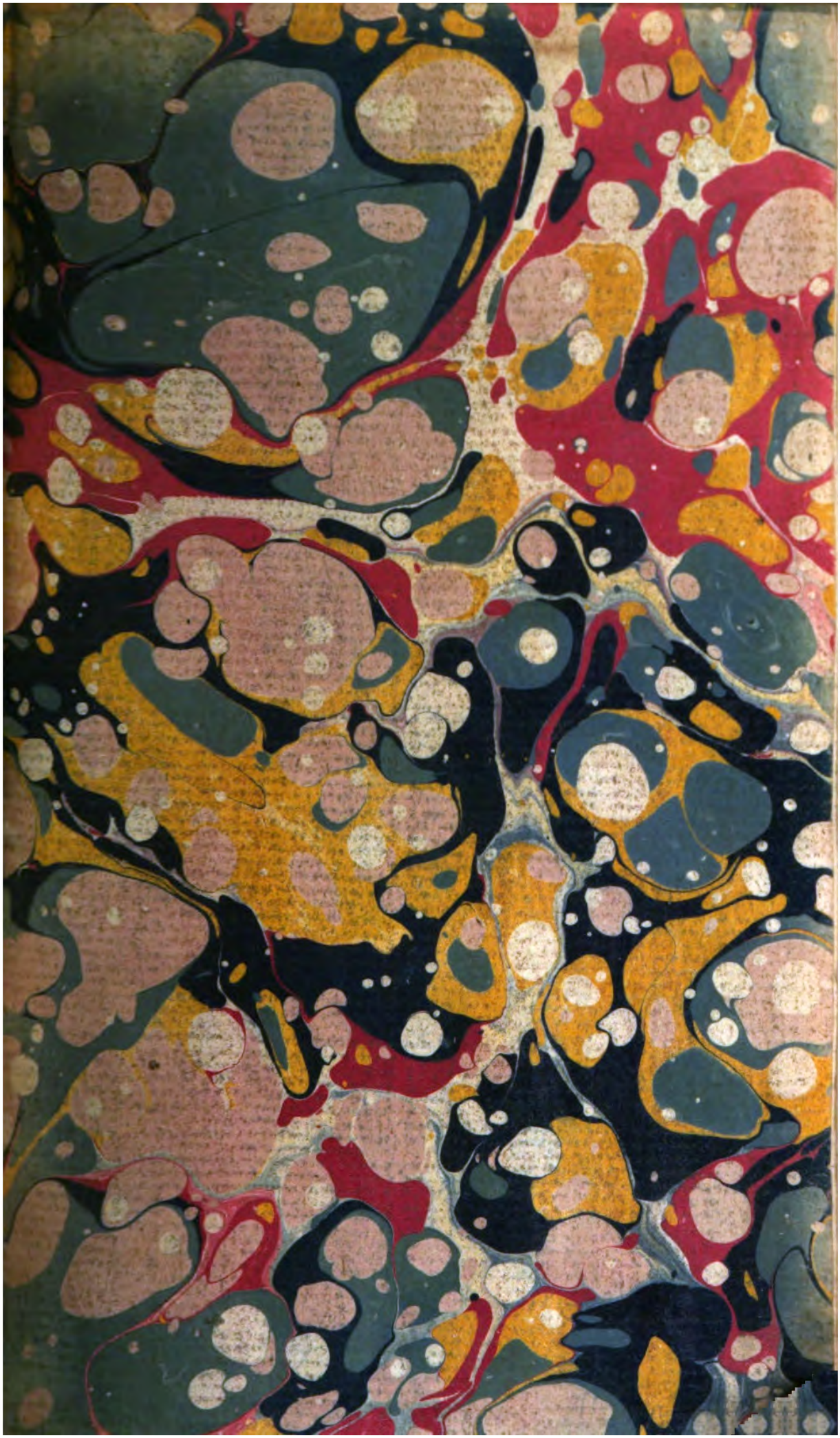

THE WORKS OF THE ENGLISH POETS.

WITH

PREFACES,

BIOGRAPHICAL AND CRITICAL,

BY SAMUEL JOHNSON.

VOLUME THE THIRTY-SEVENTH.

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M DCC LXXIX.

P O P E'S

H O M E R.

THE ODYSSEY.

VOLUME I.

A

GENERAL VIEW

OF

THE EPICK POEM, AND OF THE ILIAD AND ODYSSEY:

EXTRACTED FROM BOSSU.

SECT. I.

OF THE NATURE OF EPICK POETRY.

THE fables of poets were originally employed in repreſenting the Divine Nature, according to the notion then conceived of it. This ſublime ſubject occaſioned the firſt poets to be called Divines, and Poetry the Language of the Gods. They divided the Divine Attributes into ſo many perſons; becauſe the infirmity of a human mind cannot ſufficiently conceive, or explain, ſo much power and action in a ſimplicity ſo great and indiviſible as that of God. And, perhaps, they were alſo jealous of the advantages they reaped from ſuch excellent and exalted learning, and of which they thought the vulgar part of mankind was not worthy.

They could not deſcribe the operations of this Almighty Cauſe, without ſpeaking at the ſame time of its effects: ſo that to Divinity, they added Phyſiology; and treated of both, without quitting the umbrages of their allegorical expreſſions.

But man being the chief and the moſt noble of all that God produced, and nothing being ſo proper, or more uſeful to poets than this ſubject; they added it to the former, and treated of the doctrine of morality after the ſame manner as they did that of divinity and philoſophy; and from morality thus treated, is formed that kind of poem and fable which we call Epick.

The poets did the ſame in morality, that the divines had done in divinity. But that infinite variety of the actions and operations of the Divine Nature (to which our underſtanding bears ſo ſmall a proportion) did, as it were, force them upon dividing the ſingle idea of the Only One God into ſeveral perſons, under the different names of Jupiter, Juno, Neptune, and the reſt.

And on the other hand, the nature of moral philoſophy being ſuch, as never to treat of things in particular, but in general; the epick poets were obliged to unite in one ſingle idea, in one and the ſame perſon, and in an action which appeared ſingular, all that looked like it in different perſons and in various actions; which might be thus contained as ſo many ſpecies under their genus.

The preſence of the Deity, and the care ſuch an auguſt cauſe is to be ſuppoſed to take about any action, obliges the poet to repreſent this action as great, important, and managed by kings and princes. It obliges him likewiſe to think and ſpeak in an elevated way above the vulgar, and in a ſtyle that may in ſome ſort keep up the character of the divine perſons he introduces. To this end ſerve the poetical and figurative expreſſion, and the majeſty of the heroick verſe.

But

But all this, being divine and ſurprizing, may quite ruin all probability; therefore the poet ſhould take a particular care as to that point, ſince his chief aim is to inſtruct, and without probability any action is leſs likely to perſuade.

Laſtly, ſince precepts ought to be conciſe, to be the more eaſily conceived, and leſs oppreſs the memory; and ſince nothing can be more effectual to this end than propoſing one ſingle idea, and collecting all things ſo well together, as to be preſent to our minds all at once; therefore the poets have reduced all to one ſingle action, under one and the ſame deſign, and in a body whoſe members and parts ſhould be homogeneous.

What we have obſerved of the nature of the Epick Poem, gives us a juſt idea of it, and we may define it thus:

"The Epick Poem is a diſcourſe invented by art, "to form the manners, by ſuch inſtructions as are "diſguiſed under the allegories of ſome one important "action, which is related in verſe, after a probable, "diverting, and ſurprizing manner."

SECT. II.

THE FABLE OF THE ILIAD.

IN every deſign which a man deliberately undertakes, the end he propoſes is the firſt thing in his mind, and that by which he governs the whole work, and all its parts: thus, ſince the end of the Epick

Poem is to regulate the manners, it is with this firſt view the poet ought to begin.

But there is a great difference between the philoſophical and the poetical doctrine of Manners. The ſchoolmen content themſelves with treating of virtues and vices in general; the inſtructions they give are proper for all ſtates of people, and for all ages. But the poet has a nearer regard to his own country, and the neceſſities of his own nation. With this deſign he makes choice of ſome piece of morality, the moſt proper and juſt he can imagine; and in order to preſs this home, he makes leſs uſe of the force of reaſoning, than of the power of inſinuation; accommodating himſelf to the particular cuſtoms and inclinations of thoſe who are to be the ſubject, or the readers, of his work.

Let us now ſee how Homer has acquitted himſelf in theſe reſpects.

He ſaw the Grecians, for whom he deſigned his Poem, were divided into as many ſtates as they had capital cities. Each was a body politick apart, and had its form of government independent from all the reſt. And yet theſe diſtinct ſtates were very often obliged to unite together in one body againſt their common enemies. Theſe were two very different ſorts of government, ſuch as could not be comprehended in one maxim of morality, and in one ſingle poem.

The poet, therefore, has made two diſtinct fables of them. The one is for Greece in general, united into one body, but compoſed of parts independent on

each

each other; and the other for each particular ſtate, conſidered as they were in time of peace, without the former circumſtances and the neceſſity of being united.

As for the firſt ſort of government, in the union or rather in the confederacy of many independent ſtates; experience has always made it appear, "That nothing "ſo much cauſes ſucceſs as a due ſubordination, and "a right underſtanding among the chief commanders "And on the other hand, the inevitable ruin of ſuch "confederacies proceeds from the heats, jealouſies, "and ambition of the different leaders, and the dif-"contents of ſubmitting to a ſingle general." All ſorts of ſtates, and in particular the Grecians, had dearly experienced this truth. So that the moſt uſeful and neceſſary inſtruction that could be given them, was, to lay before their eyes the loſs which both the people and the princes muſt of neceſſity ſuffer, by the ambition, diſcord, and obſtinacy of the latter.

Homer then has taken for the foundation of his fable this great truth; That a miſunderſtanding between princes is the ruin of their own ſtates. "I ſing "(ſays he) the anger of Achilles, ſo pernicious to "the Grecians, and the cauſe of ſo many heroes "deaths, occaſioned by the diſcord and ſeparation "of Agamemnon and that prince."

But that this truth may be completely and fully known, there is need of a ſecond to ſupport it. It is neceſſary in ſuch a deſign, not only to repreſent the confederate ſtates at firſt diſagreeing among themſelves,

and from thence unfortunate; but to ſhow the ſame ſtates afterwards reconciled and united, and of conſequence victorious.

Let us now ſee how he has joined all theſe in one general action.

" Several princes independent on one another were " united againſt a common enemy. The perſon whom " they had elected their general, offers an affront to " the moſt valiant of all the confederates. This " offended prince is ſo far provoked, as to relinquiſh " the union, and obſtinately refuſe to fight for the " common cauſe. This miſunderſtanding gives the " enemy ſuch an advantage, that the allies are very " near quitting their deſign with diſhonour. He him- " ſelf who made the ſeparation, is not exempt from " ſharing the misfortune which he brought upon his " party. For having permitted his intimate friend to " ſuccour them in a great neceſſity, this friend is kil- " led by the enemy's general. Thus the contending " princes, being both made wiſer at their own coſt, are " reconciled, and unite again: then this valiant prince " not only obtains the victory in the public cauſe, but " revenges his private wrongs, by killing with his own " hands the author of the death of his friend."

This is the firſt platform of the Poem, and the fiction which reduces into one important and univerſal action all the particulars upon which it turns.

In the next place it muſt be rendered probable by the circumſtances of times, places, and perſons: ſome perſons muſt be found out, already known by hiſtory or otherwiſe,

otherwiſe, whom we may with probability make the actors and perſonages of this fable. Homer has made choice of the ſiege of Troy, and feigned that this action happened there. To a phantom of his brain, whom he would paint valiant and cholerick, he has given the name of Achilles; that of Agamemnon to his general; that of Hector to the enemy's commander, and ſo to the reſt.

Beſides, he was obliged to accommodate himſelf to the manners, cuſtoms, and genius of the Greeks his auditors, the better to make them attend to the inſtruction of his Poem: and to gain their approbation by praiſing them: ſo that they might the better forgive him the repreſentation of their own faults in ſome of his chief perſonages. He admirably diſcharges all theſe duties, by making theſe brave princes and thoſe victorious people all Grecians, and the fathers of thoſe he had a mind to commend.

But not being content, in a work of ſuch a length, to propoſe only the principal point of the moral, and to fill up the reſt with uſeleſs ornaments and foreign incidents, he extends this moral by all its neceſſary conſequences. As for inſtance, in the ſubject before us, it is not enough to know that a good underſtanding ought always to be maintained among confederates: it is likewiſe of equal importance that, if there happens any diviſion, care muſt be taken to keep it ſecret from the enemy, that their ignorance of this advantage may prevent their making uſe of it. And in the ſecond place, when their concord is but counterfeit and only in ap-

pearance, one ſhould never preſs the enemy too cloſely; for this would diſcover the weakneſs which we ought to conceal from them.

The epiſode of Patroclus moſt admirably furniſhes us with theſe two inſtructions. For when he appeared in the arms of Achilles, the Trojans, who took him for that prince now reconciled and united to the confederates, immediately gave ground, and quitted the advantages they had before over the Greeks. But Patroclus, who ſhould have been contented with this ſucceſs, preſſes upon Hector too boldly, and, by obliging him to fight, ſoon diſcovers that it was not the true Achilles who was clad in his amour, but a hero of much inferior proweſs. So that Hector kills him, and regains thoſe advantages which the Trojans had loſt, on the opinion that Achilles was reconciled.

SECT. III.

THE FABLE OF THE ODYSSEY.

THE Odyſſey was not deſigned, like the Iliad, for the inſtruction of all the ſtates of Greece joined in one body, but for each ſtate in particular. As a ſtate is compoſed of two parts; the head which commands, and the members which obey; there are inſtructions requiſite to both, to teach the one to govern, and the others to ſubmit to government.

There are two virtues neceſſary to one in authority; prudence to order, and care to ſee his orders put in execution.

cution. The prudence of a politician is not acquired but by a long experience in all ſorts of buſineſs, and by an acquaintance with all the different forms of governments and ſtates. The care of the adminiſtration ſuffers not him that has the government to rely upon others, but requires his own preſence: and kings, who are abſent from their ſtates, are in danger of loſing them, and give occaſion to great diſorders and confuſion.

Theſe two points may be eaſily united in one and the ſame man. "A king forſakes his kingdom to viſit the "courts of ſeveral princes, where he learns the man-"ners and cuſtoms of different nations. From hence "there naturally ariſes a vaſt number of incidents, of "dangers, and of adventures, very uſeful for a political "inſtitution. On the other ſide, this abſence gives "way to the diſorders which happen in his own "kingdom, and which end not till his return, whoſe "preſence only can re-eſtabliſh all things." Thus the abſence of a king has the ſame effects in this fable, as the diviſion of the princes had in the former.

The ſubjects have ſcarce any need but of one general maxim, which is, to ſuffer themſelves to be governed, and to obey faithfully; whatever reaſon they may imagine againſt the orders they receive. It is eaſy to join this inſtruction with the other, by beſtowing on this wiſe and induſtrious prince ſuch ſubjects, as in his abſence would rather follow their own judgment than his commands; and by demonſtrating the misfortunes which this diſobedience draws upon them, the evil conſequences which almoſt infallibly atttend theſe

particular

particular notions, which are entirely different from the general idea of him who ought to govern.

But as it was necessary that the princes in the Iliad should be choleric and quarrelsome, so it is necessary in the fable of the Odyssey that the chief person should be sage and prudent. This raises a difficulty in the fiction; because this person ought to be absent for the two reasons above mentioned, which are essential to the fable, and which constitute the principal aim of it: but he cannot absent himself, without offending against another maxim of equal importance, viz. That a king should upon no accounts leave his country.

It is true, there are sometimes such necessities as sufficiently excuse the prudence of a politician in this point. But such a necessity is a thing important enough of itself to supply matter for another poem, and this multiplication of the action would be vicious. To prevent which, in the first place, this necessity, and the departure of the hero, must be disjoined from the poem; and in the second place, the hero having been obliged to absent himself, for a reason antecedent to the action, and placed distinct from the fable, he ought not so far to embrace this opportunity of instructing himself, as to absent himself voluntarily from his own government. For at this rate, his absence would be merely voluntary, and one might with reason lay to his charge all the disorders which might arise.

Thus in the constitution of the fable he ought not to take for his action, and for the foundation of his poem, the departure of a prince from his own country,

nor his voluntary ſtay in any other place; but his return, and this return retarded againſt his will. This is the firſt idea Homer gives us of it*. His hero appears at firſt in a deſolate iſland, ſitting upon the ſide of the ſea, which, with tears in his eyes, he looks upon as the obſtacle which had ſo long oppoſed his return, and detained him from reviſiting his own dear country.

And laſtly, ſince this forced delay might more naturally and uſually happen to ſuch as make voyages by ſea; Homer has judiciouſly made choice of a prince, whoſe kingdom was in an iſland.

Let us ſee then how he has feigned all this action, making his hero a perſon in years, becauſe years are requiſite to inſtruct a man in prudence and policy.

" A prince had been obliged to forſake his native " country, and to head an army of his ſubjects in a " foreign expedition. Having glorioufly performed " this enterprize, he was marching home again, and " conducting his ſubjects to his own ſtate. But ſpite " of all the attempts, with which the eagerneſs to re- " turn had inſpired him, he was ſtopt by the way by " tempeſts for ſeveral years, and caſt upon ſeveral " countries, differing from each other in manners and " government. In theſe dangers, his companions, " not always following his orders, periſhed through " their own fault. The grandees of his country " ſtrangely abuſe his abſence, and raiſe no ſmall diſ- " orders at home. They conſume his eſtate, conſpire " to

* Odyſſey V.

" to deſtroy his ſon, would conſtrain his queen to ac-
" cept of one of them for her huſband; and indulge
" themſelves in all violence, ſo much the more, be-
" cauſe they were perſuaded he would never return.
" But at laſt he returns, and diſcovering himſelf only
" to his ſon and ſome others, who had continued firm
" to him, he is an eye-witneſs of the inſolence of his
" enemies, puniſhes them according to their deſerts,
" and reſtores to his iſland that tranquillity and re-
" poſe to which they had been ſtrangers during his
" abſence."

As the truth, which ſerves for foundation to this fiction, is, that the abſence of a perſon from his own home, or his neglect of his own affairs, is the cauſe of great diſorders: ſo the principal point of the action, and the moſt eſſential one, is the abſence of the hero. This fills almoſt all the poem: for not only this real abſence laſted ſeveral years, but even when the hero returned, he does not diſcover himſelf; and this prudent diſguiſe, from whence he reaped ſo much advantage, has the ſame effect upon the authors of the diſorders, and all others who knew him not, as his real abſence had before, ſo that he is abſent as to them, till the very moment of their puniſhment.

After the poet had thus compoſed his fable, and joined the fiction to the truth, he then makes choice of Ulyſſes, the king of the iſle of Ithaca, to maintain the character of his chief perſonage, and beſtowed the reſt upon Telemachus, Penelope, Antinous, and others, whom he calls by what names he pleaſes.

I ſhall

I ſhall not here inſiſt upon the many excellent advices, which are ſo many parts and natural conſequences of the fundamental truth; and which the poet very dextrouſly lays down in thoſe fictions which are the epiſodes and members of the entire action. Such for inſtance are theſe advices: not to intrude one's ſelf into the myſteries of government, which the prince keeps ſecret; this is repreſented to us by the winds ſhut up in a bull-hide, which the miſerable companions of Ulyſſes would needs be ſo fooliſh as to pry into: not to ſuffer one's ſelf to be led away by the ſeeming charms of an idle and inactive life, to which the Syrens ſong invited *: not to ſuffer one's ſelf to be ſenſualized by pleaſures, like thoſe who were changed into brutes, by Circe: and a great many other points of morality neceſſary for all ſorts of people.

This Poem is more uſeful to the people than the Iliad, where the ſubjects ſuffer rather by the ill conduct of their princes, than through their own miſcarriages. But in the Odyſſey, it is not the fault of Ulyſſes that is the ruin of his ſubjects. This wiſe prince leaves untried no method to make them partakers of the benefit of his return. Thus the poet in the Iliad ſays, "He ſings the anger of Achilles, which "had cauſed the death of ſo many Grecians;" and, on the contrary, in the Odyſſey he tells his readers, "That the ſubjects periſhed through their own fault."

SECT.

* "Improba Syren deſidia." HORA.

SECT. IV.

OF THE UNITY OF THE FABLE.

ARISTOTLE beſtows great encomiums upon Homer for the ſimplicity of his deſign, becauſe he has included in one ſingle part all that happened at the ſiege of Troy. And to this he oppoſes the ignorance of ſome poets, who imagined that the unity of the fable or action was ſufficiently preſerved by the unity of the hero; and who compoſed their Theſeids, Heraclids, and the like, wherein they only heaped up in one poem every thing that happened to one perſonage.

He finds fault with thoſe poets who were for reducing the unity of the Fable into the unity of the hero, becauſe one man may have performed ſeveral adventures, which it is impoſſible to reduce under any one general and ſimple head. This reducing of all things to unity and ſimplicity, is what Horace likewiſe makes his firſt rule.

" Denique ſit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat, & unum."

According to theſe rules, it will be allowable to make uſe of ſeveral fables; or (to ſpeak more correctly) of ſeveral incidents, which may be divided into ſeveral fables, provided they are ſo ordered, that the unity of the fable be not ſpoiled. This liberty is ſtill greater in the epick poem, becauſe it is of a larger extent, and ought to be entire and complete.

I will

I will explain myſelf more diſtinctly by the practice of Homer.

No doubt but one might make four diſtinct fables out of theſe four following inſtructions:

I. Diviſion between thoſe of the ſame party expoſes them entirely to their enemies.

II. Conceal your weakneſs; and you will be dreaded as much, as if you had none of thoſe imperfections, of which they are ignorant.

III. When your ſtrength is only feigned, and founded only in the opinion of others; never venture ſo far as if your ſtrength was real.

IV. The more you agree together, the leſs hurt can your enemies do you.

It is plain, I ſay, that each of theſe particular maxims might ſerve for the ground-work of a fiction, and one might make four diſtinct fables out of them. May not one then put all theſe into one ſingle Epopea? Not unleſs one ſingle fable can be made out of all. The poet indeed may have ſo much ſkill as to unite all into one body, as members and parts, each of which taken aſunder would be imperfect; and if he joins them ſo, as that this conjunction ſhall be no hindrance at all to the unity and regular ſimplicity of the fable. This is what Homer has done with ſuch ſucceſs in the compoſition of the Iliad.

1. The diviſion between Achilles and his allies tended to the ruin of their deſigns. 2. Patroclus comes

comes to their relief in the armour of this hero, and Hector retreats. 3. But this young man pushing the advantage which his disguise gave him, too far, ventures to engage with Hector himself; but not being master of Achilles's strength (whom he only represented in outward appearance) he is killed, and by this means leaves the Grecian affairs in the same disorder, from which, in that disguise, he came to free them. 4. Achilles provoked at the death of his friend, is reconciled, and revenges his loss by the death of Hector. These various incidents being thus united, do not make different actions and fables, but are only the uncomplete and unfinished parts of one and the same action and fable, which alone, when taken thus complexly, can be said to be complete and entire: and all these maxims of the moral, are easily reduced into these two parts, which, in my opinion, cannot be separated without enervating the force of both. The two parts are these, That a right understanding is the preservation, and discord the destruction of states.

Though then the poet has made use of two parts in his poems, each of which might have served for a fable, as we have observed: yet this multiplication cannot be called a vicious and irregular Polymythia, contrary to the necessary unity and simplicity of the fable; but it gives the fable another qualification, altogether necessary and regular, namely, its perfection and finishing stroke.

SECT.

SECT. V.

OF THE ACTION OF THE EPICK POEM.

THE action of a poem is the ſubject which the poet undertakes, propoſes, and builds upon. So that the moral and the inſtructions which are the end of the Epick Poem are not the matter of it. Thoſe the poets leave in their allegorical and figurative obſcurity. They only give notice at the exordium, that they ſing ſome action: The Revenge of Achilles, the Return of Ulyſſes, &c.

Since then the action is the matter of a fable, it is evident, that whatever incidents are eſſential to the fable, or conſtitute a part of it, are neceſſary alſo to the action, and are parts of the epick matter, none of which ought to be omitted. Such, for inſtance, are the contention of Agamemnon and Achilles, the ſlaughter Hector makes in the Grecian army, the re-union of the Greek princes; and laſtly, the re-ſettlement and victory which was the conſequence of that re-union.

There are four qualifications in the epick action: the firſt is its unity, the ſecond its integrity, the third its importance, the fourth its duration.

The unity of the epick action, as well as the unity of the fable, does not conſiſt either in the unity of the hero, or in the unity of time: three things, I ſuppoſe, are neceſſary to it. The firſt is, to make uſe of no epiſode, but what ariſes from the very platform and

 founda-

foundation of the action, and is as it were a natural member of the body. The ſecond is, exactly to unite theſe epiſodes and theſe members with one another. And the third is, never to finiſh any epiſode ſo as it may ſeem to be an entire action; but to let each epiſode ſtill appear in its own particular nature, as the member of a body, and as a part of itſelf not compleat.

OF THE BEGINNING, MIDDLE, AND END OF THE ACTION.

ARISTOTLE not only ſays, that the epick action ſhould be one, but adds, that it ſhould be entire, perfect, and compleat; and for this purpoſe, ought to have a beginning, a middle, and an end. Theſe three parts of a whole are too generally and univerſally denoted by the words, beginning, middle, and end; we may interpret them more preciſely, and ſay, That the cauſes and deſigns of an action, are the beginning: that the effects of theſe cauſes, and the difficulties that are met with in the execution of theſe deſigns, are the middle; and that the unraveling and reſolution of theſe difficulties are the end.

THE ACTION OF THE ILIAD.

HOMER'S deſign in the Iliad, is to relate the anger and revenge of Achilles. The beginning of this action is the change of Achilles from a calm to a paſſionate temper. The middle is the effects of his paſſion,

and

and all the illuſtrious deaths it is the cauſe of. The end of this ſame action is the return of Achilles to his calmneſs of temper again. All was quiet in the Grecian camp, when Agamemnon, their general, provokes Apollo againſt them, whom he was willing to appeaſe afterwards at the coſt and prejudice of Achilles, who had no part in his fault. This then is an exact beginning: it ſuppoſes nothing before, and requires after it the effects of this anger. Achilles revenges himſelf, and that is an exact middle; it ſuppoſes before it the anger of Achilles, this revenge is the effect of it. Then this middle requires after it the effects of this revenge, which is the ſatisfaction of Achilles: for the revenge had not been complete, unleſs Achilles had been ſatisfied. By this means the poet makes his hero, after he was glutted by the miſchief he had done to Agamemnon, by the death of Hector, and the honour he did his friend, by inſulting over his murderer; he makes him, I ſay, to be moved by the tears and misfortunes of king Priam. We ſee him as calm at the end of the poem, during the funeral of Hector, as he was at the beginning of the poem, whilſt the plague raged among the Grecians. This end is juſt; ſince the calmneſs of temper Achilles re-enjoyed, is only an effect of the revenge which ought to have preceded: and after this nobody expects any more of his anger. Thus has Homer been very exact in the beginning, middle, and end of the action he made choice of for the ſubject of his Iliad.

THE ACTION OF THE ODYSSEY.

HIS design in the Odyssey was to describe the return of Ulysses from the siege of Troy, and his arrival at Ithaca. He opens this poem with the complaints of Minerva against Neptune, who opposed the return of this hero, and against Calypso, who detained him in an island from Ithaca. Is this a beginning? No; doubtless, the reader would know why Neptune is displeased with Ulysses, and how this prince came to be with Calypso? He would know how he came from Troy thither? The poet answers his demands out of the mouth of Ulysses himself, who relates these things, and begins the action by the recital of his travels from the city of Troy. It signifies little whether the beginning of the action be the beginning of the poem. The beginning of this action is that which happens to Ulysses, when, upon his leaving Troy, he bends his course for Ithaca. The middle comprehends all the misfortunes he endured, and all the disorders of his own government. The end is the re-instating of this hero in the peaceable possession of his kingdom, where he was acknowledged by his son, his wife, his father, and several others. The poet was sensible he should have ended ill, had he gone no farther than the death of these princes, who were the rivals and enemies of Ulysses, because the reader might have looked for some revenge, which the subjects of these princes might have taken on him who had killed their sovereigns: but

but this danger over, and the people vanquiſhed and quieted, there was nothing more to be expected. The poem and the action have all their parts, and no more.

But the order of the Odyſſey differs from that of the Iliad, in that the poem does not begin with the beginning of the action.

OF THE CAUSES AND BEGINNING OF THE ACTION.

THE cauſes of the action are alſo what the poet is obliged to give an account of. There are three ſorts of cauſes, the humours, the intereſts, and the deſigns of men; and theſe different cauſes of an action are likewiſe often the cauſes of one another, every man taking up thoſe intereſts in which his humour engages him, and forming thoſe deſigns to which his humour and intereſt incline him. Of all theſe the poet ought to inform his readers, and render them conſpicuous in his principal perſonages.

Homer has ingeniouſly begun his Odyſſey with the tranſactions at Ithaca, during the abſence of Ulyſſes. If he had begun with the travels of his hero, he would ſcarce have ſpoken of any one elſe, and a man might have read a great deal of the poem, without conceiving the leaſt idea of Telemachus, Penelope, or her ſuitors, who had ſo great a ſhare in the action; but in the beginning he has pitched upon, beſides theſe perſonages whom he diſcovers, he repreſents Ulyſſes

in his full length, and from the very firſt opening one ſees the intereſt which the Gods take in the action.

The ſkill and care of the ſame poet may be ſeen likewiſe in inducing his perſonages in the Firſt Book of his Iliad, where he diſcovers the humours, the intereſts, and the deſigns of Agamemnon, Achilles, Hector, Ulyſſes, and ſeveral others, and even of the Deities. And in his ſecond he makes a review of the Grecian and Trojan armies: which is full evidence, that all we have here ſaid is very neceſſary.

OF THE MIDDLE OR INTRIGUE OF THE ACTION.

AS theſe cauſes are the beginning of the action, the oppoſite deſigns againſt that of the hero are the middle of it, and form that difficulty or intrigue, which makes up the greateſt part of the poem; the ſolution or unraveling commences when the reader begins to ſee that difficulty removed, and the doubts cleared up. Homer has divided each of his poems into two parts; and has put a particular intrigue, and the ſolution of it, into each part.

The firſt part of the Iliad is the anger of Achilles, who is for revenging himſelf upon Agamemnon by the means of Hector and the Trojans. The intrigue comprehends the three days fight which happened in the abſence of Achilles: and it conſiſts on one ſide in the reſiſtance of Agamemnon and the Grecians: and on the other in the revengeful and inexorable humour of Achilles, which would not ſuffer him to be reconciled.

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The loſs of the Grecians, and the deſpair of Agamemnon, prepare for a ſolution by the ſatisfaction which the incenſed hero received from it. The death of Patroclus joined to the offers of Agamemnon, which of itſelf had proved ineffectual, remove this difficulty, and make the unraveling of the firſt part.

This death is likewiſe the beginning of the ſecond part; ſince it puts Achilles upon the deſign of revenging himſelf on Hector. But the deſign of Hector is oppoſite to that of Achilles: this Trojan is valiant, and reſolved to ſtand on his own defence. This valour and reſolution of Hector are on his part the cauſe of the intrigue. All the endeavours Achilles uſed to meet with Hector, and be the death of him; and the contrary endeavours of the Trojan to keep out of his reach, and defend himſelf, are the intrigue; which comprehends the battle of the laſt day. The unraveling begins at the death of Hector; and beſides that, it contains the inſulting of Achilles over his body, the honours he paid to Patroclus, and the intreaties of king Priam. The regrets of this king and the other Trojans, in the ſorrowful obſequies they paid to Hector's body, end the unraveling; they juſtify the ſatisfaction of Achilles, and demonſtrate his tranquillity.

The firſt part of the Odyſſey is the return of Ulyſſes into Ithaca. Neptune oppoſes it by raiſing tempeſts, and this makes the intrigue. The unraveling is the arrival of Ulyſſes upon his own iſland, where Neptune could offer him no farther injury. The ſecond part is the re-inſtating this hero in his own government. The

princes, that are his rivals, oppoſe him, and this is a freſh intrigue: the ſolution of it begins at their deaths, and is compleated as ſoon as the Ithacans were appeaſed.

Theſe two parts in the Odyſſey have not one common intrigue. The anger of Achilles forms both the intrigues in the Iliad; and it is ſo far the matter of this Epopea, that the very beginning and end of this poem depend on the beginning and end of this anger. But let the deſire Achilles had to revenge himſelf, and the deſire Ulyſſes had to return to his own country, be never ſo near allied, yet we cannot place them under one and the ſame notion: for that deſire of Ulyſſes is not a paſſion that begins and ends in the poem with the action: it is a natural habit: nor does the poet propoſe it for his ſubject, as he does the anger of Achilles.

We have already obſerved what is meant by the intrigue, and the unraveling thereof; let us now ſay ſomething of the manner of forming both. Theſe two ſhould ariſe naturally out of the very eſſence and ſubject of the poem, and are to be deduced from thence. Their conduct is ſo exact and natural, that it ſeems as if their action had preſented them with whatever they inſerted, without putting themſelves to the trouble of a farther enquiry.

What is more uſual and natural to warriors, than anger, heat, paſſion, and impatience of bearing the leaſt affront or diſreſpect? This is what forms the intrigue of the Iliad: and every thing we read there is nothing elſe but the effect of this humour and theſe paſſions.

What

What more natural and uſual obſtacle to thoſe who take voyages, than the ſea, the winds, and the ſtorms? Homer makes this the intrigue of the firſt part of the Odyſſey: and for the ſecond, he makes uſe of almoſt the infallible effect of the long abſence of a maſter, whoſe return is quite deſpaired of, viz. the inſolence of his ſervants and neighbours, the danger of his ſon and wife, and the ſequeſtration of his eſtate. Beſides, an abſence of almoſt twenty years, and the inſupportable fatigues joined to the age of which Ulyſſes then was, might induce him to believe that he ſhould not be owned by thoſe who thought him dead, and whoſe intereſt it was to have him really ſo. Therefore, if he had preſently declared who he was, and had called himſelf Ulyſſes, they would eaſily have deſtroyed him as an impoſtor, before he had an opportunity to make himſelf known.

There could be nothing more natural nor more neceſſary than this ingenious diſguiſe, to which the advantages his enemies had taken of his abſence had reduced him, and to which his long misfortunes had inured him. This allowed him an opportunity, without hazarding any thing, of taking the beſt meaſures he could, againſt thoſe perſons who could not ſo much as miſtruſt any harm from him. This way was afforded him, by the very nature of his action, to execute his deſigns, and overcome the obſtacles it caſt before him. And it is this conteſt between the prudence and the diſſimulation of a ſingle man on one hand, and the ungovernable inſolence of ſo many rivals on the

the other, which conſtitutes the intrigue of the ſecond part of the Odyſſey.

OF THE END OR UNRAVELING OF THE ACTION.

IF the plot or intrigue muſt be natural, and ſuch as ſprings from the very ſubject, as has been already urged; then the winding-up of the plot, by a more ſure claim, muſt have this qualification, and be a probable conſequence of all that went before. As this is what the readers regard more than the reſt, ſo ſhould the poet be more exact in it. This is the end of the poem, and the laſt impreſſion that is to be ſtamped upon them.

We ſhall find this in the Odyſſey. Ulyſſes by a tempeſt is caſt upon the iſland of the Phæacians, to whom he diſcovers himſelf, and deſires they would favour his return to his own country, which was not very far diſtant. One cannot ſee any reaſon why the king of this iſland ſhould refuſe ſuch a reaſonable requeſt, to a hero whom he ſeemed to have in great eſteem. The Phæacians indeed had heard him tell the ſtory of his adventures; and in this fabulous recital conſiſted all the advantage that he could derive from his preſence; for the art of war which they admired in him, his undauntedneſs under dangers, his indefatigable patience, and other virtues, where ſuch as theſe iſlanders were not uſed to. All their talent lay in ſinging and dancing, and whatſoever was charming in a quiet life. And here we ſee how dextrouſly Homer prepares the incidents he makes uſe of. Theſe people could do no leſs, for the

account

account with which Ulyſſes had ſo much entertained them, than afford him a ſhip and a ſafe convoy, which was of little expence or trouble to them.

When he arrived, his long abſence, and the travels which had disfigured him, made him altogether unknown; and the danger he would have incurred, had he diſcovered himſelf too ſoon, forced him to a diſguiſe: laſtly, This diſguiſe gave him an opportunity of ſurprizing thoſe young ſuitors, who for ſeveral years together had been accuſtomed to nothing but to ſleep well, and fare daintily.

It was from theſe examples that Ariſtotle drew this rule, that "Whatever concludes the poem, ſhould ſo "ſpring from the very conſtitution of the fable, as "if it were a neceſſary, or at leaſt a probable, con-"ſequence."

SECT. VI.

THE TIME OF THE ACTION.

THE time of the epick action is not fixed, like that of the dramatick poem; it is much longer: for an uninterrupted duration is much more neceſſary in an action which one ſees and is preſent at, than in one which we only read or hear repeated. Beſides, tragedy is fuller of paſſion, and conſequently of ſuch a violence as cannot admit of ſo long a duration.

The Iliad containing an action of anger and violence, the poet allows it but a ſhort time, about forty days.

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The design of the Odyssey required another conduct; the character of the hero is prudence and long-suffering; therefore the time of its duration is much longer, above eight years.

THE PASSIONS OF THE EPICK POEM.

THE passions of tragedy are different from those of the epick poem. In the former, terror and pity have the chief place; the passion that seems most peculiar to epick poetry, is admiration.

Besides this admiration, which in general distinguishes the Epick Poem from the Dramatick; each epick poem has likewise some peculiar passion, which distinguishes it in particular from other epick poems, and constitutes a kind of singular and individual difference between these poems of the same species. These singular passions correspond to the character of the hero. Anger and terror reign throughout the Iliad, because Achilles is angry, and the most terrible of all men. The Æneid has all soft and tender passions, because that is the character of Æneas. The prudence, wisdom, and constancy of Ulysses do not allow him either of these extremes; therefore the poet does not permit one of them to be predominant in the Odyssey. He confines himself to admiration only, which he carries to an higher pitch than in the Iliad: and it is upon this account that he introduces a great many more machines, in the Odyssey, into the body of the action, than are to be seen in the actions of the other two poems.

THE

THE MANNERS.

THE manners of the Epick Poem ought to be poetically good, but it is not neceſſary they be always morally ſo. They are poetically good, when one may diſcover the virtue or vice, the good or ill inclinations of every one who ſpeaks or acts: they are poetically bad, when perſons are made to ſpeak or act out of character, or inconſiſtently, or unequally. The manners of Æneas and of Mezentius are equally good, conſidered poetically, becauſe they equally demonſtrate the piety of the one, and the impiety of the other.

CHARACTER OF THE HERO.

IT is requiſite to make the ſame diſtinction between a hero in morality and a hero in poetry, as between moral and poetical goodneſs. Achilles had as much right to the latter, as Æneas. Ariſtotle ſays, That the hero of a poem ſhould be neither good nor bad; neither advanced above the reſt of mankind by his virtues, or ſunk beneath them by his vices; that he may be the proper and fuller example to others, both what to imitate and what to decline.

The other qualifications of the manners are, that they be ſuitable to the cauſes which either raiſe or diſcover them in the perſons; that they have an exact reſemblance to what hiſtory, or fable, have delivered of thoſe perſons, to whom they are aſcribed; and that

there be an equality in them, ſo that no man is made to act, or ſpeak, out of his character.

UNITY OF THE CHARACTER.

BUT this equality is not ſufficient for the unity of the character; it is further neceſſary, that the ſame ſpirit appear in all ſort of encounters. Thus Æneas acting with great piety and mildneſs in the firſt part of the Æneid, which requires no other character; and afterwards appearing illuſtrious in heroic valour, in the wars of the ſecond part; but there, without any appearance either of a hard or a ſoft diſpoſition; would doubtleſs, be far from offending againſt the equality of the manners: but yet there would be no ſimplicity or unity in the character. So that, beſides the qualities that claim their particular place upon different occaſions, there muſt be one appearing throughout, which commands over all the reſt; and without this, we may affirm, it is no character.

One may indeed make a hero as valiant as Achilles, as pious as Æneas, and as prudent as Ulyſſes. But it is a mere chimera, to imagine a hero that has the valour of Achilles, the piety of Æneas, and the prudence of Ulyſſes, at one and the ſame time. This viſion might happen to an author, who would ſuit the character of a hero to whatever each part of the action might naturally require, without regarding the eſſence of the fable, or the unity of the character in the ſame perſon upon all ſorts of occaſions: this hero would be the mildeſt, beſt-natured prince in the world, and alſo

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the moſt choleric, hard-hearted, and implacable creature imaginable; he would be extremely tender like Æneas, extremely violent like Achilles, and yet have the indifference of Ulyſſes, that is incapable of the two extremes. Would it not be in vain for the poet to call this perſon by the ſame name throughout?

Let us reflect on the effects it would produce in ſeveral poems, whoſe authors were of opinion, that the chief character of a hero is that of an accompliſhed man. They would be all alike; all valiant in battle, prudent in council, pious in the acts of religion, courteous, civil, magnificent; and, laſtly, endued with all the prodigious virtues any poet could invent. All this would be independent from the action and the ſubject of the poem; and upon ſeeing each hero ſeparated from the reſt of the work: we ſhould not eaſily gueſs, to what action, and to what poem, the hero belonged. So that we ſhould ſee, that none of thoſe would have a character; ſince the character is that, which makes a perſon diſcernible, and which diſtinguiſhes him from all others.

This commanding quality in Achilles, is his anger; in Ulyſſes, the art of diſſimulation; in Æneas, meekneſs. Each of theſe may be ſtiled, by way of eminence, the character in theſe heroes.

But theſe characters cannot be alone. It is abſolutely neceſſary that ſome other ſhould give them a luſtre, and embelliſh them as far as they are capable: either by hiding the defects that are in each, by ſome

noble

noble and ſhining qualities; as the poet has done the anger of Achilles, by ſhading it with extraordinary valour: or by making them entirely of the nature of a true and ſolid virtue, as is to be obſerved in the two others. The diſſimulation of Ulyſſes is a part of his prudence; aud the meekneſs of Æneas is wholly employed in ſubmitting his will to the Gods. For the making up of this union, our poets have joined together ſuch qualities as are by nature the moſt compatible; valour with anger, meekneſs with piety, and prudence with diſſimulation. This laſt union was neceſſary for the goodneſs of Ulyſſes; for, without that, his diſſimulation might have degenerated into wickedneſs and double-dealing.

SECT. VII.

OF THE MACHINERY.

WE come now to the machines of the Epick Poem. The chief paſſion which it aims to excite being admiration, nothing is ſo conducive to that as the marvellous; and the importance and dignity of the action is by nothing ſo greatly elevated as by the care and interpoſition of Heaven.

Theſe machines are of three ſorts. Some are Theological, and were invented to explain the nature of the Gods. Others are phyſical, and repreſent the things

things of nature. The laſt are moral, and are the images of virtues and vices.

Homer and the ancients have given to their deities the manners, paſſions, and vices, of men. The poems are wholly allegorical; and in this view it is eaſier to defend Homer, than to blame him. We cannot accuſe him for making mention of many Gods, for his beſtowing paſſions upon them, or even introducing them fighting againſt men. The Scripture uſes the like figures and expreſſions.

If it be allowable to ſpeak thus of the Gods in theology, much more in the fictions of natural philoſophy; where, if a poet deſcribes the Deities, he muſt give them ſuch manners, ſpeeches, and actions, as are conformable to the nature of the things they repreſent under thoſe divinities. The caſe is the ſame in the morals of the Deities: Minerva is wiſe, becauſe ſhe repreſents prudence; Venus is both good or bad, becauſe the paſſion of love is capable of theſe contrary qualities.

Since among the Gods of a poem ſome are good, ſome bad, and ſome indifferently either; and ſince of our paſſions we make ſo many allegorical Deities; we may attribute to the Gods all that is done in the poem, whether good or evil. But theſe Deities do not act conſtantly in one and the ſame manner.

Sometimes they act inviſibly, and by mere inſpiration; which has nothing in it extraordinary or miraculous; being no more than what we ſay every day,

 "That

" That ſome God has aſſiſted us, or ſome dæmon has
" inſtigated us."

At other times they appear viſibly, and manifeſt themſelves to men, in a manner altogether miraculous and præternatural.

The third way has ſomething of both the others; it is in truth a miracle, but is not commonly ſo accounted: this includes dreams, oracles, &c.

All theſe ways muſt be probable; for however neceſſary the marvellous is to the Epick Action, as nothing is ſo conducive to admiration; yet we can, on the other hand, admire nothing, that we think impoſſible. Though the probability of theſe machines be of a very large extent, (ſince it is founded upon Divine Power) it is not without limitations. There are numerous inſtances of allowable and probable machines in the Epick Poem, where the Gods are no leſs actors than the men. But the leſs credible ſort, ſuch as metamorphoſes, &c. are far more rare.

This ſuggeſts a reflection on the method of rendering thoſe machines probable, which in their own nature are hardly ſo. Thoſe, which require only divine probability, ſhould be ſo diſengaged from the action, that one might ſubtract them from it, without deſtroying the action. But thoſe, which are eſſential and neceſſary, ſhould be grounded upon human probability, and not on the ſole power of God. Thus the epiſodes of Circe, the Syrens, Polyphemus, &c. are neceſſary to the action of the Odyſſey, and yet not humanly probable: yet Homer has artificially reduced them to human

human probability, by the ſimplicity and ignorance of the Phæacians, before whom he cauſes thoſe recitals to be made.

The next queſtion is, Where, and on what occaſions, machines may be uſed? It is certain Homer and Virgil make uſe of them every where, and ſcarce ſuffer any action to be performed without them. Petronius makes this a precept: "Per ambages, deorumque mi-"niſteria, &c." The Gods are mentioned in the very propoſition of their works, the invocation is addreſt to them, and the whole narration is full of them. The Gods are the cauſes of the action, they form the intrigue, and bring about the ſolution. The precept of Ariſtotle and Horace, that the unraveling of the plot ſhould not proceed from a miracle, or the appearance of a God, has place only in Dramatick Poetry, not in the Epick. For it is plain, that both in the ſolution of the Iliad and Odyſſey, the Gods are concerned: in the former, the Deities meet to appeaſe the anger of Achilles: Iris and Mercury are ſent to that purpoſe, and Minerva eminently aſſiſts Achilles in the deciſive combat with Hector. In the Odyſſey, the ſame Goddeſs fights cloſe by Ulyſſes againſt the ſuitors, and concludes that peace betwixt him and the Ithacenſians, which compleats the poem.

We may therefore determine, that a machine is not an invention to extricate the poet out of any difficulty which embarraſſes him: but that the preſence of a Divinity, and ſome action ſurprizing and extraordinary, are inſerted into almoſt all the parts of his work, in

order to render it more majeſtick and more admirable. But this mixture ought to be ſo made, that the machines might be retrenched, without taking any thing from the action: at the ſame time that it gives the readers a leſſon of piety and virtue; and teaches them, that the moſt brave and the moſt wiſe can do nothing, and attain nothing great and glorious, without the aſſiſtance of heaven. Thus the machinery crowns the whole work, and renders it at once marvellous, probable, and moral.

THE

THE FIRST BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

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 Mentes, 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 deſtin'd fall
Of ſacred Troy, and raz'd her heaven-built wall.
Wandering from clime to clime, obſervant ſtray'd, 5
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; 10
The God vindictive doom'd them never more
(Ah, men unbleſs'd!) 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; 15
All who the wars of ten long years ſurviv'd,
And 'ſcap'd the perils of the gulphy main.
Ulyſſes, ſole of all the victor train,
An exile from his dear paternal coaſt,
Deplor'd his abſent queen, and empire loſt. 20
Calypſo in her caves 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 given by fate, 25
Where yet new labours his arrival wait;
At length their rage the hoſtile powers reſtrain,
All but the ruthleſs monarch of the main.
But now the God, remote, a heavenly gueſt,
In Æthiopia grac'd the genial feaſt 30
(A race divided, whom with ſloping rays
The riſing and deſcending ſun ſurveys);
There on the world s extremeſt verge, rever'd
With hecatombs and prayer in pomp preferr'd,
Diſtant he lay: while in the bright abodes 35
Of high Olympus, Jove conven'd the Gods:
Th' aſſembly thus the Sire ſupreme addreſt,
Ægyſthus' fate revolving in his breaſt,
Whom young Oreſtes to the dreary coaſt
Of Pluto ſent, a blood-polluted ghoſt. 40
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 Ægyſthus gave the rein, 45
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; 50
To warn the wretch, that young Oreſtes, grown
To manly years, ſhould re-aſſert the throne.
Yet, impotent of mind, and uncontrol'd,
He plung'd into the gulf which heaven foretold.

Here

Here paus'd the God; and penſive thus replies 55
Minerva, graceful with her azure eyes:
O thou! from whom the whole creation ſprings,
The ſource of power 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! 60
But grief and rage alternate wound my breaſt
For brave Ulyſſes, ſtill by Fate oppreſt.
Amidſt an iſle, around whoſe rocky ſhore
The foreſts murmur, and the ſurges roar,
The blameleſs hero from his wiſh'd-for home 65
A goddeſs guards in her inchanted dome:
(Atlas her ſire, to whoſe far-piercing eye
The wonders of the deep expanded lie;
Th' eternal columns which on earth he rears
End in the ſtarry vault, and prop the ſpheres.) 70
By his fair daughter is the chief confin'd,
Who ſoothes to dear delight his anxious mind:
Succeſsleſs all her ſoft careſſes prove,
To baniſh from his breaſt his country's love;
To ſee the ſmoke from his lov'd palace riſe, 75
While the dear iſle in diſtant proſpect lies,
With what contentment could he cloſe his eyes?
And will Omnipotence neglect to ſave
The ſuffering virtue of the wiſe and brave?
Muſt he, whoſe altars on the Phrygian ſhore 80
With frequent rites, and pure, avow'd thy power,
Be doom'd the worſt of human ills to prove,
Unbleſs'd, abandon'd to the wrath of Jove?

Daughter!

Daughter! what words have paſs'd thy lips unweigh'd?
(Reply'd the Thunderer to the martial maid) 85
Deem not unjuſtly by my doom oppreſt
Of human race the wiſeſt and the beſt.
Neptune, by prayer repentant rarely won,
Afflicts the chief, t' avenge his giant-ſon,
Whoſe viſual orb Ulyſſes robb'd of light! 90
Great Polypheme, of more than mortal might!
Him young Thoöſa bore (the bright increaſe
Of Phorcys, dreaded in the ſounds and ſeas):
Whom Neptune ey'd with bloom of beauty bleſt,
And in his cave the yielding nymph compreſt. 95
For this, the God conſtrains the Greek to roam,
A hopeleſs exile from his native home,
From death alone exempt—but ceaſe to mourn!
Let all combine t' atchieve his wiſh'd return:
Neptune aton'd, his wrath ſhall now refrain, 100
Or thwart the ſynod of the Gods in vain.
Father and king ador'd! Minerva cry'd,
Since all who in th' Olympian bower reſide
Now make the wandering Greek their public care,
Let Hermes to th' Atlantick * iſle repair; 105
Bid him, arriv'd in bright Calypſo's court,
The ſanction of th' aſſembled powers report:
That wiſe Ulyſſes to his native land
Muſt ſpeed, obedient to their high command.
Meantime Telemachus, the blooming heir 110
Of ſea-girt Ithaca, demands my care:

'Tis

* Ogygia.

'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: 115
Who croud his palace, and with lawleſs power
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 120
That from his realm retards his god-like ſire:
Delivering early to the voice of fame
The promiſe of a great, immortal name.
She ſaid: the ſandals of celeſtial mould,
Fledg'd with ambroſial plumes, and rich with gold,
Surround her feet; with theſe ſublime ſhe ſails
Th' aerial ſpace, and mounts the winged gales:
O'er earth and ocean wide prepar'd to ſoar,
Her dreaded arm a beamy javelin bore,
Ponderous and vaſt; which, when her fury burns,
Proud tyrants humbles, 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 135
(Mentes, the monarch of the Taphian land):
A glittering ſpear wav'd awful in her hand.
There in the portal plac'd, the heaven-born maid
Enormous riot and miſ-rule ſurvey'd.
On hides of beeves, before the palace gate, 140
(Sad ſpoils of luxury) the ſuitors ſate.

With rival art, and ardour in their mien,
At chefs they vie, to captivate the queen;
Divining of their loves. Attending nigh,
A menial train the flowing bowl fupply: 145
Others, apart, the fpacious hall prepare,
And form the coftly feaft with bufy care.
There young Telemachus, his bloomy face
Glowing celeftial fweet, with god-like grace
Amid the circle fhines: but hope and fear 150
(Painful viciffitude!) his bofom tear.
Now, imag'd in his mind, he fees reftor'd
In peace and joy, the people's rightful lord;
The proud oppreffors fly the vengeful fword.
While his fond foul thefe fancied triumphs fwell'd;
The ftranger gueft, the royal youth beheld:
Griev'd that a vifitant fo long fhould wait
Unmark'd, unhonour'd, at a monarch's gate;
Inftant he flew with hofpitable hafte,
And the new friend with courteous air embrac'd. 160
Stranger! whoe'er thou art, fecurely reft,
Affianc'd in my faith, a friendly gueft:
Approach the dome, the focial banquet fhare,
And then the purpofe of thy foul declare.
Thus affable and mild, the prince precedes, 165
And to the dome th' unknown Celeftial leads.
The fpear receiving from her hand, he plac'd
Againft a column, fair with fculpture grac'd;
Where feemly rang'd in peaceful order ftood
Ulyffes' arms, now long difus'd to blood. 170
He led the Goddefs to the fovereign feat,
Her feet fupported with a ftool of ftate

(A purple carpet ſpread the pavement wide);
Then drew his ſeat, familiar to her ſide;
Far from the ſuitor-train, a brutal crowd, 175
With inſolence, and wine, elate and loud:
Where the free gueſt, unnoted, might relate,
If haply conſcious, of his father's fate.
The golden ewer a maid obſequious brings,
Repleniſh'd from the cool, tranſlucent ſprings; 180
With copious water the bright vaſe ſupplies
A ſilver laver, of capacious ſize:
They waſh. The tables in fair order ſpread,
They heap the glittering caniſters with bread:
Viands of various kinds allure the taſte, 185
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 voracious haſte: 190
Marſhal'd in order due, to each a ſewer
Preſents, to bathe his hands, a radiant ewer.
Luxurious then they feaſt. Obſervant round
Gay ſtripling youths the brimming goblets crown'd.
The rage of hunger quell'd, they all advance, 195
And form to meaſur'd airs the mazy dance:
To Phemius was conſign'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. 200
Meanwhile, in whiſpers to his heavenly gueſt
His indignation thus the prince expreſt:

Indulge

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, 205
When for the dear delight another pays.
His treasur'd stores these cormorants consume,
Whose bones, defrauded of a regal tomb
And common turf, lie naked on the plain,
Or doom'd to welter in the whelming main. 210
Should he return, that troop so blithe and bold,
With purple robes inwrought, and stiff with gold,
Precipitant in fear would wing their flight,
And curse their cumbrous pride's unwieldy weight.
But, ah, I dream!—th' appointed hour is fled! 215
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: 220
Sincere, from whence began thy course, recite,
And to what ship I owe the friendly freight?
Now first to me this visit dost thou deign,
Or number'd in my father's social train?
All who deserv'd his choice he made his own, 225
And, curious much to know, he far was known.
My birth I boast (the blue-eyed 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

Freighted with iron from my native land,
I ſteer my voyage to the Brutian ſtrand;
To gain by commerce, for the labour'd maſs, 235
A juſt proportion of refulgent braſs.
Far from your capital my ſhip reſides
At Reithrus, and ſecure at anchor rides;
Where waving groves on airy Neion grow,
Supremely tall, and ſhade the deeps below. 240
Thence to reviſit 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, 245
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 marſhaling his vines
Returning ſad, when toilſome day declines. 250
With friendly ſpeed, induc'd by erring fame,
To hail Ulyſſes' ſafe return, I came;
But ſtill the frown of ſome celeſtial Power
With envious joy retards the bliſsful hour.
Let not your ſoul be ſunk in ſad deſpair; 255
He lives, he breathes this heavenly vital air,
Among a ſavage race, whoſe ſhelfy bounds
With ceaſeleſs roar the foaming deep ſurrounds.
The thoughts which roll within my raviſh'd breaſt,
To me, no ſeer, th' inſpiring Gods ſuggeſt; 260
Nor ſkill'd, nor ſtudious, with prophetic eye
To judge the winged omens of the ſky.

Yet

Yet hear this certain ſpeech, nor deem it vain;
Though adamantine bonds the chief reſtrain,
The dire reſtraint his wiſdom will defeat, 265
And ſoon reſtore him to his regal ſeat.
But, generous 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. 270
Such was that face, on which I dwelt with joy
Ere Greece aſſembled ſtemm'd the tides to Troy;
But, parting then for that detected ſhore,
Our eyes, unhappy! never greeted more.
To prove a genuine birth (the prince replies) 275
On female truth aſſenting 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 toſs the great! 280
Happier the ſon, whoſe hoary ſire 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 divine: 285
Oh true deſcendant of a ſcepter'd line!
The Gods a glorious fate from anguiſh free
To chaſte Penelope's increaſe decree.
But ſay, yon joyful troop ſo gaily dreſt,
Is this a bridal or a friendly feaſt! 290
Or from their deed I rightlier may divine,
Unſeemly flown with inſolence and wine;

Unwelcome revelers, whose lawless joy
Pains the sage ear, and hurts the sober eye?
Magnificence of old (the prince replied) 295
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 heaven decrees) is doom'd to mourn,
Bitter constraint! erroneous and forlorn. 300
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 transmissive honour grac'd his son.
Now snatch'd by harpies to the dreary coast,
Sunk is the hero, and his glory lost: 310
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 amorous wiles, 315
Resort the nobles from the neighbouring isles;
From Samos, circled with the Iönian main,
Dulichium, and Zacynthus' sylvan reign:
Ev'n with presumptuous Hope her bed t' ascend,
The lords of Ithaca their right pretend. 320
She seems attentive to their pleaded vows,
Her heart detesting what her ear allows.

They, vain expectants of the bridal hour,
My ſtores in riotous expence devour,
In feaſt and dance the mirthful months employ, 325
And meditate my doom, to crown their joy.
With tender pity touch'd, the Goddeſs cried;
Soon may kind heaven a ſure relief provide!
Soon may your ſire diſcharge the vengeance due,
And all your wrongs the proud oppreſſors rue! 330
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 grac'd,
When ſocial mirth unbent his ſerious ſoul, 335
O'er the full banquet, and the ſprightly bowl):
He then from Ephyré, the fair domain
Of Ilus, ſprung from Jaſon's royal ſtrain,
Meaſur'd a length of ſeas, a toilſome length, in vain.
For, voyaging to learn the direful art 340
To taint with deadly drugs the barbed dart;
Obſervant of the Gods, and ſternly juſt,
Ilus refus'd t' impart the baneful truſt:
With friendlier zeal my father's ſoul was fir'd,
The drugs he knew, and gave the boon deſir'd. 345
Appear'd he now with ſuch heroic port,
As then conſpicuous at the Taphian court;
Soon ſhould yon boaſters ceaſe their haughty ſtrife,
Or each atone his guilty love with life.
But of his wiſh'd return the care reſign; 350
Be future vengeance to the powers divine.
My ſentence hear: with ſtern diſtaſte avow'd,
To their own diſtricts drive the ſuitor-crowd:

When

When next the morning warms the purple eaſt,
Convoke the peerage, and the Gods atteſt; 355
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 360
To great Icarius, whoſe paternal care
Will guide her paſſion, and reward the choice
With wealthy dower, and bridal gifts of price.
Then let this dictate of my love prevail:
Inſtant, to foreign realms prepare to ſail, 365
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: 370
Thence ſpeed your voyage to the Spartan ſtrand;
For young Atrides to th' 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. 375
But if his ſoul hath wing'd the deſtin'd flight,
Inhabitant of deep diſaſtrous night;
Homeward with pious ſpeed repaſs the main,
To the pale ſhade funereal rites ordain,
Plant the fair column o'er the vacant grave, 380
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, fir'd
With great revenge, immortal praiſe acquir'd?
His virgin-ſword, Ægyſthus' veins imbrued;
The murderer fell, and blood aton'd for blood. 390
O greatly bleſs'd with every 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, 295
Impatient on the hoarſe-reſounding 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. 400
So fathers ſpeak (perſuaſive ſpeech and mild)
Their ſage experience to the favourite child.
But, ſince to part, for ſweet refection due
The genial viands let my train renew:
And the rich pledge of plighted faith receive, 405
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 Temesé return'd, your royal court 410
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' ætherial gueſt; 415
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. 420
His tender theme the charming lyriſt choſe,
Minerva's anger, and the direful woes
Which voyaging from Troy the victors bore,
While ſtorms vindictive intercept the ſhore.
The ſhrilling airs the vaulted roof rebounds, 425
Reflecting to the queen the ſilver ſounds.
With grief renew'd the weeping fair deſcends;
Their ſovereign's ſtep a virgin train attends:
A veil, of richeſt texture wrought, ſhe wears,
And ſilent to the joyous hall repairs. 430
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 ancient bards in hall and bower have told,
Attemper'd to the lyre, your voice employ; 435
Such the pleas'd ear will drink with ſilent joy.
But, oh! forbear that dear diſaſtrous name,
To ſorrow ſacred, and ſecure of fame:
My bleeding boſom ſickens at the ſound,
And every piercing note inflicts a wound. 440
Why, deareſt object of my duteous love,
(Reply'd the prince) will you the bard reprove?
Oft, Jove's æthereal rays (reſiſtleſs fire)
The chanter's ſoul and raptur'd ſong inſpire;

Instinct divine! nor blame severe his choice, 445
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, 450
And in the public woe forget your own;
You weep not for a perish'd lord, alone.
What Greeks, now wandering in the Stygian gloom,
With your Ulysses shar'd an equal doom!
Your widow'd hours, apart, with female toil 455
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. 460
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.
Meantime, rekindled at the royal charms, 465
Tumultuous love each beating bosom warms;
Intemperate rage a wordy war began;
But bold Telemachus assum'd the man.
Instant (he cry'd) your female discord end,
Ye deedless boasters! and the song attend; 470
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 475
The firm reſolve, I here in few diſcloſe:
No longer live the cankers of my court;
All to your ſeveral ſtates with ſpeed reſort;
Waſte in wild riot what your land allows,
There ply the early feaſt, and late carouſe. 480
But if, to honour loſt, 'tis ſtill decreed
For you my bowl ſhall flow, my flock ſhall bleed;
Judge and revenge my right, impartial Jove!—
By him and all th' immortal thrones above,
(A ſacred oath) each proud oppreſſor, ſlain, 485
Shall with inglorious gore this marble ſtain.
Aw'd by the prince, thus haughty, bold, and young,
Rage gnaw'd the lip, and wonder chain'd the tongue.
Silence at length the gay Antinoüs broke,
Conſtrain'd a ſmile, and thus ambiguous ſpoke: 490
What God to your untutor'd youth affords
This headlong torrent of amazing words?
May Jove delay thy reign, and cumber late
So bright a genius with the toils of ſtate!
Thoſe toils (Telemachus ſerene replies) 495
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 Antinoüs rage, if ſtrong deſire
Of wealth and fame a youthful boſom fire: 500
Elect by Jove his delegate of ſway,
With joyous pride the ſummons I 'd obey.
Whene'er Ulyſſes roams the realm of night,
Should factious power diſpute my lineal right,

Some other Greeks a fairer claim may plead; 505
To your pretence their title would precede.
At least, the sceptre lost, I still should reign
Sole o'er my vassals, and domestic train.
To this Eurymachus: To heaven alone
Refer the choice to fill the vacant throne. 510
Your patrimonial stores in peace possess;
Undoubted, all your filial claim confess:
Your private right should impious power invade,
The peers of Ithaca would arm in aid.
But say, that stranger guest who late withdrew, 515
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 ancient right require,
Or came fore-runner of your sceptre'd sire? 520
Oh, son of Polybus! the prince replies,
No more my sire will glad these longing eyes:
The queen's fond hope inventive rumour cheers,
Or vain diviners' dreams divert her fears
That stranger-guest the Taphian realm obeys, 525
A realm defended with incircling seas;
Mentes, an ever-honour'd name, of old
High in Ulysses' social list inroll'd.
Thus he, though conscious of th' etherial guest,
Answer'd evasive of the sly request. 530
Meantime 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 sable night;

The

The mirthful train diſperſing quit the court, 535
And to their ſeveral domes to reſt reſort.
A towering 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; 540
(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 545
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 addreſt,
The duteous dame receiv'd the purple veſt: 350
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

THE SECOND BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT.

THE COUNCIL OF ITHACA.

TELEMACHUS, 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 princes, 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. Telemachus 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 ancient 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.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK II.

NOW reddening from the dawn, the morning-ray
Glow'd in the front of heaven, 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, 5
A two-edg'd falchion 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. 10
Soon as in solemn form th' assembly sate,
From his high dome himself descends in state.
Bright in his hand a ponderous javelin shin'd;
Two dogs, a faithful guard, attend behind;
Pallas with grace divine his form improves, 15
And gazing crouds 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

His eldeſt * hope in arms to Ilion came,
By great Ulyſſes taught the path to fame;
But (hapleſs youth) the hideous Cyclops tore 25
His quivering 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 aſſwage,
And eaſe the fire of half the cares of age. 30
Yet ſtill his Antiphus he loves, he mourns,
And, as he ſtood, he ſpoke and wept by turns:
Since great Ulyſſes ſought the Phrygian plains,
Within theſe walls inglorious ſilence reigns.
Say then, ye peers, by whoſe commands we meet! 35
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! 40
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 roſe
(His royal hand th' imperial ſcepter ſway'd); 45
Then thus, addreſſing to Ægyptius, ſaid:
Reverend old man! lo here confeſt he ſtands
By whom ye meet; my grief your care demands.
No ſtory I unfold of public woes,
Nor bear advices of impending foes: 50
Peace the bleſt land, and joys inceſſant crown;
Of all this happy realm, I grieve alone,

For

* Antiphus.

For my loſt ſire continual ſorrows ſpring,
The great, the good; your father, and your king.
Yet more; our houſe from its foundation bows, 55
Our foes are powerful, 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? 60
Yet through my court the noiſe of revel rings,
And waſtes the wiſe frugality of kings.
Scarce all my herds their luxury ſuffice;
Scarce all my wine their midnight hours ſupplies.
Safe in my youth, in riot ſtill they grow, 65
Nor in the helpleſs orphan dread a foe.
But come it will, the time when manhood grants
More powerful advocates than vain complaints.
Approach that hour! inſufferable wrong
Cries to the Gods, and vengeance ſleeps too long. 70
Riſe then, ye Peers! with virtuous anger riſe;
Your fame revere, but moſt th' avenging ſkies.
By all the deathleſs powers that reign above,
By righteous Themis and by thundering Jove,
(Themis, who gives to councils, or denies; 75
Succeſs; and humbles, or confirms the wiſe)
Riſe in my aid! ſuffice the tears that flow
For my loſt ſire, nor add new woe to woe.
If e'er he bore the ſword to ſtrengthen ill,
Or, having power to wrong, betray'd the will, 80
On me, on me your kindled wrath aſſwage,
And bid the voice of lawleſs riot rage.

If

If ruin to our royal race ye doom,
Be you the ſpoilers, and our wealth conſume.
Then might we hope redreſs from juſter laws, 85
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 ſpoke, with rage and grief he frown'd,
And daſh'd th' imperial ſceptre to the ground. 90
The big round tear hung trembling in his eye:
The ſynod griev'd, and gave a pitying ſigh,
Then ſilent ſate—at length Antinoüs burns
With haughty rage, and ſternly thus returns:
O inſolence of youth! whoſe tongue affords 95
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 hope to all, and all with hopes deceives. 100
Did not the ſun, through heaven'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, 105
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 Laërtes I bequeath
"A taſk of grief, his ornaments of death. 110
"Leſt when the Fates his royal aſhes claim,
"The Grecian matrons taint my ſpotleſs fame;

"When

"When he, whom living mighty realms obey'd,
"Shall want in death a shroud to grace his shade."
Thus she: at once the generous train complies, 115
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; 120
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 illustrious toils; 125
A wondrous monument of female wiles!
But you, oh peers! and thou, oh prince! give ear
(I speak aloud, that every Greek may hear):
Dismiss the queen: and if her sire approves,
Let him espouse her to the peer she loves: 130
Bid instant to prepare the bridal train,
Nor let a race of princes wait in vain.
Though with a grace divine her soul is bless,
And all Minerva breathes within her breast,
In wondrous arts than woman more renown'd, 135
And more than woman with deep wisdom crown'd;
Though Tyro nor Mycene match her name,
Nor great Alcmena (the proud boasts of Fame)
Yet, thus by heaven adorn'd, by heaven's decree,
She shines with fatal excellence to thee: 140
With thee, the bowl we drain, indulge the feast,
Till righteous heaven 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, 145
Thy bowl to empty, and thy flock 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? 150
While sad on foreign shores Ulysses treads,
Or glides a ghost with unapparent shades;
How to Icarius in the bridal hour
Shall I, by waste undone, refund the dower?
How from my father should I vengeance dread? 155
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?
Abhorr'd by all, accurs'd my name would grow,
The earth's disgrace, and human-kind my foe. 160
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 carouse.
But if, to honour lost, 'tis still decreed 165
For you my bowl shall flow, my flocks shall bleed;
Judge and assert my right, impartial Jove!
By him, and all th' immortal host above,
(A sacred oath) if heaven the power supply,
Vengeance I vow, and for your wrongs ye die. 170
With that, two eagles from a mountain's height
By Jove's command direct their rapid flight;

Swift

Swift they defcend, with wing to wing conjoin'd,
Stretch their broad plumes, and float upon the wind,
Above th' affembled peers they wheel on high, 175
And clang their wings, and hovering beat the fky;
With ardent eyes the rival train they threat,
And, fhrieking loud, denounce approaching Fate.
They cuff, they tear; their cheeks and neck they rend,
And from their plumes huge drops of blood defcend:
Then, failing o'er the domes and towers, they fly
Full tow'rd the eaft, and mount into the fky.
The wondering rivals gaze with cares oppreft,
And chilling horrors freeze in every breaft.
Till, big with knowledge of approaching woes, 185
The prince of augurs, Halitherfes, rofe:
Prefcient he view'd th' aërial tracks, and drew
A fure prefage from every wing that flew.
Ye fons (he cry'd) of Ithaca, give ear,
Hear all! but chiefly you, oh rivals! hear. 190
Deftruction fure o'er all your heads impends;
Ulyffes comes, and death his fteps attends.
Nor to the great alone is death decreed;
We and our guilty Ithaca muft bleed.
Why ceafe we then the wrath of heaven to ftay? 195
Be humbled all, and lead, ye Great! the way.
For, lo! my words no fancy'd woes relate:
I fpeak from fcience, and the voice is fate.
When great Ulyffes fought the Phrygian fhores
To fhake with war proud Ilion's lofty towers, 200
Deeds then undone my faithful tongue foretold:
Heaven feal'd my words, and you thofe 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; 205
Now twice ten years are paſt, and now he comes!
To whom Eurymachus—Fly, dotard, fly!
With thy wiſe dreams, and fables of the ſky,
Go prophecy at home; thy ſons adviſe;
Here thou art ſage in vain—I better read the ſkies.
Unnumber'd birds glide through th' aërial way,
Vagrants of air, and unforeboding ſtray.
Cold in the tomb, or in the deeps below,
Ulyſſes lies: oh, wert thou laid as low!
Then would that buſy head no broils ſuggeſt, 215
Nor fire to rage Telemachus's breaſt.
From him ſome bribe thy venal tongue requires,
And intereſt, not the God, thy voice inſpires.
His guideleſs youth, if thy experienc'd age
Miſlead fallacious into idle rage, 220
Vengeance deſerv'd thy malice ſhall repreſs,
And but augment the wrongs thou would'ſt redreſs.
Telemachus may bid the queen repair
To great Icarius, whoſe paternal care
Will guide her paſſion, and reward her choice, 225
With wealthy dower, 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. 230
Threat on, O Prince! elude the bridal day,
Threat on, till all thy ſtores in waſte decay.

True,

True, Greece affords a train of lovely dames,
In wealth and beauty worthy of our flames:
But never from this nobler ſuit we ceaſe; 235
For wealth and beauty leſs than virtue pleaſe.
To whom the youth: Since then in vain I tell
My numerous woes, in ſilence let them dwell.
But Heaven, and all the Greeks, have heard my wrongs:
To Heaven, and all the Greeks, redreſs belongs. 240
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 ſire from ſhore to ſhore:
If, or to Fame his doubtful fate be known, 245
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 wandering in the train
Of empty ſhades; I meaſure back the main, 250
Plant the fair column o'er the mighty dead,
And yield his conſort to the nuptial bed.
He ceas'd; and while abaſh'd the peers attend,
Mentor aroſe, Ulyſſes' faithful friend:
[When fierce in arms he ſought 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 roſe, he caſt his eyes around,
That flaſh'd with rage; and as he ſpoke, he frown'd:
O never, never more! let king be juſt,
Be mild in power, 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 ſpoke, Leocritus rejoin'd: 275
O pride of words, and arrogance of mind!
Would'ſt thou to riſe in arms the Greeks adviſe?
Join all your powers! in arms, ye Greeks, ariſe!
Yet would your powers 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; 285
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 ſtay
Safe in the court, nor tempt the watery way. 290
Then, with a ruſhing ſound, th' aſſembly bend,
Diverſe their ſteps: the rival rout aſcend

The

The royal dome; while ſad the prince explores
The neighbouring main, and ſorrowing treads the ſhores.
There, as the waters o'er his hands he ſhed, 295
The royal ſuppliant to Minerva pray'd:
O Goddeſs! who deſcending from the ſkies
Vouchſaf'd thy preſence to my wondering eyes,
By whoſe commands the raging deeps I trace,
And ſeek my ſire through ſtorms and rolling ſeas! 300
Hear from thy heavens above, oh, warriour-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 prayer the Goddeſs took 305
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 wave ſucceſs thy ways attends: 310
To tread the walks of death, he ſtood prepar'd;
And what he greatly thought, he nobly dar'd.
Were not wiſe ſons deſcendent of the wiſe,
And did not heroes from brave heroes riſe:
Vain were my hopes: few ſons attain the praiſe 315
Of their great ſires, and moſt their ſires diſgrace.
But ſince thy veins paternal virtue fires,
And all Penelope thy ſoul inſpires:
Go, and ſucceed! the rivals aims deſpiſe;
For never, never, wicked man was wiſe. 320
Blind they rejoice, though now, ev'n now they fall;
Death haſtes amain: one hour o'erwhelms them all!

And lo, with ſpeed we plough the watery way;
My power ſhall guard thee, and my hand convey:
The winged veſſel ſtudious I prepare, 325
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 generous wine, which thoughtful ſorrow flies.
Meanwhile the mariners, by my command,
Shall ſpeed aboard, a valiant choſen band.
Wide o'er the bay, by veſſel veſſel rides;
The beſt I chuſe to waft thee o'er the tides.
She ſpoke: to his high dome the prince returns, 335
And, as he moves, with royal anguiſh mourns.
'Twas riot all, among the lawleſs train;
Boar bled by boar, and goat by goat lay ſlain.
Arriv'd, his hand the gay Antinous preſt,
And, thus deriding, with a ſmile addreſt: 340
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 345
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. 350
Suffice it to have ſpent with ſwift decay
The wealth of kings, and made my youth a prey.

But

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, 355
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. 360
He spoke and frown'd, nor longer degn'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: 365
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 warriour flies:
Or comes from Ephyré with poisons fraught, 370
And kills us all in one tremendous draught?
Or who can say (his gamesome mate replies)
But, while the dangers of the deeps he tries,
He, like his sire, may sink deprivd of breath,
And punish us unkindly by his death? 375
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!
Meantime the lofty rooms the prince surveys, 380
Where lay the treasures of th' Ithacian race:

Here

Here ruddy brafs and gold refulgent blaz'd;
There polifh'd chefts embroider'd veftures grac'd;
Here jars of oil breath'd forth a rich perfume;
There cafks of wine in rows adorn'd the dome 385
(Pure flavorous wine, by Gods in bounty given,
And worthy to exalt the feafts of heaven).
Untouch'd they ftood, till, his long labours o'er,
The great Ulyffes reach'd his native fhore.
A double ftrength of bars fecur'd the gates: 390
Faft by the door the wife Euryclea waits;
Euryclea, who, great Ops! thy lineage fhar'd,
And watch'd all night, all day; a faithful guard.
To whom the prince: O thou, whofe guardian care
Nurs'd the moft wretched king that breathes the air;
Untouch'd and facred may thefe veffels ftand,
Till great Ulyffes views his native land.
But by thy care twelve urns of wine be fill'd;
Next thefe in worth, and firm thofe urns be feal'd;
And twice ten meafures of the choiceft flour 400
Prepar'd, ere yet defcends the evening hour.
For when the favouring fhades of night arife,
And peaceful flumbers clofe my mother's eyes,
Me from our coaft fhall fpreading fails convey,
To feek Ulyffes through the watery way. 405
While yet he fpoke, fhe fill'd the walls with cries,
And tears ran trickling from her aged eyes.
Oh whither, whither flies my fon? fhe cry'd,
To realms, that rocks and roaring feas divide?

In

In foreign lands thy father's days decay'd, 410
And foreign lands contain the mighty dead.
The watery way ill-fated if thou try,
All, all muſt periſh, and by fraud you die!
Then ſtay, my child! ſtorms beat, and rolls the main;
Oh, beat thoſe ſtorms, and roll the ſeas in vain! 415
Far hence (reply'd the prince) thy fears be driven:
Heaven calls me forth; theſe counſels are of Heaven.
But, by the powers that hate the perjur'd, ſwear,
To keep my voyage from the royal ear,
Nor uncompell'd the dangerous truth betray, 420
Till twice ſix times deſcends the lamp of day:
Leſt the ſad tale a mother's life impair,
And grief deſtroy what time a while would ſpare.
Thus he. The matron with uplifted eyes
Atteſts th' all-ſeeing Sovereign of the ſkies. 425
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 thee, Telemachus, in voice and ſize, 430
With ſpeed divine from ſtreet to ſtreet ſhe flies,
She bids the mariners prepar'd, to ſtand,
When night deſcends, embody'd on the ſtrand.
Then to Noëmon ſwift ſhe runs, ſhe flies,
And aſks a bark: the chief a bark ſupplies. 435
And now, declining with his ſloping wheels,
Down ſunk the ſun behind the weſtern hills.

The

The Goddess shov'd the vessel from the shores,
And stow'd within its womb the naval stores.
Full in the openings of the spacious main 440
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 every eye with slumberous chains she bound,
And dash'd the flowing goblet to the ground. 445
Drowsy they rose, with heavy fumes oppress,
Reel'd from the palace, and retir'd to rest.
Then thus, in Mentor's reverend form array'd,
Spoke to Telemachus the martial maid.
Lo! on the seas, prepar'd the vessel stands, 450
Th' impatient mariner thy speed demands.
Swift as she spoke, with rapid pace she 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. 455
He bids them bring their stores; th' attending train
Load the tall bark, and launch into the main.
The Prince and Goddess to the stern ascend;
To the strong stroke at once the rowers bend.
Full from the west she bids fresh breezes blow; 460
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 it to the wind. 465

High

High o'er the roaring waves the ſpreading ſails
Bow the 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 wine
The holy goblet to the powers divine:
Imploring all the Gods that reign above,
But chief the blue-eyed progeny of Jove.
  Thus all the night they ſtem the liquid way,
And end their voyage with the morning ray. 475

THE

THE
THIRD BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

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 paſt 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 inquire further of Menelaus. The ſacrifice ended 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 lies on the ſea-ſhore of Pylos.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK III.

THE ſacred ſun, above the waters rais'd,
Through heaven'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, 5
Before old Neleus' 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. 10
They taſte the entrails, and the altars load
With ſmoking thighs, an offering to the God.
Full for the port the Ithacenſians ſtand,
And furl their ſails, and iſſue on the land.
Telemachus already preſt the ſhore; 15
Not firſt, the Power of Wiſdom march'd before,
And, ere the ſacrificing throng he join'd,
Admoniſh'd thus his well-attending mind:
Proceed, my ſon! this youthful ſhame expel;
An honeſt buſineſs never bluſh to tell. 20
To learn what fates thy wretched ſire detain,
We paſs'd 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; 25
And ſure he will: for Wiſdom never lies.
Oh, 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? 30
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 heavenly power, 35
Shall riſe ſpontaneous in the needful hour.
For nought unproſperous ſhall thy ways attend,
Born with good omens, and with heaven thy friend.
She ſpoke, and led the way with ſwifteſt ſpeed:
As ſwift, the youth purſued the way ſhe led; 40
And join'd the band before the ſacred fire,
Where ſate, encompaſt with his ſons, the ſire.
The youth of Pylos, ſome on pointed wood
Transfix'd the fragments, ſome prepar'd the food.
In friendly throngs they gather to embrace 45
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 ſate with youthful Thraſymed. 50
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 addreſt:

Whoe'er

Whoe'er thou art, whom Fortune brings to keep 55
The rites of Neptune, monarch of the deep,
The firſt it fits, oh ſtranger! to prepare
Thee due libation and the ſolemn prayer:
Then give thy friend to ſhed the ſcared wine:
Though much thy younger, and his years like mine,
He too, I deem, implores the Powers divine:
For all mankind alike require their grace,
All born to want; a miſerable race!
He ſpake, and to her hand prefer'd the bowl:
A ſecret pleaſure touch'd Athena's ſoul, 65
To ſee the preference 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 70
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. 75
Thus ſhe; and, having paid the rite divine,
Gave to Ulyſſes' ſon the roſy wine.
Suppliant he pray'd. And, now the victims dreſt,
They draw, divide, and celebrate the feaſt.
The banquet done, the narrative old man, 80
Thus mild, the pleaſing conference began:
Now, gentle gueſts! the genial banquet o'er,
It fits to aſk you, what your native ſhore,

And whence your race? on what adventure, ſay,
Thus far ye wander through the watery way? 85
Relate, if buſineſs, or the thirſt of gain,
Engage your journey o'er the pathleſs main:
Where ſavage pirates ſeek through ſeas unknown
The lives of others, venturous of their own.
Urg'd by the precepts by the Goddeſs given, 90
And fill'd with confidence infus'd from heaven,
The youth, whom Pallas deſtin'd to be wiſe
And fam'd among the ſons of men, replies:
Inquir'ſt thou, father! from what coaſt we came?
(Oh, grace and glory of the Grecian name!) 95
From where high Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,
Brown with o'er-arching ſhades and pendent woods,
Us to theſe ſhores our filial duty draws,
A private ſorrow, not a public cauſe.
My ſire I ſeek, where-e'er the voice of Fame 100
Has told the glories of his noble name,
The great Ulyſſes; fam'd from ſhore to ſhore
For valour much, for hardy ſuffering more.
Long time with thee before proud Ilion's wall
In arms he fought; with thee beheld her fall. 105
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 gulphy main?
Of this to learn, oppreſt with tender fears, 110
Lo! at thy knee his ſuppliant ſon appears.
If or thy certain eye, or curious ear,
Have learnt his fate, the whole dark ſtory clear:

And,

And, oh! whate'er heaven deſtin'd to betide,
Let neither flattery ſmooth, nor pity hide. 115
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, 120
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 experienc'd Neſtor thus rejoin'd: 125
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: 130
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, 135
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? 140
Not added years on years my taſk could cloſe,
The long hiſtorian of my country's woes:
Back to thy native iſlands might'ſt thou ſail,
And leave half-heard the melancholy tale.

Nine painful years on that deteſted ſhore; 145
What ſtratagems we form'd, what toils we bore!
Still labouring 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. 150
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 ſire and I were one; nor vary'd ought 155
In public ſentence, or in private thought;
Alike to council or th' aſſembly came,
With equal ſouls, and ſentiments the ſame.
But when (by Wiſdom won) proud Ilion burn'd,
And in their ſhips the conquering Greeks return'd;
'Twas God's high will the victors to divide,
And turn th' event, confounding human pride:
Some he deſtroy'd, ſome ſcatter'd as the duſt,
(Not all were prudent, and not all were juſt).
Then Diſcord, ſent by Pallas from above, 165
Stern daughter of the great avenger Jove,
The brother-kings inſpir'd with fell debate;
Who call'd to council all th' Achaian ſtate,
But call'd untimely (not the ſacred rite
Obſerv'd, nor heedful of the ſetting light, 170
Nor herald ſworn the ſeſſion to proclaim).
Sour with debauch, a reeling tribe they came.
To theſe the cauſe of meeting they explain,
And Menelaüs moves to croſs the main;

Not

Not ſo the King of Men: he will'd to ſtay: 175
Theſe 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 ireful taunts each other they oppoſe,
Till in loud tumult all the Greeks aroſe. 180
Now different counſels every 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, 185
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); 190
For Tenedos we ſpread our eager oars,
There land, and pay due victims to the Powers:
To bleſs our ſafe return we join in prayer;
But angry Jove diſpers'd our vows in air,
And rais'd new diſcord. Then (ſo Heaven decreed)
Ulyſſes firſt and Neſtor diſagreed:
Wiſe 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. 200
With us, Tydides fear'd, and urg'd his haſte:
And Menelaüs came, but came the laſt.
He join'd our veſſels in the Leſbian bay,
While yet we doubted of our watery way;

If to the right to urge the pilot's toil, 205
(The ſafer road) beſide the Pſyrian iſle;
Or the ſtraight courſe to rocky Chios plow,
And anchor under Mimas' ſhaggy brow?
We ſought direction of the Power divine:
The God propitious gave the guiding ſign; 210
Through the mild ſeas he bid our navy ſteer,
And in Eubœa ſhun the woes we fear.
The whiſtling winds already wak'd the ſky;
Before the whiſtling winds the veſſels fly,
With rapid ſwiftneſs cut the liquid way, 215
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 wiſh'd-for ſhore. 220
But I to Pylos ſcud before the gales,
The Gods ſtill breathing on my ſwelling ſails;
Separate from all, I ſafely landed here;
Their fates or fortunes never reach'd my ear.
Yet what I learn'd, attend; as here I ſate,
And aſk'd 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, 230
Brave Philoctetes, taught to wing the dart;
And thoſe whom Idomen from Ilion's plain
Had led, ſecurely croſt the dreadful main.
How Agamemnon touch'd his Argive coaſt,
And how his life by fraud and force he loſt, 235

And how the murderer paid his forfeit breath;
What lands so distant from that scene of death
But trembling heard the fame? and, heard, admire
How well the son appeas'd his slaughter'd sire!
Ev'n to th' unhappy, that unjustly bleed, 240
Heaven gives posterity, t' avenge the deed.
So fell Ægysthus; and may'st thou, my friend,
(On whom the virtues of thy sire descend)
Make future times thy equal act adore,
And be what brave Orestes was before! 245

The prudent youth reply'd: O 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 bless! 250
And the proud suitors shall its force confess:
Injurious men! who while my soul is sore
Of fresh affronts, are meditating more.
But Heaven denies this honour to my hand,
Nor shall my father repossess the land: 255
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 crouds of rivals for thy mother's charms 260
Thy palace fill with insults and alarms?
Say, is the fault, through tame submission, thine?
Or, leagued against thee, do thy people join,
Mov'd by some oracle, or voice divine?
And yet who knows, but ripening lies in fate 265
An hour of vengeance for th' afflicted state;

When

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, 270
(Whoſe fame and ſafety was her conſtant care
In every danger and in every war:
Never on man did heavenly favour ſhine
With rays ſo ſtrong, diſtinguiſh'd, and divine,
As thoſe with which Minerva mark'd thy ſire) 275
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 Heaven denies. 280
Ev'n by celeſtial favour were it given,
Fortune or Fate would croſs the will of Heaven.
What words are theſe, and what imprudence thine?
(Thus interpos'd the martial Maid divine)
Forgetful youth! but know, the Power above 285
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 labouring gains his natal ſhore at laſt; 290
Than who, too ſpeedy, haſtes to end his life
By ſome ſtern ruffian, or adulterous wife.
Death only is the lot which none can miſs,
And all is poſſible to Heaven, but this.
The beſt, the deareſt favourite of the ſky 295
Muſt taſte that cup, for man is born to die.

Thus

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!
Paſs 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 Ægyſthus wrought, relate 310
(By force he could not) ſuch a hero's fate?
Liv'd Menelaüs not in Greece! or where
Was then the martial brother's pious care?
Condemn'd perhaps ſome foreign ſhore to tread;
Or ſure Ægyſthus had not dar'd the deed. 315
To whom the full of days: Illuſtrious youth!
Attend (though partly thou haſt gueſt) the truth.
For had the martial Menelaüs found
The ruffian breathing yet on Argive ground;
Nor earth had hid his carcaſe from the ſkies, 320
Nor Grecian virgins ſkriek'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; 325
He, ſtretch'd at eaſe in Argos' calm receſs,
(Whoſe ſtately ſteeds luxuriant paſtures bleſs)

With

With flattery's insinuating art
Sooth'd the frail queen, and poison'd all her heart.
At first, with worthy shame and decent pride, 330
The royal dame his lawless suit deny'd.
For Virtue's image yet possest her mind,
Taught by a master of the tuneful kind:
Atrides, parting from the Trojan war,
Consign'd the youthful consort to his care. 335
True to his charge, the bard preserv'd her long
In honour's limits; such the power 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, 340
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 lust a voluntary prey. 345
Ev'n to the temple stalk'd th' adulterous spouse,
With impious thanks, and mockery of vows,
With images, with garments, and with gold;
And odorous fumes from loaded altars roll'd.
Meantime from flaming Troy we cut the way, 350
With Menelaüs, through the curling sea.
But when to Sunium'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 355
To steer the bounding bark with steady toil,
When the storm thickens, and the billows boil);

While

While yet he exercis'd the ſteerman's art,
Apollo touch'd him with his gentle dart;
Ev'n with the rudder in his hand he fell. 360
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
Far on the gloomy boſom of the deep: 365
Soon as Malæa's miſty tops ariſe,
Sudden the Thunderer 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; 373
Part the ſtorm urges on the coaſt of Crete,
Where, winding round the rich Cydonian plain,
The ſtreams of Jardan iſſue to the main.
There ſtands a rock, high eminent and ſteep,
Whoſe ſhaggy brow o'erhangs the ſhady deep, 375
And views Gortyna on the weſtern ſide;
On this rough Auſter drove th' impetuous tide:
With broken force the billows roll'd away,
And heav'd the fleet into the neighbouring bay;
Thus ſav'd from death, they gain'd the Phæſtan 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 Menelaus through foreign ſhores,
Amaſſing gold, and gathering naval ſtores; 385
While curſt Ægyſthus the deteſted deed
By fraud fulfill'd, and his great brother bled.

Seven

Seven years the traitor rich Mycenæ ſway'd,
And his ſtern rule the groaning land obey'd;
The eighth, from Athens, to his realm reſtor'd, 390
Oreſtes brandiſh'd the revenging ſword,
Slew the dire pair, and gave to funeral flame
The vile aſſaſſin, and adulterous dame.
That day, ere yet the bloody triumphs ceaſe,
Return'd Atrides to the coaſt of Greece, 395
And ſafe to Argos' port his navy brought,
With gifts of price and ponderous treaſure fraught.
Hence warn'd, my ſon, beware! nor idly ſtand
Too long a ſtranger to thy native land;
Leſt heedleſs abſence wear thy wealth away, 400
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 rifled iſle.
Howe'er, my friend, indulge one labour more, 405
And ſeek Atrides on the Spartan ſhore.
He, wandering 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; 410
(A length of ocean and unbounded ſky,
Which ſcarce the ſea-fowl in a year o'erfly).
Go then; to Sparta take the watery way,
Thy ſhip and ſailors but for orders ſtay;
Or, if by land thou chuſe thy courſe to bend, 415
My ſteeds, my chariots, and my ſons, attend:
Thee to Atrides they ſhall ſafe convey,
Guides of thy road, companions of thy way.

Urge

Urge him with truth to frame his free replies,
And ſure he will; for Menalaus is wiſe. 420
Thus while he ſpeaks, the ruddy ſun deſcends,
And twilight grey her evening ſhade extends.
Then thus the blue-ey'd Maid: O full of days!
Wiſe are thy words, and juſt are all thy ways.
Now immolate the tongues, and mix the wine, 425
Sacred to Neptune and the Powers 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. 430
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 beverage flows; 435
While to the final ſacrifice they roſe.
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 440
Propoſe departure from the finiſh'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 445
Of ſuch a hero, and of ſuch a friend!
Me, as ſome needy peaſant, would ye leave,
Whom Heaven denies the bleſſing to relieve?

Me

Me would you leave, who boaſt imperial ſway.
When beds of royal ſtate invite your ſtay? 450
No—long as life this mortal ſhall inſpire,
Or as my children imitate their ſire,
Here ſhall the wandering ſtranger find his home,
And hoſpitable rites adorn the dome.
Well haſt thou ſpoke, (the blue-ey'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, 460
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. 465
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, 470
Let thy ſtrong courſers 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. 475
Viſion divine! the throng'd ſpectators gaze
In holy wonder fix'd, and ſtill amaze.
But chief the reverend ſage admir'd; he took
The hand of young Telemachus, and ſpoke:

Oh

Oh, happy youth! and favour'd of the ſkies, 480
Diſtinguiſh'd care of guardian Deities!
Whoſe early years for future worth engage,
No vulgar manhood, no ignoble age.
For, lo! none other of the court above
Than ſhe, the daughter of almighty Jove, 485
Pallas herſelf, the war-triumphant maid,
Confeſt is thine, as once thy father's aid.
So guide me, Goddeſs! ſo propitious ſhine
On me, my conſort, and my royal line!
A yearling bullock to thy name ſhall ſmoke, 490
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 vow: the favouring Goddeſs heard. 495
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 grandſons 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 refin'd, and roſy-bright). 505
To Pallas high the foaming bowl he crown'd,
And ſprinkled large libations 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, 510
And ſlept beneath the pompous colonade;
Faſt by his ſide Piſiſtratus lay ſpread,
(In age his equal) on a ſplendid bed:
But in an inner court, ſecurely clos'd,
The reverend Neſtor 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 ſate
On poliſh'd ſtone before his palace-gate:
With unguents ſmooth the lucid marble ſhone, 520
Where ancient Neleus ſate, a ruſtic throne;
But he deſcending to th' infernal ſhade,
Sage Neſtor fill'd it, and the ſceptre ſway'd.
His ſons around him mild obeiſance pay,
And duteous take the orders of the day. 525
Firſt Echephron and Stratius quit their bed:
Then Perſeus, Aretus, and Thraſymed;
The laſt Piſiſtratus aroſe from reſt:
They came, and near him plac'd the ſtranger-gueſt.
To theſe the ſenior thus declar'd his will: 530
My ſons! the dictates of your ſire fulfil.
To Pallas, firſt of Gods, prepare the feaſt,
Who grac'd our rites, a more than mortal gueſt.
Let one, diſpatchful, bid ſome ſwain to lead
A well-fed bullock from the graſſy mead; 535
One ſeek the harbour where the veſſels moor,
And bring thy friends, Telemachus! aſhore
(Leave only two the galley to attend);
Another to Laerceus muſt we ſend,

Artiſt

Artiſt divine, whoſe ſkilful hands infold 540
The victim's horn with circumfuſile 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. 545
He ſaid, and buſy each his care beſtow'd;
Already at the gates the bullock low'd,
Already came the Ithacenſian crew,
The dextrous ſmith the tools already drew:
His ponderous hammer, and his anvil ſound, 550
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 Aretus from forth his bridal bower
Brought the full laver, o'er their hands to pour,
And caniſters of conſecrated flour.
Stratius and Echephron the victim led; 560
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 Power;
Scatters with quivering hand the ſacred flour, 565
And the ſtream ſprinkles: from the curling brows
The hair collected in the fire he throws.
Soon as due vows on every part were paid,
And ſacred wheat upon the victim laid,

Strong Thrasymed discharg'd the speeding blow 570
Full on his neck, and cut the nerves in two.
Down sunk the heavy beast: the females round,
Maids, wives, and matrons, mix a shrilling sound.
Nor scorn'd the queen the holy choir to join
(The first-born she, of old Clymenus' line; 575
In youth by Nestor lov'd, of spotless fame,
And lov'd in age, Eurydice her name).
From earth they rear him, struggling now with death;
And Nestor's youngest stops the vents of breath.
The soul for ever flies: on all sides round 580
Streams the black blood, and smokes upon the ground.
The beast they then divide, and disunite
The ribs and limbs, observant of the rite:
On these, in double cawls involv'd with art,
The choicest morsels lay from every part. 585
The sacred sage before his altar stands,
Turns the burnt-offering with his holy hands,
And pours the wine, and bids the flames aspire:
The youth with instruments surround the fire.
The thighs now sacrific'd, and entrails drest, 590
Th' assistants part, transfix, and broil the rest.
While these officious tend the rites divine,
The last fair branch of the Nestorean line,
Sweet Polycaste, took the pleasing toil
To bathe the prince, and pour the fragrant oil. 595
O'er his fair limbs a flowery vest he threw,
And issued, like a God, to mortal view.
His former seat beside the king he found
(His people's father with his peers around);

All

All plac'd at eaſe the holy banquet join, 600
And in the dazzling goblet laughs the wine.
The rage of thirſt and hunger now ſuppreſt,
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. 605
Obſervant 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, ſuch as ſuit the ſtate of kings.
The glittering ſeat Telemachus aſcends; 610
His faithful guide Piſiſtratus attends;
With haſty hand the ruling reins he drew:
He laſh'd the courſers, and the courſers flew.
Beneath the bounding yoke alike they held
Their equal pace, and ſmok'd along the field. 615
The towers of Pylos ſink, its views decay,
Fields after fields fly back, till cloſe of day:
Then ſunk the ſun, and darken'd all the way.
To Pheræ now, Diocleus' ſtately ſeat
(Of Alpheus's race), the weary youths retreat. 620
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 luſtre purpled o'er the lawn;
Again they mount, their journey to renew, 625
And from the ſounding portico they flew.
Along the waving fields their way they hold,
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. 630

THE FOURTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT.

THE CONFERENCE WITH MENELAUS.

TELEMACHUS with Pisistratus 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 apprized of this; but comforted in a dream by Pallas, in the shape of her sister Ipthima.

THE

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK IV.

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 sate Atrides 'midst his bridal friends,
With double vows invoking Hymen's power, 5
To bless his sons and daughters nuptial hour.
That day, to great Achilles' son resign'd,
Hermione, the fairest of the kind,
Was sent to crown the long-protracted joy,
Espous'd before the final doom of Troy: 10
With steeds and gilded cars, a gorgeous train
Attend the nymph to Phthia's distant reign.
Meanwhile at home, to Megapenthes' bed
The virgin-choir Alector's daughter led.
Brave Megapenthes, from a stol'n amour 15
To great Atrides' age his hand-maid 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. 20
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 25
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 Neſtor ſhone,
And faſt beſide him great Ulyſſes' ſon: 30
Grave Eteoneus ſaw the pomp appear,
And, ſpeeding, thus addreſs'd the royal ear:
Two youths approach, whoſe ſemblant features prove
Their blood devolving from the ſource of Jove.
Is due reception deign'd, or muſt they bend 35
Their doubtful courſe to ſeek a diſtant friend?
Inſenſate! (with a ſigh the king replies)
Too long, miſ-judging, have I thought thee wiſe:
But ſure relentleſs folly ſteels thy breaſt,
Obdurate to reject the ſtranger-gueſt; 40
To thoſe dear hoſpitable rites a foe,
Which in my wanderings oft reliev'd my woe:
Fed by the bounty of another's board,
Till pitying Jove my native realm reſtor'd—
Straight be the courſers from the car releaſt, 45
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; 50
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 vaſt delight;

Refplendent as the blaze of fummer-noon, 55
Or the pale radiance of the midnight moon.
From room to room their eager view they bend;
Thence to the bath, a beauteous pile, defcend;
Where a bright damfel-train attend the guefts
With liquid odours, and embroider'd vefts. 60
Refrefh'd, they wait them to the bower of ftate,
Where circled with his peers Atrides fate:
Thron'd next the king, a fair attendant brings
The pureft product of the cryftal fprings;
High on a maffy vafe of filver mold, 65
The burnifh'd laver flames with folid gold;
In folid gold the purple vintage flows,
And on the board a fecond banquet rofe.
When thus the king with hofpitable port:—
Accept this welcome to the Spartan court; 70
The wafte of nature let the feaft repair,
Then your high lineage and your names declare:
Say from what fcepter'd anceftry ye claim,
Recorded eminent in deathlefs fame?
For vulgar parents cannot ftamp their race 75
With fignatures of fuch majeftic grace.
Ceafing, benevolent he ftraight affigns
The royal portion of the choiceft chines
To each accepted friend: with grateful hafte
They fhare the honours of the rich repaft. 80
Suffic'd, foft-whifpering thus to Neftor's fon,
His head reclin'd, young Ithacus begun:
View'ft thou unmov'd, O ever-honour'd moft!
Thefe prodigies of art, and wondrous coft!

Above,

Above, beneath, around the palace ſhines 85
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. 90
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, 95
Envy will own the purchaſe dearly paid.
For eight ſlow-circling years by tempeſt toſt,
From Cyprus to the far Phœnician coaſt
(Sidon the capital), I ſtretch'd my toil
Through regions fatten'd with the flows of Nile. 100
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 Libyan wave to ſpread my ſails:
That happy clime! where each revolving year 105
The teeming ewes 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; 110
Nor want of herbage makes the dairy fail,
But every ſeaſon fills the foaming pail.
Whilſt, heaping unwiſh'd wealth, I diſtant roam;
The beſt of brothers, at his natal home,

By

By the dire fury of a traitreſs wife, 115
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 wars, the copious theme of every tongue,
To you, your fathers have recorded long: 120
How favouring Heaven 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 fir'd, 125
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. 130
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 power 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! 140
Whether he wanders on ſome friendleſs coaſt,
Or glides in Stygian gloom a penſive ghoſt,
No fame reveals; but, doubtful of his doom,
His good old ſire with ſorrow to the tomb

Declines

Declines his trembling ſteps; untimely care 145
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: 150
Studious to veil the grief, in vain repreſt,
His face he ſhrouded with his purple veſt:
The conſcious monarch pierc'd the coy diſguiſe,
And view'd his filial love with vaſt ſurprize:
Dubious to preſs the tender theme, or wait 155
To hear the youth enquire his father's fate.
In this ſuſpence 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 chace! 160
The ſeat of majeſty Adraſte brings,
With art illuſtrious, for the pomp of kings;
To ſpread the pall (beneath the regal chair)
Of ſofteſt woof, is bright Alcippe's care.
A ſilver caniſter, divinely wrought, 165
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), 170
When to that court Atrides came, careſt
With vaſt munificence th' imperial gueſt:
Two lavers from the richeſt ore refin'd,
With ſilver tripods, the kind hoſt aſſign'd;

And

And bounteous from the royal treasure told 175
Ten equal talents of refulgent gold.
Alcandra, consort of his high command,
A golden distaff gave to Helen's hand;
And that rich vase, with living sculpture 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 scepter'd lord address'd:
Who grace our palace now, that friendly pair, 185
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 wrapt, on yonder cheek I trace
The feature of the Ulyssean race: 190
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, 195
T' avenge the stain of my ill-fated charms!
Just is thy thought, the king assenting cries,
Methinks Ulysses strikes my wondering eyes:
Full shines the father in the filial frame,
His port, his features, and his shape, the same: 200
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

Dismay'd, heart-wounded with paternal woes, 205
Above restraint the tide of sorrow rose:
Cautious to let the gushing grief appear,
His purple garment veil'd the falling tear.
  See there confest, Pisistratus replies,
The genuine worth of Ithacus the wise! 210
Of that heroic fire the youth is sprung,
But modest awe hath chain'd his timorous 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, 215
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, 220
Still must the wrong'd Telemachus sustain,
If, hopeful of your aid, he hopes in vain:
Affianc'd in your friendly power alone,
The youth would vindicate the vacant throne.
  Is Sparta blest, and these desiring eyes 225
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:
Mirrour of constant faith, rever'd, and mourn'd!—
When Troy was ruin'd, had the chief return'd, 230
No Greek an equal space had e'er possest,
Of dear affection in my grateful breast.
I, to confirm the mutual joys we shar'd,
For his abode a capital prepar'd;

Argos

Argos the ſeat of ſovereign rule I choſe; 235
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 reſign'd a ſoil,
With teeming plenty to reward their toil. 240
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 Power the bliſsful ſcene deſtroys; 245
Vaniſh'd are all the viſionary joys:
The ſoul of friendſhip to my hope is loſt,
Fated to wander from his natal coaſt!
He ceas'd; a guſt of grief began to riſe,
Faſt ſtreams a tide from beauteous Helen's eyes; 250
Faſt for the ſire the filial ſorrows flow;
The weeping monarch ſwells the mighty woe:
Thy cheeks, Piſiſtratus, the tears bedew,
While pictur'd to thy mind appear'd in view
Thy martial * brother: on the Phrygian plain 255
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 raiſe
And charm attention with thy copious praiſe: 260
To crown thy various gifts, the ſage aſſign'd
The glory of a firm capacious mind:

* Antilochus.

With that ſuperior attribute control
This unavailing impotence of ſoul.
Let not your roof with echoing grief reſound, 265
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: 270
O'er the congenial duſt injoin'd to ſhear
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 275
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. 280
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.
Whene'er his influence Jove vouchſafes to ſhower 285
To bleſs the natal, and the nuptial hour;
From the great ſire 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, 290
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 ſuit, Telemachus, delay, 295
Till Heaven's revolving lamp reſtores the day.
He ſaid, Aſphalion ſwift the laver brings;
Alternate all partake the grateful ſprings:
Then from the rites of purity repair,
And with keen guſt the ſavory viands ſhare. 300
Meantime, with genial joy to warm the ſoul,
Bright Helen mix'd a mirth-inſpiring bowl:
Temper'd with drugs of ſovereign uſe, t' aſſuage
The boiling boſom of tumultuous rage;
To clear the cloudy front of wrinkled Care, 305
And dry the tearful ſluices 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 groan'd his life away, 310
Or darling ſon, oppreſs'd by ruffian-force,
Fell breathleſs at his feet, a mangled corſe;
From morn to eve, impaſſive and ſerene,
The man entranc'd would view the deathful ſcene.
Theſe drugs, ſo friendly to the joys of life, 315
Bright Helen learn'd from Thone's imperial wife;
Who ſway'd the ſceptre, where prolific Nile
With various ſimples clothes the fatten'd ſoil.
With wholeſome herbage mix'd, the direful bane
Of vegetable venom taints the plain; 320
From Pæon ſprung, their patron-god imparts
To all the Pharian race his healing arts.

The beverage now prepar'd t' inſpire the feaſt,
The circle thus the beauteous queen addreſt:
Thron'd in omnipotence, ſupremeſt Jove 325
Tempers the fates of human race above;
By the firm ſanction of his ſovereign 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. 330
Myſelf, aſſiſting 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 paſs'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 340
The chief I challeng'd; he, whoſe practis'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 dreſs'd; 345
Each brightening 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. 350
Exploring then the ſecrets of the ſtate,
He learn'd what beſt might urge the Dardan fate:

And,

And, ſafe returning to the Grecian hoſt,
Sent many a ſhade to Pluto's dreary coaſt.
Loud grief reſounded through the towers of Troy, 355
But my pleas'd boſom 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: 360
And oft in bitterneſs of ſoul deplor'd
My abſent daughter, and my dearer lord;
Admir'd among the firſt of human race,
For every 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: 370
In battle calm, he guides the rapid ſtorm,
Wiſe to reſolve, and patient to perform.
What wondrous conduct in the chief appear'd,
When the vaſt fabrick of the ſteed we rear'd!
Some Dæmon, anxious for the Trojan doom, 375
Urg'd you with great Deïphobus to come,
T' 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: 380
The pleaſing ſounds each latent warrior warm'd,
But moſt Tydides' and my heart alarm'd:

To quit the ſteed we both impatient preſs,
Threatening to anſwer from the dark receſs.
Unmov'd the mind of Ithacus remain'd: 385
And the vain ardours of our love reſtrain'd:
But Anticlus, unable to control,
Spoke loud the language of his yearning ſoul:
Ulyſſes ſtraight, with indignation fir'd,
(For ſo the common care of Greece requir'd) 390
Firm to his lips his forceful hands apply'd,
Till on his tongue the fluttering murmurs dy'd.
Meantime Minerva, from the fraudful horſe,
Back to the court of Priam bent your courſe.
Inclement Fate! Telemachus replies, 395
Frail is the boaſted attribute of wiſe:
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. 400
He ceas'd; the menial fair that round her wait,
At Helen's beck prepare the room of ſtate;
Beneath an ample portico, they ſpread
The downy fleece to form the ſlumberous bed;
And o'er ſoft palls of purple grain, unfold 405
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 bower the king aſcends,
And beauteous Helen on her lord attends. 410
Soon as the morn, in orient purple dreſt,
Unbarr'd the portal of the roſeate eaſt,

The

The monarch rose; magnificent to view,
Th' imperial mantle o'er his vest he threw:
The glittering zone athwart his shoulder cast, 415
A starry faulchion 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: 420
Say, royal youth, sincere of soul, report
What cause hath led you to the Spartan court?
Do public or domestic cares constrain
This toilsome voyage o'er the surgy main?
O highly-favour'd delegate of Jove! 425
(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 sovereign seat a lewd usurping race
With lawless riot and misrule disgrace; 430
To pamper'd insolence devoted fall
Prime of the flock, and choicest of the stall:
For wild ambition wings their bold desire,
And all to mount th' imperial bed aspire.
But prostrate I implore, oh king! relate 435
The mournful series of my father's fate:
Each known disaster 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: 440
If e'er Ulysses, to reclaim your right,
Avow'd his zeal in council or in fight,

If Phrygian camps the friendly toils atteſt,
To the ſire's merit give the ſon's requeſt.
Deep from his inmoſt ſoul Atrides ſigh'd, 445
And thus indignant to the prince reply'd:
Heavens! would a ſoft, inglorious daſtard train
An abſent hero's nuptial joys profane!
So with her young, amid the woodland ſhades,
A timorous hind the lion's court invades, 450
Leaves in that fatal lair the tender fawns,
Climbs the green cliff, or feeds the flowery lawns:
Meantime return'd, with dire remorſeleſs ſway
The monarch ſavage rends the trembling prey.
With equal fury, and with equal fame, 455
Ulyſſes ſoon ſhall re-aſſert his claim.
O Jove, ſupreme, whom Gods and men revere!
And thou * to whom 'tis given to gild the ſphere!
With power congenial join'd, propitious aid
The chief adopted by the martial Maid! 460
Such to our wiſh the warriour ſoon reſtore,
As when contending on the Leſbian ſhore
His proweſs Philomelides confeſs'd,
And loud-acclaiming Greeks the victor bleſs'd:
Then ſoon th' invaders of his bed and throne 465
Their love preſumptuous ſhall with life atone.
With patient ear, O royal youth! attend
The ſtoried labours of thy father's friend:
Fruitful of deeds, the copious tale is long,
But truth ſevere ſhall dictate to my tongue: 470
Learn what I heard the ſea-born ſeer relate,
Whoſe eye can pierce the dark receſs of Fate.

Long

* Apollo.

Long on th' Ægyptian coaſt by calms confin'd,
Heaven to my fleet refus'd a proſperous wind:
No vows had we preferr'd, nor victim ſlain! 475
For this the Gods each favouring gale reſtrain:
Jealous, to ſee their high beheſts obey'd;
Severe, if men th' eternal rights evade.
High o'er a gulfy ſea, the Pharian iſle
Fronts the deep roar of diſemboguing Nile: 480
Her diſtance from the ſhore, the courſe begun
At dawn, and ending with the ſetting ſun,
A galley meaſures; when the ſtiffer gales
Riſe on the poop, and fully ſtretch the ſails.
There, anchor'd veſſels ſafe in harbour lie, 485
Whilſt limpid ſprings the failing caſk ſupply.
And now the twentieth ſun, deſcending, laves
His glowing axle in the weſtern waves;
Still with expanded ſails we court in vain
Propitious winds, to waft us o'er the main: 490
And the pale mariner at once deplores
His drooping vigour, and exhauſted ſtores,
When, lo! a bright cœrulean form appears,
The fair Eidothea! to diſpel my fears;
Proteus her ſire divine. With pity preſs'd, 495
Me ſole 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' afflictive fierce deſire of food. 500
Whoe'er thou art (the azure Goddeſs 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 meagre train 505
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 Goddess sure! for more than mortal grace
Speaks the descendant of ætherial race: 510
Deem not, that here of choice my fleet remains;
Some heavenly power 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? 515
What guilt provokes him, and what vows appease?
I ceas'd, when affable the Goddess cry'd;
Observe, and in the truths I speak confide:
Th' oraculous seer frequents the Pharian coast,
From whose high bed my birth divine I boast: 520
Proteus, a name tremendous o'er the main,
The delegate of Neptune's watery reign.
Watch with insidious care his known abode;
There fast in chains constrain the various God:
Who bound, obedient to superior force, 525
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. 530
She ceas'd, and suppliant thus I made reply:
O Goddess! on thy aid my hopes rely;

Dictate

Dictate propitious to my duteous ear,
What arts can captivate the changeful ſeer?
For perilous th' aſſay, unheard the toil, 535
T' elude the preſcience 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 Heaven the mounted ſun
Hath journey'd half, and half remains to run; 540
The ſeer, while zephyrs curl the ſwelling deep,
Baſks on the breezy ſhore, in grateful ſleep,
His oozy limbs. Emerging from the wave,
The Phocæ ſwift ſurround his rocky cave,
Frequent and full; the conſecrated train 545
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 receſs, commodious for ſurprize,
When purple light ſhall next ſuffuſe the ſkies, 550
With me repair; and from thy warriour band
Three choſen 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 555
The flouncing herd aſcending from the ſeas;
Their number ſumm'd, repos'd in ſleep profound
The ſcaly charge their guardian God ſurround:
So with his battening flocks the careful ſwain
Abides, pavilion'd on the graſſy plain. 560
With powers united, obſtinately bold
Invade him, couch'd amid the ſcaly fold:

Inſtant

* Amphitrite.

Inſtant he wears, eluſive of the rape,
The mimic force of every ſavage ſhape:
Or glides with liquid lapſe a murmuring ſtream, 565
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; 570
The cauſe that urg'd the bold attempt declare,
And ſoothe the vanquiſh'd with a victor's prayer.
The bands relax'd, implore the ſeer to ſay
What godhead interdicts the watery way?
Who ſtraight, propitious, in prophetic ſtrain 575
Will teach you to repaſs th' unmeaſur'd main.
She ceas'd, and, bounding from the ſhelfy ſhore,
Round the deſcending nymph the waves redounding roar.

High wrapt in wonder of the future deed,
With joy impetuous, to the port I ſpeed: 580
The wants of nature with repaſt ſuffice,
Till night with grateful ſhade involv'd the ſkies,
And ſhed ambroſial dews. Faſt by the deep,
Along the tented ſhore, in balmy ſleep,
Our cares were loſt. When o'er the eaſtern lawn, 585
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. 590

Arriv'd,

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 Phocæ takes, to veil her wiles:
Beneath the finny ſpoils, extended prone, 595
Hard toil! the prophet's piercing eye to ſhun;
New from the corſe, the ſcaly frauds diffuſe
Unſavory ſtench of oil, and brackiſh ooze;
But the bright ſea-maid's gentle power implor'd,
With nectar'd drops the ſickening ſenſe reſtor'd. 600
Thus till the ſun had travel'd half the ſkies,
Ambuſh'd we lie, 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 ſunny ſand, the monſters ſleep: 605
Then Proteus, mounting from the hoary deep,
Surveys his charge, unknowing of deceit
(In order told, we make the ſum compleat).
Pleas'd with the falſe review, ſecure he lies,
And leaden ſlumbers preſs his drooping eyes. 610
Ruſhing impetuous forth, we ſtraight 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; 615
Sudden, our bands a ſpotted pard reſtrain;
Then, arm'd with tuſks, and lightning in his eyes,
A boar's obſcener ſhape the God belies:
On ſpiry volumes, there, a dragon rides;
Here, from our ſtrict embrace a ſtream he glides: 620

And

And laſt, ſublime his ſtately growth he rears,
A tree, and well-diſſembled foliage wears.
Vain efforts! with ſuperior power compreſs'd,
Me with reluctance thus the ſeer addreſs'd:
Say, ſon of Atreus, ſay what God inſpir'd 625
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; 630
Unfriended of the gales. All-knowing! ſay,
What Godhead interdicts the watery way?
What vows repentant will the power 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 cheering face of friend, 640
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, 645
And altars blaze along his ſanguine 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, 650

A ſhelfy

A ſhelfy 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 hoſt, 655
Whom I with Neſtor on the Phrygian coaſt
Embracing left? Muſt I the warriours weep,
Whelm'd in the bottom of the monſtrous deep?
Or did the kind domeſtic friend deplore
The breathleſs heroes on their native ſhore? 660
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! 665
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. 670
By Neptune reſcued from Minerva's hate,
On Gyræ, ſafe Oïlean Ajax ſate,
His ſhip o'erwelm'd; but, frowning on the floods,
Impious he roar'd defiance to the Gods;
To his own proweſs all the glory gave, 675
The Power defrauding who vouchſaf'd to ſave.
This heard the raging Ruler of the main;
His ſpear, indignant for ſuch high diſdain,
He lanch'd; dividing with his forky mace
Th' aërial ſummit from the marble baſe; 680

The

The rock rush'd sea-ward with impetuous roar
Ingulf'd, and to th' abyss the boaster bore.
By Juno's guardian aid, the watery vast,
Secure of storms, your royal brother past:
Till coasting nigh the cape, where Malea shrouds 685
Her spiry cliffs amid surrounding clouds;
A whirling gust tumultuous from the shore
Across the deep his labouring vessel bore.
In an ill-fated hour the coast he gain'd,
Where late in regal pomp Thyestes reign'd; 690
But, when his hoary honours bow'd to Fate,
Ægysthus 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! 695
Far from his own domain salutes the soil:
With rapture oft' 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, 700
To bribe whose vigilance, Ægysthus 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 705
With terror wing'd conveys the dread report.
Of deathful arts expert, his lord employs
The ministers of blood in dark surprize:
And twenty youths in radiant mail incas'd,
Close ambush'd nigh the spacious hall he plac'd. 710

Then

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 coursers and triumphal cars
Magnificent he leads! the royal guest, 715
Thoughtless of ill, accepts the fraudful feast.
The troop, forth issuing from the dark recess,
With homicidal rage the king oppress!
So, whilst he feeds luxurious in the stall,
The sovereign of the herd is doom'd to fall. 720
The partners of his fame and toils at Troy,
Around their lord, a mighty ruin! lie:
Mix'd with the brave, the base invaders bleed;
Ægysthus sole survives to boast the deed.
He said; chill horrors shook my shivering soul, 725
Rack'd with convulsive pangs in dust I roll;
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 addreſt
The preſcient Godhead to reveal the reſt.
The doom decreed of thoſe diſaſtrous two 745
I 've heard with pain, but, oh! the tale purſue;
What third brave ſon of Mars the Fates conſtrain
To roam the howling deſart of the main:
Or, in eternal ſhade if cold he lies,
Provoke new ſorrow from theſe grateful eyes. 750
That chief (rejoin'd the God) his race derives
From Ithaca, and wondrous woes ſurvives;
Laertes' ſon: girt with circumfluous tides,
He ſtill calamitous conſtraint abides.
Him in Calypſo's cave of late I view'd, 755
When ſtreaming grief his faded cheek bedew'd.
But vain his prayer, his arts are vain, to move
Th' enamour'd Goddeſs, or elude her love:
His veſſel ſunk, and dear companions loſt,
He lives reluctant on a foreign coaſt. 760
But oh, belov'd by Heaven! 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 765
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 unfading prime; 770

From

From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
Mould 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 775
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. 780
Arriv'd, the rage of hunger we control,
Till night with ſilent ſhade inveſts the pole;
Then loſe the cares of life in pleaſing reſt.—
Soon as the morn reveals the roſeate eaſt,
With ſails 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 deſtin'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, 795
The friendly Gods a ſpringing gale enlarg'd:
The fleet ſwift tilting o'er the ſurges flew,
Till Grecian cliffs appear'd, a bliſsful view!
Thy patient ear hath heard me long relate
A ſtory, fruitful of diſaſtrous 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.
Meantime my train the friendly gifts prepare, 805
Three sprightly coursers, and a polish'd car:
With these, a goblet of capacious mould,
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 haste constrain,
Charm'd by your speech, so graceful and humane,
Lost in delight the circling year would roll, 815
While deep attention fix'd my listening soul.
But now to Pyle permit my destin'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 vase; 820
The coursers, for the champaign sports, retain;
That gift our barren rocks will render vain:
Horrid with cliffs, our meagre land allows
Thin herbage for the mountain goat to browze,
But neither mead nor plain supplies, to feed 825
The sprightly courser, or indulge his speed:
To sea-surrounded realms the Gods assign
Small tract of fertile lawn, the least to mine.
His hand the king with tender passion press'd,
And, smiling, thus the royal youth address'd: 830

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 mould of ſilver, grac'd 835
By Vulcan's art, the verge with gold enchas'd;
A pledge the ſcepter'd power of Sidon gave,
When to his realm I plough'd the orient wave.
Thus they alternate; while with artful care
The menial train the regal feaſt prepare: 840
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 gilt roofs with genial triumph ring.
Meanwhile, in Ithaca, the ſuitor-powers 845
In active games divide their jovial hours:
In areas vary'd with moſaic art,
Some whirl the diſk, and ſome the javelin dart.
Aſide, ſequeſter'd from the vaſt reſort,
Antinous ſate ſpectator of the ſport; 850
With great Eurymachus, of worth confeſt,
And high deſcent, ſuperior to the reſt;
Whom young Noëmon lowly thus addreſt:
My ſhip equipp'd within the neighbouring port,
The prince, departing for the Pylian court, 855
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 plough, 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 bower they fondly thought,
Numbering his flocks and herds, not far remote. 865
Relate, Antinous cries, devoid of guile,
When ſpread the prince his ſail for diſtant Pyle?
Did choſen chiefs acroſs the gulfy main
Attend his voyage, or domeſtic train?
Spontaneous did you ſpeed his ſecret courſe, 870
Or was the veſſel ſeiz'd by fraud or force?
With willing duty, not reluctant mind,
(Noëmon 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 power to you:
And Mentor, captain of the lordly crew,
Or ſome celeſtial in his reverend form,
Safe from the ſecret rock and adverſe ſtorm,
Pilots the courſe: for when the glimmering ray 880
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 addreſt,
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,

Fly unperceiv'd, ſeducing half the flower 890
Of nobles, and invite a foreign power?
The ponderous engine rais'd to cruſh us all,
Recoiling, on his head is ſure to fall.
Inſtant prepare me, on the neighbouring ſtrand,
With twenty choſen mates a veſſel mann'd; 895
For ambuſh'd cloſe beneath the Samian ſhore
His ſhip 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; 900
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: 905
What will the ſuitors? muſt my ſervant-train
Th' allotted labours of the day refrain,
For them to form ſome exquiſite repaſt?
Heaven grant this feſtival may prove their laſt!
Or, if they ſtill muſt live, from me remove 910
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? 915
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, 920
The people's parent, he protected all:
But abſent now, perfidious and ingrate!
His ſtores ye ravage, and uſurp his ſtate.
He thus: O were the woes you ſpeak the worſt!
They form a deed more odious and accurſt; 925
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, 930
From Pyle re-ſailing and the Spartan court;
Horrid to ſpeak! in ambuſh is decreed
The hope and heir of Ithaca to bleed!
Sudden ſhe ſunk beneath the weighty woes,
The vital ſtreams a chilling horror froze: 935
The big round tear ſtands trembling in her eye,
And on her tongue imperfect accents dye.
At length, in tender language, interwove
With ſighs, ſhe thus expreſs'd her anxious love:
Why raſhly would my ſon his fate explore, 940
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 given
To know, if ſome inhabitant of Heaven 945
In his young breaſt the daring thought inſpir'd;
Or if, alone with filial duty fir'd,
The winds and waves he tempts in early bloom,
Studious to learn his abſent father's doom.

The

The ſage retir'd: unable to control 950
The mighty griefs that ſwell her labouring 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. 955
Around their ſoveregn wept the menial fair,
To whom ſhe 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, 960
His country's buckler, and the Grecian boaſt:
Now from my fond embrace, by tempeſts torn,
Our other column of the ſtate is borne:
Nor took a kind adieu, nor ſought conſent!—
Unkind confederates in his dire intent! 965
Ill ſuits it with your ſhews of duteous 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, 670
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 975
To good Laertes tell. Experienc'd age
May timely intercept the ruffian-rage.
Convene the tribes, the murderous plot reveal,
And to their power to ſave his race appeal,

Then

Then Euryclea thus: My dearest dread! 980
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:
Auxiliar to his flight, my aid implor'd,
With wine and viands I the vessel stor'd: 985
A solemn oath, impos'd, the secret seal'd,
Till the twelfth dawn the light of heaven reveal'd.
Dreading th' effect of a fond mother's fear,
He dar'd not violate your royal ear.
But bathe, and, in imperial robes array'd, 990
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 Powers divine 995
To ruin doom the Jove-descended line:
Long shall the race of just Arcesius reign,
And isles remote enlarge his old domain.
The queen her speech with calm attention hears,
Her eyes restrain the silver-streaming tears: 1000
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 1005
Th' avenging bolt, and shake the dreaded shield!
If e'er Ulysses to thy fane preferr'd
The best and choicest of his flock and herd;

Hear,

* Minerva.

Hear, Goddeſs, hear, by thoſe oblations won;
And for the pious ſire preſerve the ſon: 1010
His wiſh'd return with happy power befriend,
And on the ſuitors let thy wrath deſcend.
She ceas'd; ſhrill extaſies of joy declare
The favouring Goddeſs preſent to the prayer:
The ſuitors heard, and deem'd the mirthful voice
A ſignal of her hymenæal 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." 1020
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; 1025
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, 1030
Replete with mail and military ſtore,
In all her tackle trim to quit the ſhore.
The deſperate crew aſcend, unfurl the ſails
(The ſea-ward prow invites the tardy gales);
Then take repaſt, till Heſperus diſplay'd 1035
His golden circlet in the weſtern ſhade.
Meantime the queen, without reflection due,
Heart-wounded, to the bed of ſtate withdrew:

In her ſad breaſt the prince's fortunes roll,
And hope and doubt alternate ſeize her ſoul. 1040
So when the woodman's toil her cave ſurrounds,
And with the hunter's cry the grove reſounds;
With grief and rage the mother-lion ſtung,
Fearleſs herſelf, yet trembles for her young.
While penſive in the ſilent ſlumberous ſhade, 1045
Sleep's gentle powers her drooping eyes invade;
Minerva, life-like, on imbodied air
Impreſs'd the form of Iphthima the fair
(Icarius' daughter ſhe, whoſe blooming charms
Allur'd Eumelus to her virgin-arms; 1050
A ſcepter'd lord, who o'er the fruitful plain
Of Theſſaly, wide ſtretch'd his ample reign):
As Pallas will'd, along the ſable ſkies,
To calm the queen, the phantom-ſiſter flies.
Swift on the regal dome deſcending right, 1055
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 unſincere? 1060
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 ſiſter, to my ſoul for ever dear,
Why this firſt viſit to reprove my fear?

How

How in a realm ſo diſtant ſhould you know
From what deep ſource my deathleſs ſorrows flow?
To all my hope 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 fled! an eaſy prey 1075
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 heaven confide: 1080
On him attends the blue-eyed martial Maid;
What earthly can implore a ſurer aid?
Me now the guardian Goddeſs deigns to ſend,
To bid thee patient his return attend.
The queen replies: If in the bleſt abodes 1085
A Goddeſs, thou haſt commerce with the Gods;
Say, breathes my lord the bliſsful realm of light,
Or lies he wrapt in ever-during night?
Enquire not of his doom, the phantom cries,
I ſpeak not all the counſel of the ſkies: 1090
Nor muſt indulge with vain diſcourſe, or long,
The windy ſatisfaction of the tongue.
Swift through the valves the viſionary fair
Repaſs'd, and viewleſs mix'd with common air.
The queen awakes, deliver'd of her woes: 1095
With florid joy her heart dilating glows:
The viſion, manifeſt of future fate,
Makes her with hope her ſon's arrival wait.

Mean-

Meantime the ſuitors plough the watery plain,
Telemachus in thought already ſlain! 1100
When ſight of leſſening Ithaca was loſt,
Their ſail directed for the Samian coaſt,
A ſmall but verdant iſle appear'd in view,
And Aſteris th' advancing pilot knew:
An ample port the rocks projected form, 1105
To break the rolling waves, and ruffling ſtorm:
That ſafe receſs they gain with happy ſpeed,
And in cloſe ambuſh wait the murderous deed.

THE

THE FIFTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

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 ſhipwrecked, and in the laſt danger of death: till Leucothea, a Sea Goddeſs, aſſiſts him, and, after innumerable perils, he gets aſhore on Phæacia.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK V.

THE ſaffron morn, with early bluſhes ſpread,
Now roſe refulgent from Tithonus' bed;
With new-born day to gladden mortal ſight,
And gild the courts of Heaven 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 Power, 10
The nymph's ſeducements, and the magic bower.
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, 15
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, 20
Abandon'd, baniſh'd from his native reign,
Unbleſt he ſighs, detain'd by lawleſs charms,
And preſs'd unwilling in Calypſo's arms.

Nor friends are there, nor veſſels to convey,
Nor oars to cut th' immeaſurable way. 25
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 Power who forms
The clouds of night, and darkens Heaven 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; 35
While the fell foes, who late in ambuſh lay,
With fraud defeated, meaſure back their way.
Then thus to Hermes the command was given:
Hermes, thou choſen meſſenger of heaven!
Go, to the nymph be theſe our orders borne: 40
'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 Sheria find,
Alone, and floating to the wave and wind. 45
The bold Phæacians there, whoſe haughty line
Is mix'd with Gods, half human, half divine,
The chief ſhall honour as ſome heavenly gueſt,
And ſwift tranſport him to his place of reſt.
His veſſels loaded with a plenteous ſtore 50
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

His friends, his country, he ſhall ſee, though late;
Such is our ſovereign will, and ſuch is fate. 55
He ſpoke. The God who mounts the winged winds
Faſt to his feet the golden pinions binds,
That high through fields of air his flight ſuſtain
O'er the wide earth, and o'er the boundleſs main.
He graſps the wand that cauſes ſleep to fly, 60
Or in ſoft ſlumber ſeals the wakeful eye:
Then ſhoots from heaven to high Pieria's ſteep,
And ſtoops incumbent on the rolling deep.
So watery fowl, that ſeek their fiſhy food,
With wings expanded o'er the foaming flood, 65
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 azure wave, 70
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 every beauty crown'd);
She ſate, and ſung: the rocks reſound her lays;
The cave was brighten'd with a riſing blaze: 75
Cedar and frankincenſe, an odorous 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 80
Appear'd around, and groves of living green;
Poplars and alders ever quivering play'd,
And nodding cypreſs form'd a fragrant ſhade;

On whose high branches, waving with the storm,
The birds of broadest wing their mansion form, 85
The chough, 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 limpid fountains from the clefts distil;
And every fountain pours a several rill,
In mazy windings wandering down the hill:
Where bloomy meads with vivid greens were crown'd,
And glowing violets threw odours round.
A scene, where if a God should cast his sight, 95
A God might gaze, and wander with delight!
Joy touch'd the messenger of heaven: he stay'd
Entranc'd, and all the blissful haunt survey'd.
Him, entering in the cave, Calypso knew;
For Powers celestial to each other's view 100
Stand still confest, though distant far they lie
To 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 sate to weep, 105
And roll'd his eyes around the restless deep;
Tow'rd 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: 110
God of the golden wand! on what behest
Arriv'st thou here, an unexpected guest?
Lov'd as thou art, thy free injunctions lay;
'Tis mine, with joy and duty to obey.

Till

Till now a ſtranger, in a happy hour 115
Approach, and taſte the dainties of my bower.
Thus having ſpoke, the nymph the table ſpread
(Ambroſial cates, with nectar roſy-red);
Hermes the hoſpitable rite partook,
Divine refection! then, recruited, ſpoke: 120
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 125
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 power ſo great, to dare to diſobey? 130
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 in Ilion, in the tenth deſtroy'd)
At length embarking in a luckleſs hour, 135
With conqueſt proud, incens'd Minerva's power:
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! 140
Sav'd from the jaws of death by Heaven's decree,
The tempeſt drove him to theſe ſhores and thee.
Him, Jove now orders to his native lands
Straight to diſmiſs; ſo deſtiny commands:

Impatient fate his near return attends, 145
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 curſt!
Still to your own æthereal race the worſt! 150
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 ſought Orion's love, 155
Her joys diſturb'd your bliſsful hours above,
Till, in Ortygia, 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, 160
Scarce could Iäſion taſte her heavenly charms,
But Jove's ſwift lightning ſcorch'd him in her arms.
And is it now my turn, ye mighty powers!
Am I the envy of your bliſsful bowers?
A man, an outcaſt to the ſtorm and wave, 165
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 toſt,
The ſport of winds, and driven from every coaſt, 170
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

'Tis paſt—and Jove decrees he ſhall remove; 175
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. 180
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 Power who bears the charming rod: 185
Diſmiſs 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. 190
The nymph, obedient to divine command,
To ſeek Ulyſſes, pac'd along the ſand.
Him penſive on the lonely beach ſhe found,
With ſtreaming eyes in briny torrents drown'd,
And inly pining for his native ſhore: 195
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; 200
There ſate 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, dimm'd with riſing grief, they ſtream'd again.

Here, on his muſing mood the Goddeſs preſt, 205
Approaching ſoft; and thus the chief addreſt:
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, 210
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, 215
And proſperous gales to waft thee on the 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. 220
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, 225
On a ſlight raft to paſs the ſwelling ſea,
Huge, horrid, vaſt! where ſcarce in ſafety ſails
The beſt-built ſhip, though Jove inſpire the gales.
The bold propoſal how ſhall I fulfil;
Dark as I am, unconſcious of thy will? 230
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

This ſhows thee, friend, by old experience taught, 235
And learn'd in all the wiles of human thought,
How prone to doubt, how cautious are the wiſe!
But hear, O earth! and hear ye ſacred ſkies!
And thou, O 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.
Heaven has not curſt me with a heart of ſteel, 245
But given 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 ſate, 250
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 repreſt, 255
Thus ſpoke Calypſo to her god-like gueſt:
Ulyſſes! (with a ſigh ſhe thus began)
O ſprung from Gods! in Wiſdom more than man!
Is then thy home the paſſion of thy heart?
Thus wilt thou leave me, are we thus to part? 260
Farewell! and ever joyful may'ſt thou be,
Nor break the tranſport with one thought of me.
But ah, Ulyſſes! wert thou given to know
What Fate yet dooms thee, yet, to undergo;

Thy

Thy heart might ſettle in this ſcene of eaſe, 265
And ev'n 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?
Leſs ſoft my feature, leſs auguſt my frame? 270
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?
Lov'd and ador'd, oh Goddeſs! as thou art, 275
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; 280
Yet every day, while abſent thus I roam,
I languiſh to return and die at home.
Whate'er the Gods ſhall deſtine me to bear
In the black ocean, or the watery war,
'Tis mine to maſter with a conſtant mind; 285
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 beamy ſun deſcends,
And riſing night her friendly ſhade extends. 290
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

The nymph's fair head a veil tranſparent grac'd, 295
Her ſwelling loins a radiant zone embrac'd
With flowers of gold: an under robe, unbound,
In ſnowy waves flow'd glittering on the ground.
Forth iſſuing thus, ſhe gave him firſt to wield
A weighty ax with trueſt temper ſteel'd, 300
And double edg'd; the handle ſmooth and plain,
Wrought of the clouded olive's eaſy grain;
And next, a wedge to drive with ſweepy ſway:
Then to the neighbouring foreſt led the way.
On the lone iſland's utmoſt verge there ſtood 305
Of poplars, pines, and firs, a lofty wood,
Whoſe leafleſs ſummits to the ſkies aſpire,
Scorch'd by the ſun, or ſear'd by heavenly 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 foreſt 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, 315
He ſmooth'd and ſquar'd them, 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 ſhipwright forms
Some bark's broad bottom to out-ride the ſtorms, 320
So large he built the raft: then ribb'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

With croſſing ſail-yards dancing in the wind; 325
And to the helm the guiding rudder join'd
(With yielding oſiers fenc'd, to break the force
Of ſurging waves, and ſteer the ſteady courſe).
Thy loom, Calypſo! for the future ſails
Supply'd the cloth, capacious of the gales. 330
With ſtays and cordage laſt he rigg'd the ſhip,
And, roll'd on levers, launch'd her in the deep.
Four days were paſt, and now the work complete,
Shone the fifth morn: when from her ſacred ſeat
The nymph diſmiſt him, (odorous garments given)
And bath'd in fragrant oils that breath'd of Heaven:
Then fill'd two goat-ſkins with her hands divine,
With water one, and one with ſable wine:
Of every kind, proviſions heav'd aboard;
And the full decks with copious viands ſtor'd. 340
The Goddeſs, laſt, a gentle breeze ſupplies,
To curl old ocean, and to warm the ſkies.
And now, rejoicing in the proſperous gales,
With beating heart, Ulyſſes ſpreads his ſails;
Plac'd at the helm he ſate, and mark'd the ſkies, 345
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: 350
Who ſhines exalted on th' æthereal plain,
Nor bathes his blazing forehead in the main.
Far on the left thoſe radiant fires to keep
The nymph directed, as he ſail'd the deep.

Full

Full ſeventeen nights he cut the foamy way: 355
The diſtant land appear'd the following day:
Then ſwell'd to ſight Phæacia's duſky coaſt,
And woody mountains, half in vapours loſt:
That lay before him, indiſtinct and vaſt,
Like a broad ſhield amid the watery waſte. 360
  But him, thus voyaging the deeps below,
From far, on Solyme's aërial brow,
The King of Ocean ſaw, and ſeeing burn'd
(From Æthiopia's happy climes return'd);
The raging monarch ſhook his azure head, 365
And thus in ſecret to his ſoul he ſaid:
  Heavens! how uncertain are the Powers on high?
Is then revers'd the ſentence of the ſky,
In one man's favour; while a diſtant gueſt
I ſhar'd ſecure the Æthiopian feaſt? 370
Behold how near Phæacia'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 ſceptre yet commands the main.
  He ſpoke, and high the forky trident hurl'd 375
Rolls clouds on clouds, and ſtirs the watery 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 deſtin'd end?

Too

Too well, alas! the Iſland Goddeſs knew, 385
On the black ſea what perils ſhould enſue.
New horrors now this deſtin'd head encloſe;
Unfill'd is yet the meaſure of my woes;
With what a cloud the brows of Heaven are crown'd!
What raging winds! what roaring waters round! 390
'Tis Jove himſelf the ſwelling tempeſts rears;
Death, preſent death, on every ſide appears.
Happy! thrice happy! who, in battle ſlain,
Preſt, in Atrides' cauſe, the Trojan plain:
Oh! had I dy'd before that well-fought wall; 395
Had ſome diſtinguiſh'd day renown'd my fall
(Such as was that, when ſhowers of javelins fled
From conquering Troy around Achilles dead);
All Greece had paid me ſolemn funerals then,
And ſpread my glory with the ſons of men. 400
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 maſt it broke;
Swept from the deck, and from the rudder torn, 405
Far on the ſwelling ſurge the chief was borne:
While by the howling tempeſt rent in twain
Flew ſail and ſail-yards rattling o'er the main.
Long preſs'd, he heav'd beneath the weighty wave,
Clogg'd by the cumbrous veſt Calypſo gave: 410
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

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; 420
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 wandering chief, with toils on toils oppreſt,
Leucothea ſaw, and pity touch'd her breaſt 425
(Herſelf a mortal once, of Cadmus' ſtrain,
But now an azure ſiſter of the main).
Swift as a ſea-mew ſpringing from the flood,
All radiant on the raft the Goddeſs ſtood:
Then thus addreſs'd him: Thou, whom Heaven decrees
To Neptune's wrath, ſtern tyrant of the ſeas,
(Unequal conteſt! not his rage and power,
Great as he is, ſuch virtue ſhall devour.
What I ſuggeſt, thy wiſdom will perform;
Forſake thy float, and leave it to the ſtorm; 435
Strip off thy garments; Neptune's fury brave
With naked ſtrength, and plunge into the wave.
To reach Phæacia all thy nerves extend,
There Fate decrees thy miſeries ſhall end.
This heavenly ſcarf beneath thy boſom bind, 440
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. 445

With

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, 450
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 pleaded reaſon, but conſult with mine: 455
For ſcarce in ken appears that diſtant iſle
Thy voice foretels 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 tempeſts yields, 460
I lanch 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 watery mountain roll'd; 465
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-ſhorn, 470
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 veſt,
And binds the ſacred cincture 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! 480
Go, wander helpleſs on the watery 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. 485
This ſaid, his ſea-green ſteeds divide the foam,
And reach high Ægæ and the towery dome.
Now, ſcarce withdrawn the fierce earth-ſhaking power,
Jove's daughter, Pallas, watch'd the favouring hour,
Back to their caves ſhe bade the winds to fly, 490
And huſh'd the bluſtering brethren of the ſky.
The drier 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. 495
And now two nights, and now two days were paſt,
Since wide he wander'd on the watery 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; 495
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 watery world;
When lifted on a ridgy wave he ſpies
The land at diſtance, and with ſharpen'd eyes. 505

As pious children joy with vaſt delight
When a lov'd ſire revives before their ſight
(Who, lingering long has call'd on death in vain,
Fix'd by ſome dæmon to his bed of pain,
Till Heaven by miracle his life reſtore); 510
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 liſtening ear may wound, 515
Amidſt the rocks he hears a hollow roar
Of murmuring 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! 520
All-rough with rocks, with foamy billows white.
Fear ſeiz'd his ſlacken'd limbs and beating heart;
As thus commun'd he with his ſoul apart;
Ah me! when, o'er a length of waters toſt,
Theſe eyes at laſt behold th' unhop'd-for coaſt, 525
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 ſand, 530
To ſtem too rapid, and too deep to ſtand.
If here I enter, my efforts are vain,
Daſh'd on the cliffs, or heav'd into the main;
Or round the iſland if my courſe I bend,
Where the ports open, or the ſhores deſcend, 535

Back

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 moral chance I know, 540
And hate relentleſs of my heavenly foe.
While thus he thought, a monſtrous wave upbore
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. 545
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 refluent tides, and plunge him in the deep.
As when the Polypus, from forth his cave 550
Torn with full force, reluctant beats the wave;
His ragged claws are ſtuck with ſtones and ſands:
So the rough rock had ſhagg'd Ulyſſes' hands.
And now had periſh'd, whelm'd beneath the main,
Th' unhappy man: ev'n Fate had been in vain: 555
But all-ſubduing Pallas lent her power,
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 560
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. 565

To this calm port the glad Ulyſſes preſt,
And hail'd the river, and its God addreſt:
  Whoe'er thou art, before whoſe ſtream unknown
I bend, a ſuppliant at thy watery throne,
Hear, azure king! nor let me fly in vain 570
To thee from Neptune and the raging main.
Heaven hears and pities haplefs 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 diſtreſt. 575
  He pray'd, and ſtraight the gentle ſtream ſubſides,
Detains the ruſhing current of his tides,
Before the wanderer ſmooths the watery way,
And ſoft receives him from the rolling ſea.
That moment, fainting as he touch'd the ſhore, 580
He dropt his ſinewy arms: his knees no more
Perform'd their office, or his weight upheld:
His ſwoln heart heav'd; his bloated body ſwell'd:
From mouth and noſe the briny torrent ran;
And loſt in laſſitude lay all the man, 585
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 ſcarf unbound;
Obſervant of her word, he turn'd aſide 590
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 preſs'd, and gently kiſs'd the ground;

Where

Where on the flowery herb as ſoft he lay,
Thus to his ſoul the ſage began to ſay:
  What will ye next ordain, ye Powers on high?
And yet, ah! yet, what Fates are we to try? 600
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, 605
And in thick ſhelter of innumerous 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 waſte!
Perhaps I yet may fall a bloody prey 610
To prowling bears, or lions in the way.
  Thus long debating in himſelf he ſtood:
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. 615
There grew two olives, cloſeſt of the grove,
With roots intwin'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 power, 620
Nor wind ſharp-piercing, nor the ruſhing ſhower;
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 bowery 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 630
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 ſlumbers on his eyes; 635
And golden dreams (the gift of ſweet repoſe)
Lull'd all his cares, and baniſh'd all his woes.

THE

THE
SIXTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT.

PALLAS, appearing in a dream to Nauſicaa (the daughter of Alcinous king of Phæacia), commands her to deſcend to the river, and waſh the robes of ſtate, 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.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK VI.

WHILE thus the weary wanderer ſunk to reſt,
And peaceful ſlumbers calm'd his anxious breaſt;
The Martial Maid from heaven's aerial height
Swift to Phæacia wing'd her rapid flight.
In elder times the ſoft Phæacian train 5
In eaſe poſſeſt 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, 10
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 heaven the glittering domes and temples blaz'd:
Juſt to his realms, he parted grounds from grounds, 15
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 Goddeſs ſhot; Ulyſſes was her care. 20
There as the night in ſilence roll'd away,
A heaven of charms divine Nauſicaa lay:

Through

Through the thick gloom the ſhining portals blaze;
Two nymphs the portals guard, each nymph a Grace.
Light as the viewleſs air, the Warriour-Maid 25
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'ſt thou careleſs of the bridal day? 30
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, 35
When the gay morn unveils her ſmiling ray:
Haſte to the ſtream! Companion of thy care,
Lo, I thy ſteps attend, thy labours ſhare.
Virgin, awake! the marriage-hour is nigh,
See! from their thrones thy kindred monarchs ſigh! 40
The royal car at early dawn obtain,
And order mules obedient to the rein;
For rough the way, and diſtant rolls the wave,
Where their fair veſts Phæacian virgins lave.
In pomp ride forth; for pomp becomes the Great, 45
And majeſty derives a grace from ſtate.
Then to the palaces of heaven ſhe ſails,
Incumbent on the wings of wafting gales:
The ſeat of Gods; the regions mild of peace,
Full joy, and calm eternity of eaſe. 50
There no rude winds preſume to ſhake the ſkies,
No rains deſcend, no ſnowy vapours riſe;

But

But on immortal thrones the bleſt repoſe:
The firmament with living ſplendours glows.
Hither the Goddeſs wing'd th' aerial way, 55
Through heaven'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.
Uproſe the virgin with the morning light,
Obedient to the viſion of the night. 60
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.
Meanwhile Phæacia's peers in council ſate; 65
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 ſire his ear regardful deign,
And may his child the royal car obtain? 70
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, 75
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: 80
The conſcious ſire the dawning bluſh ſurvey'd,
And ſmiling thus beſpoke the blooming maid:

My

My child, my darling joy, the car receive;
That, and whate'er our daughter asks, we give.
Swift at the royal nod th' attending train 85
The car prepare, the mules incessant rein.
The blooming virgin with dispatchful cares
Tunicks, and stoles, and robes imperial, bears.
The queen, assiduous, to her train assigns
The sumptuous viands, and the flavorous wines. 90
The train prepare a cruise of curious mould,
A cruise 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 95
Shine in her hand: along the sounding plains
Swift fly the mules: nor rode the nymph alone;
Around, a bevy of bright damsels shone.
They seek the cisterns where Phæacian dames
Wash their fair garments in the limpid streams; 100
Where, gathering into depth from falling rills,
The lucid wave a spacious bason fills.
The mules unharness'd range beside the main,
Or crop the verdant herbage of the plain.
Then emulous the royal robes they lave, 105
And plunge the vestures in the cleansing wave;
(The vestures 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; 110
And, while the robes imbibe the solar ray,
O'er the green mead the sporting virgins play

(Their

(Their ſhining veils unbound). Along the ſkies
Toſt, and retoſt, the ball inceſſant flies.
They ſport, they feaſt; Nauſicaa lifts her voice, 115
And, warbling ſweet, makes earth and heaven rejoice.
As when o'er Erymanth Diana roves,
Or wide Täygetus' reſounding groves;
A ſylvan train the huntreſs queen ſurrounds,
Her rattling quiver from her ſhoulder ſounds: 120
Fierce in the ſport, along the mountain's brow
They bay the boar, or chace the bounding roe:
High o'er the lawn, with more majeſtic pace,
Above the nymphs ſhe treads with ſtately grace;
Diſtinguiſh'd excellence the Goddeſs proves; 125
Exults Latona, as the virgin moves.
With equal grace Nauſicaa trod the plain,
And ſhone tranſcendent o'er the beauteous train.
Meantime (the care and favourite of the ſkies)
Wrapt in embowering ſhade, Ulyſſes lies, 130
His woes forgot! but Pallas now addreſt
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,
Or what new region, is Ulyſſes toſt: 140
Poſſeſt by wild barbarians fierce in arms;
Or men, whoſe boſom tender pity warms?

What

What ſounds are theſe that gather from the ſhores:
The voice of nymphs that haunt the ſylvan bowers,
The fair-hair'd Dryads of the ſhady wood; 145
Or azure daughters of the ſilver flood;
Or human voice? but, iſſuing from the ſhades,
Why ceaſe I ſtraight to learn what ſound invades?
Then, where the grove with leaves umbrageous bends
With forceful ſtrength a branch the hero rends; 150
Around his loins the verdant cincture ſpreads
A wreathy foliage and concealing ſhades.
As when a lion in the midnight hours,
Beat by rude blaſts, and wet with wintery ſhowers,
Deſcends terrific from the mountain's brow: 155
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. 160
No leſs a terror, from the neighbouring groves
(Rough from the toſſing 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 165
To rocks, to caves, the frighted virgins fly;
All but the nymph: the nymph ſtood fix'd alone,
By Pallas arm'd with boldneſs not her own.
Meantime in dubious thought the king awaits,
And, ſelf-conſidering, as he ſtands, debates; 170
Diſtant his mournful ſtory to declare,
Or proſtrate at her knee addreſs the prayer.

But

But fearful to offend, by Wiſdom ſway'd,
At aweful diſtance he accoſts the maid:
If from the ſkies a Goddeſs, or if earth 175
(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, 180
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 ſprung,
Bleſt is the mother at whoſe breaſt you hung,
Bleſt are the brethren who thy blood divide, 185
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 heavenly charms,
Who claſps the bright perfection in his arms! 190
Never, I never view'd till this bleſt hour
Such finiſh'd grace! I gaze, and I adore!
Thus ſeems the palm with ſtately honours crown'd
By Phœbus' altars; thus o'erlooks the ground;
The pride of Delos. (By the Delian coaſt, 195
I voyag'd, leader of a warriour-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 reverence at the lofty wonder gaze: 200
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, O queen, before thee ſtands!
Twice ten tempeſtuous nights I roll'd, reſign'd 205
To roaring billows, and the warring wind;
Heaven bade the deep to ſpare! but Heaven, 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! 210
Once more I view the face of human-kind:
Oh, let ſoft pity touch thy generous mind!
Unconſcious of what air I breathe, I ſtand
Naked, defenceleſs, on a foreign land.
Propitious to my wants, a veſt ſupply 215
To guard the wretched from th' inclement ſky:
So may the Gods, who heaven 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; 220
Bleſt be thy huſband with a blooming race,
And laſting 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; 225
The good exult, and Heaven is in our ſtate.

To whom the nymph: O ſtranger, ceaſe thy care;
Wiſe is thy ſoul, but man is born to bear:
Jove weighs affairs of earth, in dubious ſcales,
And the good ſuffers, while the bad prevails: 230
Bear, with a ſoul reſign'd, the will of Jove;
Who breathes, muſt mourn: thy woes are from above.

Bnt,

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— 235
Know, the Phæacian 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. 240
Dread ye a foe? diſmiſs that idle dread,
'Tis death with hoſtile ſteps theſe ſhores to tread:
Safe in the love of Heaven, an ocean flows
Around our realm, a barrier from the foes;
'Tis ours this ſon of ſorrow to relieve, 245
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 lent.
Then food ſupply, and bathe his fainting limbs
Where waving ſhades obſcure the mazy ſtreams. 250
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 embroidery gay:
Then unguents in a vaſe of gold ſupply, 255
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 foul pollution of the briny wave: 260
Ye Gods! ſince this worn frame refection 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 265
Active he bounds; the flaſhing waves divide:
O'er all his limbs his hands the wave diffuſe,
And from his locks compreſs the weedy ooze;
The balmy oil, a fragrant ſhower, he ſheds;
Then, dreſt, in pomp magnificently treads. 270
The Warriour 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 275
His ſkill divine, a breathing ſtatue lives;
By Pallas taught, he frames the wondrous mould,
And o'er the ſilver pours the fuſile gold.
So Pallas his heroic frame improves
With heavenly bloom, and like a God he moves. 280
A fragrance breathes around: majeſtic grace
Attends his ſteps: th' aſtoniſh'd virgins gaze.
Soft he reclines along the murmuring ſeas,
Inhaling freſhneſs from the fanning breeze.
The wondering 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 driven
Far from this realm, the favourite iſle of Heaven. 290
Late a ſad ſpectacle of woe, he trod
The deſart ſands, and now he looks a God.

Oh,

Oh, Heaven! in my connubial hour decree
This man my ſpouſe, or ſuch a ſpouſe as he!
But haſte, the viands and the bowl provide— 295
The maids the viands, and the bowl ſupply'd:
Eager he fed, for keen his hunger rag'd,
And with the generous vintage thirſt aſſwag'd.
Now on return her care Nauſicaa bends,
The robes reſumes, the glittering car aſcends, 300
Far blooming o'er the field: and as ſhe preſs'd
The ſplendid ſeat, the liſtening chief addreſs'd:
Stranger, ariſe! the ſun rolls down the day,
Lo! to the palace I direct the way:
Where in high ſtate the nobles of the land 305
Attend my royal ſire, a radiant band.
But hear, though Wiſdom in thy ſoul preſides,
Speaks from thy tongue, and every action guides;
Advance at diſtance, while I paſs the plain
Where o'er the furrows waves the golden grain: 310
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 baſons arching rocks encloſe, 315
A ſure defence from every ſtorm that blows.
Cloſe to the bay great Neptune's fane adjoins;
And near, a forum flank'd with marble ſhines,
Where the bold youth, the numerous fleets to ſtore,
Shape the broad ſail, or ſmooth the taper oar: 320
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, 325
Climb the ſteep ſurge, and through the tempeſt fly;
A proud, unpoliſh'd race—To me belongs
The care to ſhun the blaſt of ſlanderous tongues;
Leſt malice, prone the virtuous to defame,
Thus with vile cenſure taint my ſpotleſs name: 330
" What ſtranger this whom thus Nauſicaa leads?
" Heavens, with what graceful majeſty he treads!
" Perhaps a native of ſome diſtant ſhore,
" The future conſort of her bridal hour;
" Or rather ſome deſcendant of the ſkies; 335
" Won by her prayers, th' aërial bridegroom flies.
" Heaven on that hour his choiceſt influence ſhed,
" That gave a foreign ſpouſe to crown her bed!
" All, all the god-like worthies that adorn
" This realm, ſhe flies: Phæacia is her ſcorn." 340
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 ſires a ſpouſe provide, 345
And public nuptials juſtify the bride.
But would'ſt 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, 350
We bend our way: a bubbling fount diſtils
A lucid lake, and thence deſcends in rills;

Around

Around the grove a mead with lively green
Falls by degrees, and forms a beauteous ſcene;
Here a rich juice the royal vineyard pours; 355
And there the garden yields a waſte of flowers.
Hence lies the town, as far as to the ear
Floats a ſtrong ſhout along the waves of air.
There wait embower'd, while I aſcend alone
To great Alcinous on his royal throne. 360
Arriv'd, advance impatient of delay,
And to the lofty palace bend thy way:
The lofty palace overlooks the town,
From every dome by pomp ſuperior known;
A child may point the way. With earneſt gait 365
Seek thou the queen along the rooms of ſtate;
Her royal hand a wondrous work deſigns,
Around a circle of bright damſels ſhines,
Part twiſt the threads, and part the wool diſpoſe,
While with the purple orb the ſpindle glows. 370
High on a throne, amid the Scherian powers,
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, 375
Though mountains riſe between, and oceans roar.
She added not, but waving as ſhe wheel'd
The ſilver ſcourge, it glitter'd o'er the field:
With ſkill the virgin guides th' embroider'd rein,
Slow rolls the car before th' attending train. 380
Now whirling down the heavens, 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 wield
Th' avenging bolt, and ſhake the dreadful ſhield;
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. 390

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

THE
SEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

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 Phæacians 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, heavenly man thus ſuppliant pray'd;
While the ſlow mules draw on th' imperial maid:
Through the proud ſtreet ſhe moves, the public gaze:
The turning wheel before the palace ſtays.
With ready love her brothers gathering round, 5
Receiv'd the veſtures, and the mules unbound.
She ſeeks the bridal bower: a matron there
The riſing fire ſupplies with buſy care,
Whoſe charms in youth her father's heart inflam'd,
Now worn with age, Eurymeduſa nam'd: 10
The captive dame Phæacian rovers bore,
Snatch'd from Epirus, her ſweet native ſhore,
(A grateful prize) and in her bloom beſtow'd
On good Alcinous, honour'd as a God:
Nurſe of Nauſicaa from her infant years, 15
And tender ſecond to a mother's cares.
Now from the ſacred thicket where he lay,
To town Ulyſſes took the winding way.
Propitious Pallas, to ſecure her care,
Around him ſpread a veil of thicken'd air; 20
To ſhun th' encounter of the vulgar croud,
Inſulting ſtill, inquiſitive and loud.

When

When near the fam'd Phæacian walls he drew,
The beauteous city opening to his view,
His ſtep a virgin met, and ſtood before: 25
A poliſh'd 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. 30
Through many woes and wanderings, lo! I come
To good Alcinous' hoſpitable dome.
Far from my native coaſt, I rove alone,
A wretched ſtranger, and of all unknown!
The Goddeſs anſwer'd, Father, I obey, 35
And point the wandering traveller his way:
Well known to me the palace you inquire,
For faſt beſide it dwells my honour'd ſire;
But ſilent march, nor greet the common train
With queſtion needleſs, or enquiry vain, 40
A race of rugged mariners are theſe;
Unpoliſh'd men, and boiſterous as their ſeas:
The native iſlanders alone their care,
And hateful he who breathes a foreign air.
Theſe did the Ruler of the deep ordain 45
To build proud navies, and command the main;
On canvaſs wings to cut the watery way;
No bird ſo light, no thought ſo ſwift, as they.
Thus having ſpoke, th' unknown Celeſtial leads:
The footſtep of the Deity he treads, 50
And ſecret moves along the crouded ſpace,
Unſeen of all the rude Phæacian race.

(So

(So Pallas order'd, Pallas to their eyes
The mist objected, and condens'd the skies).
The chief with wonder sees th' extended streets, 55
The spreading harbours, and the riding fleets;
He next their princes lofty domes admires,
In separate islands crown'd with rising spires;
And deep intrenchments, and high walls of stone,
That gird the city like a marble zone. 60
At length the kingly palace-gates he view'd;
There stop'd the Goddess, and her speech renew'd:
My task is done; the mansion you inquire
Appears before you: enter, and admire.
High thron'd, and feasting, there thou shalt behold
The sceptred 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,
Alcinous' queen, Arete is her name,
The same her parents, and her power the same.
For know, from Ocean's God Nausithous sprung,
And Peribæa, beautiful and young
(Eurymedon's last hope, who rul'd of old
The race of giants, impious, proud, and bold; 75
Perish'd the nation in unrighteous war,
Perish'd the prince, and left this only heir).
Who now, by Neptune's amorous power compreſt,
Produc'd a monarch that his people bleſt,
Father and prince of the Phæacian name; 80
From him Rhexenor and Alcinous came.
The first by Phœbus' burning arrows fir'd,
New from his nuptials, hapless youth! expir'd.

No

No ſon ſurviv'd: Arete heir'd his ſtate,
And her, Alcinous choſe his royal mate. 85
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 through the ſtreet ſhe gracious deigns to move,
(The public wonder and the public love)
The tongues of all with tranſport ſound 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: 100
Forſaking Scheria's ever-pleaſing ſhore,
The winds to Marathon the Virgin bore;
Thence, where proud Athens rears her towery head,
With opening ſtreets and ſhining ſtructures ſpread,
She paſt, delighted with the well-known ſeats; 105
And to Erectheus' ſacred dome retreats.
Meanwhile 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, 110
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

Rich plates of gold the folding doors incaſe;
The pillars ſilver, on a brazen baſe; 115
Silver the lintals 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 power of years.
Fair thrones within from ſpace to ſpace were rais'd,
Where various carpets with embroidery blaz'd, 125
The work of matrons: theſe the princeſs preſt,
Day following day, a long continued feaſt.
Refulgent pedeſtals the walls ſurround,
Which boys of gold with flaming torches crown'd;
The poliſh'd ore, reflecting every ray, 130
Blaz'd on the banquets with a double day.
Full fifty handmaids form the houſhold 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 ſailing arts and all the naval toil,
Than works of female ſkill their women's pride,
The flying ſhuttle through the threads to guide:
Pallas to theſe her double gifts imparts, 140
Inventive genius, and induſtrious arts.
Cloſe to the gates a ſpacious garden lies,
From ſtorms defended and inclement ſkies.

Four

Four acres was th' allotted ſpace of ground,
Fenc'd with a green encloſure all around, 145
Tall thriving trees confeſs'd the fruitful mould;
The reddening 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, 150
And verdant olives flouriſh round the year.
The balmy ſpirit of the weſtern gale
Eternal breathes on fruits untaught to fail:
Each dropping pear a following pear ſupplies,
On apples apples, figs on figs ariſe: 155
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 th' united labours of the year;
Some to unload the fertile branches run, 160
Some dry the blackening cluſters in the ſun,
Others to tread the liquid harveſt join,
The groaning preſſes foam with floods of wine.
Here are the vines in early flower deſcry'd,
Here grapes diſcolour'd on the ſunny ſide,
And there in autumn's richeſt 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 through 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 beſtows;

To

To various uſe their various ſtreams they bring,
The people one, and one ſupplies the king. 175
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, 180
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 offering to the * God
Who bears the virtue of the ſleepy rod. 185
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 dropt the veil of night; 190
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-enduring man) 195
To thee, thy conſort, 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 ſend, 200
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

* Mercury.

So reign for ever on your country's breaſt,
Your people bleſſing, by your people bleſt! 205
Then to the genial hearth he bow'd his face,
And humbled in the aſhes took his place.
Silence enſued. The eldeſt firſt began,
Echenus ſage, a venerable man!
Whoſe well-taught mind the preſent age ſurpaſt, 210
And join'd to that th' experience of the laſt.
Fit words attended on his weighty ſenſe,
And mild perſuaſion flow'd in eloquence.
O ſight (he cry'd) diſhoneſt and unjuſt!
A gueſt, a ſtranger, ſeated in the duſt! 215
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 diſtinguiſh'd place.
Let firſt the herald due libation pay 220
To Jove, who guides the wanderer on his way;
Then ſet the genial banquet in his view,
And give the ſtranger-gueſt a ſtranger's due.
His ſage advice the liſtening king obeys,
He ſtretch'd his hand the prudent chief to raiſe, 225
And from his ſeat Laodamas remov'd
(The monarch's offſpring, and his beſt-belov'd);
There next his ſide the god-like hero ſate;
With ſtars of ſilver ſhone the bed of ſtate.
The golden ewer a beauteous handmaid brings, 230
Repleniſh'd from the cool tranſlucent ſprings,
Whoſe poliſh'd vaſe with copious ſtreams ſupplies
A ſilver laver of capacious ſize.

The table next in regal order ſpread,
The glittering caniſters are heap'd with bread: 235
Viands of various kinds invite the taſte,
Of choiceſt ſort and ſavour, rich repaſt!
Thus feaſting high, Alcinous gave the ſign,
And bade the herald pour the roſy wine.
Let all around the due libation pay 240
To Jove, who guides the wanderer 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: 245
Princes and peers, attend; while we impart
To you, the thoughts of no inhuman heart.
Now pleas'd and ſatiate from the ſocial rite
Repair we to the bleſſings of the night:
But with the riſing day, aſſembled here, 250
Let all the elders of the land appear,
Pious obſerve our hoſpitable laws,
And Heaven propitiate in the ſtranger's cauſe:
Then, join'd in council, proper means explore
Safe to tranſport him to the wiſh'd-for ſhore 255
(How diſtant that, imports not us to know,
Nor weigh the labour, but relieve the woe).
Meantime, nor harm nor anguiſh let him bear:
This interval, Heaven truſts him to our care;
But to his native land our charge reſign'd, 260
Heaven 's 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 bower, 265
Gracious approach us ſome immortal power;
If in that form thou com'ſt 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; 270
Then manifeſt of heaven the viſion ſtood,
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, 275
The friends and guardians of our pious race.
So near approach we their celeſtial kind,
By juſtice, truth, and probity of mind:
As our dire neigbours of Cyclopean birth
Match in fierce wrong the Giant-ſons of earth. 280
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 yon azure ſky:
In form, ah how unlike their heavenly kind! 285
How more inferior in the gifts of mind!
Alas, a mortal! moſt oppreſt of thoſe
Whom Fate has loaded with a weight of woes;
By a ſad train of miſeries alone
Diſtinguiſh'd long, and ſecond now to none! 290
By Heaven's high will compell'd from ſhore to ſhore;
With Heaven's high will prepar'd to ſuffer more.
What hiſtories of toil could I declare!
But ſtill long-wearied nature wants repair;

Spent

Spent with fatigue, and ſhrunk with pining faſt, 295
My craving bowels ſtill require repaſt.
Howe'er the noble, ſuffering mind, may grieve
Its load of anguiſh, and diſdain to live;
Neceſſity demands our daily bread;
Hunger is inſolent, and will be fed. 300
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 ſoil, my ſon, my friends, again.
That view vouchſaf'd, let inſtant death ſurprize 305
With ever-during ſhade theſe happy eyes!
Th' aſſembled peers with general 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. 310
Ulyſſes in the regal walls alone
Remain'd: beſide him, on a ſplendid throne,
Divine Arete and Alcinous ſhone.
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'ſt thou not hither, wondrous 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, o princeſs! you impoſe:
(Thus ſighing ſpoke the man of many woes)
The long, the mournful ſeries to relate
Of all my ſorrows ſent by Heaven and Fate! 325

Yet what you aſk, attend. An iſland lies
Beyond theſe tracts, and under other ſkies,
Ogygia nam'd, in Ocean's watery arms;
Where dwells Calypſo, dreadful in her charms!
Remote from Gods or men ſhe holds her reign, 330
Amid the terrours 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: 335
Then, all my fleet, and all my followers loſt,
Sole on a plank, on boiling ſurges toſt,
Heaven 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, 340
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 ſucceſsleſs prove,
To baniſh from my breaſt my country's love. 345
I ſtay reluctant ſeven continued years,
And water her ambroſial couch with tears.
The eighth ſhe voluntary moves to part,
Or urg'd by Jove, or her own changeful heart.
A raft was form'd, to croſs the ſurging ſea; 350
Herſelf ſupply'd the ſtores and rich array;
And gave the gales to waft me on the way.
In ſeventeen 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

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 360
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 chanc'd to find
A river's mouth impervious to the wind, 365
And clear of rocks. I fainted by the flood;
Then took the ſhelter of the neighbouring 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: 370
Aurora dawn'd and Phœbus ſhin'd in vain,
Nor, till oblique he ſlop'd his evening ray,
Had Somnus dry'd the balmy dews away.
Then female voices from the ſhore I heard:
A maid amidſt them, goddeſs-like, appear'd: 375
To her I ſued, ſhe pity'd my diſtreſs;
Like thee in beauty, nor in virtue leſs.
Who from ſuch youth could hope conſiderate care?
In youth and beauty wiſdom is but rare!
She gave me life, reliev'd with juſt ſupplies 380
My wants, and lent theſe robes that ſtrike your eyes.
This is the truth: and oh, ye Powers on high!
Forbid that want ſhould ſink me to a lye.
To this the king: Our daughter but expreſt
Her cares imperfect to our god-like gueſt. 385

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: 390
She bade me follow in th' attendant train;
But fear and reverence did my ſteps detain,
Leſt raſh ſuſpicion might alarm thy mind:
Man 's of a jealous and miſtaking kind.
Far from my ſoul (he cry'd) the Gods efface 395
All wrath ill-grounded, and ſuſpicion baſe!
Whate'er is honeſt, ſtranger, I approve:
And would to Phœbus, Pallas, and to Jove,
Such as thou art, thy thought and mine were one,
Nor thou unwilling to be call'd my ſon. 400
In ſuch alliance could'ſt thou wiſh to join,
A palace ſtor'd with treaſures ſhould be thine.
But, if reluctant, who ſhall force thy ſtay?
Jove bids to ſet 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. 410
Far as Eubœa though 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

* Tityus.

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 dextrous, and how fleet our sail,
When justly tim'd with equal sweep they row,
And ocean whitens in long tracts below. 420
Thus he. No word th' experienc'd man replies,
But thus to heaven (and heavenward lifts his eyes)
O, Jove! o father! what the king accords
Do thou make perfect! sacred be his words!
Wide o'er the world Alcinous' glory shine! 425
Let fame be his, and ah! my country mine!
Mean time Arete, for the hour of rest,
Ordains the fleecy couch, and covering vest:
Bids her fair train the purple quilts prepare,
And the thick carpets spread with busy care. 430
With torches blazing in their hands they past,
And finish'd all their queen's command with haste:
Then gave the signal to the willing guest:
He rose with pleasure, and retir'd to rest,
There, soft-extended, to the murmuring sound 435
Of the high porch, Ulysses sleeps profound!
Within, releas'd from cares Alcinous lies;
And fast beside were clos'd Arete's eyes.

THE
EIGHTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT.

ALCINOUS 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, &c. 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, Alcinous enquires 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, 5
And fill the shining thrones along the bay.
Meanwhile 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: 10
Nobles and chiefs who rule Phæacia'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 15
Of thronging multitudes the shore rebounds:
At once the seats they fill: and every eye
Gaz'd, as before some brother of the sky.
Pallas with grace divine his form improves,
More high he treads, and more enlarg'd he moves:
She sheds celestial bloom, regard to draw;
And gives a dignity of mien, to awe;

With

With ſtrength, the future prize of Fame to play,
And gather all the honours of the day.
Then from his glittering throne Alcinous roſe: 25
Attend, he cry'd, while we our will diſcloſe.
Your preſent aid this god-like ſtranger craves,
Toſt by rude tempeſt through a war of waves;
Perhaps from realms that view the riſing day,
Or nations ſubject to the weſtern ray. 30
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 every oar; 35
Then in our court indulge the genial hour.
Inſtant, you ſailors, to this taſk attend;
Swift to the palace, all ye peers aſcend;
Let none to ſtrangers honours due diſclaim:
Be there Demodocus, the Bard of Fame, 40
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, 45
At once the ſailors to their charge ariſe:
They launch the veſſel, and unfurl the ſails,
And ſtretch the ſwelling canvaſs to the gales;
Then to the palace move: A gathering throng,
Youth, and white age, tumultuous pour along: 50
Now all acceſſes to the dome are fill'd;
Eight boars, the choiceſt of the herd, are kill'd:

Two

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 55
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 viſual ray,
But gave him ſkill to raiſe the lofty lay. 60
High on a radiant throne ſublime in ſtate,
Encircled by huge multitudes, he ſate:
With ſilver ſhone the throne; his lyre well ſtrung
To rapturous ſounds, at hand Pontonous hung:
Before his ſeat a poliſh'd table ſhines, 65
And a full goblet foams with generous wines:
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 Demi-gods and Kings: 70
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 Heaven foretold the conteſt, when he trod 75
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 ſtraight reſign'd
To ſoft affliction all his manly mind: 80
Before his eyes the purple veſt he drew,
Induſtrious to conceal the falling dew:

But when the music 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, 85
He pour'd a pure libation to the ground.
Transported with the song, the listening train
Again with loud applause demand the strain:
Again Ulysses veil'd his pensive head,
Again, unmann'd, a shower of sorrow shed: 90
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 power 95
Of heavenly 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 Phæacian fame: 100
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 lists of Fame repairs. 110
Now swarms the populace; a countless throng,
Youth and hoar age; and man drives man along:

The

The games begin; ambitious of the prize,
Acroneus, Thoon, and Eretmeus rise;
The prize Ocyalus and Prymneus claim, 115
Anchialus and Ponteus, chiefs of Fame:
There Proreus, Neates, Eratreus appear,
And fam'd Amphialus, Polyneus' heir:
Euryalus like Mars terrific rose,
When clad in wrath he withers hosts of foes: 120
Naubolides with grace unequal'd shone,
Or equal'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, 125
Start from the goal, and vanish o'er the strand:
Swift as on wings of winds 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 plough to plough;
Clytonous 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, 135
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 Laodam whirls high, with dreadful sway,
The gloves of death, victorious in the fray. 140
While thus the peerage in the games contends,
In act to speak, Laodamas ascends:
O friends,

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 haſt thou ſpoke (Euryalus replies):
Thine is the gueſt, invite him thou to riſe.
Swift at the word advancing from the croud 155
He made obeiſance, and thus ſpoke aloud:
Vouchſafes the reverend 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. 160
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 165
Call thee aboard, and ſtretch the ſwelling ſails.
To whom with ſighs Ulyſſes gave reply:
Ah! why th' ill-ſuiting paſtime muſt I try?
To gloomy care my thoughts alone are free;
Ill the gay ſports with troubled hearts agree: 170
Sad from my natal hour my days have ran,
A much-afflicted, much-enduring man!

Who

Who ſuppliant to the king and peers implores
A ſpeedy voyage to his native ſhores.
Wide wanders, Laodam, thy erring tongue, 175
The ſports of glory to the brave belong,
(Retorts Euryalus): he boaſts no claim
Among the great, unlike the ſons of Fame.
A wandering merchant he frequents the main;
Some mean ſea-farer in purſuit of gain; 180
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; 185
Some greatly think, ſome ſpeak with manly ſenſe;
Here Heaven an elegance of form denies,
But wiſdom the defect of form ſupplies:
This man with energy of thought controls,
And ſteals with modeſt violence our ſouls, 190
He ſpeaks reſerv'dly, but he ſpeaks with force.
Nor can one word be chang'd but for a worſe;
In publick more than mortal he appears,
And, as he moves, the gazing croud reveres.
While others, beauteous as th' ætherial kind, 195
The nobler portion want, a knowing mind.
In outward ſhew Heaven gives thee to excell,
But Heaven denies the praiſe of thinking well.
Ill bear the brave a rude ungovern'd tongue,
And, youth, my generous 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, 205
In ſcenes of death, by tempeſt and by war.
Yet, thus by woes impair'd, no more I wave
To prove the hero.—Slander ſtings the brave.
Then, ſtriding forward with a furious bound,
He wrench'd a rocky fragment from the ground. 210
By far more ponderous, and more huge by far,
Than what Phæacia's ſons diſcharg'd in air.
Fierce from his arm th' enormous load he flings,
Sonorous through the ſhaded air it ſings;
Couch'd to the earth, tempeſtuous as it flies, 215
The croud 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 diſtinguiſh'd mark, and cry'd aloud: 220
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 every champion by a length of ground:
Securely bid the ſtrongeſt of the train 225
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 Phæacians, try your force, he cried; 230
If with this throw the ſtrongeſt caſter vie,
Still, further ſtill, I bid the diſcus fly,

Stand

Stand forth, ye champions, who the gauntlet wield,
Or ye, 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. 240
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; 245
Give me a man that we our might may try.
Expert in every 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: 250
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, 455
And Eurytus, who bade the Gods be foes:
(Vain Eurytus, whoſe art became his crime,
Swept from the earth, he periſh'd in his prime;
Sudden th' irremeable way he trod,
Who boldly durſt defy the Bowyer-God). 260
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, 265
When ſtorms and hunger both at once aſſail.
Abaſh'd, the numbers hear the god-like man,
Till great Alcinous mildly thus began:
Well haſt thou ſpoke, and well thy generous tongue
With decent pride refutes a public wrong: 270
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 diſplay, 275
Repeat them frequent in the genial day;
When bleſt with eaſe thy woes and wanderings end,
Teach them thy conſort, bid thy ſons attend!
How lov'd of Jove he crown'd our ſires with praiſe,
How we their offspring dignify our race 280
Let other realms the deathful gauntlet weild,
Or boaſt the glories of th' athletic field;
We in the courſe unrival'd ſpeed diſplay,
Or thro' cærulean billows plough the way;
To dreſs, to dance, to ſing, our ſole delight, 285
The feaſt or bath by day, and love by night:
Riſe then, ye ſkill'd in meaſures; let him bear
Your fame to men that breathe a diſtant air:
And faithful ſay, to you the powers belong
To race, to ſail, to dance, to chant the ſong. 290
But, herald, to the palace ſwift repair,
And the ſoft lyre to grace our paſtimes bear.

Swift

Swift at the word, obedient to the king,
The herald flies the tuneful lyre to bring.
Up rose nine seniors, chosen to survey 295
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, 300
Skill'd in the dance, tall youths, a blooming band,
Graceful before the heavenly 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 305
The glancing splendours as their sandals play.
Meantime 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, 310
By bribes seduc'd: and how the sun, whose eye
Views the broad heavens, disclos'd the lawless joy.
Stung to the soul, indignant through the skies
To his black forge vindictive Vulcan flies:
Arriv'd, his sinewy arms incessant place 315
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 instant bears
To his immortal dome the finish'd snares. 320
Above, below, around, with art dispread,
The sure inclosure 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 bowers, 325
He feigns a journey to the Lemnian ſhores,
His favourite 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, 330
Gay blooming in full charms: her hand he preſt
With eager joy, and with a ſigh addreſt:
Come, my belov'd, and taſte the ſoft delights:
Come, to repoſe the genial bed invites:
Thy abſent ſpouſe, neglectful of thy charms, 335
Prefers his barbarous Sintians to thy arms!
Then, nothing loth, th' enamour'd fair 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: 340
In vain they ſtrive, th' entangling ſnares deny
(Inextricably firm) the power 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: 345
Full horrible he roars, his voice all heaven returns:
O Jove, he cry'd, oh all ye Powers above,
See the lewd dalliance of the Queen of Love!
Me, aukward me, ſhe ſcorns; and yields her charms
To that fair letcher, the ſtrong God of arms. 350
If I am lame, that ſtain my natal hour
By Fate impos'd; ſuch me my parent bore:

Why

Why was I born? See how the wanton lies!
O ſight tormenting to an huſband's eyes!
But yet I truſt, this once ev'n Mars would fly 355
His fair-one's arms—he thinks her, once, too nigh.
But there remain, ye guilty, in my power,
Till Jove refunds his ſhameleſs daughter's dower.
Too dear I priz'd a fair enchanting face:
Beauty unchaſte is beauty in diſgrace. 360

Meanwhile the Gods the dome of Vulcan throng,
Apollo comes, and Neptune comes along;
With theſe gay Hermes trod the ſtarry plain;
But modeſty withheld the Goddeſs-train.
All Heaven beholds impriſon'd as they lie, 365
And unextinguiſh'd laughter ſhakes the ſky.

Then mutual, thus they ſpoke: Behold on wrong
Swift vengeance waits; and art ſubdues the ſtrong!
Dwells there a God on all th' Olympian brow
More ſwift than Mars, and more than Vulcan ſlow?
Yet Vulcan conquers, and the God of arms
Muſt pay the penalty for lawleſs charms.

Thus ſerious they; but he who gilds the ſkies,
The gay Apollo, thus to Hermes cries:
Would'ſt thou enchain'd like Mars, O Hermes, lie,
And bear the ſhame, like Mars, to ſhare the joy?

O envy'd ſhame! (the ſmiling youth rejoin'd),
Add thrice the chains, and thrice more firmly bind;
Gaze all ye Gods, and every 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, O Vulcan! free from ſhame
Thy captives; I enſure 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, perfidious fly;
Say, wilt thou bear the mulct? He inſtant cries,
The mulct I bear, if Mars perfidious 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 power an hundred altars riſe,
And breathing odours ſcent the balmy ſkies;
Conceal'd ſhe bathes in conſecrated bowers,
The Graces unguents ſhed, ambroſial ſhowers, 400
Unguents that charm the Gods! ſhe laſt aſſumes
Her wondrous robes; and full the 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 wondrous ball is brought
(The work of Polypus, divinely wrought);
This youth with ſtrength enormous bids it fly,
And bending backward whirls it to the ſky; 410
His brother, ſpringing with an active bound,
At diſtance intercepts it from the ground:

The

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, 415
And sends in shouts applauses to the skies.
Then thus Ulysses: Happy king, whose name
The brightest shines in all the rolls of Fame:
In subjects happy! with surprize 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, 425
O'er whom supreme, imperial power 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 generous heart repairs a slanderous tongue.
Th' assenting peers, obedient to the king,
In haste their heralds send the gifts to bring.
Then thus Euryalus: O prince, whose sway 435
Rules this best 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

Far from thy mind thoſe words, ye whirlwinds, bear,
And ſcatter them, ye ſtorms, in empty air:
Crown, O ye Heavens! 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 every joy, ye favouring ſkies;
To thy calm hours continued peace afford,
And never, never may'ſt thou want this ſword! 450
  He ſaid; and o'er his ſhoulder ſlung the blade.
Now o'er the earth aſcends 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 455
The veſts, the robes, and heaps of ſhining gold;
Then to the radiant thrones they move in ſtate:
Aloft, the king in pomp imperial ſate.
  Then to the queen: O partner of our reign,
O ſole belov'd! command thy menial train 460
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,
Ourſelf we give, memorial of our name:
To raiſe in offerings 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, 470
The ſpacious vaſe with ample ſtreams ſuffice,
Heap high the wood, and bid the flames ariſe.

The

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 475
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: 480
Leſt, in thy ſlumbers on the watery 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 Circæan art. A train attends 485
Around the bath: the bath the king aſcends
(Untaſted joy, ſince that diſaſtrous hour,
He ſail'd ill-fated from Calypſo's bower):
Where, happy as the Gods that range the ſky,
He feaſted every ſenſe, with every joy. 490
He bathes; the damſels, with officious toil,
Shed ſweets, ſhed unguents, in a ſhower 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 wondering eyes the hero ſhe ſurvey'd,
And graceful thus began the royal maid:
Hail, god-like ſtranger! and when Heaven reſtores
To thy fond wiſh thy long-expected ſhores, 500
This ever-grateful in remembrance bear,
To me thou ow'ſt, to me, the vital air.

O royal

O royal Maid! Ulyſſes ſtraight returns,
Whoſe worth the ſplendors of thy race adorns,
So may dread Jove (whoſe arm in vengeance forms
The writhen bolt, and blackens heaven with ſtorms,)
Reſtore me ſafe, through weary wanderings toſt,
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 ſate
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 obeiſance as he moves along:
Beneath a ſculptur'd arch he ſits 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; 525
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: 530
Oh more than man! thy ſoul the Muſe inſpires,
Or Phœbus animates with all his fires:

For

For who, by Phœbus uninform'd, could know
The woe of Greece, and ſing ſo well the woe?
Juſt to the tale, as preſent at the fray, 535
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' Epæan fabrick, fram'd by Pallas, ſing: 540
How ſtern Ulyſſes, furious to deſtroy,
With latent heroes 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 545
In every 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: 550
How, ev'n in Ilion's walls, in deathful bands,
Came the ſtern Greeks by Troy's aſſiſting hands:
All Troy up-heav'd the ſteed; of differing mind,
Various the Trojans counſel'd; part conſign'd
The monſter to the ſword, part ſentence gave 555
To plunge it headlong in the whelming wave;
Th' unwiſe prevail, they lodge it in the towers,
An offering ſacred to th' immortal Powers:
Th' unwiſe award to lodge it in the walls.
And by the Gods decree proud Ilion falls; 560
Deſtruction enters in the treacherous wood,
And vengeful ſlaughter, fierce for human blood.

He

He ſung the Greeks ſtern-iſſuing from the ſteed,
How Ilion burns, how all her fathers bleed:
How to thy dome, Deiphobus! aſcends 565
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 bathe his cheeks, and tears the ground bedew:
As ſome fond matron views in mortal fight
Her huſband falling in his country's right:
Frantic through claſhing ſwords ſhe runs, ſhe flies,
As ghaſtly pale he groans, and faints, and dies;
Cloſe to his breaſt ſhe grovels on the ground, 575
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 deplores;
A widow, and a ſlave on foreign ſhores. 580
So from the ſluices of Ulyſſes' eyes
Faſt 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, 585
Dumb be thy voice, and mute the tuneful ſtring:
To every 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: 590
This ſocial right demands: for him the ſails,
Floating in air, invite th' impelling gales:

His

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, 595
Artful concealment ill becomes the brave:
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:) 600
Say from what city, from what regions toſt,
And what inhabitants thoſe regions boaſt?
So ſhalt thou inſtant reach the realm aſſign'd,
In wondrous ſhips ſelf-mov'd, inſtinct with mind;
No helm ſecures their courſe, no pilot guides, 605
Like man, intelligent, they plough the tides,
Conſcious of every coaſt, and every bay,
That lies beneath the ſun's all-ſeeing ray;
Though clouds and darkneſs veil th' encumber'd ſky,
Fearleſs through darkneſs and through clouds they fly:
Though tempeſts rage, though rolls the ſwelling main,
The ſeas may roll, the tempeſts rage in vain;
Ev'n the ſtern God, that o'er the waves preſides,
Safe as they paſs, and ſafe repaſs the tides,
With fury burns; while careleſs they convey 615
Promiſcuous every gueſt to every bay.
Theſe ears have heard my royal ſire diſcloſe
A dreadful ſtory big with future woes,
How Neptune rag'd, and how, by his command,
Firm rooted in a ſurge a ſhip ſhould ſtand 620
A monument of wrath: how mound on mound
Should bury theſe proud towers beneath the ground.

But

But this the Gods may fruſtrate or fulfill,
As ſuits the purpoſe of th' Eternal Will.
But ſay through 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 boſom 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 Heaven: from Heaven proceed
The woes of man; Heaven doom'd the Greeks to bleed;
A theme of future ſong! Say then if ſlain
Some dear lov'd brother preſs'd the Phrygian plain?
Or bled ſome friend, who bore a brother's part, 635
And claim'd by merit, not by blood, the heart?

THE

THE
NINTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

ARGUMENT.

THE ADVENTURES OF THE CICONS, LOTOPHAGI, AND CYCLOPS.

ULYSSES begins the relation of his adventures; how, after the destruction of Troy, he with his companions 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 characterised. The giant Polyphemus and his cave described; the usage Ulysses and his companions met with there; and lastly, the method and artifice by which he escaped.

THE

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK IX.

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 heaven-taught poet, and enchanting ſtrain;
The well-fill'd palace, the perpetual feaſt, 5
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! 10
Amid theſe joys, why ſeeks thy mind to know
Th' unhappy ſeries of a wanderer's woe;
Remembrance ſad, whoſe image to review,
Alas! muſt open all my wounds anew?
And, oh! what firſt, what laſt ſhall I relate, 15
Of woes unnumber'd ſent by Heaven and Fate?
Know firſt the man (though now a wretch diſtreſt)
Who hopes thee, monarch, for his future gueſt.
Behold Ulyſſes! no ignoble name,
Earth ſounds my wiſdom, and high heaven my fame.
My native ſoil is Ithaca the fair,
Where high Neritus waves his woods in air:
Dulichium, Samè, and Zacynthus crown'd
With ſhady mountains, ſpread their iſles around

(Thefe to the north and night's dark regions run,
Thofe to Aurora and the rifing fun).
Low lies our ifle, yet bleft in fruitful ftores;
Strong are her fons, though rocky are her fhores;
And none, ah! none fo lovely to my fight,
Of all the lands that Heaven o'erfpreads with light!
In vain Calypfo long conftrain'd my ftay,
With fweet, reluctant, amorous delay;
With all her charms as vainly Circe ftrove,
And added magick, to fecure my love.
In pomps or joys, the palace or the grot, 35
My country's image never was forgot,
My abfent parents rofe before my fight,
And diftant lay contentment and delight.
Hear then the woes which mighty Jove ordain'd
To wait my paffage from the Trojan land. 40
The winds from Ilion to the Cicons' fhore,
Beneath cold Ifmarus our veffels bore.
We boldly landed on the hoftile place,
And fack'd the city, and deftroy'd the race,
Their wives made captive, their poffeffions fhar'd, 45
And every foldier found a like reward.
I then advis'd to fly; not fo the reft,
Who ftay'd to revel, and prolong the feaft:
The fatted fheep and fable bulls they flay,
And bowls flow round, and riot waftes the day. 50
Meantime the Cicons to their holds retir'd,
Call on the Cicons with new fury fir'd;
With early morn the gather'd country fwarms,
And all the continent is bright with arms;

Thick

Thick as the budding leaves or rising flowers 55
O'erspread the land, when Spring descends in showers:
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 heaven's pure azure spread the growing light,
Promiscuous death the form of war confounds, 65
Each adverse battle gor'd with equal wounds:
But when his evening 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. 70
With sails outspread we fly th' unequal strife,
Sad for their loss, but joyful of our life.
Yet as we fled, our fellows rites we paid,
And thrice we call'd on each unhappy shade.
Meanwhile the God whose hand the thunder forms,
Drives clouds on clouds, and blackens heaven 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 borne,
And all the rattling shrouds in fragments torn. 80
We furl'd the sail, we ply'd the labouring 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, 85
We rear the maſts, we ſpread the canvas wings;
Refreſh'd, and careleſs on the deck reclin'd,
We ſit, and truſt the pilot and the wind.
Then to my native country had I ſail'd:
But the cape doubled, adverſe winds prevail'd. 90
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 in wide ocean, and from ſight of ſhore;
The tenth we touch'd, by various errors toſt, 95
The land of Lotos and the flowery coaſt.
We climb the beach, and ſprings of water found,
Then ſpread our haſty banquet on the ground.
Three men were ſent, deputed from the crew,
(An herald one) the dubious coaſt to view, 100
And learn what habitants poſſeſs 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 fruit produce; 105
Lotos, the name; divine, nectareous juice!
(Thence call'd Lotophagi) which whoſo taſtes,
Inſatiate 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' inchanting ground
We dragg'd reluctant, and by force we bound:

The

The reſt in haſte forſook the pleaſing ſhore,
Or, the charm taſted, had return'd no more.
Now plac'd in order on their banks, they ſweep 115
The ſea's ſmooth face, and cleave the hoary deep;
With heavy hearts we labour through the tide
To coaſts unknown, and oceans yet untry'd.
The land of Cyclops firſt; a ſavage kind,
Nor tam'd by manners, nor by laws confin'd: 120
Untaught to plant, to turn the glebe and ſow;
They all their products to free nature owe.
The ſoil untill'd a ready harveſt yields,
With wheat and barley wave the golden fields,
Spontaneous wines from weighty cluſters pour, 125
And Jove deſcends in each prolific ſhower.
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. 130
Each rules his race, his neighbour not his care,
Heedleſs of others, to his own ſevere.
Oppos'd to the Cyclopean coaſts, there lay
An iſle, whoſe hills their ſubject field ſurvey;
Its name Lachæa, crown'd with many a grove, 135
Where ſavage goats through pathleſs thickets rove:
No needy mortals here, with hunger bold,
Or wretched hunters, through the wintery cold
Purſue their flight: but leave them ſafe to bound
From hill to hill, o'er all the deſert ground. 140
Nor knows the ſoil to feed the fleecy care,
Or feels the labours of the crooked ſhare;

But uninhabited, untill'd, unſown
It lies, and breeds the bleating goat alone.
For there no veſſel with vermillion prore, 145
Or bark 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 th' induſtrious arts of toil. 150
Yet here all products and all plants abound,
Sprung from the fruitful genius of the ground;
Fields waving high with heavy crops are ſeen,
And vines that flouriſh in eternal green,
Refreſhing meads along the murmuring main, 155
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. 160
High at 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 favouring God, beyond our thought, 165
Through all-ſurrounding ſhade our navy brought;
For gloomy night deſcended on the main,
Nor glimmer'd Phœbe in th' ethereal plain:
But all unſeen the clouded iſland lay,
And all unſeen the ſurge and rolling ſea,
Till ſafe we anchor'd in the ſhelter'd bay:
Our ſails we gather'd, caſt our cables o'er,
And ſlept ſecure along the ſandy ſhore.

Soon

Soon as again the rosy morning shone,
Reveal'd the landscape and the scene unknown, 175
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, 180
For arms and weapons of the sylvan war;
Straight 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: 185
The royal bark had ten. Our ships complete
We thus supply'd (for twelve were all the fleet).
Here, till the setting sun roll'd down the light,
We sat indulging in the genial rite:
Nor wines were wanting; those from ample jars 190
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 195
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 addrest:
My dear associates, here indulge your rest: 200
While, with my single ship, adventurous 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, 205
Revere the Gods, and ſuccour the diſtreſt?
This ſaid, I climb'd my veſſel's loſty 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,
Faſt by the ſea a lonely cave we view,
High, and with darkening laurels cover'd o'er;
Where ſheep and goats lay ſlumbering round the ſhore.
Near this, a fence of marble from the rock, 215
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. 220
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, 225
And cloſe to guard it, gave our crew command:
With only twelve, the boldeſt and the beſt,
I ſeek th' adventure, and forſake the reſt.
Then took a goatſkin fill'd with precious wine,
The gift of Maron of Evantheus' line 230
(The prieſt of Phœbus at th' Iſmarian ſhrine).
In ſacred ſhade his honour'd manſion ſtood
Amidſt Apollo's conſecrated wood;
Him, and his houſe, Heaven mov'd my mind to ſave,
And coſtly preſents in return he gave; 235

Seven

Seven 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, 240
The hoary ſire in gratitude reveal'd;
Such was the wine: to quench whoſe fervent ſteam,
Scarce twenty meaſures from the living ſtream
To cool one cup ſuffic'd: the goblet crown'd
Breath'd aromatic fragrancies around. 245
Of this an ample vaſe we heav'd aboard,
And brought another with proviſions ſtor'd.
My ſoul foreboded I ſhould find the bower
Of ſome fell monſter, fierce with barbarous power,
Some ruſtic wretch, who liv'd in Heaven'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: 255
The bending ſhelves with loads of cheeſes preſt,
The folded flocks each ſeparate 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 lies): 260
The cavern echoes with reſponſive cries.
Capacious chargers all around were laid,
Full pails, and veſſels of the milking trade.
With freſh proviſions hence our fleet to ſtore
My friends adviſe me, and to quit the ſhore; 265

Or

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: 270
Dire rites, alas! and fatal to my friends!
Then firſt a fire we kindle, and prepare
For his return with ſacrifice and prayer.
The loaded ſhelves afford us full repaſt;
We ſit expecting. Lo! he comes at laſt. 275
Near half a foreſt on his back he bore,
And caſt the ponderous 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, 280
Came tumbling, heaps on heaps, th' unnumber'd flock:
Big-udder'd ewes, 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, 290
Then to the mother's teats ſubmits the lambs.
Half the white ſtream to hardening cheeſe he preſt,
And high in wicker-baſkets heap'd: the reſt,
Reſerv'd in bowls, ſupply'd the nightly feaſt.

His

His labour done, he fir'd the pile, that gave 295
A ſudden blaze, and lighted all the cave.
We ſtand diſcover'd by the riſing fires;
Aſkance the giant glares, and thus inquires:
What are ye, gueſts; on what adventure, ſay,
Thus far ye wander through the watery way? 300
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! 305
At length, with heart recover'd, I began:
From Troy's fam'd fields, ſad wanderers o'er the [main,
Behold the relicks of the Grecian train!
Through various ſeas by various perils toſt,
And forc'd by ſtorms, unwilling, on your coaſt; 310
Far from our deſtin'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; 315
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: 320
'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

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:
And learn, our power proceeds with thee and thine,
Not as he wills, but as ourſelves incline.
But anſwer, the good ſhip that brought ye o'er,
Where lies ſhe anchor'd? near or off the ſhore?
Thus he. His meditated fraud I find 335
(Vers'd in the turns of various human-kind);
And, cautious, thus: Againſt a dreadful rock,
Faſt by your ſhore the gallant veſſel broke,
Scarce with theſe few I 'ſcap'd; of all my train,
Whom angry Neptune whelm'd beneath the main;
The ſcatter'd wreck the winds blew back again.
He anſwer'd with his deed. His bloody hand
Snatch'd two, unhappy! of my martial band,
And daſh'd like dogs againſt the ſtoney floor:
The pavement ſwims with brains and mingled gore.
Torn limb from limb, he ſpreads 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 carnage 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 ſlumbering monſter to the ground,
My ſoul impels 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 teats 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, ev'n in the laſt deſpair
I thought, devis'd, and Pallas heard my prayer.
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, 380
A tree of ſtatelieſt 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 plane; 385

The

The narrower 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 venturous 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 fleecy 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, 400
He roll'd it on the cave, and clos'd the gate.
Firſt down he ſits, to milk the woolly dams,
And then permits their udder to the lambs.
Next ſeiz'd two wretches more, and headlong caſt,
Brain'd on the rock; his ſecond dire repaſt. 405
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, 410
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

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! 420
Declare thy name; not mortal is this juice,
Such as th' unbleſt Cyclopean climes produce
(Though ſure our vine the largeſt cluſter yields,
And Jove's ſcorn'd thunder ſerves to drench our fields);
But this deſcended from the bleſt abodes, 425
A rill of nectar, ſtreaming 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 fraudful ſpeech I reaſſume: 430
Thy promis'd boon, O Cyclop! now I claim,
And plead my title; Noman 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, 435
The hoſpitable boon we mean to give:
When all thy wretched crew have felt my power,
Noman ſhall be the laſt I will devour.
He ſaid: then, nodding with the fumes of wine,
Dropp'd his huge head, and ſnoring lay ſupine. 440
His neck obliquely o'er his ſhoulders hung,
Preſs'd with the weight of ſleep that tames the ſtrong!
There belch'd the mingled ſtreams of wine and blood,
And human fleſh, his indigeſted food.
Sudden I ſtir the embers, and inſpire 445
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. 450
Then forth the vengeful inſtrument I bring;
With beating hearts my fellows form a ring.
Urg'd by ſome preſent God, they ſwift let fall
The pointed torment on his viſual ball.
Myſelf above them from a riſing ground 455
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: 460
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 jelly bubbles, and the fibres crack.
And as when armourers temper in the ford 465
The keen-edg'd pole-ax, or the ſhining ſword,
The red-hot metal hiſſes in the lake,
Thus in his eye-ball hiſs'd the plunging ſtake.
He ſends a dreadful groan: the rocks around
Through all their inmoſt winding caves reſound. 470
Scar'd we receded. Forth, with frantic hand,
He tore, and daſh'd on earth the gory brand:
Then calls the Cyclops, all that round him dwell,
With voice like thunder, and a direful yell.
From all their dens the one-ey'd race repair, 475
From rifted rocks and mountains bleak in air.

All

All haſte aſſembled, at his well-known roar,
Enquire the cauſe, and croud 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, oppreſs thee, or by fraud or power?
Or thieves inſidious the fair flock ſurprize?
Thus they: the Cyclop from his den replies:
Friends, Noman kills me; Noman, in the hour 485
Of ſleep, oppreſſes me with fraudful power.
"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.
Meantime the Cyclop, raging with his wound,
Spreads his wide arms, and ſearches round and round:
At laſt, the ſtone removing from the gate, 495
With hands extended in the midſt he ſate:
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 labouring boſom wrought;
Each ſcheme I turn'd, and ſharpen'd every 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 ozier bands we ty'd
(The twining bands the Cyclops bed ſupply'd)
The midmoſt bore a man; the outward two
Secur'd each ſide: ſo bound we all the crew. 510
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,
I cling implicit, and confide in Jove.
When roſy morning glimmer'd o'er the dales, 515
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, 520
(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: 525
What makes my ram the lag of all the flock?
Firſt thou wert wont to crop the flowery mead,
Firſt to the field and river's bank to lead,
And firſt with ſtately ſtep at evening hour
Thy fleecy fellows uſher to their bower, 530
Now far the laſt, with penſive pace and ſlow
Thou mov'ſt, as conſcious of thy maſter's woe!
Seeſt thou theſe lids that now unfold in vain?
(The deed of Noman and his wicked train!)
Oh! didſt thou feel for thy afflicted lord, 535
And would but Fate the power of ſpeech afford,

Soon

Soon might'ſt thou tell me, where in ſecret here
The daſtard lurks, all trembling with his fear:
Swung round and round, and daſh'd from rock to rock,
His batter'd brains ſhould on the pavement ſmoke.
No eaſe, no pleaſure, my ſad heart receives,
While ſuch a monſter as vile Noman lives.
The giant ſpoke, and through the hollow rock
Diſmiſs'd the ram, the father of the flock.
No ſooner freed, and through th' encloſure paſt, 445
Firſt I releaſe myſelf, my fellows laſt:
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. 550
Big tears of tranſport ſtand in every 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, 555
As far as human voice could reach the ear:
With taunts the diſtant giant I accoſt:
Hear me, O Cyclop! hear, ungracious hoſt!
'Twas on no coward, no ignoble ſlave,
Thou meditat'ſt thy meal in yonder cave. 560
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.
The 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 thundering on the flood.
It almoſt bruſh'd the helm, and fell before:
The whole ſea ſhook, and refluent beat the ſhore. 570
The long 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 every oar we ply.
Juſt 'ſcap'd impending death, when now again 575
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-leſs giant to provoke,
Whoſe arm may ſink us at a ſingle ſtroke? 580
Already, when the dreadful rock he threw,
Old ocean ſhook, and back his ſurges flew,
Thy 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, 585
Thus with new taunts inſult the monſter's ear.
Cyclop! if any, pitying thy diſgrace,
Aſk who disfigur'd thus that eye-leſs face?
Say 'twas Ulyſſes, 'twas his deed, declare,
Laertes' ſon, of Ithaca the fair; 590
Ulyſſes, far in fighting fields renown'd,
Before whoſe arm Troy tumbled to the ground.
Th' aſtoniſh'd ſavage with a roar replies:
O heavens! O faith of ancient prophecies!
This, Telemus Eurymedes foretold, 595
(The mighty ſeer who on theſe hills grew old;

Skill'd

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. 600
I deem'd ſome god-like giant 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 605
Great Neptune's bleſſing on the watery way:
For his I am, and I the lineage own:
Th' immortal father no leſs boaſts the ſon.
His power can heal me, and re-light my eye:
And only his, of all the Gods on high. 610
Oh! could this arm (I thus aloud rejoin'd)
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, 615
With hands uplifted to the ſtarry ſkies:
Hear me, O 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; 620
Let not Ulyſſes breathe his native air,
Laertes' ſon, of Ithaca the fair.
If to review his country be his fate,
Be it through toils and ſufferings long and late;
His loſt companions let him firſt deplore; 625
Some veſſel, not his own, tranſport him o'er;
And when at home from foreign ſufferings freed,
More near and deep, domeſtic woes ſucceed!

With imprecations thus he fill'd the air,
And angry Neptune heard th' unrighteous prayer.
A larger rock then heaving from the plain,
He whirl'd it round: it ſung 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, 635
And gain'd the iſland where our veſſels lay.
Our ſight the whole collected navy chear'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: 640
Of theſe due ſhares to every ſailor fall;
The maſter ram was voted mine by all:
And him (the guardian of Ulyſſes' fate)
With pious mind to Heaven I conſecrate.
But the great God, whoſe thunder rends the ſkies,
Averſe, beholds the ſmoking ſacrifice;
And ſees me wandering 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;
Till evening Phœbus 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.
Now, rang'd in order on our banks, we ſweep
With haſty ſtrokes the hoarſe reſounding deep;
Blind to the future, penſive with our fears,
Glad for the living, for the dead in tears.

THE

THE
TENTH BOOK
OF THE
ODYSSEY.

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 untying, 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.

AT 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, 5
And ſix fair daughters, grac'd the royal bed:
Theſe ſons their ſiſters 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 muſick through the iſle reſound: 10
At night each pair on ſplendid carpets lay,
And crown'd with love the pleaſures of the day.
This happy port affords our wandering fleet
A month's reception, and a ſafe retreat.
Full oft the monarch urg'd me to relate 15
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 Sire of Gods aſſign'd
The tempeſt's Lord, the tyrant of the wind;

His

His word alone the liſtening ſtorms obey,
To ſmooth the deep, or ſwell the foamy ſea.
Theſe in my hollow ſhip the monarch hung,
Securely fetter'd 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 labouring 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 oppreſt,
Comply'd to take the balmy gifts of reſt;
Then firſt my hands did from the rudder part
(So much the love of home poſſeſs'd my heart);
When, lo! on board a fond debate aroſe;
What rare device thoſe veſſels might encloſe?
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.

Rous'd

Rouz'd from my fatal ſleep, I long debate
If ſtill to live, or deſperate plunge to Fate: 55
Thus, doubting, proſtrate on the deck I lay,
Till all the coward thoughts of death gave way.
Meanwhile our veſſels plough 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 feaſt
Our thirſt and hunger haſtily repreſs'd;
That done, two choſen heralds ſtraight attend
Our ſecond progreſs to my royal friend:
And him amidſt his jovial ſons we found; 65
The banquet ſteaming, and the goblets crown'd:
There humbly ſtopp'd with conſcious ſhame and awe,
Nor nearer than the gate preſum'd to draw.
But ſoon his ſons their well-known gueſt deſcry'd,
And ſtarting from their couches loudly cry'd: 70
Ulyſſes here! what dæmon could'ſt thou meet
To thwart thy paſſage, and repel thy fleet?
Waſt 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, 75
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. 80
Thus I with art to move their pity try'd,
And touch'd the youths; but their ſtern ſire reply'd:
Vile wretch, be gone! this inſtant I command
Thy fleet accurs'd to leave our hallow'd land.

His

His baneful ſuit pollutes theſe bleſs'd abodes, 85
Whoſe fate proclaims him hateful to the Gods.
Thus fierce he ſaid: we ſighing went our way,
And with deſponding hearts put off to ſea.
The ſailors, ſpent with toils, their folly mourn,
But mourn in vain; no proſpect of return, 90
Six days and nights a doubtful courſe we ſteer,
The next proud Lamos' ſtately towers appear,
And Læſtrigonia's gates ariſe diſtinct in air.
The ſhepherd, quitting here at night the plain,
Calls, to ſucceed his cares, the watchful ſwain; 95
But he that ſcorns the chains of ſleep to wear,
And adds the herdſman'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 lies,
Edg'd round with cliffs, high pointing to the ſkies;
The jutting ſhores that ſwell on either ſide
Contract its mouth, and break the ruſhing tide.
Our eager ſailors ſeize the fair retreat, 105
And bound within the port their crowded fleet;
For here retir'd the ſinking 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 halſers to the ſhore. 110
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

Two with our herald thither we command, 115
With ſpeed to learn what men poſſeſs'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; 120
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, 125
And ſhew'd them where the royal dome appear'd.
They went; but, as they entering ſaw the queen
Of ſize enormous, and terrific mein
(Not yielding to ſome bulky mountain's height),
A ſudden horrour ſtruck their aking ſight. 130
Swift at her call her huſband ſcour'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, 135
And fills the city with his hideous cries;
A ghaſtly band of giants hear the roar,
And, pouring down the mountains, croud the ſhore.
Fragments they rend from off the craggy brow,
And daſh the ruins on the ſhips below: 140
The crackling veſſels burſt; hoarſe groans ariſe,
And mingled horrours echo to the ſkies;
The men, like fiſh, they ſtuck upon the flood,
And cramm'd their filthy throats with human food.

Whilſt

Whilst thus their fury rages at the bay, 145
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 they seize,
And sweep with equal strokes the smoky seas: 150
Clear of the rocks th' impatient vessel flies;
Whilst in the port each wretch encumber'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 155
Cool'd every breast, and damp'd the rising joy.
Now dropp'd our anchors in the Ææan bay,
Where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the Day;
Her mother Persè, of old Ocean's strain,
Thus from the Sun descended and the Main 160
(From the same lineage stern Æætes came
The far-fam'd brother of th' enchantress dame);
Goddess, and queen, to whom the powers belong
Of dreadful magic, and commanding song.
Some God directing to this peaceful bay 165
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: 170
To learn if aught of mortal works appear,
Or chearful voice of mortal strike the ear?
From the high point I mark'd, in distant view,
A stream of curling smoke ascending blue,

And

And ſpiry tops, the tufted trees above, 175
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. 180
As down the hill I ſolitary go,
Some Power divine, who pities human woe,
Sent a tall ſtag, deſcending from the wood,
To cool his fervour in the cryſtal flood;
Luxuriant on the wave-worn bank he lay, 185
Stretch'd forth, and panting in the ſunny ray.
I launch'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's ſide
The bloody ſpear, his gather'd feet I ty'd
With twining oziers which the bank ſupplied.
An ell in length the pliant whiſp I weav'd 195
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:
Chear up, my friends! it is not yet our fate
To glide with ghoſts through Pluto's gloomy gate.
Food in the deſert land, behold! is given;
Live, and enjoy the providence of Heaven.
The joyful crew ſurvey his mighty ſize,
And on the future banquet feaſt their eyes, 205

As huge in length extended lay the beaſt;
Then waſh their hands, and haſten to the feaſt.
There, till the ſetting ſun roll'd down the light,
They ſate indulging in the genial rite.
When evening roſe, and darkneſs cover'd o'er 210
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 addreſt:
Followers and friends; attend what I propoſe:
Ye ſad companions of Ulyſſes' woes! 215
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. 220
Alas! from yonder promontory's brow,
I view'd the coaſt, a region flat and low;
An iſle incircled with the boundleſs flood;
A length of thickets, and entangled wood.
Some ſmoke I ſaw amid the foreſts riſe, 225
And all around it only ſeas and ſkies!
With broken hearts my ſad companions ſtood,
Mindful of Cyclops and his human food,
And horrid Læſtrigons, the men of blood.
Preſaging tears apace began to rain; 230
But tears in mortal miſeries are vain.
In equal parts I ſtraight 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. 235

Then in the brazen helm the lots we throw,
And Fortune casts Eurylochus to go:
He march'd, with twice eleven in his train:
Pensive they march, and pensive we remain.
The palace in a woody vale they found, 240
High rais'd of stone; a shaded space around:
Where mountain wolves and bridled lions roam,
(By magick tam'd) familiar to the dome.
With gentle blandishment our men they meet,
And wag their tails, and fawning lick their feet. 245
As from some feast a man returning late,
His faithful dogs all meet him at the gate,
Rejoicing round, some morsel to receive
(Such as the good man ever us'd to give).
Domestic thus the grisly beasts drew near; 250
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. 255
O'er 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, chanting to the loom 260
(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. 265

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 flour of wheat, 270
And honey freſh, and Pramnian 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. 275
Inſtant her circling wand the Goddeſs waves,
To hogs transforms them, and the ſty receives.
No more was ſeen the human form divine;
Head, face, and members, briſtle into ſwine:
Still curſt with ſenſe, their minds remain alone, 280
And their own voice affrights them when they groan.
Meanwhile the Goddeſs in diſdain beſtows
The maſt and acorn, brutal food! and ſtrows
The fruits of cornel, as their feaſt, around;
Now prone and groveling on unſavory ground. 285
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,
His ſwelling heart deny'd the words their way:
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) 295
Through the lone thicket and the deſert land.

A palace

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. 300
Acceſs we ſought, nor was acceſs denied:
Radiant ſhe came; the portal 's 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; 305
I waited long, and eyed 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 inſtant o'er my ſhoulders flung
The belt in which my weighty faulchion hung 310
(A beamy blade); then feiz'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, belov'd of Jove! thy ſervant ſpare, 315
And ah, thyſelf, the raſh attempt forbear!
Never, alas! thou 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. 320
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 bower;
Where dwelt th' enchantreſs ſkill'd in herbs of power,
A form divine forth iſſued from the wood
(Immortal Hermes with the golden rod) 330
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 roam'ſt thou, much-enduring man?
Oh blind to fate! what led thy ſteps to rove 335
The horrid mazes of this magic grove!
Each friend you ſeek in yon encloſure lies,
All loſt their form, and habitants of ſties.
Think'ſt thou by wit to model their eſcape?
Sooner ſhalt thou, a ſtranger to thy ſhape, 340
Fall prone their equal: firſt thy danger know,
Then take the antidote the Gods beſtow.
The plant I give, through all the direful bower
Shall guard thee, and avert the evil hour.
Now hear her wicked arts. Before thy eyes 345
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, 350
And menace death: thoſe menaces ſhall move
Her alter'd mind to blandiſhment and love.
Nor ſhun the bleſſing profer'd to thy arms,
Aſcend her bed, and taſte celeſtial charms:
So ſhall thy tedious toils a reſpite find, 355
And thy loſt friends return to human-kind.

But

But ſwear her firſt by thoſe dread oaths that tie
The Powers below, the Bleſſed in the ſky;
Leſt to thee naked ſecret fraud be meant,
Or magic bind thee cold and impotent. 560
Thus while he ſpoke, the ſovereign plant he drew
Where on th' all-bearing earth unmark'd it grew,
And ſhew'd its nature and its wondrous power:
Black was the root, but milky-white the flower;
Moly the name, to mortals hard to find, 365
But all is eaſy to th' ætherial kind.
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: 370
Arriv'd, before the lofty gates I ſtay'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 ſtarry ſtuds, a ſilver ſeat 375
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 Heaven:
Then wav'd the wand, and then the word was given.
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, ſhe trembling cries, 385
She faints, ſhe falls; ſhe lifts her weeping eyes.

What art thou? ſay! from whence, from whom you came?
Oh more than human! tell thy race, thy name.
Amazing ſtrength, theſe poiſons to ſuſtain!
Nor mortal thou, nor mortal is thy brain. 390
Or art thou he? the man to come (foretold
By Hermes powerful 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, 395
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! 400
Beneath thy charms when my companions groan,
Transform'd to beaſts, with accents not their own.
Oh thou of fraudful heart! ſhall I be led
To ſhare thy feaſt-rites, or aſcend thy bed:
That, all unarm'd, thy vengeance may have vent, 405
And magick bind me, cold and impotent!
Celeſtial as thou art, yet ſtand denied;
Or ſwear that oath by which the Gods are tied,
Swear, in thy ſoul no latent frauds remain,
Swear by the vow which never can be vain. 410
The Goddeſs ſwore: then ſeiz'd my hand, and led
To the ſweet tranſports of the genial bed.
Miniſtrant to their queen, with buſy care
Four faithful handmaids the ſoft rites prepare;
Nymphs ſprung from fountains, or from ſhady woods,
Or the fair offspring of the ſacred floods.

One

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 flaskets grac'd: 420
With dulcet beverage 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; 425
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 tunick o'er me next she threw,
Fresh from the bath, and dropping balmy dew; 430
Then led and plac'd me on the sovereign seat,
With carpets spread; a footstool at my feet.
The golden ewer a nymph obsequious brings,
Replenish'd from the cool translucent springs:
With copious water the bright vase supplies 435
A silver laver of capacious size.
I wash'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 savour, rich repast! 440
Circe in vain invites the feast to share;
Absent I ponder, and absorb in care:
While scenes of woe rose anxious in my breast,
The queen beheld me, and those words addrest:
Why sits Ulysses silent and apart, 445
Some hoard of grief close-harbour'd at his heart?
Untouch'd

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! human 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 would'ſt 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, haſtening to the ſties, ſet wide the door,
Urg'd forth, and drove the briſtly herd before; 460
Unweildy, out they ruſh'd with general cry,
Enormous beaſts diſhoneſt to the eye.
Now touch'd by counter-charms, they change again,
And ſtand majeſtic, and recall'd to men.
Thoſe hairs, of late that briſtled every 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: 470
Sad, pleaſing ſight! with tears each eye ran o'er,
And ſobs of joy re-echoed through the bower:
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-experienc'd man!

Haſte

Haſte to thy veſſel on the ſea-beat ſhore,
Unload thy treaſures, and the galley moor:
Then bring thy friends, ſecure from future harms,
And in our grottoes ſtow 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 485
(When loaded cribs their evening 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: 490
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! 495
(Theſe tender words on every 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. 500
I anſwer'd chearful: 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 505
To taſte the joys of Circe's ſacred dome.

With

With ready 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? 510
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 bower?
Remember Cyclops, and his bloody deed; 515
The leader's raſhneſs made the ſoldiers bleed.
I heard incens'd, and firſt reſolv'd to ſpeed
My flying falchion at the rebel's head.
Dear as he was, by ties of kindred bound,
This hand had ſtretch'd him breathleſs on the ground.
But all at once my interpoſing 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 525
Of Circe's palace, where Ulyſſes leads.
This with one voice declar'd, the riſing train
Left the black veſſel by the murmuring main.
Shame touch'd Eurylochus's alter'd breaſt,
He fear'd my threats, and follow'd with the reſt. 530
Meanwhile 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:
Brightening with joy their eager eyes behold 535
Each other's face, and each his ſtory told;

Then gushing tears the narrative confound,
And with their sobs 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 power,
And share the pleasures of this genial hour. 545
Such be your minds as ere ye left your coast,
Or learn'd to sorrow for a country lost.
Exiles and wanderers now, where-e'er ye go
Too faithful memory renews your woe;
The cause remov'd, habitual griefs remain, 550
And the soul saddens by the use of pain.
Her kind entreaty mov'd the general 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. 555
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? 560
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: 565
But when the shades came on at evening hour,
And all lay slumbering in the dusky bower;

I came

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; 570
Muſt ſad Ulyſſes ever be delay'd?
Around their lord 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, (ſhe 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, 580
And view the realms of darkneſs and of death.
There ſeek the Theban bard, depriv'd of ſight;
Within, irradiate with prophetic light;
To whom Perſephone, entire and whole,
Gave to retain th' unſeparated ſoul: 583
The reſt are forms, of empty æther made;
Impaſſive ſemblance, and a flitting ſhade.
Struck at the word, my very heart was dead:
Penſive I ſate; my tears bedew'd the bed;
To hate the light and life my ſoul begun, 590
And ſaw that all was grief beneath the ſun.
Compos'd at length, the guſhing tears ſuppreſt,
And my toſt limbs now weary'd into reſt:
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

Thy fated road (the magic power reply'd)
Divine Ulyſſes! aſks no mortal guide.
Rear but the maſt, the ſpacious ſail diſplay, 600
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: 605
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, ſlow-rolling from the Stygian bed, 610
Cocytus' lamentable waters ſpread:
Where the dark rock o'erhangs th' infernal lake,
And mingling ſtreams eternal murmurs make.
Firſt draw thy falchion, and on every ſide
Trench the black earth a cubit long and wide: 615
To all the ſhades around libations pour,
And o'er th' ingredients ſtrow the hallow'd flour:
New wine and milk, with honey temper'd, bring;
And living water from the cryſtal ſpring.
Then the wan ſhades and feeble ghoſts implore, 620
With promis'd offerings on thy native ſhore;
A barren cow, the ſtatelieſt of the iſle,
And, heap'd with various wealth, a blazing pile:
Theſe to the reſt; but to the ſeer muſt bleed
A ſable ram, the pride of all thy breed. 625
Theſe ſolemn vows and holy offerings paid
To all the phantom-nations of the dead;

Be

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, 630
And back to Ocean glance with reverend awe.
Sudden ſhall ſkim along the duſky glades
Thin airy ſhoals, and viſionary ſhades.
Then give command the ſacrifice to haſte,
Let the flay'd victims in the flame be caſt, 635
And ſacred vows and myſtic ſong apply'd
To griſly Pluto and his gloomy bride.
Wide o'er the pool, thy falchion wav'd around
Shall drive the ſpectres from forbidden ground:
The ſacred draught ſhall all the dead forbear, 640
Till awful from the ſhades ariſe the ſeer.
Let him, oraculous, 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 645
The morn, conſpicuous on her golden throne.
The Goddeſs with a radiant tunic dreſs'd
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: 650
A tiar wreath'd her head with many a fold;
Her waſte 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: 655
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

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, 665
And down he haſten'd, but forgot the way;
Full endlong from the roof the ſleeper fell,
And ſnapp'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: 670
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, 675
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; 680
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, 685
The ſable 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

THE
ELEVENTH BOOK
OF THE
O D Y S S E Y.

ARGUMENT.

THE DESCENT INTO HELL.

ULYSSES continues his narration, How he arrived 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 ancient heroines, afterwards of the heroes, and converſes in particular with Agamemnon and Achilles. Ajax keeps at a ſullen diſtance, and diſdains to anſwer him. He then beholds Tityus, Tantalus, Syſiphus, Hercules; till he is deterred from further curioſity by the apparition of horrid Spectres, and the cries of the wicked in torments.

THE

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 oppreſt, 5
And ſolemn horror ſaddens every breaſt.
A freſhening breeze the * Magic Power ſupplied,
While the wing'd veſſel flew along the tide;
Our oars we ſhipp'd: all day the ſwelling ſails
Full from the guiding pilot catch'd the gales. 10
Nor ſunk the ſun from his aërial height,
And o'er the ſhaded billows ruſh'd the night:
When, lo! we reach'd old Ocean's utmoſt bounds,
Where rocks control his waves with ever-during mounds.
There in a lonely land, and gloomy cells, 15
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.

* Circe.

The ſhip we moor on theſe obſcure abodes;
Diſbark the ſheep, an offering to the Gods;
And, hell-ward bending, o'er the beach deſcry
The doleſome paſſage to th' infernal ſky.
The victims, vow'd to each Tartarean Power, 25
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 every ſide,
A cavern form'd, a cubit long and wide. 30
New wine, with honey-temper'd milk, we bring,
Then living waters from the cryſtal ſpring;
O'er theſe was ſtrew'd the conſecrated flour,
And on the ſurface ſhone 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 pile ſhall burn; 40
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, 45
And all the caverns ſmok'd with ſtreaming blood.
When, lo! appear'd along the duſky coaſts,
Thin, airy ſhoals of viſionary ghoſts;
Fair, penſive youths, and ſoft enamour'd maids;
And wither'd elders, pale and wrinkled ſhades; 50

Ghaſtly

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, 55
And a cold fear ran ſhivering through my blood;
Straight I command the ſacrifice to haſte,
Straight the flay'd victims to the flames are caſt,
And mutter'd vows, and myſtic ſong applied
To griſly Pluto, and his gloomy bride. 60
Now ſwift I wav'd my faulchion o'er the blood;
Back ſtarted the pale throngs, and trembling ſtood.
Round the black trench the gore untaſted flows,
Till awful from the ſhades Tireſias roſe.
There wandering through 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 lie.
Sad at the ſight I ſtand, deep fix'd in woe,
And ere I ſpoke the tears began to flow: 70
Oh ſay what angry power, 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 ſail, and leave the lagging wind?
The ghoſt replied: To hell my doom I owe, 75
Dæmons accurſt, dire miniſters of woe!
My feet, through wine unfaithful to their weight,
Betray'd me tumbling from a towery height,
Staggering I reel'd, and as I reel'd I fell,
Lux'd the neck-joint—my ſoul deſcends to hell. 80

But lend me aid, I now conjure thee lend,
By the ſoft tie and ſacred name of friend!
By thy fond conſort! by thy father's cares!
By lov'd Telemachus's blooming years!
For well I know that ſoon the heavenly Powers 85
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. 90
But if, unheard, in vain compaſſion plead,
Revere the Gods, the Gods avenge the dead!
A tomb along the watery 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, O mournful ſhade,
Due to thy ghoſt, ſhall to thy ghoſt be paid.
Still as I ſpoke, the phantom ſeem'd to moan, 100
Tear follow'd tear, and groan ſucceeded groan.
But, as my waving ſword the blood ſurrounds,
The ſhade withdrew, and mutter'd empty ſounds.
There as the wondrous viſions I ſurvey'd,
All pale aſcends my royal mother's ſhade: 105
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

Yet as I ſhook my faulchion o'er the blood, 110
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: 115
Why, mortal, wandereſt thou from chearful 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 poinard, while my tongue relates 120
Heaven's ſtedfaſt purpoſe, and thy future fates.
While yet he ſpoke, the Prophet I obey'd,
And in the ſcabbard plung'd the glittering blade:
Eager he quaff'd the gore, and then expreſt
Dark things to come, the counſels of his breaſt: 125
Weary of light, Ulyſſes here explores,
A proſperous 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, 130
For injur'd Cyclops, and his eye-ball loſt!
Yet to thy woes the Gods decree an end,
If Heaven thou pleaſe, and how to pleaſe attend!
Where on Trinacrian rocks the ocean roars,
Graze numerous herds along the verdant ſhores; 135
Though hunger preſs, yet fly the dangerous 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

Rob not the God; and ſo propitious gales 140
Attend thy voyage, and impel 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! 145
Strangers thy guides! nor there thy labours end,
New foes ariſe, domeſtic ills attend!
There foul adulterers to thy bride refort,
And lordly gluttons riot in thy court!
But vengeance haſtes amain! Theſe eyes behold 150
The deathful ſcene, princes on princes roll'd!
That done, a people far from ſea explore,
Who ne'er knew ſalt, or heard the billows roar,
Or ſaw gay veſſel ſtem the watery plain,
A painted wonder flying on the main! 155
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 watery reign;
A three-fold offering to his altar bring, 160
A bull, a ram, a boar; and hail the Ocean-King.
But, home return'd, to each æthereal power
Slay the due victim in the genial hour:
So peaceful ſhalt thou end thy bliſsful days,
And ſteal thyſelf from life by ſlow decays: 165
Unknown to pain, in age reſign thy breath,
When late ſtern Neptune points the ſhaft with death:
To the dark grave retiring as to reſt,
Thy people bleſſing, by thy people bleſt!

Unerring truths, O man, my lips relate; 170
This is thy life to come, and this is fate.
To whom unmov'd: If this the Gods prepare;
What Heaven ordains, the wife with courage bear.
But fay, why yonder on the lonely ftrands,
Unmindful of her fon, Anticlea ftands? 175
Why to the ground fhe bends her downcaft eye?
Why is fhe filent, while her fon is nigh?
The latent caufe, O facred feer, reveal!
Nor this, replies the feer, will I conceal.
Know, to the fpectres, that thy beverage tafte, 180
The fcenes of life recur, and actions paft:
They, feal'd with truth, return the fure reply;
The reft, repell'd, a train oblivious fly.
The phantom-prophet ceas'd, and funk from fight
To the black palace of eternal night. 185
Still in the dark abodes of death I ftood,
When near Anticlea mov'd, and drank the blood.
Straight all the mother in her foul awakes,
And, owning her Ulyffes, thus fhe fpeaks:
Com'ft thou, my fon, alive, to realms beneath, 190
The dolefome realms of darknefs and of death:
Com'ft thou alive from pure, æthereal day?
Dire is the region, difmal is the way!
Here lakes profound, there floods oppofe their waves,
There the wide fea with all his billows raves! 195
Or (fince to duft proud Troy fubmits her towers)
Com'ft thou a wanderer from the Phrygian fhores?
Or fay, fince honour call'd thee to the field,
Haft thou thy Ithaca, thy bride beheld?

Source

Source of my life, I cry'd, from earth I fly, 200
To ſeek Tireſias in the nether ſky,
To learn my doom; for, toſt from woe to woe,
In every land Ulyſſes finds a foe:
Nor have theſe eyes beheld my native ſhores,
Since in the duſt proud Troy ſubmits her towers. 205
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? 210
If yet Telemachus, my ſon, ſurvives?
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 truſt;
Though tempted, chaſte, and obſtinately juſt! 215
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 conſort mourns:
Whether the night deſcends, or day prevails, 220
Thee ſhe by night, and thee by day bewails,
Thee in Telemachus thy realm obeys;
In ſacred groves celeſtial rites he pays,
And ſhares the banquet in ſuperior ſtate,
Grac'd with ſuch honours as become the great. 225
Thy ſire in ſolitude foments his care:
The court is joyleſs, for thou art not there!
No coſtly carpets raiſe his hoary head,
No rich embroidery ſhines to grace his bed:

Ev'n

Ev'n when keen winter freezes in the ſkies, 230
Rank'd with his ſlaves, on earth the monarch lies:
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 ſcattering on the ground; 235
Regardleſs of his years, abroad he lies,
His bed the leaves, his canopy the ſkies.
Thus cares on cares his painful days conſume,
And bow his age with ſorrow to the tomb!
For thee, my ſon, I wept my life away; 240
For thee through hell's eternal dungeons ſtray:
Nor came my fate by lingering 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; 245
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 through my arms ſhe ſlipp'd like empty wind,
Or dreams, the vain illuſions of the mind. 250
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 powers that ſmile at human harms! 255
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 rejoin'd,
Oh moſt inur'd to grief of all mankind! 260

'Tis

'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, 265
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 dominions ſpeed thy way,
And climb the ſteep aſcent to upper day; 270
To thy chaſte bride the 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. 280
Tyro began, whom great Salmoneus bred;
The royal partner of fam'd Cretheus' bed.
For fair Enipeus, as from fruitful urns
He pours his watery 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 amorous God deſcends into her arms: 290

Around,

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 ſighing, he the fair addreſs'd, 295
And as he ſpoke her tender hand he preſs'd:
Hail, happy nymph! no vulgar births are ow'd
To the prolific raptures of a God:
Lo! when nine times the moon renews her horn,
Two brother heroes ſhall from thee be born; 300
Thy early care the future worthies claim,
To point them to the arduous paths of fame;
But in thy breaſt th' important truth conceal,
Nor dare the ſecret of a God reveal:
For know, thou Neptune view'ſt! and at my nod 305
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 ſhe brings
Jove's dread vice-gerents, in two future kings; 310
O'er proud Icolos Pelias ſtretch'd his reign,
And god-like Neleus rul'd the Pylian plain:
Then, fruitful, to her Cretheus' royal bed
She gallant Pheres and fam'd Æſon bred:
From the ſame fountain Amythaon roſe, 315
Pleas'd with the din of war, and noble ſhout of foes.
There mov'd Antiope with haughty charms,
Who bleſt th' Almighty Thunderer in her arms:
Hence ſprung Amphion, hence brave Zethus came,
Founders of Thebes, and men of mighty name; 320

Though

Though bold in open field, they yet ſurround
The town with walls, and mound inject on mound;
Here ramparts ſtood, there towers roſe high in air,
And here through ſeven wide portals ruſh'd the war.
There with ſoft ſtep the fair Alcmena trod, 325
Who bore Alcides to the Thundering 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 frown'd, th' inceſtuous Theban queen; 330
With her own ſon ſhe join'd in nuptial bands,
Though father's blood imbrued 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, 335
A pompous wretch! accurs'd upon a throne.
The wife ſelf-murder'd from a beam depends;
And her foul ſoul to blackeſt hell deſcends;
Thence to her ſon the choiceſt plagues ſhe brings,
And his fiends haunt him with a thouſand ſtings. 340
And now the beauteous Chloris I deſcry,
A lovely ſhade, Amphion's youngeſt joy!
With gifts unnumber'd Neleus ſought her arms,
Nor paid too dearly for unequal'd charms;
Great in Orchomenos, in Pylos great, 345
He ſway'd the ſceptre with imperial ſtate.
Three gallant ſons the joyful monarch told,
Sage Neſtor, Periclimenus the bold,
And Chromius laſt; but of the ſofter race,
One nymph alone, a miracle of grace. 350

Kings

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 Iphyclus, detain'd in wrong; 355
Wild, furious herds, unconquerably strong!
This dares a seer, but nought the seer prevails,
In beauty's cause illustriously he fails;
Twelve moons the foe the captive youth detains
In painful dungeons, and coercive chains; 360
The foe at last, from durance where he lay,
His art revering, gave him back to day;
Won by prophetic knowledge, to fulfill
The stedfast purpose of th' Almighty will.
With graceful port advancing now I spy'd 365
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
Curbs the proud steed, reluctant to the rein: 370
By turns they visit this æthereal sky,
And live alternate, and alternate die:
In hell beneath, on earth, in heaven above,
Reign the Twin-gods, the favourite sons of Jove.
There Ephimedia trod the gloomy plain, 375
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'erburthen'd groan'd beneath their weight,
None but Orion e'er surpass'd their height:

The wonderous youths had ſcarce nine winters told,
When high in air, tremendous to behold,
Nine ells aloft they rear'd their towering head,
And full nine cubits broad their ſhoulders ſpread.
Proud of their ſtrength and more than mortal ſize, 385
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 they youths! had they to manhood grown,
Almighty Jove had trembled on his throne. 390
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 Phædra with ſad Procris moves,
Both beauteous ſhades, both hapleſs in their loves;
And near them walk'd, with ſolemn pace and ſlow,
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 tow'rds his Athens bears the lovely prize;
There Bacchus with fierce rage Diana fires,
The Goddeſs aims her ſhaft, the nymph expires.
There Clymenè and Mera I behold;
There Eriphylè weeps, who looſely ſold
Her lord, 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, 410
Here in the court, or yonder on the waves;

In

In you I truſt, and in the heavenly powers,
To land Ulyſſes on his native ſhores.
He ceas'd: but left ſo charming on their ear
His voice, that liſtening ſtill they ſeem'd to hear. 415
Till, riſing up, Aretè ſilence broke,
Stretch'd-out her ſnowy hand, and thus ſhe ſpoke:
What wondrous man Heaven ſends us in our gueſt!
Through all his woes the hero ſhines confeſt;
His comely port, his ample frame, expreſs 420
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 generous hand reward his ſtay; 425
For, ſince kind Heaven with wealth our realm has bleſt,
Give it to Heaven, by aiding the diſtreſt.
Then ſage Echeneus whoſe, grave reverend brow
The hand of time had ſilver'd o'er with ſnow,
Mature in wiſdom roſe: Your words, he cries, 430
Demand obedience, for your words are wiſe.
But let our king direct the glorious way
To generous act; our part is to obey.
While life informs theſe limbs, (the king reply'd)
Well to deſerve, be all my cares employ'd: 435
But here this night the royal gueſt detain,
Till the ſun flames along th' æthereal 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, 440
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 control,
To raiſe a bounty noble as thy ſoul; 445
The circling year I wait, with ampler ſtores
And fitter pomp to hail my native ſhores:
Then by my realms due homage would be paid;
For wealthy kings are loyally obey'd!
O king! for ſuch thou art, and ſure thy blood 450
Through veins (he cry'd) of royal fathers flow'd;
Unlike thoſe vagrants who on falſehood live,
Skill'd in ſmooth tales, and artful to deceive;
Thy better ſoul abhors the liar's part,
Wiſe is thy voice, and noble is thy heart. 455
Thy words like muſic every breaſt control,
Steal through the ear, and win upon the ſoul;
Soft, as ſome ſong divine, thy ſtory flows,
Nor better could the Muſe record thy woes.
But ſay, upon the dark and diſmal coaſt, 460
Saw'ſt thou the worthies of the Grecian hoſt?
The god-like leaders who, in battle ſlain,
Fell before Troy, and nobly preſt the plain?
And, lo! a length of night behind remains,
The evening ſtars ſtill mount th' æthereal plains. 465
Thy tale with raptures I could hear thee tell,
Thy woes on earth, the wondrous ſcenes in hell,
Till in the vault of heaven the ſtars decay,
And the ſky reddens with the riſing day.
O worthy of the power the Gods aſſign'd, 470
(Ulyſſes thus replies) a king in mind!

Since yet the early hour of night allows
Time for discourse, and time for soft repose,
If scenes of misery can entertain,
Woes I unfold, of woes a dismal train. 475
Prepare to hear of murther 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 480
The heroine shades; they vanquish'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 prest the plain.
He quaff'd the gore: and straight 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. 490
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, 495
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 human-kind
For active courage and a patient mind; 500
Nor 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.
Stabb'd by a murderous hand Atrides dy'd, 505
A foul adulterer, and a faithleſs bride;
Ev'n in my mirth and at the friendly feaſt,
O'er the full bowl, the traitor ſtabb'd his gueſt;
Thus by the gory arm of ſlaughter falls
The ſtately ox, and bleeds within the ſtalls. 510
But not with me the direful murther 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 ſtorms, 515
Death thou haſt ſeen in all her ghaſtly forms;
In duel met her, on the liſted 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. 520
Ev'n in the flow of joy, when now the bowl
Glows in our veins, and opens every 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, 525
The bleeding innocent Caſſandra dies!
Then though pale death froze cold in every vein,
My ſword I ſtrive to wield, but ſtrive in vain;
Nor did my traitreſs wife theſe eye-lids cloſe,
Or decently in death my limbs compoſe. 530
O woman, woman, when to ill thy mind
Is bent, all hell contains no fouler fiend:

And

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, 53
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. 540
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 lies a deſert land.
Warn'd by my ills beware, the ſhade replies, 545
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 conſort ceaſe to fear a foe,
For thee ſhe feels ſincerity of woe: 550
When Troy firſt bled beneath the Grecian arms,
She ſhone unrival'd with a blaze of charms;
Thy infant ſon her fragrant boſom preſs'd,
Hung at her knee, or wanton'd at her breaſt;
But now the years a numerous train have ran; 555
The blooming boy is ripen'd into man;
Thy eyes ſhall ſee him burn with noble fire,
The fire ſhall bleſs his ſon, the ſon his ſire:
But my Oreſtes never met theſe eyes,
Without one look the murther'd father dies; 560
Then from a wretched friend this wiſdom learn,
Ev'n to thy queen diſguiſs'ſt, 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, 565
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 chearful day; 570
Or pale or 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 575
Advanc'd Achilles' and Patroclus' ghoſt,
A friendly pair! near theſe the * Pylian ſtray'd,
And towering Ajax, an illuſtrious ſhade!
War was his joy, and pleas'd with loud alarms,
None but Pelides brighter ſhone in arms. 580
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 wan ſpectres walk eternal rounds;
Nor fear'ſt the dark and diſmal waſte to tread, 585
Throng'd with pale ghoſts familiar with the dead?
To whom with ſighs: I paſs theſe dreadful gates
To ſeek the Theban, and conſult the Fates:
For ſtill, diſtreſt, I rove from coaſt to coaſt,
Loſt to my friends, and to my country loſt. 590
But ſure the eye of Time beholds no name
So bleſt as thine in all the rolls of fame;

Alive

* Antilochus.

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 dolorous gloom, 395
Nor think vain words (he cried) can eaſe my doom.
Rather I chuſe laborioufly to bear
A weight of woes, and breathe the vital air,
A ſlave to ſome poor hind that toils for bread;
Than reign the ſceptred monarch of the dead. 600
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 reverend Peleus, reigns, 605
Great in his Pthia, and his throne maintains:
Or, weak and old, my youthful arm demands,
To fix the ſceptre ſtedfaſt in his hands?
Oh 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 ſlain,
Should vindicate my injur'd father's fame,
Cruſh the proud rebel, and aſſert his claim.
Illuſtrious ſhade, (I cried) of Peleus' fates 615
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. 620
When Greece aſſembled all her hundred ſtates,
To ripen counſels, and decide debates;

Heavens!

Heavens! 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, 625
The third in wiſdom where they all were wiſe;
But when, to try the fortune of the day,
Hoſt mov'd tow'rd hoſt in terrible array,
Before the van, impatient for the fight,
With martial port he ſtrode, and ſtern delight; 630
Heaps ſtrew'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 Cetæan 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 dropp'd a tear;
Fierce in his look his ardent valour glow'd, 645
Fluſh'd in his cheek, or ſallied in his blood;
Indignant in the dark receſs 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 glittering ſpear:
And when the Gods our arms with conqueſt crown'd,
When Troy's proud bulwarks ſmok'd upon the ground,

Greece

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 655
Safe he return'd, without one hoſtile ſcar;
Though ſpears in iron tempeſts rain'd around,
Yet innocent they play'd, and guiltleſs of a 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, 665
A gloomy ſhade, the ſullen Ajax ſtood;
For ever ſad with proud diſdain he pin'd,
And the loſt arms for ever ſtung his mind;
Though on the conteſt Thetis gave the laws,
And Pallas, by the Trojans, judg'd the cauſe. 670
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 died!
Touch'd at the ſight, from tears I ſcarce refrain, 675
And tender ſorrow thrills in every vein;
Penſive and ſad I ſtand, at length accoſt
With accents mild th' inexorable ghoſt.
Still burns thy rage? and can brave ſouls reſent
Ev'n after death? Relent, great ſhade, relent! 680
Periſh thoſe arms which by the Gods decree
Accurs'd our army with the loſs of thee!

With

With thee we fell; Greece wept thy hapleſs fates;
And ſhook aſtoniſh'd through her hundred ſtates;
Not more, when great Achilles preſs'd the ground,
And breath'd his manly ſpirit through the wound.
Oh, 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 control,
And calm the raging tempeſt of thy ſoul. 690

While yet I ſpeak, the ſhade diſdains to ſtay,
In ſilence turns, and ſullen ſtalks away.

Touch'd at his ſour retreat, through deepeſt night,
Through hell's black bounds I had purſued his flight,
And forc'd the ſtubborn ſpectre to reply; 695
But wondrous viſions drew my curious eye,
High on a throne, tremendous 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 rolls,
Abſolves the juſt, and dooms the guilty ſouls.

There huge Orion, of portentous ſize,
Swift through the gloom a giant-hunger flies;
A ponderous mace of braſs with direful ſway 705
Aloft he whirls, to cruſh the ſavage prey;
Stern beaſts in trains that by his truncheon fell,
Now griſly forms, ſhoot o'er the lawns of hell.

There Tityus large and long, in fetters bound,
O'erſpreads nine acres of infernal ground; 710
Two ravenous vultures, furious for their food,
Scream o'er the fiend, and riot in his blood,

Inceſſant

Inceſſant gore the liver in his breaſt,
Th' immortal liver grows, and gives th' immortal feaſt.
For as o'er Panope's enamel'd plains, 715
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 treacherous water flies.
Above, beneath, around his hapleſs head, 725
Trees of all kinds delicious fruitage ſpread;
There figs ſky-died, a purple hue diſcloſe,
Green looks the olive, the pomegranate glows,
There dangling pears exalted ſcents unfold,
And yellow apples ripen into gold; 730
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, 735
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 renews,
Duſt mounts in clouds, and ſweat deſcends in dews.
Now I the ſtrength of Hercules behold, 740
A towering ſpectre of gigantic mould,

A ſhadowy

A ſhadowy form! for high in heaven's abodes
Himſelf reſides, a God among the Gods;
There, in the bright aſſemblies of the ſkies, 745
He nectar quaffs, and Hebe crowns his joys.
Here hovering ghoſts, like fowl, his ſhade ſurround,
And clang their pinions with terrific ſound;
Gloomy as night he ſtands, in act to throw
Th' aërial arrow from the twanging bow. 750
Around his breaſt a wondrous zone is roll'd,
Where woodland monſters grin in fretted gold,
There ſullen lions ſternly ſeem to roar,
The bear to growl, to foam the tuſky boar,
There war and havock and deſtruction ſtood, 755
And vengeful murther red with human blood.
Thus terribly adorn'd the figures ſhine,
Inimitably wrought with ſkill divine.
The mighty ghoſt advanc'd with awful look,
And, turning his grim viſage, ſternly ſpoke: 760
O exercis'd in grief! by arts refin'd!
O taught to bear the wrongs of baſe mankind!
Such, ſuch was I! ſtill toſt from care to care,
While in your world I drew the vital air!
Ev'n I, who from the Lord of Thunders roſe, 765
Bore toils and dangers, and a weight of woes;
To a baſe monarch ſtill a ſlave confin'd,
(The hardeſt bondage to a generous mind!)
Down to theſe worlds I trod the diſmal way,
And dragg'd the three-mouth'd dog to upper day;
Ev'n hell I conquer'd, through the friendly aid
Of Maia's offspring and the Martial Maid.

Thus

Thus he, nor deign'd for our reply to ſtay,
But, turning, ſtalk'd with giant-ſtrides away.
Curious to view the kings of ancient days, 775
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, 780
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 hangs ſhivering in my veins;
Leſt Gorgon, riſing from th' infernal lakes, 785
With horrors arm'd, and curls of hiſſing ſnakes,
Should fix me, ſtiffen'd at the monſtrous ſight,
A ſtony image, in eternal night!
Straight from the direful coaſt to purer air
I ſpeed my flight, and to my mates repair. 790
My mates aſcend the ſhip; they ſtrike their oars;
The mountains leſſen, and retreat the ſhores;
Swift o'er the waves we fly; the freſhening gales
Sing through the ſhrouds, and ſtretch the ſwelling ſails,

THE

THE TWELFTH BOOK OF THE ODYSSEY.

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 Strait 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 relation concludes.

THE ODYSSEY.

BOOK XII.

THUS o'er the rolling ſurge the veſſel flies,
Till from the waves th' Ææan hills ariſe.
Here the gay morn reſides in radiant bowers,
Here keeps her revels with the dancing Hours;
Here Phœbus riſing in th' ætherial way, 5
Through heaven's bright portals pours the beamy day.
At once we fix our halſers 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 rolling deep. 10
Soon as the morn reſtor'd the day, we pay'd
Sepulchral honours to Elpenor's ſhade.
Now by the ax the ruſhing foreſt bends,
And the huge pile along the ſhore aſcends.
Around we ſtand a melancholy train, 15
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; 20
The riſing tomb a lofty column bore,
And high above it roſe the tapering oar.

Meantime the * Goddeſs our return ſurvey'd
From the pale ghoſts, and hell's tremendous ſhade.
Swift ſhe deſcends: a train of nymphs divine 25
Bear the rich viands and the generous wine:
In act to ſpeak the * Power of Magick ſtands,
And graceful thus accoſts the liſtening bands:
O ſons of woe! decreed by adverſe fates
Alive to paſs through hell's eternal gates! 30
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, 35
Spread your broad ſails, and plough the liquid way;
Lo! I 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 Phœbus downward plung'd his burning ray; 40
Then ſable night aſcends, and balmy reſt
Seals every 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, 45
The wondrous 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 favouring Power be kind,
And print th' important ſtory on thy mind! 50
Next, where the Sirens dwell, you plough the ſeas;
Their ſong is death, and makes deſtruction pleaſe.

Unbleſt

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, 55
His blooming offspring, or his beauteous wife!
In verdant meads they ſport; and wide around
Lie human bones, that whiten all the ground;
The ground polluted floats with human gore,
And human carnage taints the dreadful ſhore. 60
Fly ſwift the dangerous coaſt; let every 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, 65
Be every 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. 70
  High o'er the main two rocks exalt their brow,
The boiling billows thundering roll below;
Through the vaſt waves the dreadful wonders move,
Hence nam'd Erratick by the Gods above.
No bird of air, no dove of ſwifteſt wing, 75
That bears ambroſia to th' ætherial 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 proſperous breezes play,
Ploughs o'er that roaring ſurge its deſperate way; 80
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 85
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 rolling clouds;
Loud ſtorms around and miſts eternal riſe,
Beat its bleak brow, and intercept the ſkies. 90
When all the broad expanſion bright with day
Glows with th' autumnal or the ſummer ray,
The ſummer and the autumn glow in vain,
The ſky for ever lours, for ever clouds remain.
Impervious to the ſtep of man it ſtands, 95
Though borne by twenty feet, though arm'd with twenty hands;
Smooth as the poliſh of the mirrour riſe
The ſlippery ſides, and ſhoot into the ſkies.
Full in the centre of this rock diſplay'd,
A yawning cavern caſts a dreadful ſhade: 100
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 ſight! expand thy ſails, 105
Ply the ſtrong oar, and catch the nimble gales;
Here Scylla bellows from her dire abodes,
Tremendous peſt! abhorr'd by men and gods!
Hideous her voice, and with leſs terrors roar
The whelps of lions in the midnight hour. 110
Twelve feet deform'd and foul the fiend diſpreads;
Six horrid necks ſhe rears, and ſix terrific heads;

Her

Her jaws grin dreadful with three rows of teeth;
Jaggy they ſtand, the gaping den of death;
Her parts obſcene the raging billows hide; 115
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 watery way; 120
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 125
Breaks the wild waves, and forms a dangerous ſtreight;
Full on its crown a fig's green branches riſe,
And ſhoot a leafy foreſt to the ſkies;
Beneath, Charybdis holds her boiſtering reign
'Midſt roaring whirlpools, and abſorbs the main; 130
Thrice in her gulfs the boiling ſeas ſubſide,
Thrice in dire thunders ſhe refunds the tide.
Oh, if thy veſſel plough the direful waves
When ſeas retreating roar within her caves,
Ye periſh all! though he who rules the main 135
Lend 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 prayer,
Goddeſs divine! my guardian power, declare, 140
Is the foul fiend from human vengeance freed?
Or, if I riſe in arms, can Scylla bleed?

Then ſhe: O worn by toils, O broke in fight,
Still are new toils and war thy dire delight?
Will martial flames for ever fire thy mind, 145
And never, never be to Heaven 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! 150
She mocks the weak attempts of human might;
Oh fly her rage! thy conqueſt is thy flight.
If but to ſeize thy arms thou make delay,
Again the fury vindicates her prey,
Her ſix mouths yawn, and ſix are ſnatch'd away.
From her foul womb Cratæis gave to air
This dreadful peſt! To her direct thy prayer,
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, 160
Where graze thy herds, illuſtrious Source of Day!
Seven herds, ſeven flocks, enrich the ſacred plains;
Each herd, each flock, full fifty heads contains;
The wondrous kind a length of age ſurvey,
By breed increaſe not, nor by death decay. 165
Two ſiſter Goddeſſes poſſeſs the plain,
The conſtant guardians of the woolly train;
Lampetie fair, and Phaethuſa young,
From Phœbus and the bright Neæra ſprung:
Here, watchful o'er the flocks, in ſhady bowers 170
And flowery meads they waſte the joyous hours.
Rob not the God! and ſo propitious gales
Attend thy voyage, and impel thy ſails;

But

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 ceas'd: 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, 180
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 freſhening 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 Heaven foredooms diſcloſe,
Hear all! Fate hangs o'er all! on you it lies
To live, or periſh! to be ſafe, be wiſe!
In flowery meads the ſportive Sirens play,
Touch the ſoft lyre, and tune the vocal lay; 195
Me, me alone, with fetters firmly bound,
The Gods allow to hear the dangerous ſound.
Hear and obey: if freedom I demand,
Be every fetter ſtrain'd, be added band to band.
While yet I ſpeak, the winged galley flies, 200
And, lo! the Siren ſhores like miſts ariſe.
Sunk were at once the winds; the air above,
And waves below, at once forgot to move!

Some

Some dæmon calm'd the air, and ſmooth'd the deep,
Huſh'd the loud winds, and charm'd the waves to ſleep.
Now every ſail we furl, each oar we ply;
Laſh'd by the ſtroke, the frothy waters fly.
The ductile wax with buſy hands I mould,
And cleft in fragments, and the fragments roll'd:
Th' aerial region now grew warm with day, 210
The wax diſſolv'd beneath the burning ray!
Then every ear I barr'd againſt the ſtrain,
And from acceſs of phrenzy lock'd the brain.
Now round the maſt my mates the fetters 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, 220
And thus the ſweet deluders tune the ſong.
Oh ſtay, O pride of Greece! Ulyſſes, ſtay!
Oh 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 whate'er the kings of mighty name
Atchiev'd at Ilion in the field of fame;
Whate'er beneath the ſun's bright journey lies. 230
Oh ſtay and learn new wiſdom from the wiſe!
Thus the ſweet charmers warbled o'er the main;
My ſoul takes wing to meet the heavenly ſtrain;

I give

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 dangerous ground,
The deafen'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, deafen'd, and aghaſt we ſtood!
No more the veſſel plough'd the dreadful wave,
Fear ſeiz'd the mighty, and unnerv'd the brave; 245
Each dropp'd his oar: but ſwift from man to man
With looks ſerene I turn'd, and thus began:
O friends! Oh often tried in adverſe ſtorms!
With ills familiar in more dreadful forms!
Deep in the dire Cyclopean den you lay, 250
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 every nerve, and bid the veſſel fly. 255
If from yon juſtling 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 plough 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

While yet I ſpeak, at once their oars they ſeize,
Stretch to the ſtroke, and bruſh the working ſeas. 265
Cautious the name of Scylla I ſuppreſt;
That dreadful ſound had chill'd the boldeſt breaſt.
Meantime, forgetful of the voice divine,
All dreadful bright my limbs in armour ſhine;
High on the deck I take my dangerous ſtand, 270
Two glittering javelins 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 labouring eyes I roll'd; 275
In vain! the diſmal dungeon dark as night
Veils the dire monſter, and confounds the ſight.
Now through the rocks, appall'd with deep diſmay,
We bend our courſe, and ſtem the deſperate way;
Dire Scylla there a ſcene of horror forms, 280
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; 285
Eternal miſts obſcure th' aërial plain,
And high above the rock ſhe ſpouts the main!
When in her gulphs the ruſhing ſea ſubſides,
She drains the ocean with the refluent tides:
The rock rebellows with a thundering ſound; 290
Deep, wondrous deep below, appears the ground.
Struck with deſpair, with trembling hearts we view'd
The yawning dungeon, and the tumbling flood;

When

When, lo! fierce Scylla ſtoop'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 quivering 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 overhangs the flood, 300
The ſilent fiſher calls th' inſidious food,
With fraudful care he waits the finny prize,
And ſudden lifts it quivering to the ſkies:
So the foul monſter lifts her prey on high,
So pant the wretches, ſtruggling in the ſky; 305
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 ſhivering blood, congeal'd, forgot to flow; 310
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 glittering mountains riſe to view. 315
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,
Straight 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 oppreſt, I thus begun:
O friends!

O friends! Oh ever exercis'd in care!
Hear Heaven'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 Heaven forebodes:
Fly the dire regions, and revere the Gods!
While yet I spoke, a sudden sorrow ran
Through every breast, and spread from man to man,
Till wrathful thus Eurylochus began:
O cruel thou! some fury sure has steel'd
That stubborn soul, by toil untaught to yield!
From sleep debarr'd, we sink from woes to woes:
And cruel envieſt 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. 340
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 toss with rising storms the watery way,
Though Gods descend from heaven's aërial plain 345
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 beam, pursue the destin'd way. 350
A sudden joy in every bosom rose:
So will'd some dæmon, minister of woes!
To whom with grief—Oh! swift to be undone,
Constrain'd I act what wisdom bids me shun.

But

But yonder herds and yonder flocks forbear; 355
Atteſt the heavens, and call the Gods to hear:
Content an innocent repaſt diſplay,
By Circe given, and fly the dangerous prey.
Thus I: and while to ſhore the veſſel flies,
With hands uplifted they atteſt the ſkies; 360
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 365
A ſweet forgetfulneſs of human cares.
Now far the night advanc'd 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; 370
The moon, the ſtars, the bright ætherial 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 rag'd: when morning roſe, to land 375
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 neighbouring ſeas.
There while the wild winds whiſtled o'er the main,
Thus careful I addreſt the liſtening train: 380
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 Heaven, be aw'd;
Holy the flocks, and dreadful is the God!

That

That God who ſpreads the radiant beams of light, 385
And views wide earth and heaven's unmeaſur'd height.
And now the moon had run her monthly round,
The ſouth-eaſt bluſtering with a dreadful ſound;
Unhurt the beeves, untouch'd the woolly train
Low through the grove, or range the flowery plain: 390
Then fail'd our food; then fiſh we make our prey,
Or fowl that ſcreaming haunt the watery way.
Till now, from ſea or flood no ſuccour found,
Famine and meagre want beſieg'd us round.
Penſive and pale from grove to grove I ſtray'd, 395
From the loud ſtorms to find a ſylvan ſhade;
There o'er my hands the living wave I pour;
And Heaven and Heaven's immortal thrones adore,
To calm the roarings of the ſtormy main,
And grant me peaceful to my realms again. 400
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 405
Pale hunger waſtes the manly ſtrength away.
Why ceaſe ye then t' implore the Powers above,
And offer hecatombs to thundering Jove?
Why ſeize ye not yon beeves, and fleecy prey?
Ariſe unanimous; ariſe and ſlay! 410
And, if the Gods ordain a ſafe return,
To Phœbus ſhrines ſhall riſe, and altars burn.
But, ſhould the Powers that o'er mankind preſide
Decree to plunge us in the whelming tide,

Better to rush at once to shades below, 415
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. 420
Swift from the oak they strip the shady pride;
And verdant leaves the flowery cake supply'd.
With prayer they now address th' ætherial train,
Slay the selected beeves, and flay the slain:
The thighs, with fat involv'd, divide with art, 425
Strew'd o'er with morsels cut from every 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 dreft,
They roast the fragments, and prepare the feast. 430
'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, 435
And thus obtesting Heaven I mourn'd aloud:
O Sire of men and gods, immortal Jove!
Oh, all ye blissful Powers that reign above!
Why were my cares beguil'd in short repose?
O fatal slumber paid with lasting woes! 440
A deed so dreadful all the Gods alarms,
Vengeance is on the wing, and Heaven in arms!
Meantime Lampetie mounts th' aërial way,
And kindles into rage the God of Day:

Vengeance, ye powers, (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 through the ports of Heaven I pour the day.
Or deep in Ocean plunge the burning ray.
Vengeance, ye Gods! or I the ſkies forego, 450
And bear the lamp of heaven to ſhades below.
To whom the Thundering Power: O Source of Day!
Whoſe radiant lamp adorns the azure way,
Still may thy beams through heaven's bright portals riſe,
The joy of earth, and glory of the ſkies; 455.
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.
Meantime 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 Heaven gave ſigns of wrath; along the ground
Crept the raw hides, and with a bellowing ſound
Roar'd the dead limbs; the burning entrails groan'd.
Six guilty days my wretched mates employ
In impious feaſting, and unhallow'd joy;
The ſeventh aroſe, and now the Sire of Gods
Rein'd the rough ſtorms, and calm'd the toſſing floods:
With ſpeed the bark we climb; the ſpacious ſails
Loos'd 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

When, lo! a murky cloud the Thunderer forms 75
Full o'er our heads, and blackens heaven with ſtorms.
Night dwells o'er all the deep: and now outflies
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:
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, 485
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 retoſs'd, it reel'd beneath the blow; 490
At once into the main the crew it ſhook:
Sulphureous odours roſe, and ſmouldering ſmoke.
Like fowl that haunt the floods, they ſink, they riſe,
Now loſt, now ſeen, with ſhrieks and dreadful cries;
And ſtrive to gain the bark; but Jove denies.
Firm at the helm I ſtand, when fierce the main
Ruſh'd with dire noiſe, and daſh'd the ſides in twain;
Again impetuous 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, 505
And dire Charybdis rolls her thundering waves.
All night I drove; and at the dawn of day,
Faſt by the rocks beheld the deſperate way:
Juſt when the ſea within her gulfs ſubſides,
And in the roaring whirlpools ruſh the tides. 510
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 pendent round it claſps his leathern wings.
High in the air the tree its boughs diſplay'd, 515
And o'er the dungeon caſt a dreadful ſhade,
All unſuſtain'd between the wave 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; 520
Charybdis rumbling from her inmoſt caves,
The maſt refunded on her refluent waves.
Swift from the tree, the floating maſt to gain,
Sudden I dropp'd amidſt the flaſhing main;
Once more undaunted on the ruin rode, 525
And oar'd with labouring arms along the flood.
Unſeen I paſs'd by Scylla's dire abodes:
So Jove decreed (dread Sire of men and gods).
Then nine long days I plough'd the calmer ſeas,
Heav'd by the ſurge, and wafted by the breeze. 530
Weary and wet th' Ogygian ſhores I gain,
When the tenth ſun deſcended to the main.
There, in Calypſo's ever-fragrant bowers,
Refreſh'd I lay, and joy beguil'd the hours.

My

My following fates to thee, O 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?

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