n above, by hell beneath enjoin'd:
For, to Tiresias through th' eternal gates
Of hell I trode, to learn my future fates.

But end we here—the night demands repose,
Be deck'd the couch! and peace a-while my woes!
To whom the queen: Thy word we shall obey,
And deck the couch; far hence be woes away!
Since the just gods who tread the stately plains
Restore thee safe, since my Ulysses reigns.
But what those perils heav'n decrees, impart;
Knowledge may grieve, but fear distracts the heart.

To this the king: Ah why must I disclose
A dreadful story of approaching woes?
Why in this hour of transport wound thy ears,
When thou must learn what I must speak with tears?
Heav'n, by the Theban ghost, thy spouse decrees,
Torn from thy arms, to fail a length of seas;
From realm to realm a nation to explore
Who ne'er knew salt, or heard the billows roar,
Nor saw gay vessel stem the surgy plain,
A painted wonder, flying on the main.
An oar my hand must bear; a shepherd eyes
The unknown instrument with strange surprise,
And calls a corn-van: this upon the plain
I fix, and hail the monarch of the main;
Then bathe his altars with the mingled gore
Of victims vow'd, a ram, a bull, a boar:
Then swift re-sailing to my native shores,
Due victims slay to all th' ethereal pow'rs.
Then heav'n decrees in peace to end my days,
And steal myself from life by slow decays;
Unknown to pain in age resign my breath,
When late stern Neptune points the shaft of death;
To the dark grave retiring as to rest;
My people bless'd, by my people blest.

Such future scenes th' all-righteous pow'rs display,
By their dread seer †, and such my future day.
To whom thus firm of soul: If ripe for death,
And full of days, thou gently yield thy breath;
While heav'n a kind release from ills forehows,
Triumph, thou happy victor of thy woes!

But Eurycles, with dispatchful care,
And sage Eurynome, the couch prepare:
Instant they bid the blazing torch display
Around the dome an artificial day;
Then to repose her steps the matron bends,
And to the queen Eurynome descends;
A torch she bears to light with guiding fires
The royal pair; she guides them, and retires.
Then instant his fair spouse Ulysses led
To the chaste love-rites of the nuptial bed.

And now the blooming youths and sprightly fair
Cease the gay dance, and to their rest repair;
But in discourse the king and comfort lay,
While the soft hours stole unperceiv'd away;
Intent he hears Penelope disclose
A mournful story of domestic woes,
His servants insults, his invaded bed,
How his whole flocks and herds exhausted bled,
His gen'rous wines dishonour'd shed in vain,
And the wild riots of the suitor-train.

† Tiretias.
The king alternate a dire tale relates,
Of wars, of triumphs, and disastrous fates.
All he unfolds: his hilt'ning spouse turns pale
With pleasing horror at the dreadful tale,
Sleepless devours each word; and hears, how slain
Cicons on Cicons swell th' enfangun'd plain;
How to the land of Lote unblest he fails;
And images the rills and flow'ry vales!
How, dash'd like dogs, his friends the Cyclops tore,
(Not unrevenge'd) and quaff'd the spousing gore,
How the loud storms in prison bound, he fails
From friendly Aeolus with prosp'rous gales;
Yet fate withstands! a sudden tempest roars,
And whisks him groaning from his native shores:
How on the barb'rous Laetrigonian coast,
By savage hands his fleet and friends he lost;
How scarce himself surviv'd: he paints the bow'r,
The spells of Circe, and her magic pow'r;
His dreadful journey to the realms beneath,
To seek Tiresias in the vales of death;
How in the doleful mansions he survey'd
His royal mother, pale Anticlea's shade,
And friends in battle slain, heroic ghosts!
Then how unarm'd he past the Siren-coasts,
The justling rocks, where fierce Charybdis raves,
And howling Scylla whirs her thund'rous waves,
The cave of death! How his companions play
The oxen sacred to the god of day,
Till Jove in wrath the ratt'ling tempest guides,
And whelms th' offenders in the roaring tides:
How struggling through the surge, he reach'd the shores
Of fair Ogygia, and Calypso's bow'r;
Where the gay blooming nymph constrain'd his stay,
With sweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
And promis'd, vainly promis'd, to bestow
Immortal life exempt from age and woe:
How, sav'd from storms, Phaegcia's coast he trode
By great Alcinous honour'd as a god,
Who gave him last his country to behold,  
With change of raiment, bras, and heaps of gold.  
He ended, sinking into sleep, and shares  
A sweet forgetfulness of all his cares.  
Soon as soft slumber eas'd the toils of day,  
Minerva rushes through th' aereal way,  
And bids Aurora with her golden wheels  
Flame from the ocean o'er the eastern hills:  
Uprose Ulysses from the genial bed;  
And thus with thought mature the monarch said:  
My queen, my consort! through a length of years,  
We drank the cup of sorrow mix'd with tears,  
Thou, for thy lord: while me th' immortal Pow'rs  
Detain'd reluctant from my native shores.  
Now, blest again by heav'n, the queen display,  
And rule our palace with an equal sway:  
Be it my care, by loans, or martial toils,  
To throng my empty'd folds with gifts or spoils.  
But now I haste to bless Laertes' eyes  
With light of his Ulysses ere he dies;  
The good old man, to awaiting woes a prey,  
Weeps a sad life in solitude away.  
But hear, though wise! this morning shall unfold  
The deathful scene, on heroes, heroes roll'd:  
Thou with thy maids within the palace stay,  
From all the scene of tumult far away!  
He spoke, and, sheath'd in arms, incessant flies  
To wake his son, and bid his friends arise:  
To arms! aloud he cries: his friends obey,  
With glitt'ring arms their manly limbs array,  
And pass the city-gate; Ulysses leads the way.  
Now flames the rosy dawn, but Pallas shrouds  
The latent warriors in a veil of clouds.
THE

ODYSSEY

OF

HOMER

BOOK XXIV.
The souls of the suitors are conducted by Mercury to the infernal shades. Ulysses in the country goes to the retirement of his father Laertes; he finds him busied in his garden all alone: the manner of his discovery to him is beautifully described. They return together to his lodge, and the king is acknowledged by Dolius and the servants. The Ithacensians, led by Eupithes, the father of Antinous, rise against Ulysses, who gives them battle, in which Eupithes is killed by Laertes: and the goddess Pallas makes a lasting peace between Ulysses and his subjects, which concludes the Odyssey.
THE
ODYSSEY.
BOOK XXIV.

C Y L E N I U S now to Pluto's dreary reign,
Conveys the dead, a lamentable train!
The golden wand, that causes sleep to fly,
Or in soft slumber seals the wakeful eye,
That drives the ghosts to realms of night or day,
Points out the long, uncomfortable way.
Trembling the spectres glide, and plaintive vent
Thin, hollow screams, along the deep descent.
As in a cavern—of some rifted den,
Where flock nocturnal bats, and birds obscene;
Clust'rd they hang, till at some sudden shock,
They move, and murmurs run through all the rock:
So cow'ring fled the sable heaps of ghosts,
And such a scream fill'd all the dismal coasts.
And now they reach'd the earth's remotest ends,
And now the gates where ev'ning Sol descends,
And Leuca's rock, and Ocean's utmost streams,
And now pervade the dusky land of dreams;
And rest at last, where souls unbodied dwell
In ever-flow'ring meads of asphodel.
The empty forms of men inhabit there,
Impassive semblance, images of air!
Nought else are all that thin'd on earth before;
Ajax, and great Achilleus, are no more!
Yet still a master ghost, the rest he saw'd,
The rest ador'd him, tow'ring as he trod;
Still at his side is Nestor's son survey'd,
And lovd' Patrolus still attends his shade.

New as they were to that infernal shore,
The suitors stopp'd, and gaz'd the hero o'er.
When, moving slow, the regal form they view'd
Of great Atrides: him in pomp pursu'd.
And solemn sadness through the gloom of hell,
The train of those who by Ægisthus fell.
O mighty chief! (Pelides thus began,)
Honour'd by Jove above the lot of man!
King of an hundred kings! to whom resign'd
The strongest, bravest, greatest of mankind!
Coun'st thou the first; to view this dreary state?
And was the noblest the first mark of fate?
Condemn'd to pay the great arrear so soon,
The lot which all lament; and none can shun;
Oh! better hadst thou sunk in Trojan ground,
With all thy full-blown honours cover'd round!
Then grateful Greece with streaming eyes might raise.

Historic marbles to record thy praise:
Thy praise eternal on the faithful stone;
Had with transmissive glories grac'd thy Son;
But heavier fates were destin'd to attend:
What man is happy 'till he knows his end?

O son of Peleus! greater than mankind!
(Thus Agamemnon's kingly shade rejoin'd)
Thrice happy thou! to press the martial plain
Midst heaps of heroes in thy quarrel slain:
In clouds of smoke, rais'd by the noble fray.
Great, and terrific ev'n in death you lay,
And deluges of blood flow'd round you ev'ry way.
Nor ceas'd the strife, till Jove himself oppos'd,
And all in tempests the dire ev'ning clos'd.
Then to the fleet we bore thy honour'd load,
And decent on the sun'r al bed beflow'd.

Then unguents sweet, and tepid streams we shed;
Tears flow'd from ev'ry eye, and o'er the dead
Each clipt the curling honours of his head.
Struck at the news, thy azure mother came;
The sea-green sisters waited on the dame.
A voice of loud lament through all the main
Was heard, and terror seiz'd the Grecian train:
Back to the ship the frighted host had fled;
But Nestor spoke, they listen'd, and obey'd:
(From old-experience Nestor's counsel springs,
And long vicissitudes of human things)
"Forbear your flight: fair Thetis from the main
To mourn Achilles leads her azure train."
Around thee stand the daughters of the deep,
Robe thee in heavenly veils, and round thee weep;
Round thee, the Muses, with alternate strain,
In ever-consecrating verse, complain.
Each warlike Greek the moving music hears,
And iron-hearted heroes melt in tears.
Till seventeen nights and seventeen days return'd,
All that was mortal or immortal mourn'd.
To flames we gave thee, the succeeding day,
And fatted sheep and fable oxen lay;
With oils and honey blaze th' augmented fires,
And like a god adorn'd, thy earthly part expires.
Unnumber'd warriors round the burning pyle
Urge the fleet courier's or the racer's toil;
Thick clouds of dust o'er all the circle rise,
And the mixt clamour thunders in the skies.
Soon as absorpt in all-embracing flame
Sunk what was mortal of thy mighty name,
We then collect thy snowy bones, and place
With wines and unguents in a golden vase.
(The vase to Thetis' Bacchus gave of old,
And Vulcan's art enrich'd the sculptur'd gold)
There wothy relics: great Achilles! blend
With dear Patroclus, thy departed friend:
In the same urn a sep'rate space contains
Thy next belov'd, Antilochus' remains.
Now all the sons of warlike Greece surround
Thy destin'd tomb, and cast a mighty mound:
High on the shore the growing hill we raise,
That wide th' extended Hellepont surveys;
Where all, from age to age who pass the coast,
May point Achilles' tomb, and hail the mighty ghost.
Thetis herself to all our peers proclaims:
Heroic prizes and exequial games.
The gods assented; and around thee lay
Rich spoils and gifts that blaz'd against the day.

Oft have I seen, with solemn fun'real games,
Heroes and kings committed to the flames;
But strength of youth, or valour of the brave
With nobler contest ne'er renown'd a grave.
Such were the games by azure Thetis giv'n;
And such thy honours, oh below'd of heav'n!
Dear to mankind thy fame survives, nor fades.
Its bloom eternal in the Stygian shades.

But what to me avail my honours gone,
Successful toils, and battles bravely won?
Doom'd by stern Jove at home to end my life,
By curt Egythus, and a faithless wife!

Thus they; while Hermes o'er the dreary plain.
Led the sad numbers by Ulysses slain.

On each majestic form they cast a view,
And tim'rous pass'd, and awfully withdrew.
But Agamemnon, through the gloomy shade,
His antient host Amphimedon survey'd:
Son of Melanthus! (he began,) Oh say!
What cause compell'd so many, and so gay,
To tread the downward, melancholy way?
Say, could one city yield a troop so fair?
Were all these partners of one native air?
Or did the rage of stormy Neptune sweep
Your lives at once, and whelm beneath the deep?
Did nightly thieves, or pyrates cruel bands,
Drench with your blood your pillag'd country's sands?
Or well-defending some beleaguer'd wall,
Say, for the public did ye greatly fall?
Inform thy guest; for such I was of yore,
When our triumphant navies touch’d your shore;
For’d a long month the wintry seas to bear,
To move the great Ulysses to the war.

O king of men! I faithful shall relate
(Reply’d Amphimedon) our hapless fate.
Ulysses absent, our ambitious aim
With rival loves pursu’d his royal dame;
Her coy reserve, and prudence mixt with pride,
Our common suit nor granted, nor deny’d;
But close with inward hate our deaths design’d;
Vers’d in all arts of wily womankind.
Her hand, laborious in delusion, spread
A spacious loom, and mix’d the various thread:
Yea peers, she cry’d, who press to gain my heart
Where-dead Ulysses claims no more a part,
Yet a short space your rival suit suspend,
Till this funeral web my labours end:
Cease, till to good Laertes I bequeath
A task of grief, his ornaments of death;
Left, when the fates his royal ashes claim,
The Grecian matrons taint my spotless fame;
Should he, long honour’d with supreme command,
Want the last duties of a daughter’s hand.

The fiction pleas’d: our generous train complies,
Nor fraud mistrusts in virtue’s fair disguise.
The work she ply’d; but studious of delay,
Each following night revers’d the toils of day.
Unheard, unseen, three years her arts prevail;
The fourth, her maid reveal’d th’ amazing tale,
And how’d, as unperceiv’d we took our stand,
The backward labours of her faithless hand.
Forc’d, she completes it; and before us lay
The mingled web, whose gold and silver ray
Display’d the radiance of the night and day.
Just as she finish’d her illustrious toil,
Ill fortune led Ulysses to our ill.
Far in a lonely nook, beside the sea,
At an old swineherd’s rural lodge he lay:
Thither his son from sandy Pyle repairs,
And speedy lands, and secretly confers.
They plan our future ruin, and retort
Confed’rate, to the city and the court.
First came the son; the father next succeeds,
Clad like a beggar, whom Eumaeus leads;
Propt on a staff, deform’d with age and care,
And hung with rags, that flutter’d in the air.
Who could Ulysses in that form behold?
Scorn’d by the young, forgotten by the old,
Ill-us’d by all! to ev’ry wrong resign’d,
Patient he suffer’d with a constant mind.
But when, arising in his wrath t’ obey
The will of Jove, he gave the vengeance way;
The scatter’d arms that hung around the dome
Careful he treasur’d in a private room:
Then, to her suitors bade his queen propose
The archer’s strife; the source of future woes,
And omen of our death! In vain we drew
The twanging string, and try’d the stubborn yew:
To none it yields but great Ulysses’ hands;
In vain we threat; Telemachus commands:
The bow he snatch’d, and in an instant bent;
Through ev’ry ring the victor arrows went.
Fierce on the threshold then in arms he stood;
Pour’d forth the darts, that thirsted for our blood,
And frown’d before us, dreadful as a god!
First bleeds Antinous: thick the shafts resound;
And heaps on heaps the wretches flrow the ground;
This way, and that, we turn, we fly, we fall;
Some god assiﬂest, and unmann’d us all:
Ignoble cries precede the dying groans;
And batter’d brains and blood defray the stones.
Thus, great Atrides! thus Ulysses drove
The shades thou seest, from yon fair realms above.
Our mangled bodies now deform'd with gore,
Cold and neglected, spread the marble floor.
No friend to bathe our wounds! or tears to shed
O'er the pale corpse! the honours of the dead.
Oh blest Ulysses! (thus the king exprest
His sudden rapture) in thy comfort blest!
Not more thy wisdom, than her virtue, shin'd;
Not more thy patience, than her constant mind.
Icarus' daughter, glory of the past,
And model to the future age, shall last:
The gods, to honour her fair fame, shall raise
(Their great reward) a poet in her praise.
Not such, oh Tyndarus! thy daughter's deed,
By whose dire hand her king and husband bled:
Her shall the muse to infamy prolong,
Example dread! and theme of tragic song!
The gen'ral sex shall suffer in her shame,
And ev'n the best that bears a woman's name.
Thus in the regions of eternal shade
Conferr'd the mournful phantomes of the dead;
While from the town, Ulysses, and his band,
Past to Laertes' cultivated land.
The ground himself had purchas'd with his pain,
And labour made the rugged soil a plain:
There stood his mansion of the rural sort,
With useful buildings round the lowly court:
Where the few servants that divide his care
Took their laborious rest, and homely fare;
And one Sicilian matron, old and sage,
With constant duty tends his drooping age.
Here now arriving, to his rustic band
And martial son Ulysses gave command:
Enter the house, and of the briskly swine
Select the largest to the pow'r's divine.
Alone, and unattended, let me try
If yet I share the old man's memory;
If those dim eyes can yet Ulysses know,
(Their light and dearest object long ago)
Now chang'd with time, with absence, and with woe!
Then to his train he gives his spear and shield;
The house they enter, and he seeks the field;
Through rows of shade with various fruitage crown'd,
And labour'd scenes of richest verdure round.

Nor aged Diomede, nor his sons were there,
Nor servants, absent on another care;
To search the woods for sets of flow'ry thorn,
Their orchard-bounds to strengthen and adorn.

But all alone the hoary king he found;
His habit coarse; but warmly wrap't around;
His head, that bow'd with many a pensive care,
Fend'd with a double cap of goat-skin hair:
His bulkins old, in former service worn,
But well repaiz'd; and gloves against the thorn.
In this array the kingly gardner sowed,
And clear'd a plant, encumber'd with its wood.

Beneath a neigb'ring tree, the chief divine
Gaze'd o'er his fire, retracing ev'ry line,
The ruins of himself! now worn away
With age, yet still majestic in decay!
Sudden his eyes releas'd their war'ry store;
The much-enduring man could bear no more;
Doubtful he stood, if instant to embrace
His aged limbs, to kiss his rev'rend face,
With eager transport to disclose the whole,
And pour at once the torrent of his soul.
Not so: his judgment takes the winding way
Of question; distant, and of soft essay.
More gentle methods on weak age employs,
And moves the sorrows to enhance the joys.
Then to his fire with beating heart he moves,
And with a tender pleanantry reproves;
Who digging round the plant still hangs his head,
Nor aught remits the work, while thus he said:

Great is thy skill, oh father! great thy toil;
Thy careful hand is stamp'd on all the soil;
Thy squadron'd vineyards well thy art declare,
The olive grove, blue fig, and pendent pear;
And not on a empty spot escapes thy case.
Book XXIV. HOMER'S ODYSSAY.

On ev'ry plant and tree thy cares are shown,
Nothing neglected, but thyself alone.
Forgive me, father, if this fault I blame;
Age so advance'd may some indulgence claim.
Not for thy sloth I deem thy lord unkind,
Nor speaks thy form a meen or servile mind.
I read a monarch in that princely air,
The same thy aspect, if the same thy care;
Soft sleep, fair garments, and the joys of-wing.
These are the rights of age, and should be thine.
Who then thy master, why, and whose the land?
So dress'd and manag'd by thy skilful hand?
But chief, oh tell me! (what I question more)
Is this the fair-fam'd Ithacaan soil?
For so reported the first man I view'd,
(Some sadly island, of manners rude)
Nor farther conference wouch'd I to stay;
Heedless he whistled, and pursu'd his way.
But thou, whom years have taught to understand,
Man's voice, and answer my demand:
A friend I seek, a wise one and a brave,
Say, lives he yet, or mouldors in the grave?
Time was (my fortunes then were at the best)
When at my home I lade'd this foreign guest;
He said, from Ithaca's fair side he came,
And old Laertes was his father's name.
To him whatever to a guest is owed,
I paid, and hospitable gifts bellow'd;
To him few'nt talents of pure ore I told.
Twelve cloaks, twelve rails, twelve tunics sift
With a bowl that rich with polished silver flames,
And, skil'd in female works, four lovely names.
At this the father, with a father's tears,
(His venerable eyes bedim'd with tears:
This is the land; but ah! thy gifts are lost,
For godless men, and rude, possess the coast:
Sunk is the glory of this once-fam'd shore!
Thy antient friend, oh stranger, is no more!

P 2
Full recompence thy bounty else had born;
For ev'ry good-man yields a just return:
So civil rights demand; and who begins
The track of friendship, not pursuing, sins.
But tell me, stranger, be the truth confessed,
What years have circled since thou saw'st that guest?
That hapless guest, alas, for ever gone!
Wretch that he was! and that I am! my son!
If ever man to misery was born,
'Twas his to suffer, and 'tis mine to mourn!
Far from his friends, and from his native reign,
He lies a prey to monster's of the main,
Or savage beasts his mangled relics tear,
Of screaming vultures scatter'd through the air.
Nor could his mother fun'ral unguents shed,
Nor wail'd his father o'er-th' untimely dead,
Nor his sad coffin, on the mournful bier,
Seal'd his cold eyes, or drop'd a tender tear.
But tell me, who art? and what thy race,
Thy town, thy parents, and thy native place.
Or if a merchant in pursuit of gain,
What port receiv'd thy vessel from the main?
Or com'st thou single? or attend thy train?
Then thus the son: From Alybas I came,
My palace there; Eperitus my name.
Not vulgar born; from Aphidas the king
Of Polyphemus's royal line I spring.
Some adverse daemon from Sicia bore
Our wand'ring course, and drove us on your shore:
Far from the town, an unfrequented bay
Reliev'd our weary vessel from the sea.
Five years have circled since these eyes pursu'd
Ulysses parting through the sable flood;
Prosperous he sail'd, with dexter auguries,
And all the wing'd good omens of the skies.
Well hop'd we then to meet on this fair shore,
Whom heav'n, alas! decreed to meet no more.
Quick through the father's heart these accents ran;
Grief seiz'd at once, and wrap'd up all the man;
Deep from his soul he sigh'd, and sorrowing spread
A cloud of ashes on his hoary head.

Trembling with agonies of strong delight
Stood the great son, heart-wounded with the sight:
He ran, he seiz'd him with a fierce embrace,
With thousand kisses wander'd o'er his face:
I, I am he: oh, father! rise, behold

Thy son, with twenty winters now grown old;
Thy son; so long desired, so long detain'd,
Restor'd, and breathing in his native land:
These floods of sorrow, oh, my fire! restrain:
The vengeance is complete; the sinner train,
Stretch'd in our palace, by these hands by slain.

Amaz'd, Laertes: "Give some certain sign,
If such thou art, to manifest thee mine."

Lo here the wound, (he cries) receiv'd of yore,
The scar indented by the tusky bear,
When by thyself and by Anticlea sent,
To old Autolychus' realms I went.

Yet by another sign thy offspring know;
The few'ral trees you gave me long ago,
While, yet a child, these fields I lov'd to trace,
And trod thy footsteps with unequal pace:
To ev'ry plant in order as we came,
Well-pleas'd you told its nature, and its name,
Whate'er my childish fancy ask'd, below'd;

Twelve pear-trees bowing with their pendent load,
And ten, that red with blushing apples glow'd;
Fall fifty purple figs; and many a row
Of various vines that then began to blow,
A future vintage! when the Hours produce
Their latent buds; and Sol exalts the juice.

Smit with the signs which all his doubts explain,
His heart within him melts; his knees sustain
Their feeble weight no more; his arms alone
Support him, round the lov'd Ulysses thrown.
He faints, he sinks, with mighty joys opprest: Ulysses clasps him to his eager breast.
Soon as returning life regains its feat,
And his breath lengthens, and his pulses beat;
Yes, I believe, (he cries) almighty Jove!
Heav'n rules us yet, and gods there are above.
'Tis so—the suitors for their wrongs have paid—
But what shall guard us, if the town invade;
If, while the news through ev'ry city flies,
All Ithaca and Cephalenia rise?
To this Ulysses: As the gods shall please.
Be all the rest; and set thy soul at ease.
Haste to the cottage by this orchard side,
And take the banquet which our cares provide:
There wait thy faithful band of rural friends,
And there the young Telemachus attends.
Thus having said, they trac'd the garden o'er,
And stooping enter'd at the lowly door.
The swains and young Telemachus they found,
The vict'rm portion'd, and the goblet crown'd.
The hoary king his old Sicilian maid
Perfum'd and wash'd, and gorgeously array'd.
Pallas attending, gives his frame to shine
With awful port, and majesty divine;
His gazing son admires the god-like grace;
And air celestial dawning o'er his face:
What god, (be cry'd) my father's form improves?
How high he treads, and how enlar'd he moves!
Oh! would to all the deathless pow'rs on high,
Pallas and Jove, and him who gilds the sky!
(Reply'd the king, elated, with his praise)
My strength were still, as once in better days;
When the bold Cephalens, the leaguer form'd,
And proud Neritus trembled as I storm'd.
Such were I now, not absent from your deed.
When the last sun beheld the suitors bleed,
This arm had aided yours; this hand bestrown
Our floors with death, and push'd the slaughter on;
Nor had the fire been sep'rate from the son.
They commun’d thus; while homeward bent their way
The swains, fatigu’d with labours of the day; Dolius the first, the venerable man,
And next his sons, a long succeeding train,
For due reflection to the bow’r they came,
Call’d by the careful old Sicilian dame,
Who nurs’d the children, and now tends the fire; They see their lord, they gaze, and they admire.
On chairs and beds in order seated round,
They share the gladsome board; the roofs resound.
While thus Ulysses to his antient friend:
"Forbear your wonder, and the feast attend;"
The rites have waited long." The chief commands.
Their loves in vain; old Dolius spreads his hands,
Springs to his master with a warm embrace,
And fastens kisses on his hands and face:
Then thus broke out: Oh long, oh daily mourn’d!
Beyond our hopes, and to our wish return’d!
Conducted sure by heav’n! for heav’n alone
Could work this wonder: welcome to thy own!
And joys and happiness attend thy throne!
Who knows thy blest, thy wish’d return? oh say,
To the chaste Queen shall we the news convey?
Or hears she, and with blessings loads the day?
Dismiss that care, for to the royal bride
Already is it known (the king reply’d
And strait resume’d his seat;) while round him bows
Each faithful youth, and breathes out ardent vows:
Then all beneath their father take their place;
Rank’d by their ages, and the banquet grace.
Now flying fame the swift report had spread.
Through all the city, of the suitors dead.
In throngs they rise, and to the palace crowd;
Their sighs were many, and the tumult loud.
Weeping they bear the mangled heaps of slain,
Inhume the natives in their native plain,
The rest in ships are wasted o’er the main.
Then sad in council all the seniors sat;
Frequent and full, assembled to debate.
Amid the circle first Eupithes rose,
Big was his eye with tears, his heart with woes:
The bold Antinous was his age's pride,
The first who by Ulysses' arrow dy'd.
Down his wan cheek the trickling torrent ran,
As mixing words with sighs, he thus began:
Great deeds, oh friends! this wond'rous man has wrought,
And mighty blessings to his country brought:
With ships he parted, and a num'rous train;
Those, and their ships, he bury'd in the main.
Now he returns, and first essays his hand
In the best blood of all his native land.
Haste then, and ere to neigh'ring Pyle he flies,
Or sacred Elis, to procure supplies;
Arise (or ye for ever fall) arise!
Shame to this age, and all that shall succeed!
If unreveng'd your sons and brothers bleed.
Prove that we live, by vengeance on his head;
Or sink at once forgotten with the dead.
Here ceas'd he, but indignant tears let fall
Spoke when he ceas'd: dumb sorrow touch'd them all.
When from the palace to the wond'ring throng
Sage Medon came, and Phemius came along;
(Reftless and early sleep's soft bands they broke)
And Medon first th' assembled chiefs bespoke:
Hear me, ye peers and elders of the land,
Who deem this act the work of mortal hand;
As o'er the heaps of death Ulysses strode,
These eyes, these eyes behold a present god,
Who now before him, now beside him stood,
Fought as he fought, and mark'd his way with blood:
In vain old Mentor's form the god bely'd,
'Twas heav'n that struck, and heav'n was on his side.
A sudden horror all th' assembly shook,
When, slowly rising, Halitherses spoke,
Book XXIV. HOMER's ODYSSEY.

(Revd'rend and wife, whose comprehensive view At once the present and the future knew :) Me too ye fathers hear! from you proceed The ills ye mourn; your own the guilty deed. Ye gave your sons, your lawless sons, the rein, (Oft warn'd by Mentor and myself in vain,) An absent hero's bed they sought to soil. An absent hero's wealth they made their spoil: Immod'rate riot, and intemp'rate lust! Th' offence was great, the punishment was just. Weigh then my counsels in an equal scale, Nor rush to ruin. Justice will prevail. His mod'rate words some better minds persuade: They part, and join him; but the number stay'd. They storm, they shout, with hasty frenzy fir'd, And second all Eupithes' rage inspir'd. They caste their limbs in brass; to arms they run; The broad effulgence blazes in the sun. Before the city, and in ample plain, They meet: Eupithes heads the frantic train. Fierce for his son, he breathes his threats in air; Fate hears them not, and death attends him there.

This past on earth, while in the realms above Minerva thus to cloud-compelling Jove: May I presume to search thy secret soul? Oh Pow'r supreme, oh ruler of the whole! Say, hast thou doom'd to this divided fate Or peaceful amity, or stern debate? Declare thy purpose; for thy will is fate.

Is not thy thought my own? (the god replies Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted skies) Had not long since thy knowing soul decreed, The chief's return should make the guilty bleed? 'Tis done, and at thy will the fates succeed. Yet hear the issue; since Ulysses' hand Has slain the suitors, heav'n shall bless the land. None now the kindred of th' unjust shall own; Forgot the slaughter'd brother, and the Son.
Each future day increase of wealth shall bring,
And o'er the past, oblivion stretch her wing:
Long shall Ulysses in his empire rest,
His people blessing, by his people blest.
Let all be peace.—He said, and gave the nod
That binds the fates; the sanction of the god:
And prompt to execute th' eternal will,
Descended Pallas from th' Olympian hill.

Now sat Ulysses at the rural feast,
The rage of hunger and of thirst repress:
To watch the foe a trusty spy he sent:
A son of Dolius on the message went,
Stood in the way, and at a glance beheld
The foe approach'd, embattled on the field.
With backward step he hastens to the bow'r,
And tells the news. They arm with all their pow'r.
Four friends alone Ulysses' cause embrace,
And six were all the sons of Dolius' race;
Old Dolius too his ruffled arms put on:
And, still more old, in arms Laertes shone.
Trembling with warmth, the hoary heroes stand,
And brassen panoply invests the band.
The op'ning gates at once their war display:
Fierce they rush forth: Ulysses leads the way.
That moments joins them with celestial aid,
In Mentor's form, the Jove-descended maid
The suff'ring hero felt his patient break
Swell with new joy, and thus his son address'd:

Behold, Telemachus! (nor fear the fight)
The brave embattled; the grim front of fight!
The valiant with the valiant must contend:
Shame not the line whence glorious you descend.
Wide o'er the world their martial fame was spread;
Regard thyself, the living, and the dead.
Thy eyes, great father! on this battle cast,
Shall learn from me Penelope was chaste.

So spoke Telemachus: the gallant boy.
Good old Laertes heard with panting joy;
And, Blest! thrice blest this happy day! he cries,
The day that shows me, ere I close my eyes,
A son and grandson of th' Arceian name
Strive for fair virtue, and contest for fame!

Then thus Minerva in Laertes' ear:
Son of Arceius, rev'rend warrior, hear!
Jove and Jove's daughter first implore in pray'r,
Then whirling high, discharge thy lance in air.

She said, infusing courage with the word.

Jove and Jove's daughter then the chief implor'd,
And whirling high, dismiss'd the lance in air.

Full at Eupithes drove the deathful spear:
The brass-check'd helmet opens to the wound;
He falls, earth thunders, and his arms resound.

Before the father and the conqu'ring son
Heaps rush on heaps; they fight, they drop, they run.
Now by the sword and now the jav'lin fall
The rebel race, and death had swallow'd all:
But from on high the blue-ey'd virgin cry'd;
Her awful voice detain'd the headlong tide:
"Forbear, ye nations! your mad hands forbear
"From mutual slaughter: Peace descends to spare."

Fear shook the nations. At the voice divine
They drop their jav'lin's, and their rage resign.
All scatter'd round their glitt'ring weapons ly;
Some fall to earth, and some confus'dly fly.
With dreadful shouts Ulysses pour'd along,
Swift as an eagle, as an eagle strong.
But Jove's red arm the burning thunder aims;
Before Minerva shot the livid flames;
Blazing they fell, and at her feet expir'd:
Then stoop the goddes', trembled, and retir'd.

Descended from the gods! Ulysses, cease;
Offend not Jove: obey, and give the peace.

So Pallas spoke. The mandate from above
The king obey'd. The virgin-seed of Jove,
In Mentor's form, confirm'd the full accord,
"And willing nations knew their lawful lord."

T H E   E N D.