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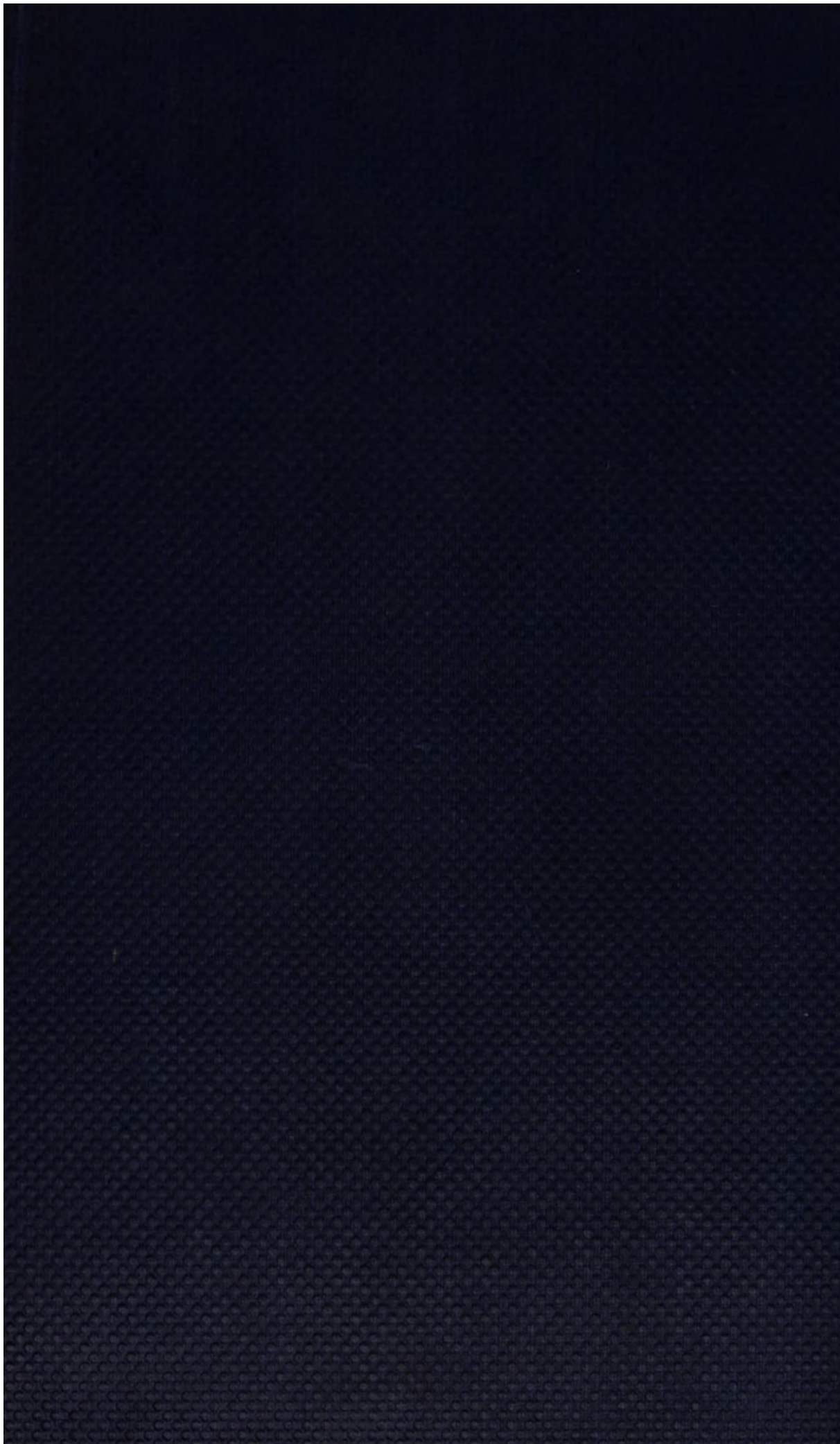
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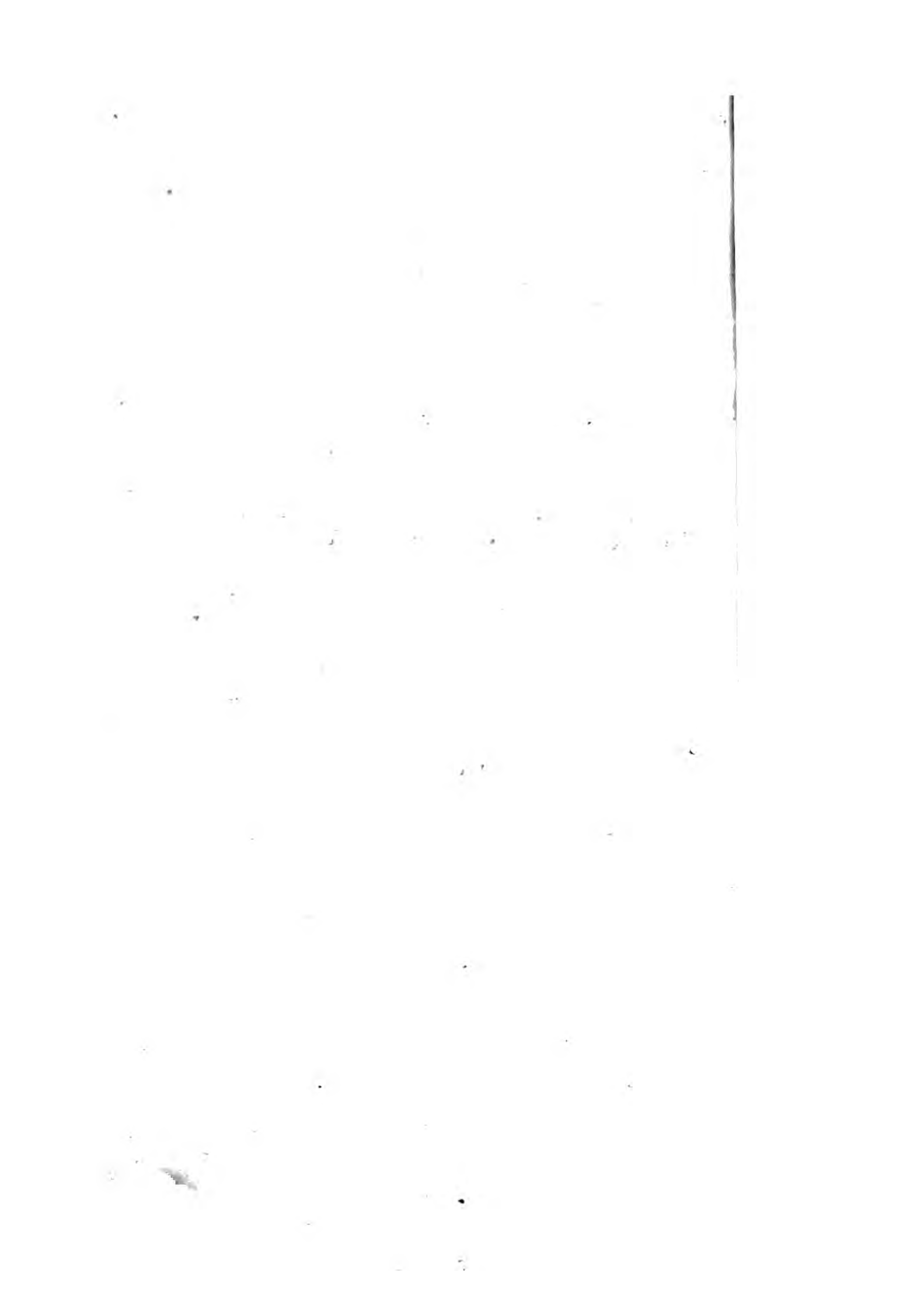
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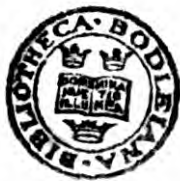
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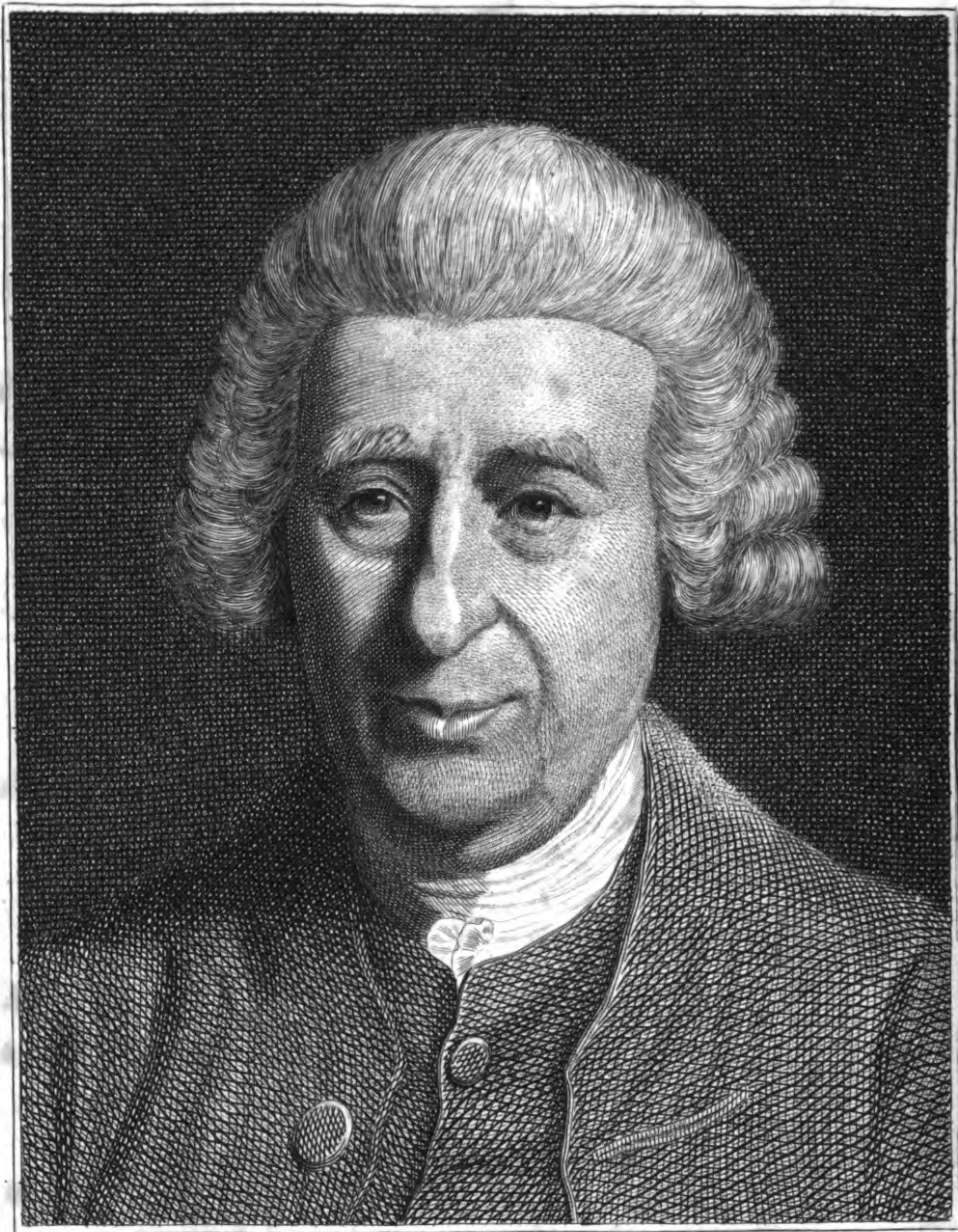
A T H E N A I D,

A P O E M.

VOL. I.







A

THE
A T H E N A I D,
A P O E M,

BY THE
AUTHOR OF LEONIDAS.

ΕΣΤ' ΑΡ ΑΘΗΝΩΝ ΕΣΤ' ΑΠΟΡΘΗΤΟΣ ΠΟΛΙΣ·
ΑΝΔΡΩΝ ΓΑΡ ΟΝΤΩΝ 'ΕΡΚΟΣ ΕΣΤΙΝ ΑΣΦΑΔΕΣ.
ÆSCHYL. PERSÆ.

V O L. I.

L O N D O N:
PRINTED FOR T. CADELL,
IN THE STRAND.

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1873
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE ATHENAID, written by the late Richard Glover, Esq; was left by him, among other literary works, to Miss Glover (now Mrs. Halfey) who presents it to the Public exactly copied from her Father's Manuscript, except what regards the punctuation, and introduction of now and then a connective word, inserted by the good offices of a Friend.—The Poem was not finished early enough before Mr. Glover's decease for him to revise it, as he intended; yet, incorrect as it may be for want of such revisal, the Editor flatters herself that it will be favorably received, as the genuine work of an Author, who was ever distinguished by public approbation.—An earnest desire of doing honor to

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

the memory of a deceased Parent, and also of gratifying the literary world with the Sequel to LEONIDAS, which the present Poem contains, and which together includes the most brilliant period of the Grecian History, are the motives for her Publication:

E R R A T A.

- B. I. l. 390, *for* Alpheus, *read* Alphēus.
B. I. l. 520, *for* Dionecece, *read* Dienecece.
B. III. l. 324, *for* ut, *read* But.
B. IV. l. 340, *for* servants, *read* servant's.
B. VI. l. 80, *after* blood *place* a full stop.
B. X. l. 72, *for* Erotria, *read* Eretria.
B. X. l. 337, *for* waite, *read* waits.

T H E

THE
A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the FIRST.

THE Persians vanquish'd, Greece from bon-
dage sav'd,

The death of great Leonidas aveng'd

By Attic virtue—celebrate, O Muse!

A burning ray the summer solstice cast, 4
Th' Olympiad was proclaim'd; when Xerxes pour'd
His millions through Thermopylæ, new-stain'd
With blood. From Athens Æschylus divine

B

In

In genius, arts, and valour, musing deep
 On his endanger'd country's future doom,
 Repairs, invited by an evening still, 10
 To clear Iliffus, Attic stream renown'd.
 Beneath an oak, in solitary state
 Apart, itself a wood, the hero's limbs
 On tufted moss repose. He grasps the lyre;
 Unfolded scrolls voluminous he spreads 15
 Along the ground: high lays repeating thence,
 Leonidas the Spartan he extols,
 And sweeps th' accordant strings. To closing day
 He bade farewell, and hail'd th' ascending stars
 In music long continued; till the stream 20
 With drowsy murmur won his eye to sleep,
 But left his fancy waking. In a dream
 The god of day, with full meridian blaze,
 Seem'd to assume his function o'er the skies;
 When, lo! the earth divided: through the cleft 25
 A gush of radiance dimm'd the noon-tide sun.

In

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 3

In *structure* all of diamond, self pois'd,
Amid redundant light a chariot hung
Triumphal. Twelve transparent horses breath'd
Beams from their nostrils, dancing beams of day 30
Shook from their manes. In lineaments of man,
Chang'd to immortal, there the mighty soul
Of Sparta's king apparent shone. His wounds
Shot forth a splendour like the clust'ring stars,
Which on Orion's chest and limbs proclaim 35
Him first of constellations. Round in cars
Of triumph too arrang'd, the stately forms
Of those whom virtue led to share his doom,
And consecrate Thermopylæ to fame.
Pines tipp'd with lightning seem'd their spears; their
shields 40
Broad like Minerva's ægis: from their helms
An empyreal brightness stream'd abroad:
Ineffable felicity their eyes,
Their fronts the majesty of gods display'd.

4 THE ATHENAID. Book I.

Ereft the glorious fhape began to fpeak 45
In accents louder than a burfting cloud—
Pentelicus, Hymettus feem'd to fhake
Through all their quarries, and Iliffus beat
His fhudd'ring banks in tumult—Thou, whose mufe
Commands th' immortalizing trump of fame, 50
Go to the fage Hellanodics, the juft
Elēan judges of Olympian palms;
There in thy own celeftial ftrains rehearfe,
Before that concourfe wide, our deeds and fate.
Let our example general Greece infpire 55
To face her danger; let the Spartan fhield
Protect th' Athenians, elfe I died in vain.

The brilliant vifion, now difperſing, leaves
The wond'ring bard. He, ſtarting, in his ken
Discerns no other than the real ſcene 60
Of ſhadows brown from cloſe embow'ring wood,
Than

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 5

Than distant mountains, and the spangled face
Of heav'n, reflected from the silver stream.

But pensive, brooding o'er his country's fate,
His step he turns. Themistocles, who rul'd 65
Athenian councils, instant he accosts
With large recital of his awful dream.

Obey the mandate, cries the chief: alarm
Th' Olympian concourse: from the Delphian port
Of Cirrha sail for Elis: on thy way 70
Consult Apollo in the state's behalf,
Which to that function nominates thy worth:
Of Xerxes' march intelligence obtain.

This said, they parted. Æschylus by dawn
Commenc'd his progress, join'd by numbers arm'd,
Like him to Pisa's barrier destin'd all, 76
Electing him their chief. Five times the sun

6 THE ATHENAID. Book I.

Renew'd his orbit, five successive nights
The moon enlarg'd her crescent, ere they reach'd
Phœbean Delphi, seated on a rock 80
Abrupt, sublime. Yet thence the curious eye
Must upward look to meet the summits blue
Of double-topp'd Parnassus, where the god
Oracular is worshipp'd. Here they trac'd
Barbarian violence profane. Consum'd 85
Were hamlets, temples levell'd to the dust,
The statues broken, each religious bow'r
A burning mass of embers. Wrapt in smoke,
With cinders strewn, so glows the region round
Portentous Ætna, or Vesuvius dire, 90
Death's flaming cauldrons; when their stony ribs
And min'ral bowels, liquefied by fire,
O'erwhelm the fields, by nature left unblest'd,
Alone unblest'd of all Sicania's bound,
Or lovely-fac'd Hesperia. Dubious here 95
Th' Athenians halt, while fierce the sultry noon
Inflames

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 7

Inflames the sky. From Delphi's open gates,
To Attic eyes no stranger, Timon comes,
Sage priest of Phœbus, magistrate unfoil'd,
The public host of Athens, to the plain 100
Descending swift with followers who bear
His buckler, spear, and armour. On his head
Were ashes sprinkled : rent, his garb presag'd
Some black disaster. What malignant dart
Of fortune wounds thee? Æschylus aloud, 105
While by the hand Cecropia's host he press'd.

To him the Delphian: From deserted roofs,
Depopulated streets, I come to hail
Thee, bound by hospitable ties my friend,
Thee, dear to Phœbus, by Minerva grac'd, 110
Thy country's goddess. Me thou often saw'st
A parent bless'd in Amarantha's bloom,
Yet ripe in virtue. Her, presenting pray'r
With votive flow'rs before Minerva's shrine,

8 THE ATHENAID. Book I.

This very hour Barbarians have enthrall'd, 115

Borne in my fight precipitate away.

O wife lamented, gather'd in thy prime

By ruthless Pluto! in Elysian groves

How shall I meet thee, and the tidings bear

Of thy lost child, to servitude a prey, 120

To violation doom'd? Yet more: the rage

Of these invaders, who have spoil'd our fields,

Defac'd our temples, driv'n to shelt'ring caves,

To pathless cliffs, our populace dismay'd,

Is now ascending to insult the fane, 125

With sacrilegious violence to seize

Th' accumulated off'rings by the great

And good from age to age devoted there.

He scarce had finish'd, when the earth beneath

Rock'd from her center in convulsive throes; 130

From pole to pole th' ethereal concave groan'd:

Night from her cavern with gigantic steps

Bestrode

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 9

Bestrode the region, lifting high as heav'n
Her broad, infernal palm, whose umbrage hides
The throne of light; while, glancing through the
rifts 135

Of her black mantle, overlaid with clouds,
Blue vapours trail'd their fires. The double head
Of tall Parnassus reeling, from the crag
Unloos'd two fragments; mountainous in bulk,
They roll to Delphi with a crashing sound, 140
Like thunder nigh whose burst of ruin strikes
The shatter'd ear with horror. Thus the bard
Unmov'd, while round him ev'ry face is pale :

Not on our heads these menaces are thrown
By ireful nature, and portentous heav'n; 145
Th' unrighteous now, th' oppressor of mankind,
The sacrilegious, in this awful hour
Alone should feel dismay. My Delphian host,
Who knows but thund'ring Jove's prophetic son

B 5

Now

Now vindicates his altar; in his name 150

Now calls the turbid elements to war?

What shrieks of terror fill thy native streets!

The hills with barb'rous dissonance of cries,

The caverns howl. Athenians, be prepar'd,

Best so when arm'd: then, Timon, ease thy limbs;

The season teems with prodigy. Secure 156

In conscious virtue, let us calmly watch

The mighty birth. By heav'n! through yonder gate

The foes are driven; confusion, wild despair,

With panic dread pursue them: friends, embrace

Th' auspicious moment; lift your pious blades, 161

Ye chosen men, auxiliars to a god!

He spake, advancing with his holy friend

To battle. Shiv'ring at their own misdeed,

At heav'n-inflicted punishment, the foes 165

Unnerv'd, distracted, unresisting, deem'd

The warriors two celestials from above,

Cas'd

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 11

Cas'd in Vulcanian panoply, to wage
The war of gods. The whole Athenian train
In equal fervour with Barbarian blood 170
Diftain their weapons. So from forests drear,
When barren winter binds the foodful earth,
Enrag'd by famine, trooping wolves invade
A helpless village; unwithstood, they range
With greedy fangs, and dye with human gore 175
The snow-envelop'd ways. The Delphian race,
By fear so lately to the neighb'ring hills
And caves restrain'd, forsake their shelt'ring holds;
In clusters rushing on the foes dismay'd,
Accomplish their defeat. Th' Athenian chief 180
Triumphant, red with massacre, admits
A Persian youth to mercy, who his shield
And sword surrenders. Persian, dost thou hope
Thy flow'ring bloom shall ripen to enjoy
A length of days? (severe his victor spake) 185
Then to my questions utter words sincere.

Reveal thy name, thy father's. Where encamps
 The host of Xerxes? Whither doth he point
 His inroad next? To violate this fane
 By his appointment was thy youth compell'd? 190
 Last, if thou know'ft, what impious savage tore
 The Delphian maiden from Minerva's shrine?

The Persian answers with a crimson'd cheek,
 With eyes in tears—Ah! little now avails
 Th' illustrious current of Argestes' blood 195
 To me a captive, less the name I bear
 Of Artamanes. By the king's decree
 That we were sent, that I unwilling came,
 Is truth sincere. Our leader slain, the heaps
 Of these disfigur'd carcases have made 200
 Their last atonement to th' insulted god.
 The king in rich Orchomenus I left;
 Who through Bœotia meditates to march
 Against th' Athenians. He, alas! who seiz'd

The

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 13

The beauteous virgin at Minerva's shrine, 205

He is my brother, eldest of the race,

Far hence secure ; while captive here I mourn

His heinous outrage, and my own disgrace.

Addressing Timon, here Cecropia's bard :

Preserve this youth a hostage for thy child : 210

He seems deserving ; thee I know humane.

Now to Apollo's temple be my guide.

Still dost thou droop ?—O Æschylus, exclaims

Desponding Timon, from the woes begun

This day in Delphi, I to Athens trace 215

A series black with evil. Lo ! the wise,

The righteous Aristides from your walls

Through jealousy of merit is expell'd ;

Themistocles the cause. Himself, though great,

Yet envious, and ambitious that his light 220

May blaze unrivall'd, of th' Athenian state

Extinguishes the brightest. Sparta shews,

At

At this dread crisis, how the hearts of men
 By selfish cares and falsehood are deprav'd.
 She to the land of Pelops still confines 225
 Her efforts, on the neighb'ring isthmus rears
 A partial bulwark, leaving half the Greeks,
 Your noble feat, this oracle, expos'd
 To devastation: little she regards
 Our god profan'd, our progeny enslav'd; 230
 Her chief Paufanias, arrogant and stern,
 O'erlooks my sufferings. Feeling what I fear
 For thee and others, I must droop, my friend.

To him the bard, in these sententious strains:
 Not endless sunshine is the lot of man, 235
 Nor ever blooming seasons. Night succeeds
 The day, as day the night: rude winter frowns,
 Fair summer smiles. Thus variable the mind,
 Not less than human fortune, feels the strife
 Of truth and error, which alternate reign 240
 The

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 15

The arbiters of nature. Dark the deed,
A deed of gloomy night, when envy forc'd
The best Athenian from his natal roof :
But light will soon return. Though Sparta break
Her promise pledg'd ; though false Bœotia prop 245
A foreign throne ; still Athens will sustain
Herself and Greece, will retribution pay
To Aristides, and her morn dispel
The mist of error with a glorious blaze.
No more—my duty calls me to the fane. 250

They move, and passing by Minerva's grove,
Two monuments of terror see. There stopp'd
The massy fragments, from Parnassus rent :
An act of nature, by some latent cause
Disturb'd. Tremendous o'er Barbarian ranks 255
The ruins down the sacred way had roll'd,
Leaving its surface horrible to sight ;
Such as might startle war's remorseless god,

And

And shake his heart of adamant. Not long
 This blood-congealing spectacle detains 260
 The troop, which swiftly to the Pythian dome
 Press their ascending steps. The martial bard
 First, as enjoin'd by holy form, to scenes
 Far different, sweet Castalia's fount and grove,
 Resorts, with pure ablution to redeem 265
 From dust and slaughter his polluted limbs,
 To holy eyes obscene. Beside the fane,
 Within a flow'ring bosom of the hill,
 Through veins of rock beneath embow'ring shade,
 The rills divine replenish, as they flow, 270
 A cavity of marble. O'er the brim,
 In slender sheets of liquid crystal, down
 They fall harmonious. Pliftus takes below
 To his smooth bed their tribute. Plunging there
 In deep obscurity of wood, whose roof 275
 With ridgy verdure meets the low-bent eye
 From that stupendous cliff, his current winds
 Through.

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 17

Through shade awhile ; thence issuing large in view,
Refreshes grateful meads, by mountains edg'd,
Which terminate on Cirrha, Delphian port. 280
Beyond her walls blue Neptune spreads his face
Far as Achaia's wide expanse of coast,
With tow'rs and cities crown'd. The marble fount
On either side is skirted thick by groves
Of ancient laurel with luxuriant arms, 285
In glossy green attir'd. There Phœbus, pride
Of Parian quarries, stands a form divine,
In act to draw an arrow from the case
Loose hanging o'er his shoulder ; and in look
Serene, but stern : his worshippers to guard, 290
As if the Pythian serpent were in sight,
He meditates the combat. Here disarm'd,
His limbs from all th' impurities of Mars
Th' Athenian purges. Menial care supplies
A garment silver-white : an olive branch 295
His suppliant hand sustains. He seeks the fane ;
He

He mounts the steps magnificent : the gates
 On founding hinges turn their brazen valves.
 Across an area vast, with solemn shade
 Of massy columns border'd, slow he moves 300
 His manly frame. Procumbent at the mouth
 Of that abyss oracular, whose fume
 Breathes wild sensation through the Pythian maid,
 With hands outstretch'd, he offers up this pray'r :

O vanquisher of Python ! Seed of Jove, 305
 Whose eleutherian might the tyrant dreads !
 Bright pow'r of day, dispenser of that fire
 Which kindles genius in the human breast !
 God of that light diffusing through the soul
 The rays of truth and knowledge ! Friend to man,
 His monitor prophetic ! O admit 310
 Athenians, anxious for their country's weal,
 In this her day of peril to consult
 Thy wisdom, thy protection to implore !

Her

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 19

Her tripod high the prophets ascends : 315
Enthusiastic motion strains her form,
In flashes rolls her eyeballs, and bespreads
Her agitated front with floating hair.
Her weight a laurel, planted nigh, upholds,
Which she embraces ; her convulsive grasp 320
Shakes to the root the groaning trunk, the boughs,
The clatt'ring foliage. Forth she bursts in foam.

Fly, wretched men, to earth's extremest bound !
I see, I see th' Acropolis in flames,
Your temples crumble, and your turrets nod : 325
I see the blood run sable through your streets.

All unabash'd, the hero firm replies :
Yet further speak. Though citadel and fanes
Be doom'd to ashes, must the nation fall ?
If so, instruct thy suppliants how their fall 330
May prove most glorious in the fight of gods
And

And men.—The Pythian answers with a look
Of pity, soft'ning her tempestuous rage:

Ah! still my tongue like adamant is hard.
Minerva's tow'rs must perish: Jove severe 335
So wills; yet granting, at his daughter's suit,
Her people refuge under walls of wood.
But shun the myriads of terrific horse,
Which on your fields an eastern Mars will range.

She ceas'd; Th' Athenian notes her answer
down: 340
To one, the most entrusted of his train,
He gives the tablet. Back to Athens fly,
He said; the son of Neocles alone,
By his unbounded faculties, can pierce
The hidden sense of these mysterious strains; 345
All which of Xerxes thou hast heard, report:
I must depart to Elis.—Must thou go?

Dejected

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 21

Dejected Timon then : what safety here
For me remains ? Barbarians will return ;
My countrymen, dishearten'd as before, 350
Resort to caverns. Though the god hath fav'd
His shrine, the rest of Phocis lies a prey,
Bœotia, Locris, Doris, to the foe.
Yet what have I, O Æschylus ! to dread ?
I have no other child for savage force 355
To violate : In Amarantha lost,
My joy, my hope are vanish'd ; and the hand,
Which lays me breathless, will befriend me best.

Th' Athenian here : Unmanly is despair,
A noxious weed, whose growth, my Delphian host,
Let courage wither. Phœbus hath denounc'd 361
The waste of Athens. Hopeful I forebode,
That prouder walls and battlements will lift
Their heads for ages ; and that eye of Greece
With inextinguishable ray surpass 365

Its

Its former lustre. Quit this dang'rous place,
 With us embarking : borrow help from time,
 Safe counsellor to wisdom. You, the race
 Of holy Delphi, should the foe return,
 Again dispersing to your caves, rely 370
 On your protecting god. Not vers'd alone
 In holy rites, in arms and council tried,
 A chief like Timon fame forbids to hide
 His dignity in caverns.—Timon here :

Thou shalt conduct me, thou my friendly star !
 Meantime selected messengers I send 376
 The needful barks at Cirrha to prepare.

Now from the temple under Timon's roof
 Admitted, vig'rous with refection due
 Of rest and food, to Cirrha they proceed 380
 With Artamanes. Ready are the barks,
 The gale propitious, calm the wat'ry plain :

When

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 23

When, like the feather'd sojourners, who leave
Their late abode on winter's bleak approach,
To wing their flight for climates more benign, 385
These with extended canvas quit the port,
And, doubling round Achaia, cut the main
To sacred Pifa. On their way the harp
Of Æschylus, preluding to the strain
Which on his banks Alpheus was to hear, 390
Relieves the sailor toiling at his oar,
Enchants the wind retentive of the sounds
Which harmonize his breath. If round the keel
Of sweet Arion dolphins ever play'd,
Or blithsome Nereids to the pleasing mood 395
Of Orpheus danc'd, while Argo plough'd the deep ;
They now had felt controulment as in bonds,
Not on their pliant, azure-glossy fins
Disporting light, but rigid with amaze
At this majestic muse. Yet sounding verse, 400
In solemn cadence to the deep-ton'd lyre,

I

Which

Which could the boist'rous mariner subdue,
 The ear of Timon, languid by despair,
 Rejects, attentive to his grief alone,
 Which fights within. Society is pain, 405
 Ev'n with his friend. A solitary couch
 He seeks ; recumbent, not reposing, there
 Consumes the hours in pertinacious woe,
 Which sheds no tear. If wearied nature sinks,
 His sleep is troubled ; visions of the night 410
 Appal his spirit ; starting, he forsakes
 A thorny pillow ; rushes on the deck
 With lamentations to the midnight moon.
 Alarm'd, th' Athenian chief approaching seiz'd
 On Timon's hand ; with earnest looks enquir'd 415
 Why thus complaining he disturbs the calm,
 From his own pillow chacing due repose ?

Ah ! I have seen my daughter, he replies,
 Have seen her twice ! — Where seen her ? all distress'd
 Th'

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 25

Th' Athenian questions.—On a rock she stood, 420

A naked rock, the parent wild exclaims ;

Unloos'd her zone, dishevell'd was her hair ;

The ravisher was nigh. On sight of me,

Who no assistance from the shore could reach,

O father, father ! I am sham'd, deflower'd, 425

But here will end my sorrows and disgrace ;

She said, and plung'd precipitate. I saw

Her body swallow'd by the greedy surge,

Unwept, depriv'd of sepulture, to float.

Illusion all ! the bard-consoling spake ; 430

The phantom offspring of distemper'd sleep.

A second time, the frantic fire pursues,

Did Amarantha meet my aking sight ;

Then, like an eastern concubine attir'd,

Her head was blazon'd with Barbaric gems ; 435

With golden glofs her wanton garment wav'd :

C

With

With her despoiler hand in hand she walk'd,
 Disclaim'd her father, and her father's gods.
 Oh then I wish'd her on the waves again,
 To parch in winds, or fate some vulture's beak!

The youthful captive Artamanes, rous'd, 441
 Stands nigh in gen'rous tears. To him the bard:

Ingenuous Persian, check thy tears, and lend
 Thy hand benign; committed to his couch
 Him watch and succour.—Hourly was perform'd
 The pious office; noblest Delphians round 446
 Assist in tears; while now the moonlight twice
 Danc'd on the billows. On the second morn
 They land in Elis. Fame had gone before,
 Promulgating the valour which aveng'd 450
 The Delphian god, prophetic light to man,
 Ev'n more than Jove in Ammon's Libyan shrine
 Or Dodonæan groves. A shining car
 Waits on the shore; a herald there salutes

The

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 27

The warrior bard. Divine Athenian, hail! 455

Hail, righteous captain of a righteous band!

These olive crowns to thee and them I bear;

So have the sage Hellenodics ordain'd,

Who to their just tribunal through my voice

Invite thy presence. Æschylus receives 460

The victor's chaplet, and ascends the car.

Along Alphēus to th' Olympian lifts

He passes through spectators all array'd

In garlands too, and num'rous like the flow'rs

Embellishing the river's fragrant sides, 465

Or like the pebbles in his murm'ring bed.

Th' approach of Æschylus is known. Between

Two rows of victors in their olive crowns

He o'er the fanded area greets the thrones,

Where, grac'd with scepters magisterial, sat 470

Th' Elean judges. Standing on the car,

To them, uprising from their seats, he spake:

If to have fought for Delphi and her god
 Deserve this chaplet, what superior praise
 To him is due, who voluntary died 475
 For Lacedæmon? But he claims no more
 Than emulation from the sons of Greece,
 Like him to save their countries and their laws.
 He hath his honours in the blest'd abodes ;
 From him I come deputed ; hear in me 480
 Leonidas. A vision, as of gods,
 To me, late slumb'ring on Ilissus, rose ;
 In semblance rose Leonidas, begirt
 With all the virtuous partners in his fate.
 Before me earth divided ; through the cleft 485
 A gushing radiance dimm'd the eye of noon.
 In structure all of diamond, self-pois'd,
 Amid redundant light, a chariot hung
 Triumphal. Twelve transparent horses breath'd
 Beams from their nostrils, dancing beams of day 490
 Shook from their manes. In lineaments of man,
 Chang'd

Chang'd to immortal, with a shape enlarg'd,
A stature lengthen'd, there the mighty soul
Of Sparta's king apparent shone. His wounds
Shot forth a starlike splendour. Round in cars 495
Triumphal too arrang'd, the stately forms
Of those whom virtue led to share his doom,
And consecrate Thermopylæ to fame.
To me these words the glorious shape address'd :

Go to the sage Hellanodics, the just 500
Elæan judges of Olympian palms :
In that wide concourse celebrate my death.
Let my example gen'ral Greece inspire
To face her danger ; let the Spartan shield
Protect th' Athenians, else I died in vain. 505

Attention mute th' Hellanodics command :
The thick'ning crowd is hush'd. The bard proceeds,
While inspiration swells his copious breast,
Flames in his eye, and thunders from his voice.

Parnassian Phœbus he invok'd, the pow'r 510
 Of prophecy and song. His aid is due
 In celebration of the man who heard
 The oracle from Delphi, and obey'd.
 " A king deriv'd from Hercules must die
 " For Lacedæmon." Who obedient heard? 515
 Leonidas : he left his household gods,
 His wife belov'd, his offspring ; at the gate
 Of Greece, Thermopylæ, he fought, he fell:
 With him what heroes ? Alpheus, Maron bled,
 There Agis, there Dionece, the feer, 520
 Megistias, bold Diomedon, the youth
 Of Dithyrambus, Thespia's hoary chief,
 Demophilus ; for you they all expir'd :
 Rise, Greeks, revenge their fall ! in that revenge
 Your laws, your manners, and religion save. 525
 You who aspire to these Olympic wreaths,
 The brightest guerdon to a Grecian brow,
 Yet will you linger, till Barbaric arms

Annihilate

Book I. THE ATHENAID. 31

Annihilate th' Olympiad? Not to die
Leonidas invites; no, Greeks, to live! 530
Surmounting foes enervate by the dread
His death impress'd, to fill your cup of life
With virtuous glory, to enjoy your hopes
In peace, in years and merit then mature
Be his companions in eternal blifs. 535

Such was the substance; but in swelling phrase
At large, full tide of poesy and zeal,
Flow'd his high-ton'd, enthusiastic song.

End of the First Book.

THE

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the SECOND.

TH' inspiring measures close. To arms, to arms,
 Innumerable mouths concurrent sound ;
 To arms, to arms, reply the pillar'd isles
 Of Jove's Olympian temple : down his banks
 To distant Neptune glad Alphēus wafts 5
 The glorious clamour. Through th' assembly vast
 Meantime an elevated form is seen,
 With gracious gesture, animating look,
 Approaching: now before th' Elean thrones

Of

Book II. THE ATHENAID. 33

Of solemn judgment he majestic stands, 10

Known for the man by Themis plac'd in rank

Above his fellow mortals; archon once

Of Athens, now an exile: him the chief

Among the grave Hellanodics address'd :

Hail, Aristides! On th' Olympian games 15

Thy presence throws new dignity: what crown

Can they provide to equal thy desert?

While others court the prize of strength and skill,

Activity and valour; in the lists

Of virtue only Aristides strives. 20

With him on earth competitor is none;

Him Jove, sole perfect judge of gods and men,

Can recompense alone. He scornful views

Ambitious heroes, who assume the names

Of thunder-bearers, vanquishers of towns, 25

And ravagers of kingdoms: vain attempt

In feeble man to imitate in pow'r

Th' inimitable gods! On thee he casts
 An eye delighted; thee, by ev'ry tongue
 Proclaim'd the just; thee, emulating heav'n, 30
 Where mortals may, in goodness. Yet our voice
 Shall, what we can, decree dispraise to those
 Whose envy wrong'd that sacred head of thine.

Forbear that censure, Aristides spake:
 Though liberty may err through jealous care; 35
 That jealous care far oft'ner saves a state
 Than injures private worth. That I forgave
 My condemnation, be my witness, Jove!
 Whom I, departing from my native soil,
 Implor'd that Athens ne'er might feel the loss 40
 Of Aristides. To confirm that pray'r
 I have employ'd my exile; not in quest
 Of splendid refuge in the courts of kings,
 But through each city with unwearied steps
 Have pass'd, exhorting, stimulating Greece 45
 To

To bold defence. I gladly am forestall'd
 Here by a noble countryman, whose arm
 At Marathon was fam'd, whose Attic lays
 Immortalize the brave. I now invoke,
 Not with less fervour, though in humbler phrase, 50
 The patriots there triumphant e'en in death,
 The manes of Leonidas, of all
 Whose gen'rous blood new-spilt in freedom's cause,
 Thermopylæ beholds, to spread abroad
 Their glorious spirit, and exalt your minds 55
 Above the sense of danger. Now the weal
 Of gen'ral Greece a gen'ral effort claims.
 March to the plain, ye Doric warriors! mount
 Your decks; th' Athenians with united arms
 Support, no longer in that isthmian fence 60
 Your trust reposing. Were the wall of brass,
 Were adamant the rampart, if the pow'r
 Of Athens, once extinguish'd, leave your coasts

Defenceless, soon to Pelops' Isle the foe,
Like death, a thousand avenues will find. 65

He ceas'd : A second acclamation rends
The sky ; again th' Olympian temple groans
In replication, and Alphæan banks
Reverberate the sound. The Attic bard
Meantime, o'er-spent with labour of the mind 70
And voice loud straining, to the tranquil porch
Of Jove is lightly borne ; nor knows the hands,
Benevolent and pious, which sustain
His languid burden ; till these friendly words
In tones remember'd dissipate his trance. 75

Doth Æschylus forget me ? O recal
Meliffa's brother, and Oileus' son,
Whose Locrian hinds at one auspicious hour
Assisted thy bold mariners to hurl
Th' Oetæan ruins on Barbarian heads. 80
See

See Melibœus off'ring to thy lip
The stream's refreshing moisture.—Soon restor'd,
Th' Athenian thus : Illustrious Medon, hail !
How fares Melissa, how thy native land ?

She rests, I hope, on Oeta still secure, 85
Returns the Locrian. When Laconia's king
Was slain, and I, commanded to retreat,
Charg'd with a solemn notice to her state,
That he expir'd obedient to the laws ;
My life, devoted to avenge his blood, 90
I fav'd. O'erpow'ring Xerxes soon reduc'd
The Locrians, Dorians, ev'ry northern Greek.
In time my father's treasure I remov'd,
Which with a hundred followers I bore
To Lacedæmon. There indiff'rence cold 95
I found to all except of Pelops' Isle ;
Attention sole to build an isthmian wall :
Pausanias, guardian to the minor king,

Son

Son of divine Leonidas, disdains
 Our just complaint: The Ephori confine 100
 To this contracted region all their care,
 Save Aëmneſtus. Gen'rous oft he mourn'd;
 In vain his torpid colleagues he reprov'd.
 Disgusted there, I join'd theſe ſolemn games,
 Where in contention of the warlike ſpear. 105
 I prov'd a victor. Olive-bound, my head
 On future fields its freedom ſhall maintain;
 Elſe, with my late preſerver's fate in view,
 Shall dying roll this chaplet in the duſt.

Repair with me to Athens, cries the bard. 110
 Sage is that counſel, Ariſtides near
 Subjoins: time preſſes; Æſchylus, embark:
 Ægina's hospitable round ſupplies
 My place of reſt.—Now ſwift th' Athenian band,
 With Medon's, ſeek their Delphian barks again; 115
 While Ariſtides holds an inland courſe,

Still:

Still to his country meditating good,
 Of his own wrongs forgetful. As he roam'd
 From state to state, his eloquence infill'd
 The love of freedom, horror at her loss, 120
 Unchanging hatred to monarchal sway,
 With concord, valour, fortitude, and zeal
 For Greece in danger. From his wonted seat
 In heav'n, so Phœbus, patient and resign'd,
 An exile wander'd on the earth below; 125
 Beneficent and helpful, there diffus'd
 His light of science; with salubrious skill
 Imparted health, and taught the varied use
 Of lenient roots and plants. The Delphian keels
 Meantime are loosen'd from Elean sands, 130
 With sails outfretch'd for Athens. On his couch
 Still Timon lies despairing; near him watch
 The chiefs humane: in kind officious care
 The Persian captive from his forehead wipes
 The dews of anguish. With a sudden start 135
 Him now the Delphian, erring, thus bespoke:

Oh

Oh Alexander! thou hast lost, my son,
 Thy dear betroth'd, the land of Phocis lost
 Her noblest virgin! Reach my arms—I see
 The ravisher before me: though he frowns, 140
 Begirt with savage multitudes, my sword
 Shall reach his barb'rous heart. Here Medon turns
 To Æschylus: The fight of Delphi's chief,
 So nobly excellent, so honour'd, lov'd,
 By all resorting to consult his god, 145
 A fight once grateful, pierces now my soul
 With agony. How oft hath music sooth'd
 Distemper'd bosoms! Let thy tuneful chords,
 Medicinally sweet, apply their aid.

To him the bard: My harmony his ear 150
 But late rejected. Melibœus, try
 The softer sounds which Pan hath taught the swains.

A modulation by Melissa taught
 I will essay, th' obedient swain replies,

He

Book II. THE ATHENAID. 41

He said, and lightly touch'd his warbling flute.
Like fountains rilling, or mellifluous notes 156
Of birds, a soft and lulling flow attun'd
The ambient air. At first th' afflicted man
Paus'd in attention, soon a trickling tear
Bedew'd his beard; the remedy was chang'd 160
To pain, and thus he recommenc'd his moan.

Thou, Amarantha, too couldst wake the soul
Of music, melting in thy parent's ear,
Refining joyful seasons, or the hours
Of care beguiling. In a foreign clime 165
Hang up thy harp, sad captive! Let thy hand
Forget her skill, nor charm Barbarian minds.
But hark! I hear the ruffian. Slave! he calls,
Resume thy harp: Some chosen hymn of Greece,
Such as delighted Phœbus, chaunt to me, 170
Me now thy god. O Alexander, fly,
Redeem thy love. Apollo, who couldst hurl

Parnassian

Parnassian summits on a host of foes,
 Make me thy instrument of wrath ! My nerves
 Convert to pierceless adamant ; my lance. 175
 Point with thy father's lightning ! Me thy priest,
 Sprung from an old, heroic, sacred line,
 Thou shouldst avenge. But vengeance is too late ;
 My daughter yields : a minstrel to her lord,
 To her deflow'rer, with obsequious art 180
 The Grecian chords she prostitutes, and smiles
 To see my suff'rings !—During this distress,
 With canvas press'd, the squadron bounds along
 By Coryphasium, by Messene's gulph
 In Nestor's Pylian kingdom, by the peak 185
 Of Tænarus, projecting o'er a cave,
 Night's gloomy chamber, fabled to descend
 Low as Plutonian regions. Thrice the morn
 Serenely smil'd, ere Malea's top their sails
 O'er shades, Laconian promontory bleak, 190
 The residence of storms. Five distant masts
 Are

Are now descried ; when Æschylus bespake
The Locrian chief : Not friendly are those decks ;
Our navy, since Thermopylæ was forc'd,
To Salamis retiring, leaves the foes 195
At large to range the sea. Thy counsel give ;
To some Laconian harbour shall we steer,
Or wait their coming ? Here Oileus' son :

Thou art my leader ; thee propitious Mars
On land and main with equal pow'rs endues : 200
How can I counsel, stranger to the waves,
At thy commandment to retreat, or fight,
Behold me ready.—Then by Mars, replies
The warrior bard, as no resistless force
Bears down against us, yet insulting hoists 205
A threat'ning signal, Delphians, rest the oar ;
Provide your arms ; Athenians, Locrians, arm !

This said, his pinnace, launch'd in haste, convey'd
His orders round to form th' embattled line.

Six were the vessels ; Lo! a stately bark 210
 In regal pendants leads th' opponent van.
 As when a vernal sun's precarious beam
 Is intercepted by a sudden cloud,
 Whose turgid folds are overcharg'd with hail;
 Some palace, broad, impenetrably roof'd, 215
 Defies the clatt'ring, ineffectual drift,
 Which harmless melts away—so flew a show'r
 Of missive arms, of arrows, javelins, darts,
 With pebbles whirling from the forceful fling,
 On Grecian helms and implicated shields ; 220
 But innocently fell. Now side to side
 The chieftains grappled, and gigantic death
 To either deck outstretch'd his purple feet.
 Malignant art no engine hath devis'd
 To man destructive like his own fell hand 225
 In ferried fight. But slaughter now began
 To pause in wonder, while the Asian chief,
 Whose blazon'd armour beam'd with gold, engag'd
 Cecropia's

Cecropia's hardy vet'ran foot to foot,
With falchion falchion, shield encount'ring shield.
So, in the season when lascivious heat 231
Burns in their veins, two branching-headed stags,
Of all the herd competitors for sway,
Long with entangled horns persist in strife,
Nor yield, nor vanquish : stand in gaze-the rest, 235
Expecting which by conquest shall assume
The mastery of all. Now Timon, rous'd
With Melibœus, and the captive youth,
Starts from his pillow : they attain the poop,
Which instant boarded from an eastern ship 240
By hostile arms is held. Brave Medon quits
His former station; Æschylus he leaves
A firm defender there : his falchion keen
Aloft he waves. As some tremendous shark,
Who with voracious jaws resistless foams 245
Along the main, and finny tribes devours,
Or drives before him on the sun-bright waves,

Where

Where late secure they wanton'd—Medon's might,
Prevailing thus, the steerage heaps with dead;

Though not in time victorious to retain 250

Unhappy Timon, Melibœus good,

And Artamanes, not unwilling borne

With them away to join his friends again.

Two Delphian vessels their auxiliar beaks

Present. More furious had the contest glow'd 255.

In ev'ry quarter; when o'er Malean cliffs

The wind began to howl, the troubled sky

To flash sulphureous, menacing a storm,

Such as Saturnia on the Dardan fleet,

Or Neptune's rage for Polyphemus blind 260

Dash'd on Laërtes' much enduring son.

The squadrons separate; To the shelt'ring lee

Of Malea steer the Grecians; while their foes

Expatriate o'er the roomy sea, to shun

The local tumults of that stormy shore, 265

And hold a distant course. O'er Timon's fate

Th'

Th' Athenian now finds leisure to lament
With Medon, Medon with responsive grief
For Melibœus. By return of dawn
The waters calm'd invite the vigorous oars 270
To recommence their progress. Coasting down
Laconia's sea-beat verge, they wear the day;
Then resting moor in Cynosura's port.
From Æschylus in sighs these accents broke:

Here Æsculapius by his pow'rful art, 275
Which dar'd revive departed breath in man,
Offending Pluto, thunder-pierc'd by Jove,
Lodg'd his own clay in Cynosura's mold.
O now to immortality preferr'd,
Kind god of med'cine! wouldst thou hear my suit,
Thou shouldst restore Leonidas, to warm 281
Unfeeling Sparta; then thy Delphian fire
The menac'd doom of Athens would revoke,
Nor I besprinkle with indignant tears

Laconia's shore. O Locrian guest, I call'd 285
 Thy welcome feet to Athens: thou mayst view
 (For so the oracle to me denounc'd)
 Her tow'rs in dust.—Minerva's tow'rs to fall
 Hath Phœbus doom'd? the Locrian chief exclaim'd;
 I, who have lost my country, yet can find 290
 A tear for Athens: I attest the gods,
 As in one vessel, Æschylus, we steer
 Together now, thy fortune I will share;
 And down her stream, howe'er the tempest roar,
 With thee embark'd, will never quit thy side. 295

The tragic bard unbends his mournful brow,
 Thus answer'ing: Gen'rous Medon, I confess,
 Approaching nearer to my seat of birth,
 I dropp'd a tear of anguish; nature wept
 At sad forebodings of destruction there. 300
 But know, a true Athenian ne'er desponds:
 Abandon'd by allies, condemn'd by heav'n

To

Book II. THE ATHENAID. 49

To see their city burnt, that gallant race
Will yet assert their liberty; will save
Ev'n faithless Sparta, and thy home redeem. 305

This said, they slept, till morning gives her sign
To weigh the anchors, and unfurl the sails.
Aurora's third appearance tips with light,
Of roseate tincture, spacious walls and tow'rs
Of no ignoble city, rising clear 310
From shading mists to view. The poet then:

Lo! Medon, fair Trœzene; rich her soil,
Her people gen'rous, to Cecropia's state
Inviolably faithful. See that isle
Which fronts the port; redundant in delights 315
Of art and nature, though of circuit small,
Calauria shews her verdant round of wood.
Here disembarking, with devotion pure
We must invoke the trident-bearing god.

D

This

This isle from Phœbus Neptune in exchange 320
 For Delphi took. Thrice holy is the soil,
 Deserving rev'ence, by that pow'r belov'd,
 Who shar'd a third of ancient Saturn's reign,
 His son a brother to Olympian Jove.
 Here shall we greet some wonder of her sex, 325
 The sacerdotal maid. Trœzene's laws
 One of her noblest daughters in her bud
 Establish here presiding, here confin'd
 To priestly functions, till the genial god
 Of marriage hence redeem her, grown mature 330
 For care less rigid, and a tend'rer tie.

The heroes land, where opening to their fight
 An elevation of the ground, attir'd
 In flow'r-enamell'd turf, display'd the fane
 Of structure vast in marble: brass the gates 335
 Refulgence cast; a peristyle sustain'd
 The massy roof; huge columns on their heads

The

The crisped foliage of acanthus bore,
And high o'erlook'd th' impenetrable shade 339
Which screen'd the island round. Perennial springs
Supplied melodious currents through the woods,
In artificial beds of pearly conchs
Along the sea-beat margin cull'd by nymphs,
The temple's chaste attendants. Unrestrain'd
Here flow'd the native waters; there confin'd 345
By marble fountains, win th' enchanted eye
To shady-skirted lawns, to op'ning glades,
Or canopies of verdure: all the founts
Were grac'd by guardian images of gods,
The train of Neptune.—Lo! the gate is thrown
Abroad; the priestess, lovely in her shape 351
As virgin Thetis to the nuptial arms
Of Peleus led, more blooming than the flow'rs
Beneath her decent step, descends the slope:
A matron staid behind her solemn treads; 355
Close to her side, in radiant arms, a youth

Who like a brother of the Graces moves.
 His head, uncas'd, discovers auburn locks
 Curl'd thick, not flowing: his sustaining hand
 She, rosy-finger'd, to her own admits. 360
 He seem'd Apollo, not with martial fires
 Such as on Titan's race he darted keen,
 But with th' enamour'd aspect which he wore
 When Clymene he won, or Daphne woo'd:
 She Cynthia, not a huntress, when the chace 365
 Of rugged boars hath flush'd her eager cheek,
 But gently stooping from an argent cloud,
 Illumining mount Latmus, while she view'd
 Her lov'd Endymion, by her magic pow'r
 Entranc'd to slumber.—Æschylus approach'd, 370
 To whom the youth: Great bard and warrior, hail!
 Whose valiant deeds on Artemisium's flood,
 In that first conflict with Barbarian fleets,
 I strove to copy: there was all my praise.
 Me Trœzen's leader, from my post remote, 375
 Thou

Book II. THE ATHENAID.

Thou see'st : forbear to wonder, and attend.
Thy Athens now is desolate—relax
That anxious brow—her constancy, her zeal
For gen'ral freedom, elevate her name
Beyond all triumphs. Her discerning chief, 380
Themistocles, interpreting the words
Of Pythian Phœbus, prov'd that ships alone,
The fleets of Athens, were the wooden walls
Of refuge. All persuaded, fires and sons,
With mothers, daughters, cheerfully forsook 385
Their native roofs. Lo! Salamis o'erflows
With your illustrious people ; through her towns
Ægina swarms ; to multitudes myself
Have been conductor ; in Trœzenian homes,
By cordial invitation, they reside. 390
To each a daily stipend by a law
They find allotted, schools with teachers fill'd,
That not unletter'd from Trœzene's walls
The sons of learned Athens may depart,

When victory to come rebuilds her tow'rs. 395

With thee behold me ready to embark

For Salamis again, where anchor'd lies

The whole confederated fleet. I leave

My Aripheia, this my dear betroth'd,

To fight my country's battles; but return, 400

I trust in Mars, more worthy of her love:

To her and Neptune I but now consign'd

The most ennobled of Athenian dames.

Ha! see on yonder beach the form divine

Of Aristides, newly wafted o'er 405

From Trœzen: thither, not unbid, he came

From his late virtuous progress, in our bounds

Through willing minds sage counsel to diffuse,

His own exterminated friends console.

Cleander finish'd. Soon th' arrival known 410

Of Aristides from the temple call'd

The Attic dames, from ev'ry purlieu near,

Who

Who with their children in assembly throng
Around him. Silent tears confess his loss
To them and Athens. His benignant mold 415
By sympathy had melted into grief;
If wisdom, ever present in his soul,
Had not his long-tried constancy upheld
To their behoof. Environ'd by the troop
Of lovely mourners, stood the godlike man 420
Like some tall cedar, in a garden plac'd
Where glowing tufts of flow'rs and florid plants
Once bloom'd around; now, fear'd by scorching blasts,
In faded colours pine. In look, in phrase
Humane he spake: Be comforted, and hear 425
My voice applaud Themistocles, my foe,
Whose counsels have preserv'd you. But what praise
Is yours, O glories of the tender sex!
Who brave the floods, without a murmur leave
Your native, dear abodes for public good! 430
Ye ornaments of Greece, the pride and boast
Of happy fathers, husbands, brothers, sons!

As yet unseen, Euphemia from the rest
 Impatient stepp'd, his mother. At her sight,
 The best, the greatest of mankind inclines 435
 Before the authres of his being, low
 As some celestial to the rev'rend form
 Of Cybele, progenitrix of gods.
 Her aged arms extending, she began:

Thy moderation aggravates the crime 440
 Of Athens. Son, remember, when thou bad'st
 Our household gods farewell, thy parting pray'r;
 That Athens never might regret the loss
 Of Aristides. Righteous man! then first
 The righteous pow'rs denied a pray'r of thine; 445
 Who with inflicted vengeance for thy wrong
 Have sorely taught Athenians to lament
 In thee their safety banish'd.—Mother, cease,
 He quick replied; controul presumptuous thoughts;
 Let such uncomfortable words no more 450
 Be

Be heard by these already plung'd in woe:
It is Laconia, who her aid withholds,
Cecropian tribes afflicts. But, noble dames,
In this asylum sojourning a while,
Trust your own merits, and a guardian god; 455
The sons of Athens on his own domain
He will exalt by conquest, soon transport
Her daughters back to liberty and peace:
From him that grace continue to deserve,
By resignation to his brother Jove, 460
Who loves the patient.—As on lands adust
By hot solstitial rays, when genial clouds,
In season due unbofoming their stores
Of kindly rain, new dress the pasture brown;
Again the flowrets on the meadows spring; 465
O'er meadows, fresh in verdure, youthful steeds,
Led by the parent females, joyous bound,
The heifers gambol, kids and lambkins dance,
The birds in dripping bow'rs their plumes repair,

And tune their choral, gratulating throats— 470
 So consolation from his blameless mouth,
 With looks benevolent, in soothing tones
 Relieves dejection. Soft composure smooths
 Each matron's forehead; virgins smile around;
 With sprightly feet the children beat the turf, 475
 Him as their father hail in shrill delight.
 Not so his own two daughters: infants young,
 A dying mother's pledge, Euphemia's charge,
 His side they leave not, clinging to his knees
 Like woodbines sweet about some stately tree: 480
 He kiss'd, he bless'd them, but controul'd his tears.

Now tow'rd the bay with Æschylus he turns;
 Cleander follows. Aripheia mute
 Stands fix'd in tears; as Niobe, congeal'd
 By grief to marble, through its oozing pores 485
 Distill'd sad moisture, trickling down unheard.
 On Sipylus the nymphs, by pity call'd,

The

Book II. THE ATHENAID. 59

The weeping rock environ'd; so the train,
Who minister in Neptune's sacred dome,
Inclose their priestess, whom her matron sage 490
Leads from Cleander's oft reverted sight.

End of the Second Book.

D 6

THE

T H E

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the THIRD.

O'ER his own squadron soon Trœzene's chief
Hath reassum'd command; the rest embark
Aboard the Delphian. Æschylus then spake:

To Salamis we hoist returning sails:
Say, Aristides, shall my voice, of weight 5
Among the tribes, solicit thy recal?
Our country wants that helpful hand of thine.

No, Aristides answers, this again
Might waken faction; let the monster sleep.

Themistocles

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 61

Themistocles directs united minds, 10
In him confiding: not the stock reviv'd
Of all Cecropia's heroes since her birth,
Could like this union prop the Attic state.
Brave too the son of Neocles, expert,
Cool, politic; his talents will uphold 15
The public safety for his own renown.
May he enjoy a glory so acquir'd!
My secret counsels from Ægina's isle
Shall not be wanting: for my country's sake,
Which I forgive, him, author of my wrongs, 20
My utmost efforts shall advance to fame.

The gulph Saronic now admits their keel.
By Epidaurus coasting, they attain
The cape of high Spiræum, which o'erlooks
Ægina. Guided by Aurora's light, 25
Th' illustrious exile on that isle they land;
Thence veering, steer for Salamis. These words

Now

Now break from Medon; Silent have I gaz'd
 On Aristides, shortly must behold
 Themistocles; Athenian friend, explain 30
 Between such men what cause produc'd their feuds.

Their diff'rent merits, Æschylus replied,
 Rais'd emulation in their younger days.
 A foldier's part they gallantly achiev'd
 In the same rank at Marathon; I saw, 35
 Admir'd their valour. For distinction high
 In pow'r and fame, Themistocles hath us'd
 His num'rous virtues; Aristides walk'd
 In virtuous paths, alone by virtue mov'd;
 For him his justice hath a title gain'd 40
 Of JUST. The son of Neocles, inflam'd
 By envy, stirr'd the people's jealous fear
 Against his rival to assert a law,
 Where, by inscription of his name on shells,
 A citizen so potent, that his will 45
 Seems

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 63

Seems only wanting to subvert the state,
Is by concurrence of six thousand hands
Doom'd for ten years to absence from their bounds,
Without disgrace or mulct. Among the tribes
Themistocles hath since obtain'd a sway 50
Which might incur the rigour of that law;
Yet by the gods his influence supreme
He at this crisis gallantly employs
To save the public.—Lift thy wond'ring eyes!
The whole confederated fleet of Greece, 55
Four hundred galleys, bulwark all the round
Of Salamis: one animated mass
That island shews; from swarms of either sex,
And ev'ry age, dales, hillocks seem to heave
With undulating motion.—His discourse 60
Clos'd with his voyage: on the furrow'd sands
Of Salamis the vessels rest their keels;
Where living waters from a copious spring
Discharge their bubbling current. On a smooth,

But

But gently-shelving green, pavilions rose; 65
 One from the rest sequester'd, under shade
 Of oaks above, was neighbour to the fane
 Of Telamonian Ajax, hero known
 At Troy: the Attic phalanx then he join'd,
 By Athens honour'd since with rites divine. 70

This tent, by ensigns of command in front
 Adorn'd, Themistocles possess'd: alone
 He now remain'd; artificer sublime
 Of great expedients, in the greatest forms
 Which rock a state, he, politic and firm, 75
 In manly strife with fortune when she frown'd,
 Whene'er she smil'd her favour to secure—
 He now, to feed his enterprising soul,
 Successes past enumerating sat,
 Thus in a glow of thought: While others dream'd
 Of rest and safety permanent in Greece, 81
 I from the day of Marathon presag'd

The

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 65

The war begun, not finish'd; I, in time,
Exhort'd Athens to construct her fleet,
A destin'd refuge; for the sail and oar, 85
The shrouds and rudder, I her lusty youth
Prepar'd; ere yet the Hellespont was bridg'd,
I cur'd intestine feuds distracting Greece;
When fate remov'd Leonidas from earth,
My penetration, fathoming the depths 90
Of ocean, like futurity foresaw
Laconia's sloth; yet undismay'd I form'd
The mighty plan to save th' Athenian state
By yielding Athens to Barbarian flames.
That I might plead the mandates of a god, 95
I won, by secret gifts, the Pythian maid
An oracle to render, which I fram'd;
Th' interpretation to enforce, that ships
Were wooden walls, Minerva's priest I gain'd
Among the people to imprint belief 100
By feign'd portents, and all religion's craft,

That

That to the sea their deity was fled,
 Th' Acropolis deserting. Thus at will
 This restive, fierce democracy I fway
 For their salvation, and my own behoof 105
 In pow'r and lustre Interrupting here
 His eagle vanity in lofty soar,
 The warrior-poet and Oileus' son
 Appear. Serene and vacant he descends
 At once to affability and ease; 110
 As from his airy tow'r the lark, who strikes
 Heav'n's highest concave with his matin trill,
 His pinions shuts, and tranquil drops to earth.
 Of Aristides Æschylus he knew
 The friend approv'd; him courteous he salutes: 115

Thy eloquence and arms, the gen'rous toils
 Of Aristides too, have reach'd my ear
 By late intelligence. Thus far at least
 You have prevail'd; this navy is enlarg'd

By

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 67

By squadrons new from various Grecian states. 120

Is not this Medon? Honour'd in thy fire,
More in thy own deservings, my embrace
Accept; accept the welcome of this tent.

Myronides now joins him, mighty chief!
The destin'd scourge of Thebes; Xanthippus, soon
At Mycale to conquer; in his hand 126
Young Pericles, that future star of Greece;
Then Cimon, fated on the land and main
To gather palms in one triumphant day;
Subaltern warriors to the prudent son 130
Of Neocles. Saluting these, he spake:

My gallant fellow-citizens, you come
To learn the issue of this day's debate
In gen'ral council. Wisely did we cede
To Spartan Eurybiades command; 135
The diff'rent squadrons to their native ports
Had

Had else deserted. Irksome, I confess,
 This acquiescence ; but occasion looks
 Disdainful back on him who lets her pass ;
 You have embrac'd her. Yielding to the Greeks,
 You fix their station here, the num'rous foe 141
 In narrow streights between Pfyttalia's isle
 And Salamis to face. Can he possess,
 Who sees a treasure scatter'd on the ground,
 Unless he stoop ? So prostrate in your sight 145
 Lies Greece, that precious treasure. Can you rule
 Before you save ? On union safety grows.
 Resigning now an empty name of pow'r,
 Your moderation, winning grateful states,
 Will to your own a real sway procure 150
 Of long duration. Lacedæmon's pride,
 Her best allies abandoning—a force
 Of ten weak vessels sparing to a fleet,
 Where Attic hands unfurl two hundred sails—
 Shall pay hereafter retribution full 155

To

To you, Athenians, out of ashes rais'd
From her to wrest ascendancy in Greece.

Not sweetest music lulls the melting soul
Beyond his artful eloquence, which sooths
Their warm, their injur'd virtue. They reply : 160

To thee, not Sparta, cheerful we submit,
Our leader sole ; thou judge and act for all.

Now to his frugal Attic meal they sat ;
Where Æschylus and Medon, each in turn
Unfolding amply his adventures, won 165
Attention : pleasing information charm'd
Deluded time, till midnight prompted sleep.

Thus, after labours past, the martial bard
His countrymen rejoin'd. The hostile ships,
Which gave him battle under Malea's cape, 170
Veer'd

Veer'd for the streights Eubœan, where the fleet
 Of Asia moor'd. Subfiding on their way,
 The wind grants leifure for the Perfian chief
 To view the captives. Artamanes fteps
 Before the reft : on fight of Caria's queen, 175
 Great Artemifia, who commanded there,
 His cheek, with recollection of his fire
 To her fo late perfidious, reddens warm.

She firft to him : Argeftes could behold
 Me worfted, long refifting adverfe fate 180
 On fam'd Thermopylæ's difaftrous field ;
 My danger he enjoy'd : his refcued fon,
 Whofe growing merit wins obfervant eyes,
 I fee with gladnefs ; welcome to my deck !
 But who is he, difconfolate in mien ? 185
 O rev'rend man of sorrows, lift thy head !
 From Artemifia no difhonour fear.
 He makes no answer—Artamanes, fpeak.

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 71

The youth replies : His name is Timon, chief
And priest in Delphi ; on our inroad there, 190
My brother, Mithridates, snatch'd away
From his paternal breast a noble maid,
An only child. His mind is darken'd since
By frenzy ; my compassion his distress
Hath ever tended, fervent now implores 195
Thou wouldst commit him to my grateful care :
Myself am debtor to indulgent Greeks.

In smiles the princess answer'd : Gen'rous youth !
Couldst thou protect him, I would trust thy care ;
But those deform'd by ignominious deeds 200
May exercise in malice stronger pow'r
Than thou in goodness : for the present lay
Th' unhappy Delphian on a bed of rest.

Beside her waits Aronces, high in trust,
A hoary senior, freedman of her sire. 205
On

On Melibœus, on the queen, he fix'd
Alternate looks ; then earnest him address'd :

O thou of noble frame, in lowly garb,
Speak whence thou com'st, thy own, thy father's name.
What region gave thee birth ? Did nature print, 210
Or some disaster, on thy cheek that mark ?
I am not curious from a slender cause.

The swain replied : From nature I derive
That mark ; of parents, of my native seat,
Within this breast no traces now survive ; 215
In childhood stol'n by pirates, I was sold
(Heav'n there was gracious) to the best of men :
Full thirty annual suns have since elaps'd.
He oft appris'd me, that my infant lips
In Grecian accents would repeat the names 220
Of Lygdamis and Dirce ; so I styl'd
My sire and mother.—O imperial dame,

My

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 73

Thyself the feed of Lygdamis, exclaim'd
The ancient man. If circumstance be proof,
He is thy brother, Haliartus, stol'n 225
Within that period from thy father's tow'r
Wash'd by the waves, that fair abode retir'd.
Halicarnassus mourn'd the dire event.
He is thy likeness. I, preferr'd to rule
Thy father's household; I, whose faithful arms 230
So oft the infant Haliartus bore,
So oft with eyes delighted have perus'd
That object dear, I never can forget
That signal mark, coeval with his birth,
Distinguishing thy brother.—Pensive, mute, 235
Uncertain rests the queen.—He still proceeds:

Behold thy son, Leander, melts in tears!
It is the touch of nature hath unclos'd
That tender spring.—To him the regal dame:

Old man, thou know'st I honour, I confide 240
 In thy untainted faith. All strange events,
 Dress'd in affecting circumstance, excite
 These soft emotions ; such in ev'ry breast
 Should rise, but not decide. Pure truth is built
 Not on our passions ; reason is her base. 245
 Him to accept my brother, needs more proof ;
 But to his manly and ingenuous looks
 I render homage. Let him cast his limbs
 In Carian steel, and combat near my side ;
 Let deeds illustrate an exalted mind ; 250
 Then, whether kin or alien to my blood,
 He like a brother shall obtain regard
 From Artemisia.—Melibœus here :

Endear'd to heroes of Oïlean race,
 I claim with none alliance ; I have liv'd 255
 With them in joy, from ignorance been rais'd
 By them to knowledge, from the lowly state
 Which

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 75

Which heav'n's deciding providence ordain'd,
To their deserv'd regard, my utmost wish.
To them restore me ; I request no more 260
From deities or mortals. Case my limbs
In Carian armour splendid as thy own,
Ne'er shalt thou see me combat near thy side
Against the Grecians. Place of birth, or blood
Of noblest dye in kindred, quite estrang'd 265
By time and fortune, I reject for Greece;
Greece, my kind nurse, the guardian of my youth,
Who for my tutors did her heroes lend.
My dear affections all are center'd there,
My gratitude, my duty.—By the hand 270
She grasps the gallant captive, and proceeds :

Thy sentiments are noble, they bespeak
The care of heroes ; thy release my hopes
Forbid, my tend'rest wishes ; to constrain
Thy presence here, while we assail thy friends, 275

E 2

I scorn.

I scorn. Aronces, launch a nimble skiff;
 On him attendant, reach Nicæa's walls,
 For him transport a suit of arms complete;
 Nor let unhappy Timon want thy care.
 Thee, Greek or Carian, brother, friend, or foe, 280
 Whate'er thou prov'ft hereafter, I will greet
 Again, my heart fo prompts me; I require
 No plighted word, no token; ere we meet
 Once more at least, thou wilt not, I confide,
 Thou canst not harbour such a thought as flight
 From Artemisia.—Melibœus look'd 286
 Integrity; he felt too full for words,
 And fees her thoughtful and perplex'd retire.

Aronces now on Artamanes calls;
 With him, and either captive, he embarks; 290
 Of Carian arms he lodges on the poop
 A rich-emblazon'd suit. The pinnace light
 Along the shore, from ev'ry foe secure,

Skims

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 77

Skims o'er the waters with distended sails,
Swift as a vig'rous stag who hears no cry 295

Of dogs or men, but o'er the champaign green
Or valley sweeps, to glory in his speed
And branching antlers. On the form and port
Of Melibœus long Aronces fed

His eager eye, unfated with delight; 300

At last he spake : My lord, Nicæa's fort,
A garrison of Xerxes, will afford

A refuge kind, till Caria's queen her sail
Of visitation hoists ; the setting sun

Will see my lord safe landed in the cove. 305

That splendid title thou dost ill bestow
On my condition, Melibœus then.

To whom Aronces : Oh thou art my lord,
Thou art the son of Lygdamis ! My heart,
Old as I am, experienc'd in events, 310

Without a cause to such excess of joy
 Would ne'er mislead me.—Honest hearts, rejoin'd
 The other, oft are credulous, and lead
 The mind to error ; art thou sure, my friend,
 That I am no impostor, who hath heard 315
 Of Lygdamis and Dyrce, and apply
 Their names to falsehood ?—Haliartus, no !
 Exclaims Aronces ; I before me see
 My noble master, Lygdamis, restor'd ;
 Such as he was when thou, his child, was lost. 320
 Oh ! lend attention—lo ! the winds are still,
 The sea unruffled, while my tongue begins
 A tale which once with horror pierc'd my soul,
 ut in thy hearing rapt'rous I repeat :

Halicarnassus gave thy father birth, 325
 Her most illustrious citizen ; with twins
 Thy mother's bed was bless'd ; thy sister one,
 That Artemisia, glory of her sex,

Bestow'd

Book III. THE ATHENAID. 79

Bestow'd in marriage on the Carian king ;
Thou art the other: Oft thy fire abode 330
Within a tow'r delightful, but remote,
Wash'd by the billows ; one disastrous day,
As thou wast tripping on the silver sands,
Thy nurse attending with some faithful slaves,
A troop of pirates landed ; all thy train 335
Defending thee were kill'd, or wounded sunk
Disabled on the beach ; with various spoil,
From those unguarded borders, they convey'd
Aboard their vessels thee their richest prize.

Aronces paus'd.—From Timon, lifting by, 340
This exclamation broke : My daughter too
May be recover'd !—Artamanes here :

Myself, redeem'd from capture, pledge my faith
That I will struggle to restore thy child.

Night dropp'd her dusky veil ; the pinnace gain'd
 Nicæa, Locrian fortress, seated nigh 346
 Thermopylæ ; ensuing morn proclaims,
 By shouts and clangour, an approaching host.
 That gate of Greece, by Lacedæmon's king
 So well maintain'd, defenceless now admits 350
 Uncheck'd Barbarian inroads : thus a mound
 By art constructed to restrain the sea,
 Or some huge river's course, neglected long,
 And unsustain'd by vigilance and care,
 Affords a passage new to whelming floods, 355
 Whose surface hides fertility in waste ;
 Till some sagacious architect oppose
 To nature's violence a skill divine,
 Prescribing where th' obedient wave shall flow.

To his companions Artamanes spake, 360
 As in their fight, extended from a tow'r,
 Thermopylæ in torrents from its mouth

Pours

Pours mingled nations : See Mardonius there,
The son of Gobryas, author of this war,
The flow'r of Asia's captains. At the time 365
We first attack'd this pass, with num'rous bands,
A distant range of Macedon and Thrace
He was detach'd to ravage and subdue,
Triumphant now returning. Friends, farewell !
Him I must follow. Timon, may the light 370
Of Mithra shine propitious on my days
As I protect thy daughter, and restore,
If fate so wills, her spotless to thy arms.

These words, reluming with hope, compos'd
The clouded soul of Timon. Swift the youth, 375
In vigour issuing through the portal, mix'd
Among his native friends : a blithsome steer,
At opening dawn deliver'd from the stall,
Thus o'er the flow'ry pasture bounding, joins
The well-known herd. Mardonius him receiv'd,
Foe to Argestes, cordial to his son, 381

Mardonius all-commanding, all in frame,
 In nervous limbs excelling, like that bull
 Who stemm'd the billows with his brawny chest,
 Who on his back of silver whiteness bore 385
 Europa's precious weight to Cretan strands,
 Himself a god transform'd. New martial pow'rs
 Are here from Hæmus, from Pangæan snows.
 A Greek in lineage, Alexander here,
 Young sov'reign o'er Barbarians, leads to war 390
 His Macedonian troops. To Athens bound
 By mutual hospitality, he lov'd
 That gen'rous city; now, by force compell'd,
 He arms against her. But persuasive love,
 The charms and virtues of a Grecian fair, 395
 Will wake remembrance of his Grecian race,
 To better counsels turn his youthful mind.

That Asia's king was now advanc'd to Thebes,
 Intelligence is brought; this known, a steed
 Of swiftest pace Mardonius mounts; command 400
 To

To Tiridates delegates—Thy force
Extend o'er Locris, o'er the Phocian bounds,
Our conquests new. This giv'n in charge, he speeds,
With no companion but Argestes' son,
Nor other guard than fifty horsemen light, 405
To greet the king. The second morning shews
Cadmean Thebes, whose citadel was rais'd
By stones descending from Cithæron's hill
Spontaneous, feign'd in fables to assume
A due arrangement in their mural bed 410
At sweet Amphion's lute ; but truth records,
That savage breasts by eloquence he tam'd,
By his instructions humaniz'd, they felt
The harmony of laws and social ties.
To him succeeded stern Agenor's son, 415
Phœnician Cadmus, he who letters brought
From Tyre to Greece ; yet ignorance o'erwhelm'd
His generation ; barbarous of heart,
Obtuse of mind they grew ; the furies there,

84 THE ATHENAID. Book III.

There parricide and incest reign'd of old, 420
Impiety and horror : more debas'd,
They now for gold their liberty exchange ;
They court a tyrant, whose Barbaric host
Flames round their bulwarks, harrows up their plain,
Lays waste their plenty, drinks Asopus dry, 425
Their swift Ismenus, and Dircaean spring.

End of the Third Book.

THE

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the FOURTH.

THE Persian host in readiness was held
 Ere dawn; Aurora sees the signal given;
 Now trumpets, clarions, timbrels mix their sounds;
 Harsh dissonance of accents, in the shouts
 Of nations gather'd from a hundred realms, 5
 Distract the sky. The king his march renews
 In all his state, collected to descend
 Precipitate on Athens; like the bird
 Of Jove, who rising to the utmost soar
 Of his strong pinions, on the prey beneath 10

Directs

Directs his pond'rous fall. Five thousand horse,
 Caparison'd in streak'd or spotted skins
 Of tygers, pards, and panthers, form'd the van;
 In quilted vests of cotton, azure dyed,
 With silver spangles deck'd, the tawny youth 15
 Of Indus rode; white quivers loofely cross'd
 Their shoulders; not ungraceful in their hands
 Were bows of glist'ning cane; the ostrich lent
 His snowy plumage to the tiffued gold
 Which bound their temples. Next a thousand steeds
 Of fable hue on argent trappings bore 21
 A thousand Persians, all select; in gold,
 Shap'd as pomegranates, rose their steely points
 Above the truncheons; gilded were the shields,
 Of silver'd scales the corselets; wrought with gems
 Of price, high-plum'd tiaras danc'd in light. 26
 In equal number, in resembling guise,
 A squadron follow'd; save their mail was gold,
 And thick with beryls edg'd their silver shields.

In

Book IV. THE ATHENAID. 87

In order next the Magi solemn trod. 30
Pre-eminent was Mirzes; snowy white
Their vestments flow'd, majestically pure,
Rejecting splendour; hymning as they mov'd,
They sung of Cyrus, glorious in his rule
O'er Sardis rich, and Babylon the proud; 35
Cambyfes victor of Ægyptian Nile,
Darius fortune-thron'd; but flatt'ry tun'd
Their swelling voice to magnify his son,
The living monarch, whose stupendous piles
Combin'd the Orient and Hesperian worlds, 40
Who pierc'd mount Athos, and o'erpower'd in fight
Leonidas of Sparta. Then succeed
Ten courfers whiter than their native snows
On wintry Media's fields; Nicæan breed,
In shape to want no trappings, none they wore 45
To veil their beauty; docile they by chords
Of silk were led, the consecrated steeds
Of Horomazes. Sacred too a car,

Constructed new of spoils from Grecian fanes,
 In splendour dazzling as the noontide throne 50
 Of cloudless Mithra, follow'd; link'd in reins,
 In traces brilliant overlaid with gems,
 Eight horses more of that surpassing race
 The precious burden drew; the drivers walk'd,
 None might ascend th' inviolable feat; 55
 On either side five hundred nobles march'd
 Uncover'd. Now th' imperial standard wav'd;
 Of Sanders wood the pedestal, inscrib'd
 With characters of magic, which the charms
 Of Indian wizards wrought in orient pearl, 60
 Vain talisman of safety, was upheld
 By twelve illustrious youths of Persian blood.
 Then came the king; in majesty of form,
 In beauty first of men, as first in pow'r,
 Contemplating the glory from his throne 65
 Diffus'd to millions round, himself he deem'd
 Not less than Mithra who illumes the world.

The

Book IV. THE ATHENAID. 89

The sons of satraps with inverted spears
His chariot wheels attend; in state their fires,
The potentates of Asia, rode behind; 70
Mardonius absent, of the gorgeous train
Argestes tower'd the foremost; following march'd
A square battalion of a thousand spears,
By Mithridates led, his eldest born;
Him the lascivious father had depriv'd 75
Of Amarantha; dangerous the flames
Of vengeance darted from his youthful eye.
Th' immortal guard succeeded; in their van
Masistius, paragon of Asia's peers,
In beauteous figure second to the king, 80
Among the brave pre-eminent, more good
Than brave or beauteous; to Mardonius dear,
His counsellor and friend, in Xerxes' court
Left by that gen'ral, while in Thrace remote,
To counterpoise Argestes. Tried in arms, 85
In manners soft, though fearless on the plain,

Of

Of tend'rest feelings, Mindarus, to love
 A destin'd captive, near Masiftius rank'd ;
 Ariobarzanes next, whose barb'rous mien
 Exemplified his fierceness. Last of horse, 90
 With Midias, pow'rful satrap, at their head,
 A chosen myriad clos'd the long array.
 From these were kept three hundred paces void ;
 Promiscuous nations held their distant march
 Beyond that limit ; numberless they roll'd, 95
 In tumult like the fluctuating sands,
 Disturb'd and buoyant on the whirling breath
 Of hurricanes, which rend the Libyan wastes.

To Thebes descending, soon Mardonius learn'd
 That pioneers, with multitudes light-arm'd, 100
 Detach'd before the army, bent their course
 To Athens. On he speeds, rejecting food,
 Disdaining rest ; till midnight Cynthia shews
 A vaulted hollow in a mountain's side ;

There

Book IV. THE ATHENAID. 91

There in his clanging arms Mardonius throws 105
His limbs for slight refreshment; by him lies
Argestes' son; to pasture springing nigh,
The troop dismiss'd their steeds, and slept around.

To superstition prone from early age
Was Gobryas' son; o'erheated now by toil, 110
Yet more by thirst unsated of renown,
His soul partakes not with her wearied clay
In sleep repose; the cavern to her view
Appears in vast dimension to enlarge,
The sides retire, th' ascending roof expands, 115
All chang'd to crystal, where pellucid walls
Expose to sight the universe around.
Thus did a dream invade the mighty breast
Of that long matchless conqueror, who gave
Italia's clime a spoil to Punic Mars, 120
When on the margin of Iberus lay
The slumb'ring chief, and eagerly to birth

The

The vast conception of his pregnant mind
 Was struggling. Now Mardonius to himself
 Seems roving o'er the metamorphos'd cave; 125
 Orbicular above, an op'ning broad
 Admits a flood of light, and gentlest breath
 Of odorif'rous winds; amid the blaze,
 Full on the center of a pavement, spread
 Beyond whate'er portentous Ægypt saw 130
 In Thebes or Memphis, Fame, presiding there,
 Gigantic shape, an amethyst entire,
 Sits on a throne of adamant. On strength
 Of pillars, each a topaz, leans the dome;
 The silver pavement's intervening space 135
 Between the circling colonnade and wall
 With pedestals of diamond is fill'd;
 The crystal circuit is comparted all
 In niches verg'd with rubies. From that scene
 The gloom of night for ever to expel, 140
 Imagination's wanton skill in chains

Of

Book IV. THE ATHENAID. 93

Of pearl throughout the visionary hall
Suspends carbuncles, gems of native light,
Emitting splendour, such as tales portray,
Where Fancy, winning forceress, deludes 145
Th' enchanted mind, rejecting reason's clue,
To wander wild through fiction's pleasing maze.
The oriental hero in his dream
Feels wonder waking ; at his presence life
Pervades the statue ; Fame, flow-rising, sounds
Her trumpet loud ; a hundred golden gates 151
Spontaneous fly abroad ; the shapes divine,
In ev'ry age, in ev'ry climate sprung,
Of all the worthies since recorded time,
Ascend the lucid hall. Again she sounds 155
A measure sweeter than the Dorian flute
Of Pan, or lyre of Phœbus ; each assumes
His place allotted, there transform'd is fix'd
An adamantine statue ; yet unfill'd
One niche remains. To Asia's gazing chief 160

The goddess then : That vacancy for thee,
 Illustrious son of Gobryas, I reserve.

He thus exults : Bright being, dost thou grant
 To Persia triumphs through my conqu'ring spear?

He said : that moment through the sever'd earth
 She sinks ; the spacious fabric is dissolv'd ; 166
 When he, upstarting in the narrow cave,
 Delivers quick these accents : Be renown
 My lot ! O Fortune, unconcern'd I leave
 The rest to thee. Thus dauntless, ere his sleep 170
 Was quite dispers'd ; but waken'd soon he feels
 Th' imperfect vision heavy on his mind
 In dubious gloom ; then lightly with his foot
 Moves Artamanes ; up he springs ; the troop
 Prepare the steeds ; all mount ; Aurora dawns. 175

The swift forerunners of th' imperial camp
 Ere long Mardonius joins, where Athens lifts

Her

Book IV. THE ATHENAID. 95

Her tow'rs in prospect. Unexpected seen,
Their mighty chief with gen'ral, cordial shouts 179
They greet; their multitude, their transport, clear
His heart from trouble. Soon Barbarian throngs
With shading standards through Cephissus wade,
Who, had his fam'd divinity been true,
His shallow stream in torrents would have swoln
Awhile, to save the capital of Greece, 185
Superb in structure, long-disputed prize
Between Minerva and the god of seas,
Of eloquence the parent, source of arts,
Fair seat of freedom! Open are the gates,
The dwellings mute, all desolate the streets, 190
Save that domestic animals forlorn,
In cries awak'ning pity, seem to call
Their masters home; while shrieking beaks of prey,
Or birds obscene of night with heavy wings,
The melancholy solitude affright. 195

Is this the city whose presumption dar'd
 Invade the lord of Asia? sternly said
 Mardonius ent'ring; whither now are fled
 Th' audacious train, whose firebrands Sardis felt?
 Where'er you lurk, Athenians, if in fight, 200
 Soon shall you view your citadel in flames;
 Or, if retreated to a distant land,
 No distant land of refuge shall you find
 Against avenging Xerxes: yet I swear
 By Horomazes, if thy gallant race 205
 Have sacrific'd their country to contend
 With mightier efforts on a future day,
 Them I will honour, though by honour forc'd
 I must destroy. Companions, now advance;
 Unnumber'd hands to overturn these walls 210
 Employ; not Xerxes through a common gate
 Shall enter Athens; lay the ruins smooth,
 That this offending city may admit,

In

Book IV. THE ATHENAID. 97

In all his state, her master with his host
In full array. His order is obey'd. 215

Through smooth Ismenus, and Asopus clear,
The royal host in slow procession led,
Their first encampment on a district lodge,
Platæa's neighbour; that renown'd abode
Of noblest Greeks was desert. In his tent 220
The king by night requested audience grants
To Leontiades, that colleague base
Of Anaxander, traitor like himself
To Sparta's hero. Xerxes thus he warns:

Now be the king reminded of the rage 225
Against his father, which Platæa bore
At Marathon; that recently she brav'd
Himself in Oeta's pass; nor Thespia fought
With less distinguish'd rancour: be inform'd,
The first is near, the other not remote; 230
Thy vengeance both deserve. Destroy their fields,

F

Consume

Confume their dwellings; thy o'erflowing camp
 May spare a large detachment; I will go
 Their willing guide. Masiftius present spake :

O monarch, live for ever in the hearts 235
 Of conquer'd nations, as of subjects born;
 Associate clemency with pow'r, and all
 Must yield obedience: thou art master here,
 Treat thy new vassals kindly.—In a frown
 Argestes: Shall the king with kindness treat 240
 Invet'rate foes and zealous friends alike?
 Shall undeserving Thespians, shall the race
 Of fell Plataea, unprovok'd who stain'd,
 On Attic fields, her spear with Persian blood,
 To help detested Athens, shall they share 245
 The clemency of Xerxes, in despite
 Of this our Theban host, who faithful gives
 Such wholesome counsel? Sov'reign, when I brought
 Thy condescension late to Sparta's king,

Among

Book IV. THE ATHENAID. 99

Among the grim assembly in his tent 250

Diomedon, Demophilus, I saw,
With Dithyrambus, men preferring death
To amity with thee, commanders all
Of these malignant cities.—Xerxes here:

Approving, Leontiades, thy words 255

I hear; Mafistius, thee my servant loves,
Mardonius, always victor in my name;
Yet learn at last, O satrap! who dost wear
The fullest honours, to partake with me,
What I inherit from Darius, hate 260

Inflexible, inexpiable hate
To Athens, hate to her confed'rates all.
Go, Theban, chuse what nations of our host
Thou dost prefer; thyself appoint their chief.

I chuse the Caspians, Sacians; name for chief 265
Brave Mithridates, great Argestes' heir,

F 2

Rejoins

Rejoins the traitor. These ferocious most
 He best approv'd, and Mithridates chose,
 Among the youth most vigorous and fell
 In acts of blood. To hear Mardonius prais'd, 270
 Argestes, dreading his return, conceiv'd
 A pain, yet temper'd by a secret joy
 He felt arise; who, rival of his son,
 Long wish'd him distant from the guarded roof
 Where Timon's daughter was confin'd. Dismiss'd
 To rest, all separate. They renew their march 276
 By day-spring; Leontiades, to wreak
 On hapless Thespia and Plataea's walls
 The hate implacable of Thebes; the king,
 With equal rage, to spoil Minerva's reign. 280

Her olive groves now Attica disclos'd,
 The fields where Ceres first her gifts bestow'd,
 The rocks whose marble crevices the bees
 With sweetness stor'd; unparallel'd in art

Rose structures, growing on the stranger's eye, 285
Where'er it roam'd delighted. On like Death,
From his pale courser scatt'ring waste around,
The regal homicide of nations pass'd,
Unchaining all the furies of revenge
On this devoted country. Near the banks 290
Of desolate Cephissus halting sat
The king; retarding night's affrighted steeds,
The conflagration wide of crumbling tow'rs,
Of ruin'd temples, of the crackling groves,
Of villages and towns, he thence enjoy'd, 295
Thence on the manes of Darius call'd:

Son of Hytaspes! if the dead can hear,
Thou didst command thy servants to remind
Thy anger daily of th' Athenian race,
Who insolently plough'd the eastern waves, 300
Thy shores affronted with their hostile beaks,
And burnt thy town of Sardis; at my call,

Ghost of my father! lift thy awful brow;
 Rememb'ring now th' Athenians, see thy son
 On their presumptuous heads retaliate flames: 305
 Depriv'd of burial, shall their bodies leave
 Pale spectres here to wail their city fall'n,
 And wander through its ruins.—Closing here
 His barb'rous lips, the tyrant fought his couch.
 Thy summits now, Pentelicus, and thine, 310
 Haunt of sonorous bees, Hymettus sweet!
 Are ting'd with orient light. The Persian host
 Renew their progress; Athens soon receives
 Their floating banners and extended ranks
 Smooth o'er the fosse, by mural ruins fill'd. 315
 As from a course of ravage, in her den
 Of high Cithæron plung'd the monster Sphinx
 Her multifarious form, preparing still
 For havoc new her fangs and talons dire;
 Till her enigma Laius' son resolv'd, 320
 Whence desperation cast her headlong down

The



The rocky steep; so, after thy career
Of devastation, Xerxes, rest awhile
Secure in Athens, meditating there
Fresh woes to men. Than Oedipus more wise, 325
Th' interpreter of oracles is nigh;
Soon will the son of Neocles expel
Thee from thy hold, by policy too deep
For thy barbarian council to explore.

Before the Prytanæum stops the car. 330
Now savage bands inclose that rev'rend seat
Of judgment; there Mardonius waits. The king,
Pleas'd with his care, salutes him: Thou hast long
Sweat under harness in th' eternal snows
Of Macedon and Thracia, hast my name 335
There dress'd in ample trophies; but thy speed,
Preventing my arrival, is unknown
To wings of eagles, or the feet of stags.

Mardonius answers : Ever live the king
 To find his servants zeal outstrip in speed 340
 The swiftest eagle, or the fleetest stag !
 Descend, thou lord of Athens ! destin'd soon
 To universal sway.—They climb the steps ;
 Alone Argestes follows. In the hall
 These words of high import Mardonius spake : 345

My liege, the season calls for quick resolves ;
 By thee entrusted with supreme command,
 When thou art absent, to Phaleron's port,
 Late arsenal of Athens, all the ships
 I order'd from Eubœa ; they below 350
 Lie well equipp'd and shelter'd, nor remote
 The whole united armament of Greece
 At Salamis. With Ariabignes great,
 Thy royal brother, and for merit nam'd
 Thy ruling admiral, the kings of Tyre, 355
 Of Sidon, Caria's princes, and the rest,

I held

I held a council; they concurr'd to fight,
And by one effort terminate the war,
All but the queen, from whose ingenuous mouth
Will I, though differing, faithfully relate 360
Each argument, each word—' Mardonius, tell
' The king,' she said, ' what peril I foresee
' From this attempt; his ships defeated leave
' His host endanger'd; ever bold, the Greeks
' Are desp'rate now; the want of sustenance 365
' Will soon disperse them to their sev'ral homes;
' The sea's entire dominion to the king
' Will then be left; whole armies then embark'd
' Through inlets free may pour on Pelops' Isle,
' Whose coast I newly have explor'd with care. 370
' Mardonius, thou art eager; do not trust
' In multitude; full many in the fleet
' Are false, are cowards. Let our sov'reign thus
' Precipitation; short delay at least
' Is safe; a naval combat lost, is bane.' 375

A greater bane delay, Argestes here ;
 Who reading artful in the royal eye
 Determination for a naval fight,
 His malice thus on Artemisia vents :

My liege forgets that Caria's queen derives 380
 Her blood from Grecian fountains ; is it strange
 She should confine thy formidable hand,
 And so preserve her kindred ?—Stern the king :

Though I reject her counsel to forbear
 The fight, none better will that fight sustain 385
 Than she, whose zeal, fidelity approv'd,
 And valour, none can equal but the son
 Of Gobryas. Go, Mardonius, see the fleet
 Prepar'd by morning ; let Argestes burn
 The citadel and temples ; I confer 390
 On him that office.—Utt'ring this, he turn'd
 Apart ; forlorn Argestes hence presag'd

Decline

Decline of regal favour, cent'ring all
In Gobrya's son, who fiercely thus pursued :

Thou hear'st the king; now hear a soldier's tone:
Of old I know thee slanderer of worth; 396
And I, distinguish'd by a late success,
To envious eyes no welcome guest return.
Thou canst traduce the absent, whom thy tongue
Would flatter present. Not in Susa's court, 400
Amid the soft security of peace,
We languish now; great Xerxes on the stage
Of glorious war, amid the din of arms,
Can hear thy coz'ning artifice no more.
Oh that he ne'er had listen'd! Asia's lord, 405
When to a Tyrian trafficker demean'd,
He barter'd for his glory. By my sword,
Leonidas, preferring fame to sway
O'er proffer'd Greece, was noble! What thy part,
Who tamely proff'ring wast with scorn dismiss'd?
Go, burn the fanes! Destruction is thy joy, 411

He said, departing swiftly; on his way
 Meets Artamanes, meritorious youth,
 Who, not resembling an unworthy fire,
 Had fix'd th' esteem of that illustrious man. 415
 To him Mardonius : Brave Autarctus greet
 In words like these—Exalted to the bed
 Of bright Sandauce, sister of thy king,
 Now is the season to approve thy worth.
 Collect ten thousand warriors on the strand. 420
 Which faces Salamis; an island near,
 Pnyttalia nam'd, possess; ere long the foes
 Against her craggy border may be driven;
 Let spoils and captives signalize thy zeal.
 Thou, Artamanes, must attend him there, 425
 Nor let me want intelligence. Farewel!

This mandate giv'n, the active chief proceeds
 With steps impatient to Phaleron's port.

End of the Fourth Book.

T H E

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the FIFTH.

THE sun was set; Autarctus and his band,
In haste collected, through nocturnal shades
To small Pnyttalia pass'd a narrow frith.

As on a desert forest, where at night
A branching oak some traveller hath climb'd
To couch securely; if the trunk beset
By famish'd wolves in herd, who thirst for blood,
Pale morn discovers to his waking sight,
His hair in terror bristles, pants his breast

In

In doubt of safety ; thus Aurora flew'd 10
 The unexpected gleam of Persian arms,
 Which fill'd Pfyttalia, while the Attic strand,
 With numbers equal to its sandy stores
 Was cover'd, and Phaleron's road with masts,
 A floating forest, crowded like the pines, 15
 Majestic daughters of the Pontic woods.
 Fair Athens burn'd in fight ; embodied smoke
 Rose mountainous, emitting pillar'd flames,
 Whose umber'd light the newly-dawning sun
 But half eclips'd. At intervals are heard 20
 The hollow sound of columns prostrate laid,
 The crash of levell'd walls, of sinking roofs
 In massy ruin. Consternation cold
 Benumbs the Greek spectators, all aghast
 Except th' Athenians, whose unshaken minds 25
 To this expected fate resign'd their homes
 For independence. Gigantean rang'd
 From ship to ship Despair ; she drives ashore

The

Book V. THE ATHENAID. III

The timid leaders, changing late resolves
For gen'rous combat into base retreat. 30
To seek the shelter of their native ports
They clamour loud; the admiral convenes
A council; him Themistocles address'd :

Now Eurybiades, to whose command
I voluntary yielded, from thy charge, 35
Not less for Athens than for gen'ral Greece,
I claim a righteous and heroic part,
The promis'd fight in these auspicious streights,
Which, rend'ring vain the multitude of foes,
Assure success. But separate this fleet, 40
A hundred openings may Barbarians chuse
To Pelops' region; not on ev'ry spot
An isthmian wall is plac'd. Depriv'd of all,
If to your succour we Athenians lose
All claim, ye Greeks, be valiant for yourselves! 45
See Attica in flames, the temples raz'd,

The

The tombs defac'd, the venerable dust
 Of our forefathers scatter'd in the wind!
 Would you avoid calamities like these,
 To sound instruction lean; th' almighty gods 50
 Wise counsels bless with prosperous events,
 To its own folly wilful blindness leave.

Proud Adimantus, on his birth elate,
 The admiral of Corinth, envying long
 Cecropia's name and pow'r, arose and spake: 55

For public safety when in council meet
 Men who have countries, silence best becomes
 Him who hath none; shall such presume to vote,
 Too patient Spartan, nay to dictate here,
 Who cannot tell us they possess a home? 60
 For Attica in flames, her temples raz'd,
 Her tombs disfigur'd, for th' ignoble dust
 Of thy forefathers scatter'd in the wind,

Thou

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 113

Thou low-born son of Neocles, must Greece
Her welfare hazard on a single day, 65
Which, unsuccessful, endless ruin brings ?

Cleander heard, Trœzene's youthful chief ;
Warm was his bosom, eloquent his tongue,
Strong-nerv'd his limbs, well exercis'd in arms ;
Preventing thus Themistocles, he spake : 70

Though blood, Corinthian, be of noblest dye,
Base-born the soul when folly is her fire.
Absurdity and malice no reply
Deserve from thee, Athenian ! thee, more wise,
More valiant, more distinguish'd in thyself, 75
Than all the vaunted progeny of gods.
Did you not mourn, ye deities, to see
A nation, you created with their soil,
Forfake that ancient land ? or not admire
Your greatest work, the conduct of that man, 80
Who

Who such a race from such endearing homes,
 Wives, husbands, elders, infants, maidens, youths,
 In gen'rous quest of liberty could lead?
 Do you not look indignant down to hear
 Such venomous reproaches on his worth, 85
 A wrong to Greece? Her favour him I call,
 As yet, I trust, his dictates will prevail.

While he declaim'd, Themistocles, who scorn'd
 The insolent Corinthian, sat and scann'd
 The looks of all; his penetrating sight 90
 Could read the thoughts of men; the major part
 He saw averse to battle, Sparta's chief
 Uncertain, cold, and slow. Affecting here
 Decisive looks, and scorn of more debate,
 Thus brief he clos'd: Athenians still possess 95
 A city buoyant on two hundred keels.
 Thou, admiral of Sparta, frame thy choice;
 Fight, and Athenians shall thy arm sustain;

Retreat,

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 115

Retreat, Athenians shall retreat to shores
Which bid them welcome, to Hesperian shores, 100
For them by ancient oracles reserv'd,
Safe from insulting foes, from false allies,
And Eleutherian Jove will bless their flight:
So said your own Leonidas, who died
For public welfare. You that glorious death 105
May render, Spartans, fruitless to yourselves.

This said, he left the council ; not to fly,
But with his wonted policy compel
The Greeks to battle. At a secret cove
He held in constant readiness a skiff, 110
In Persian colours mask'd; he there embark'd
The most entrusted of his household, charg'd
With these instructions : Now return my love,
Sicinus, born a Persian, of my house
Not as a slave long habitant, but friend, 115
My children's tutor, in my trust supreme.

To

'To Xerxes' navy sail; accost her chief
 In words like these—Themistocles, who leads
 Athenian squadrons, is the monarch's friend,
 Approv'd by this intelligence; the Greeks 120
 In consternation shortly will resolve
 To separate and fly; let Asia's fleet
 Her numbers round in diligence extend,
 Investing ev'ry passage; then, confus'd,
 This whole confederated force of Greece 125
 Will sooner yield than fight, and Xerxes close
 At once so perilous a war.—He ceas'd.

Meanwhile the council wasted precious hours,
 Till Eurybiades at length alarm'd
 Left all th' Athenians should retreat incens'd, 130
 Postpon'd the issue to th' ensuing day.

Themistocles, retiring to his tent,
 There found his wife; his stratagem on wings

Of

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 117

Of execution, left his mind serene;
Relax'd in thought, he trifled with his boy, 135
Young child, who playful on the mother's lap,
Soon as of Xerxes earnest she enquir'd,
With frowning graces on his brow of down,
Clench'd fast his infant hands. The dame pursues

O that the Greeks would emulate this child, 140
Clench fast their weapons, and confront the foe!
Did we abandon our paternal homes,
Our nuptial chambers, from the cradle snatch
Our helpless babes? Did tender maidens join
Unanimous the cry, 'Embark, embark 145
'For Salamis and freedom!' to behold
The men debating (so the Attic wives
Are told) uncertain if to fight or serve?
Who are the cowards, rather traitors, say?
We will assail them, as the Trojan dames 150
Did Polymestor, royal thief, who broke

The

The holiest ties for gold.—Take comfort, love ;
All shall be well, Themistocles replied.

Yes, I in thee have comfort, she proceeds ;
Thou canst devise some artifice to urge 155
Ev'n dastards on ; Sicinus thou hast sent,
I ask not whither.—In a smile her lord :

With thy permission, then, the gods remain
My confidants : to ease thee, I proclaim
This boy the first of Greeks ; he governs thee, 160
Thou me, I Athens ; who shall govern Greece,
As I am sure to circumvent the foes.
Retiring, seek the town ; console the dames ;
Thy husband never was so high in hope.

She pleas'd, departing, spake : To govern thee 165
Requires an art which never woman knew,
Nor man ; most artful, thou controllest all,
Yet call'st, nay often seem'st, thyself controll'd.

She

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 119

She distant, thus he meditates alone :

True, when I seem controll'd by others most, 170

Then most assur'd my enterprize succeeds.

O lib'ral nature ! science, arts acquir'd,

I little value ; while thy light supplies

Profuse invention, let capricious chance

With obstacles and dangers gird me round, 175

I can surmount them all ; nor peace, nor war,

Nor all the swift vicissitudes of time,

E'er gave emergency a birth too strong

For me to govern. On this crisis hangs

My future greatness ; whether joy or grief 180

Shall close the term of being, none foreknow ;

My penetrating spirit I will trust

Thus far prophetic ; for a time, at least,

I will possess authority and pow'r

To fix a name enduring like the sun. 185

Thus, in his own strong faculties secure,

To rest he tranquil sunk, and slept till dawn ;

Then

120 THE ATHENAID. Book V.

Then early rose. Advancing from the shore,
A manly figure he observes, the face
Wrapt in a mantle; as dividing clouds 190
Reveal th' unmuffled sun, the mantle cast
Aside discovers the majestic front
Of Aristides, who the silence breaks :

Diffensions past, as puerile and vain,
Now to forget, and nobly strive who best 195
Shall serve his country, Aristides warns
His ancient foe Themistocles. I hear
Thou giv'st the best of councils, which the Greeks
Reject, through mean sollicitude to fly ;
Weak men ! throughout these narrow seas the foe
Is station'd now, preventing all escape. 201

Themistocles, though covetous of fame,
Though envying pow'r in others, was not bred
In horrid deserts, not with savage milk
Of tigers nurs'd, nor bore a ruthless heart. 205

He

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 121

He thus replied : With gratitude this foe
Accepts thy welcome news, thy proffer'd aid,
Thy noble challenge ; in this glorious race
Be all our strife each other to surpass.
First know my inmost secrets ; if the streights 210
Are all invested with Barbarian ships,
The act is mine ; of our intended flight
I through Sicinus have appris'd the foes ;
Of his success thee messenger I hail.

The exile then : Such policy denotes 215
Themistocles ; I praise, the Greeks have cause
To bless, thy conduct ; teach me now what task
I can achieve ; to labour, to advise
With thee commanding, solely to enjoy
The secret pleasure of preserving Greece, 220
Is my pursuit ; the glory all be thine.

Before the council shew that honour'd face,
Rejoins the chief ; report thy tidings there.

G

To

To preparation for immediate fight
 Exhort; such notice they would slight in me, 225
 In thee all men believe.—This said, they mov'd.

Them on their way Myronides approach'd,
 Xanthippus, Cimon, Æschylus, and all
 The captains, fixing reverential eyes
 On Aristides; this the wary son 230
 Of Neocles remark'd; he gains the town
 Of Salamis, the council there is met;
 To them th' illustrious exile he presents,
 At whose appearance all th' assembly rise,
 Save Adimantus; fast by envy bound, 235
 He sits morose; illib'ral then the word,
 As Aristides was in act to speak,
 Thus takes: Bœotia, Attica reduc'd,
 The Dorians, Locrians, you already know;
 To me this morn intelligence arriv'd, 240
 That Thespia, that Platea were in flames,
 All

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 123

All Phocis conquer'd; thus alone of Greece
The Isle of Pelops unsubdued remains.
For what is lost, ye Grecians, must we face
Such mightier numbers, while barbarian hate 245
Lurks in Pfyttalia, watching for the wrecks
Of our defeated navy? Shall we pause
Now at the Isthmus with united force
To save a precious remnant? Landing there,
Your sailors turn to soldiers, oars to spears; 250
The only bulwark you have left, defend.

Then Aristides: Ignominious flight
Necessity forbids; Ægina's shore
Last night I left; from knowledge I report.
The hostile navy bars at either mouth 255
The narrow streight between Pfyttalia's Isle
And Salamis, where lie your anchor'd ships.
But shall the Greeks be terrified? What more
Can they solicit of propitious heav'n,

Than such deluded enemies to face, 260

Who trust in numbers, yet provoke the fight

Where multitude is fruitless?—Closing here,

The unassuming exile straight retir'd.

Cleander ent'ring heard; while Corinth's chief,

Blind with malignity and pride, pursued: 265

Her strength must Greece for Attica destroy'd

Waste on the credit of a single tongue,

From Athens banish'd? Swift Cleander spake:

Is there in Greece who doubts that righteous tongue,

Save Adimantus? To suspect the truth 270

Of that illustrious exile, were to prove

Ourselves both false and timid. But enough

Of altercation; from the fleet I come,

The words of Aristides I confirm;

Prepare to fight; no passage have our ships. 275

But through embattled foes.—The council rose.

In

In this tremendous season, thronging round
Th' accomplish'd son of Neocles, their hopes
In his unerring conduct all repose.
Thus on Olympus round their father Jove 280
The deities collected, when the war
Of earth's gigantic offspring menac'd heav'n,
In his omnipotence of arm and mind
Confiding. Eurybiades supreme
In title, ev'ry leader speeds to act 285
What great Themistocles suggests; himself,
In all expedients copious, seeks his wife,
Whom he accosts, encircled where she stood
With Attic dames: Timothea, now rejoice!
The Greeks will fight; to-morrow's sun will give
A glorious day of liberty to Greece. 291
Assemble thou the women; let the dawn
Behold you spread the Salaminian beach;
In your selected ornaments attir'd,
As when superb processions to the gods 295

Your presence graces, with your children stand
 Encompass'd ; cull your fairest daughters, range
 Them in the front ; alluring be their drefs,
 Their beauties half discover'd, half conceal'd ;
 As when you practise on a lover's eye, 300
 Through that soft portal to invade the heart ;
 So shall the faithful husband from his wife
 Catch fire, the father from his blooming race,
 The youthful warrior from the maid he loves :
 Your looks will sharpen our vindictive swords. 305

In all the grace of polish'd Athens thus
 His charge pronouncing, with a kind embrace
 He quits her bosom, nor th' encircling dames
 Without respectful admonition leaves
 To aid his confort. Grateful in itself 310
 A task she soon begins, which pleases more
 As pleasing him. A meadow fresh in green,
 Between the sea-beat margin and the walls,

Which

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 127

Which bore the island's celebrated name,
Extended large; there oft the Attic fair 315
In bebies met; Themistocles the ground
To them allotted, that communion soft,
Or pastime, sweetly cheating, might relieve
The sad remembrance of their native homes.
Here at Timothea's summons they conven'd 320
In multitude beyond the daisies, strewn
Thick o'er the verdure from the lap of spring,
When most profuse. The wives, the mothers here
Of present heroes, there in bud are seen
The future mothers of immortal sons, 325
Of Socrates, of Plato, who to birth
Had never sprung if Xerxes had prevail'd,
Or would have liv'd Barbarians. On a mount
Timothea plac'd, her graceful lips unclos'd:

Ye wives, ye mothers, and ye fair betroth'd, 330
Your husbands, sons, and suitors claim that aid

You have to give, and never can so well.
 A signal day of liberty to Greece
 Expect to-morrow; of the glorious scene
 Become spectators; in a bridal dress, 335
 Ye wives, encompass'd with your tender babes,
 Ye rev'rend matrons in your sumptuous robes,
 As when superb processions to the gods
 Your presence graces; but ye future brides,
 Now maids, let all th' allurements of attire 340
 Enhance your beauties to th' enamour'd eye:
 So from the face he loves shall ev'ry youth
 Catch fire, with animating passion look
 On her, and conquer. Thus Cecropia's maids,
 Who left their country rather than abide 345
 Impure compulsion to Barbarian beds,
 Or ply the foreign loom with servile hands,
 Shall live to see their hymeneal morn;
 Bless'd in heroic husbands, shall transmit
 To late posterity the Attic name. 350
 And

And you, whose exemplary steps began
 Our glorious emigration, you shall see
 Your lords, your sons, in triumph to your homes
 Return, ye matrons——Or with them will die,
 If fortune frown, Laodice aloud ; 355
 For this I hold a poniard ; ere endure
 A Persian yoke, will pierce this female heart.

Enthusiastic ardour seems to change
 Their sex ; with manlike firmness all consent
 To meet Timothea there by early dawn 360
 In chosen raiment, and with weapons arm'd,
 As chance should furnish. Thus Timothea sway'd,
 The emulator of her husband's art,
 But ne'er beyond immaculate intent ;
 At her suggestion interpos'd her friend 365
 Laodice, the comfort young and fair
 Of bold Aminias, train'd by naval Mars,
 From the same bed with Æschylus deriv'd.

Trœzene's leader, passing by, admir'd
 The gen'rous flame, but secretly rejoic'd 370
 In Aripheia at Calauria safe;
 He to thy tent, Themistocles, was bound.
 Thee to Sicinus list'ning, just return'd
 From his successful course, Cleander found,
 Thee of thy dear Timothea first inform'd, 375
 While thou didst smile applause. The youth pursued:

From Aristides I deputed come;
 He will adventure from Pfyttalia's isle
 This night to chace the foe, if thou concur
 In help and counsel: bands of Attic youth, 380
 Superfluous force excluded from the fleet,
 With ready arms the enterprize demand;
 Them, with his troop, Oilean Medon joins.

A noble Grecian, sage, experienc'd, brave,
 Returns the chief; my answer is concise: 385
 Sicinus,

Sicinus, fly! their pinnaces and skiffs
Command th' Athenian vessels to supply
At Aristides' call; th' attempt is wise,
Becoming such a soldier; thou remain
With him, to bring me tidings of success. 390

Swift as a stone from Balearic flings,
Sicinus hastens to th' Athenian fleet;
Cleander light th' important order bears
To Aristides, whose exalted voice
Collects the banding youth. So gen'rous hounds
The huntsman's call obey; with ringing peals 396
Their throats in tune delight Aurora's ear;
They pant impatient for the scented field,
Devour in thought the victims of their speed,
Nor dread the rav'nous wolf, nor tusky boar, 400
Nor lion, king of beasts. The exile feels
Returning warmth, like some neglected steed.
Of noblest temper, from his wonted haunts

Who long hath languish'd in the lazy stall ;
 Call'd forth, he paws, he snuffs th' enliv'ning air,
 His strength he proffers in a cheerful neigh 406
 To scour the vale, to mount the shelving hill,
 Or dash from thickets close the sprinkling dew.

He thus to Medon : Of Psyttalia's shore
 That eastern flat contains the Persian chief, 410
 Known by his standard ; with four thousand youths
 Make thy impresson there ; the western end
 Our foes neglect, a high and craggy part ;
 But nature there through perforated rock
 Hath left a passage, with its mouth above 415
 Conceal'd in bushes ; this, to me well known,
 I will possess ; thence rushing, will surround
 The unsuspecting Persian. Darkness falls ;
 Let all embark ; at midnight ply the oar.

They hear and march ; allotted seats they take
 Aboard the skiffs Sicinus had prepar'd, 421
 Impatient

Impatient waiting, but impatience keeps
Her peace. The second watch is now elaps'd,
That baneful season, mark'd in legends old,
When death-controlling forcery compell'd 425
Unwilling spirits back to mortal clay
Entomb'd, when dire Theffalian charmers call'd
Down from her orb the pallid queen of night,
And hell's tremendous avenues unclos'd;
To Asia's mothers now of real bane, 430
Who soon must wail ten thousand slaughter'd sons.
The boats in order move; full-fac'd the moon
Extends the shadows of a thousand masts
Across the mirror of cerulean floods,
Which feel no ruffling wind. A western course
With his division Aristides steers, 436
The Locrian eastward; by whose dashing oars
A guard is rous'd, not timely to obstruct
His firm descent, yet ready on the strand
To give him battle. Medon's spear by fate 440

Is wielded; Locrians and Athenians sweep
 The foes before them; numbers fresh maintain
 Unceasing conflict, till on ev'ry side
 His reinforcement Aristides pours,
 And turns the fight to carnage: by his arm 445
 Before a tent of stately structure sinks
 Autarctus brave in death. The twilight breaks
 On heaps of slaughter; not a Persian lives
 But Artamanes, from whose youthful brow
 The beaver sever'd by th' auspicious steel 450
 Of Medon, shew'd a well-remember'd face;
 The Locrian swift embrac'd him, and began:

Deserve my kindness by some grateful news.
 Of Melibœus and the Delphian priest;
 Not Æschylus in pity shall exceed 455
 My care in this thy second captive state.

His grateful news the Persian thus repeats:
 Nicæa, fort of Locris, them contains;

Though.

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 435

Though pris'ners, happy in the guardian care
Of Artemisia. What disastrous fight! 460
Autarctus there lies prostrate in his blood.
Oh, I must throw me at the victor's feet!

He went; by Medon introduc'd; to kneel;
Forbid by Ariftides, he began.:

My own compassion to solicit yours, 465
Without disgrace might bend a satrap's knee;
I have a tale of sorrow to unfold,
Might soften hearts less humaniz'd and just
Than yours, O gen'rous Grecians! In that tent
The widow'd wife of this late envied prince, 470
Young, royal matron—twenty annual suns
She hath not told—three infants . . . At these words
The righteous man of Athens stays to hear
No more; he gains the tent, he enters, views
Sandauce, silent in majestic woe, 475

With

With her three children in their eastern vests
 Of gems and gold; urbanity forbids
 To interrupt the silence of her grief;
 Sicinus, waiting nigh, he thus enjoins :

Thou, born a Persian, from a ghastly stage 480
 Of massacre and terrour these transport
 To thy own lord, Themistocles; the spoils
 Are his, not mine. Could words of comfort heal
 Calamity thus sudden and severe,
 I would instruct thy tongue; but mute respect 485
 Is all thy pow'r can give, or she receive.
 Apprise the gen'ral that Pfyttalia's coast
 I will maintain with Medon, from the wrecks
 To save our friends, our enemies destroy.

He then withdraws; Athenians he commands
 Autarctus' body to remove from fight; 491
 When her pavilion now Sandauce leaves,

Preceded

Book V. THE ATHENAID. 137

Preceded by Sicinus. On the ground
She bends her aspect, not a tear she drops
To ease her swelling heart; by eunuchs led, 495
Her infants follow; while a troop of slaves,
With folded arms across their heaving breasts,
The sad procession close. To Medon here
Spake Artamanes: O humane! permit
Me to attend this princess, and console 500
At least, companion of her woes, bewail
A royal woman from Darius sprung.

Him not a moment now his friend detains;
At this affecting season he defers
Enquiry more of Melibœus, known 505
Safe in Nicæa; Persia's youth departs;
The mournful train for Salamis embark.

End of the Fifth Book.

THE

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the SIXTH.

BRIGHT pow'r, whose presence wakens on the
face

Of nature all her beauties, gilds the floods,
The crags and forests, vine-clad hills and fields,
Where Ceres, Pan, and Bacchus in thy beams
Rejoice; O Sun! thou o'er Athenian tow'rs, 5
The citadel and fanes in ruin huge,
Dost rising now illuminate a scene
More new, more wondrous, to thy piercing eye,
Than ever time disclos'd. Phaleron's wave

Presents

Presents three thousand barks in pendants rich ; 10
Spectators, clust'ring like Hymettian bees,
Hang on the burden'd shrouds, the bending yards,
The reeling masts ; the whole Cecropian strand,
Far as Eleufis, feat of myftic rites,
Is throng'd with millions, male and female race 15
Of Afia and of Libya, rank'd on foot,
On horfes, camels, cars. Ægaleos tall,
Half down his long declivity where fpreads
A moffy level, on a throne of gold
Displays the king environ'd by his court 20
In oriental pomp ; the hill behind,
By warriors cover'd, like fome trophy huge
Ascends in varied arms and banners clad ;
Below the monarch's feet th' immortal guard,
Line under line, erect their gaudy fpears ; 25
Th' arrangement, fhelving downward to the beach,
Is edg'd by chofen horfe. With blazing fteel
Of Attic arms encircled, from the deep

Pfyttalia lifts her surface to the fight,
 Like Ariadne's heav'n-bespangling crown, 30
 A wreath of stars; beyond, in dread array,
 The Grecian fleet, four hundred gallies, fill
 The Salaminian freights; barbarian prows
 In two divisions point to either mouth
 Six hundred brazen beaks of tow'r-like ships, 35
 Unwieldy bulks; the gently-swelling foil
 Of Salamis, rich island, bounds the view.
 Along her silver-fanded verge array'd,
 The men at arms exalt their naval spears
 Of length terrific. All the tender sex, 40
 Rank'd by Timothea, from a green ascent
 Look down in beauteous order on their fires,
 Their husbands, lovers, brothers, sons, prepar'd
 To mount the rolling deck. The younger dames
 In bridal robes are clad; the matrons sage 45
 In solemn raiment, worn on sacred days;
 But white in vesture like their maiden breasts,

Where

Where Zephyr plays, uplifting with his breath
The loosely-waving folds, a chosen line
Of Attic graces in the front is plac'd; 50
From each fair head the tresses fall, entwin'd
With newly-gather'd flowrets; chaplets gay
The snowy hand sustains; the native curls,
O'erhading half, augment their pow'rful charms;
While Venus, temper'd by Minerva, fills 55
Their eyes with ardour, pointing ev'ry glance
To animate, not soften. From on high
Her large controlling orbs Timothea rolls,
Supassing all in stature, not unlike
In majesty of shape the wife of Jove, 60
Presiding o'er the empyreal fair,
Below, her consort in resplendent arms
Stands near an altar; there the victim bleeds,
The entrails burn; the fervent priest invokes
The Eleutherian pow'rs. Sicinus comes, 65
Sandauce follows; and in sumptuous vests,
Like

Like infant Castor and his brother fair,
 Two boys ; a girl like Helen, ere she threw
 Delicious poison from her fatal eyes,
 But tripp'd in blameless childhood o'er the meads
 Of sweet Amyclæ, her maternal seat : 71
 Nor less with beauty was Sandauce grac'd
 Than Helen's mother, Leda, who enthrall'd
 Th' Olympian god. A starting look the priest
 Cast on the children ; eager by the hand 75
 Themistocles he grasp'd, and thus aloud :

Accept this omen ! At th' auspicious sight
 Of these young captives, from the off'ring burst
 Unwonted light ; Fate's volume is unroll'd,
 Where victory is written in their blood
 To Bacchus, styl'd Devourer, on this isle,
 Amid surrounding gloom, a temple hoar
 By time remains ; to Bacchus I devote
 These splendid victims ; while his altar smokes,

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 143

With added force thy prow shall pierce the foe, 85
And conquest fit triumphant on thy mast.

So spake religious lips; the people heard,
Believing heard:—To Bacchus, Bacchus give
The splendid victims, hoarse acclaim resounds.
Myronides, Xanthippus, Cimon good, 90
Brave Æschylus, each leader is unmann'd
By horror, save the cool, sagacious son
Of Neocles; the prophet he accosts:

Wife, Euphrantides, are thy holy words!
To that propitious god these children bear; 95
Due time apply from each Barbarian stain
To purify their limbs; attentive watch
The signal rais'd for onset; then employ
Thy pious knife to win the grace of heav'n.

The chiefs amaz'd, the priest applauding look'd.
A young, a beauteous mother at this doom 101
Of

Of her dear babes is present. Not her locks
 She tore, nor beat in agony her breast,
 Nor shriek'd in frenzy; frozen, mute, she stands,
 Like Niobe just changing into stone, 105
 Ere yet sad moisture had a passage found
 To flow, the emblem of maternal grief:
 At length the rigour of her tender limbs
 Dissolving, Artamanes bears away
 Her fainting burden, while th' inhuman seer 110
 To slaughter leads her infants. Ev'ry eye
 On them is turn'd. Themistocles, unmark'd
 By others, beck'ning draws Sicinus nigh,
 In secret thus commission'd: Chuse a band
 From my entrusted menials; swift o'ertake, 115
 Like an assistant join this holy man;
 Not dead, but living, shall these infant heads
 Avail the Grecians. When the direful grove,
 Impenetrably dark'ning, black with night,
 That antiquated seat of horrid rites, 120

You

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 145

You reach, bid Euphrantides, in my name,
This impious, fruitless homicide forbear;
If he refuse, his savage zeal restrain
By force.—This said, his disencumber'd thoughts
For instant fight prepare; with matchless art 125
To rouse the tend'rest passions of the soul
In aid of duty, from the altar's height,
His voice persuasive, audible, and smooth,
To battle thus his countrymen inflames :

Ye pious sons of Athens, on that slope 130
Behold your mothers! husbands, fathers, see
Your wives and race! before such objects dear,
Such precious lives defending, you must wield
The pond'rous naval spear; ye gallant youths,
Look on those lovely maids, your destin'd brides,
Who of their pride have disarray'd the meads 136
To bind your temples with triumphal wreaths;
Can you do less than conquer in their fight,

H

Or

Or conquer'd perish? Women ne'er deserv'd
 So much from men; yet what their present claim?
 That by your prowess their maternal feat 141
 They may revisit; that Cecropia's gates
 May yield them entrance to their own abodes,
 There meritorious to reside in peace,
 Who cheerful, who magnanimous, those homes 145
 To hostile flames, their tender limbs resign'd
 To all the hardships of this crowded spot,
 For preservation of the Attic name,
 Laws, rites, and manners. Do your women ask
 Too much, along their native streets to move 150
 With grateful chaplets for Minerva's shrine,
 To view th' august acropolis again,
 And in procession celebrate your deeds?
 Ye men of Athens! shall those blooming buds
 Of innocence and beauty, who disclose 155
 Their snowy charms by chastity reserv'd
 For your embraces, shall those spotless maids

Abide

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 147

Abide compulsion to Barbarian beds ?
Their Attic arts and talents be debas'd
In Persian bondage ? Shall Cephissian banks, 160
Callirhoë's fountain, and Ilissus pure,
Shall sweet Hymettus never hear again
Their graceful step rebounding from the turf,
With you companions in the choral dance, 164
Enamour'd youths, who court their nuptial hands ?

A gen'ral pæan intercepts his voice ;
On ringing shields the spears in cadence beat ;
While notes more soft, but, issued from such lips,
Far more inspiring, to the martial song
Unnumber'd daughters of Cecropia join. 170
Such interruption pleas'd the artful chief,
Who said no more. Descending, swift he caught
The favourable moment ; he embark'd,
All ardent follow'd ; on his deck conven'd,
Myronides, Xanthippus, Cimon bold, 175
Aminias, Æschylus, he thus exhorts :

H 2

My

My brave associates, publish o'er the fleet,
 That I have won the Asian Greeks, whom force
 Not choice against us ranges, to retain
 Their weapons sheath'd, unting'd with kindred blood.

Not less magnanimous, and more inflam'd, 181
 Mardonius too ascends the stately deck
 Of Ariabignes ; there each leader, call'd
 To hear the royal mandate, he address'd :

Behold your king, inclos'd by watchful scribes,
 Unfolding volumes like the rolls of fate! 186
 The brave, the fearful, character'd will stand
 By name, by lineage there ; his searching eye
 Will note your actions, to dispense rewards
 Of wealth and rank, or punishment and shame 190
 Irrevocably doom. But see a spoil
 Beyond the pow'r of Xerxes to bestow,
 By your own prowess singly to be won,

Those

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 149

Those beauteous women; emblems they of Greece,
Shew what a country you are come to share. 195

Can victory be doubtful in this cause?

Who can be slow when riches, honours, fame,

His sov'reign's smile, and beauty, are the prize?

Now lift the signal for immediate fight.

He spake applauded; in his rapid skiff 200

Was wafted back to Xerxes, who enthron'd

High on Ægaleos anxious sat to view

A scene which nature never yet display'd,

Nor fancy feign'd. The theatre was Greece,

Mankind spectators; equal to that stage 205

Themistocles, great actor! by the pow'r

Of fiction present in his teeming soul,

Blends confidence with courage, on the Greeks

Imposing firm belief in heav'nly aid.

I see, I see divine Eleufis shoot 210

A spiry flame auspicious tow'rds the fleet.

H 3

I see

150 THE ATHENAID. Book VI.

I see the blest'd Æacidæ; the ghosts
Of Telamon and Peleus, Ajax there,
There bright Achilles buoyant on the gale,
Stretch from Ægina their propitious hands. 215
I see a woman! It is Pallas! Hark!
She calls! How long, infensate men, your prows
Will you keep back, and victory suspend?

He gives the signal. With impetuous heat
Of zeal and valour, urging sails and oars, 220
Th' Athenians dash the waters, which disturb'd,
Combine their murmur with unnumber'd shouts;
The gallies rush along like gliding clouds,
That utter hollow thunder as they sweep
A distant ridge of hills. The crowded lines 225
Of Xerxes' navy, in the streights confus'd,
Through their own weight and multitude ill steer'd,
Are pierc'd by diff'rent squadrons, which their chiefs,
Each with his tribe, to dreadful onset led.

Th'

Th' unerring skill of Pallas seem'd to form, 230
Then guide their just arrangement. None surpass'd
The effort bold of Æschylus ; two ships
Of large construction, boast of naval Tyre,
His well-directed beak, o'erlaid with brass,
Transpierces ; Attic Neptune whelms his floods 235
O'er either found'ring bulk. Three more, by flight
Wreck'd on Pfyttalia, yield their victim crews
To Aristides ; vigilant and dire
Against the ravager of Greece he stood,
Like that Hesperian dragon, wakeful guard 240
To Atlantean fruit. Th' intrepid son
Of Neocles, disdain'g meaner spoil
Than Asia's king-born admiral, with sails
Outspread to fresh'ning breezes, swiftly steer'd
By Ariabignes, crash'g as he pass'd 245
The triple tire of oars ; then grappling, pour'd
His fierce assailants on the splendid poop.
To this attack the gallant prince oppos'd

His royal person; three Athenians bleed
 Beneath him; but Themistocles he meets. 250
 Seed of Darius, Ariabignes falls
 In Xerxes' view, by that unrivall'd chief
 Whose arm, whose conduct, Destiny that day
 Obey'd, while fortune steady on her wheel
 Look'd smiling down. The regal flag descends, 255
 The democratic standard is uprear'd,
 Where that proud name of Eleutheria shines
 In characters of silver. Xerxes feels
 A thrilling horror, such as pierc'd the soul
 Of pale Belshazzar, last on Ninus' throne, 260
 When in the pleasures of his festive board
 He saw the hand portentous on the wall
 Of Babylon's high palace write his doom,
 With great Assyria's downfall. Caria's queen
 Not long continues in a distant post, 265
 Where blood-stain'd billows on her active oars
 Dash thick-adhering foam; tremendous fight

To

To Adimantus, who before her flies
With his dismay'd Corinthians ! She suspends
Pursuit ; her sov'reign's banner to redeem 270
Advances ; furious in her passage sends
Two ships to perish in the green abyss
With all their numbers ; this her sov'reign sees,
Exclaiming loud, my women fight like men,
The men like women. Fruitless yet her skill, 275
Her courage vain ; Themistocles was there ;
Cilicians, Cyprians shunn'd his tow'ring flag
On Ariabignes' mast. The efforts joint
Of gallant Trœzen and Ægina broke
Th' Ægyptian line, whose chief-commanding deck
Presents a warrior to Cleander's eye, 281
A warrior bright in gold, for valour more
Conspicuous still than radiancy of arms.
Cleander him affails ; now front to front,
Each on his grappled gunnel firm maintains. 285
A fight still dubious, when their pointed beaks

Auxiliar Æschylus and Cimon strike
 Deep in the hostile ship, whose found'ring weight,
 Swift from her grapples loosen'd by the shock,
 Th' affrighted master on Pfyttalia drives 290
 A prey to Medon. Then th' Ægyptians fly,
 Phœnicians, fam'd on oriental waves,
 Resign the day. Myronides in chace,
 Xanthippus, Cimon, bold Aminias gor'd
 The shatter'd planks ; the undefended decks 295
 Ran purple. Boist'rous hurricanes, which sweep
 In blasts unknown to European climes
 The western world remote, had nature call'd
 Their furies hither, so with wrecks and dead
 Had strewn the floods, disfigur'd thus the strands.

Behold Cleander from achievements high 301
 Bears down with all Trœzene's conq'ring line
 On Artemisia: yet she stops awhile,
 In pious care to save the floating corse

Of

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 155

Of Ariabignes ; this perform'd, retreats ; 305

With her last effort whelming, as she steer'd,

One Grecian more beneath devouring waves,

Retreats illustrious. So in trails of light

To night's embrace departs the golden sun,

Still in remembrance shining ; none believe 310

His rays impair'd, none doubt his rife again

In wonted splendour to emblaze the sky.

Laconian Eurybiades engag'd

Secure of conquest ; his division held

The eastern streights, where loose Pamphylians

spread 315

A timid canvass, Hellespontine Greeks,

Ionians, Dorians, and Æolians rear'd

Unwilling standards. A Phoenician crew,

Cast on the strand, approach th' imperial throne,

Accusing these of treachery. By chance 320

A bold Ionian, active in the fight,

H 6

To

To Xerxes true, that moment in his ken
Bears down an Attic ship.—Aloud the king:

Scribes, write the name of that Ionic chief,
His town, his lineage. Guards, surround these slaves,
Who, fugitive themselves, traduce the brave; 326
Cut off their heads: the order is perform'd.
A favour'd lord, expressing in his look
A sign of pity, to partake their doom
The tyrant wild commands. Argestes' heart 330
Admits a secret joy at Persia's foil;
He trusts that, blind by fear, th' uncertain prince
To him his wonted favour would restore,
Would crush Mardonius, author of the war,
Beneath his royal vengeance; or that chief, 335
By adverse fate oppress'd, his sway resign.
But as the winds or thunders never shook
Deep-rooted Ætna, nor the pregnant clouds
Discharg'd a flood extinguishing his fires,

Which

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 157.

Which inexhausted boil the furning mass 340

Of fuming sulphur; so this grim event

Shook not Mardonius, in whose bosom glow'd

His courage still unquench'd, despising chance

With all her band of evils. In himself

Collected, on calamity he founds 345

A new, heroic structure in his mind,

A plan of glory forms to conquer Greece

By his own prowess, or by death atone

For his unprosperous counsels. Xerxes now,

Amid the wrecks and slaughter in his sight, 350

Distracted vents his disappointed pride:

Have I not sever'd from the side of Thrace

Mount Athos? bridg'd the Hellespont? Go, fill

Yon sea; construct a causeway broad and firm;

As o'er a plain my army shall advance 355

To overwhelm th' Athenians in their isle.

He

He rises; back to Athens he repairs.
 Sequester'd, languid, him Mardonius finds,
 Deliv'ring bold this soldierly address:

Be not discourag'd, fov'reign of the world! 360
 Not oars, not sails and timber, can decide
 Thy enterprize sublime. In shifting strife,
 By winds and billows govern'd, may contend
 The sons of traffic; on the solid plain
 The gen'rous steed and foldier; they alone 365
 Thy glory must establish, where no swell
 Of fickle floods, nor breath of casual gales,
 Assist the skilful coward, and controul,
 By nature's wanton but resistless might,
 The brave man's arm. Unaided by her hand, 370
 Not one of these light mariners will face
 Thy regal presence at the Isthmian fence
 To that small part of yet unconquer'd Greece
 The land of Pelops. Seek the Spartans there;
 There

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 159

There let the slain Leonidas revive 375

With all his warriors whom thy pow'r destroy'd;

A second time their gen'rous blood shall dye

The sword of Asia. Sons of those who tore

Th' Assyrian, Lydian scepters from their kings,

Thy Medes and Persians, whose triumphant arms

From distant shores of Hellespont have tam'd 381

Such martial nations, have thy trophies rais'd

In Athens, bold aggressor; they shall plant

Before thy sight, on fam'd Eurota's shore,

Th' imperial standard, and repair the shame 385

Of that uncertain flutt'ring naval flag,

The sport of winds. The monarch's look betray'd

That to expose his person was the least

Of his resolves. Mardonius pierc'd his thoughts,

And thus in manly policy pursued: 390

If Susa, long forlorn, at length may claim

The royal presence; if the gracious thought

Of his return inspire my sov'reign's breast
 Throughout his empire to rekindle joy ;
 Let no dishonour on thy Persians fall, 395
 Thy Medes; not they accomplices in flight
 With vile Ægyptians, with Cilicians base,
 Pamphylians, Cyprians. Let not Greece deride
 A baffled effort in a gallant race
 Who under Cyrus triumph'd, whom to fame 400
 Darius led, and thou with recent wreaths,
 O conqueror of Athens ! hast adorn'd.
 Since they are blameless, though thy will decree
 Thy own return, and wisely would secure
 Superfluous millions in their native homes, 405
 Before chill winter in his barren arms
 Constrain the genial earth; yet leave behind
 But thirty myriads of selected bands
 To my command, I pledge my head that Greece
 Shall soon be Persia's vassal. Xerxes pleas'd, 410
 Concealing yet that pleasure, artful thus:

Deliberation.

Deliberation to thy counsel due
Shall be devoted; call the Carian queen.

She then was landed; through Cecropia's streets
A solemn bier she follow'd, where the corse 415
Of Ariabignes lay. Mardonius met,
And thus address'd her: Meritorious dame,
Of all the myriads whom retreat hath fav'd,
Hail! crown'd with honour! Xerxes thro' my voice
Requires thy counsel to decide on mine. 420
I add no more; thy wisdom, candour, faith
I trust; without a murmur will submit
To thy decision, but to thine alone.
My care shall tend that clay, among the dead
Perhaps the only glorious.—She departs. 425
He seeks the Magi, greeted in these words:

Receive this body, all which now remains
Of Ariabignes; let no dirge deplore

Him

Him as unhappy ; Horomazes smiles
 On such a death ; your lamentations vent 430
 On human nature, humbled and debas'd
 By cowards, traitors, who surviv'd this day,
 Ne'er to outlive their shame. Ye vet'ran bands
 Of Medes and Persians, who surround in tears
 These honour'd reliques ; warriors who subdued 435
 The banks of Nile, where Hyperanthes fought,
 And late with me through Macedon and Thrace
 Swept like a whirlwind ; change your grief to rage,
 To confidence that, unresisted still,
 You on the plain recov'ring what by sea 440
 Is lost, avenging this illustrious dead,
 From this enthrall'd metropolis of Greece
 Shall carry devastation, sword, and flames
 To Lacedæmon, now your only foe.

The native Medes and Persians at his words 445
 Are fir'd, in strength, in courage, not unlike
 Their

Their brave commander, who in scorn beheld
Th' inferior herds of nations. Now the sun
Glow on the ocean. To his tent retires
Mardonius; sternly in his wounded soul 450
The late disgrace of Xerxes he revolves,
Yet soothes his anguish by enliv'ning hope
Of glory. Thus the tawny king of beasts
Who o'er Numidian wastes hath lost a day
In fruitless chace, of wonted food depriv'd, 455
Growls in his den; but meditates a range,
Enlarg'd and ceaseless, through unbounded woods,
To glut his empty maw. Her charge perform'd,
Before him sudden Artemisia stands.
As Cynthia steps unveil'd from sable clouds 460
On some benighted traveller, who beats
A path untried, but persevering firm
With undiminish'd vigour, well deserves
Her succ'ring light,—the queen in cheering smiles
Accosts the hero: I have seen the king, 465
Have

Have heard thy counsel, have approv'd, confirm'd.

Thy spirit, son of Gobryas, I applaud.

Thou, not discourag'd by our foul defeat,

From this unwieldy multitude the brave

Wouldst separate, and boldly at their head 470

Thy life adventure. Xerxes may assume

A doubtful aspect. Counsel given by thee,

By me approv'd, Argestes may oppose

With all his malice. Only thou suppress

The fiery sparks which animate thy blood; 475

In patience wait; thy dictates will prevail,

Our common vengeance too that traitor feel,

Whom I saw lurking near the king's retreat.

Farewel.—She leaves him happy in her voice

Of approbation, happier in her eye, 480

Which spoke for his prosperity a wish;

That eye, enlight'ning her majestic face

With added lustre; from his grateful sense

Of her transcendent talents thus applied

To

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 165

To his behoof. His manly bosom feels, 485

Beyond a veneration of her worth,

Beyond a friendship to her friendship due,

Desire of her society in war,

Perhaps in peace. Participated thoughts

With her, united counsels, he esteems 490

A gain to both. His high-aspiring soul

Enjoys the thought, nor entertains a shade

Of jealousy or envy at her fame.

He ruminates : Observing her advice,

I shall succeed. Then starting—Earth and heaven!

Where is Masiftius? Oh ungen'rous heart! 496

Which on the scent of its ambitious chace

Forgot that best of counsellors and guides,

Friend of my infant, youthful, manly age!

If he be lost!—Oh ominous the thought! 500

Masiftius lost!—My fortune, hopes, and joys,

My virtues are no more!—He rushes wild

Abroad;

Abroad; commands a gen'ral search; himself
Down to the port precipitates his course.

The son of Gobryas and the Carian queen 505
Were thus remov'd. Argestes in that hour
Obtain'd access to Xerxes. Cold with fear,
By fortune tam'd, tormented still by pride,
Th' uncertain king to him their counsel told;
When thus Argestes, feigning wonder, spake : 510

Dost thou appoint Mardonius king in Greece?
O liberal prince! what servant in thy train
Would not confront all danger to possess
An empire, which the Hellespont alone
Will bound? Already Macedonia's lord, 515
Young Alexander, all the Thracian chiefs,
Like humble vassals to Mardonius bend.
Why should the king himself not conquer Greece,
Now more than half reduc'd? Complete the work
Appointed;

Book VI. THE ATHENAID. 167

Appointed; choak the Salaminian floods; 520

O'erwhelm th' Athenians in their isle, and reign

Thyself supreme. The monarch starts, and wild

In look, commands Argestes to pursue

Th' impracticable toil with all the host;

Then, stretch'd along, in vain solicits rest.

End of the Sixth Book.

T H E

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the SEVENTH.

MEANTIME while Venus from her Colian
dome,

Which o'er Phaleron cast a holy shade,

Beheld the shatter'd fleet of Xerxes driv'n

To refuge there precarious; from pursuit

Recall'd, the Greeks, observant of their laws, 5

Applied their pious labour to collect

Their floating dead, and send with honours due

Such glorious manes to the blest abodes.

With artful assiduity remain'd

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 169

Themistocles presiding, so to court 10

Religion's favour. From the solemn toil,

Accomplish'd now, to Salaminian strands

He veers; the slain are landed; then his deck

Himself forsakes. As Neptune, when the winds,

His ministers of anger to o'erwhelm 15

The pride of daring mortals, have fulfill'd

His stern behests, and shook the vast profound,

At length composing his afflicted reign,

Serene from fated vengeance seeks the arms

Of Amphitrite, watching his return 20

With soft impatience in her placid grot

Amidst encircling Nereids; so the chief

To his Timothea in triumphant pace

Advances. She that day had never left

The beach; surrounded by Athenian fair, 25

She rushes forward to his wish'd embrace.

He stops; defil'd by slaughter, robs his heart

Of such delights, and elegantly thus:

I

O all-

O all-surpassing woman, do not dye
 That lovely bosom in Barbarian gore; 30
 The blood of Ariabignes, not my own,
 Encrusts thy husband's cuirass. She replies:

Since not thy own, but hostile crimson stains
 Thy manly chest, Timothea will partake
 The honourable dye. O man divine! 35
 Thus for the public with a public kiss
 Thee I salute, thee saviour of all Greece,
 Thee scourge of Asia; thus will ev'ry wife
 Her husband; sisters, daughters thus infold
 Their brothers, fires; their tender hands like mine,
 Like mine their panting breasts, in transport bear 41
 These glorious marks of victory. Behold
 Those damsels pure, whose maidenly reserve
 Forbids such rapture; they in smiles, in tears
 Of gratitude and gladness, on the heads 45
 Of gallant youths triumphal garlands place.

Laodice

Laodice is nigh; she quits th' embrace
Of her Aminias, and accosts the chief:

Think'st thou, O son of Neocles, the dames
Of Athens shrink to see Barbarian blood, 50
Who would have spilt their own, had fortune frown'd;
Had you, our slaughter'd husbands, left your wives
No other choice than servitude or death?

Fair dame, united to the bravest chief,
In smiles he answers, fortune more benign 55
Preserv'd those husbands for the happiest lot,
Society with you. In holy brine
Of Neptune's flood permit them now to lave,
That love in bridal decency may greet
Athenian wives. Ye men of Athens, vote 60
That ev'ry youth and ev'ry maid betroth'd
To-night be wedded. This the gen'ral voice
Confirms a law. His winning words dispers'd

Th' obedient fair; each warrior in the deep
 Immers'd his limbs, while Phœbe's argent wheels
 Their track pursuing through unclouded skies, 66
 Diffuse around serenity and light.

To his Timothea's mansion soon repair'd
 Themistocles; Sicinus there he found,
 Who earnest thus address'd him: Thrice I hail 70
 My lord victorious; from thy servant's lips
 Now hear a tale to melt the stoniest hearts
 Of all but Euphrantides, yet with joy
 Reward compassion—To the sable grove,
 Where yew and cypress veil'd the hoary walls 75
 Of homicidal Bacchus, swift I led
 My choice companions; to the feer I told
 Thy pleasure; he indignant heard, and forc'd
 The victims forward to the fane abhorr'd.
 I follow'd careful, still in patient hope 80
 That he, though slow, would uncompell'd submit

To

To thy commanding will ; we enter'd all ;
Sandauce there at length her silence broke,
Whom from her infants none so fell to part.

O house of great Darius ! where will end 85
Thy woes ? How many of thy sons are fall'n !
Sad Ariana, sacrifice to love !
Thou sleep'st ; thy wretched sister lives to see
Her children butcher'd—On the pavement damp
She threw her limbs, she clasp'd her lovely babes ;
They shudd'ring view Sandauce in distress ; 91
Too young to know their danger, they bewail
Their mother, not themselves. The captive youth,
Still sedulous and tender, from the spot,
Where as in shackles of despair she lay, 95
Essay'd in vain to raise her. Now the seer,
Who in my look determination saw,
Approach'd the loathsome idol, foul by age,
In fell presumption utt'ring thus his wrath :

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These victims, Bacchus, did my voice devote 100
To thy neglected altar; of thy spoil
Themistocles defrauds thee; on his head
Let fall thy vengeance, not on mine, stern god!

This heard, the willing captives I remov'd
From that grim seat of terror to these walls 105
Of hospitality. Sicinus clos'd,
When Aristides enter'd. Hail, he said,
Well hast thou done, Themistocles! behold
Me come attendant on illustrious dead,
Whom on Psyttalia cast I bring to share 110
The public funeral honours.—I salute
Thee too, the son of Neocles returns;
Our noble strife to serve the public best
We both have well commenc'd. Prepare thee now
To give thy counsel on my new device 115
For better service still. Our climate holds
All Asia now, her princes, wealth, and arms;
I can

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 175

I can detain her, till consuming time
By famine, sword and pestilence, exhaust 119
Her strength, and cover Greece with Persian graves.

Too high thy ardour mounts, replies the sage;
Forbear to think of strength'ning such a pow'r
By desperation. To the feeble brute
Necessity gives courage. Such a host
Of men and steeds innum'rous on our fields, 125
By nature's stimulating wants compell'd
To fight for life, might blast our budding hopes.
Ah! rather some new stratagem devise
To send the Persians back; let famine, want,
Let pestilence pursue their tedious flight, 130
Depriv'd of succour from their vanquish'd fleet,
Which do thou chase and bury in the waves.
Farewell! my post demands me. Since their foil,
I have observ'd the enemies employ'd
In wild attempts to fill the streight profound 135
Between Psyttalia and th' Athenian shore.

He gone, these thoughts Themistocles revolves :
 I will adopt his counsel, safe for Greece,
 Nor less for me ; his banishment prolong'd
 Will discontent the people, and repeal'd 140
 Place him commander in th' Athenian camp
 To rival me. Discouraging the war
 By land, confining to the sea our strength,
 I shall secure pre-eminence. From thought
 To action turn'd, Sicinus he bespake : 145

Before my presence all the captives bring.
 As Bacchus, not Devourer, in a smile
 Of heav'nly sweetness, proffer'd soft relief
 To Ariadne, when forlorn she sat,
 Her fate deploring on the Naxian rock ; 150
 So gracious, so consoling were the looks
 Themistocles assum'd, in soothing phrase
 Accosting thus Sandauce : Thou shalt prove,
 So shall thy royal house, afflicted fair !

A cordial

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 177

A cordial friend in me. Sicinus, haste ; 155

Equip the bark which eastern colours dress,
That, ere the moon forsake her lucid path,
Thou mayst transport this princess to the king,
Her infant train, and this ingenuous youth,
With my best greetings. Say, the Athenian chief,
Themistocles, these pledges of his truth 161

And friendship sends ; them rescued I restore,
Him next will save. His Hellespontine bridge
The Greeks vindictive menace to destroy,
An enterprize of horror ; this my pow'r, 165
My dictates singly can and shall impede,
Till he in safety hath regain'd his throne.

Sandauce answers : O thou gen'rous Greek,
To thee, to thine, may fortune ne'er be cold.
But I, partaker of imperial pomp, 170
In ease, in safety nurtur'd, who have deem'd
My state above the sorrows which torment

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Inferior mortals, when my soul reflects
On this new lesson by misfortune taught,
Reflects how lately on a field of blood, 175
Young as I am, I saw my husband fall,
My children doom'd to sacrifice, myself
To endless bondage, had not heav'n achiev'd
This marvel of compassion in a foe,
I, (O forgive me!) I suspect the lot 180
Of all, ev'n thine. O prosp'rous, godlike man,
May Horomazes from thy head avert
Vicissitudes like mine! may envious fate
Ne'er bring Sandauce's gratitude to proof!
Thou never want the pity thou hast shewn! 185

She ceas'd; she wept. When Artamanes spake:
Her debt Sandauce can discharge alone
By grateful tears; but I can promise more.
In Persian thraldom lies a beauteous Greek,
Nam'd Amarantha, Delphian Timon's child; 190
For

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 179

For that bright maid's redemption I am pledg'd
To her afflicted sire. Thy goodness shower'd
On this excelling princess, shall augment
My zeal the obligation to repay
By Amarantha's freedom ; till that hour 195
Of retribution to thy virtues comes,
We will proclaim them ; nations shall admire
Themistocles, and ev'ry heart abhor
Inhuman Euphrantides. Now return'd
Sicinus ; him they follow'd. On her breast 200
The lovely mother hush'd her female babe ;
But cold with horror at remembrance deep
Of her unmatched calamities that day,
She feebly falter'd o'er the sandy beach ;
While Artamanes led in either hand 205
The tripping boys. Themistocles remain'd
In these reflections, flowing from this proof
Of fortune's changes : Few in Athens long
Sustain their greatness—but to muse on ills

Before they come, both time and thought I waste ;
 Content at present that esteem procur'd, 211
 By this fair Persian, in her brother's court,
 May prove a gain. Timothea now approach'd;
 His hand affectionate she pres'd and spake :

How sudden thou my hospitable cares 215
 Of their endearing object hast depriv'd !
 In woe how graceful is that eastern dame !
 How young a mother ! On a widow'd bed
 How early cast by fortune ! Thou hast sent
 Sicinus with her ; ever-watchful man, 220
 Some new contrivance thou dost bring to birth ;
 Thou smil'st in silence ; listen then to me.
 Since Aristides on this isle hath shewn
 That face rever'd, when banish'd, his recal
 The men of Athens, nay the women wish. 225
 This by Aminias to th' assembled tribes,
 Laodice informs me, will be mov'd ;

In

In this expect Myronides the brave,
Xanthippus, Cimon, Æschylus will join.—
So will thy husband, interpos'd the chief; 230
I will forestall them, not to others leave
Such merit with our people.—She rejoin'd:

All will applaud thee. Now, my anxious lord,
The second watch its measure hath consum'd;
The moon descends, the sprightly birds are still;
Dead sleep hath laid the soldier on his shield; 236
The active sailor slumbers; all forget
The hardships, rage, and tumult of the day;
All but thyself reposing. Shall that mind
Continue ranging o'er the field of thought, 240
In pregnancy exhaustless, till the lark
Salute the day-spring with his early song?
Till thou unresting, unrefresh'd, resume
The statesman's troubles, and the soldier's toils?
Be counsell'd; oft the thunder-bearing god 245
To Juno listens; thou my voice obey.

He

He hears; serene conducts her to repose.
 As Jove on Ida, by Saturnia charm'd,
 Confess'd a rapture never felt before,
 While lucid dew of odours from a cloud 250
 Of gold distill'd around him; from the turf
 Beneath his feet while hyacinths upsprung,
 The unctuous lotos, and the crocus gay,
 To grace his secret tabernacle there
 Of love celestial; so the Attic chief 255
 To his Timothea, in her chamber pure,
 With bridal honours deck'd, perfum'd with flow'rs,
 Whate'er the meads of Salamis supplied,
 His tender flame in winning language breath'd:

Whoe'er had whisper'd on our nuptial day 260
 That I should view thee, in a time remote
 From that sweet æra, with superior joy,
 I should have held him ignorant of love.
 What is the cause, Timothea, that I feel

My

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 183

My bosom pierc'd by transport yet unknown? 265

That eastern fair, deliver'd from distress,

Appearing then the fairest of her sex,

Thou dost exceed. Timothea smiling spake :

O thou artificer of sweetest wiles,

Wouldst thou seduce me into vain belief, 270

That I exceed Sandauce's youthful charms?

But wouldst thou know, my husband (solemn here

She modulates her accents), wouldst thou know

Why thou survey'st me with uncommon joy?

It is the conscience of a noble deed, 275

Of gather'd trophies never match'd before,

Creates this change. The perils of this day

Were new to Athens, to thy race, and me ;

Thy sword hath rescued all, increas'd thy fame,

Thy heart exalted ; with increas'd delight, 280

Thro' that bright medium of a happy mind,

Thou look'st on ev'ry object—sure on me

Not

Not less than others. Artless were these words,
By nature prompted, nature's noblest fire.

They ceas'd discourse. Her loftiness of mind, 285
His valour, talents, policy, to love
Subside. Perhaps the first of human pairs,
Who in the blest'd Assyrian garden met,
Were not more happy in their first embrace,
Than fair Timothea and her conqu'ring lord! 290

A pleasing stillness on the water sleeps ;
The land is hush'd ; from either host proceeds
No sound, no murmur. With his precious charge
Embark'd, Sicinus gently steers along ;
The dip of oars in unison awake 295
Without alarming silence ; while the moon,
From her descending, horizontal car,
Shoots lambent silver on the humid blades
Which cleave the curling flood. On carpets soft
Sandauce's

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 185

Sandauce's babes devoid of sorrow lie, 300
In sweet oblivious innocence compos'd
To smiling slumber. But the mother's breast
Admits no consolation ; when they skim
Pfyttalia's frith, at memory severe
Of that disastrous isle, she sudden sinks 305
A lifeless image in the watchful arms
Of Artamanes, who had studied well
Her sorrows, knew each tender thought and care,
Humanity his tutor. Swift he calls
Sicinus : Friendly pilot, stay thy course ; 310
We must not leave Autarctus in his gore
Behind, lest grief incurable reside
In this fair breast, perhaps eternal shade
In these extinguish'd eyes. Sicinus feels
A sympathizing pain, of Persian stock 315
Himself a branch, in Attic soil matur'd ;
He stops the bark and lands. The Asian tents
Were still erect, whence Aristides comes

In

In steel accoutred, to salute the dawn,
 Then breaking. Him Sicinus humbly greets, 320
 Requests, obtains the body, which convey'd
 On board he careful on the deck bespreads
 With canvass new. Impell'd by active strokes
 Of oars resum'd, the bounding vessel gains
 Phaleron's haven. Artemisia there, 325
 Whose vigilance, augmented by defeat,
 Had kenn'd the bark while distant, now arrests
 Her further progress; but no sooner hears
 The sad intelligence Sicinus gives,
 Than swift descending where Sandauce lay, 330
 That mourning fair in friendly strains accosts :

O lift thy head, thou daughter of a king !
 Our sov'reign's sister, sister to the man
 My soul rever'd, to Hyperanthes good,
 The flow'r of Asia's princes ! In thy woes 335
 I sharing cordial, cordially rejoice

In

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 187

In thy redemption. Leave this doleful keel ;
Think of thy duty to approach the king ;
Thy other cares entrust to me.—She said ;
They row to shore. To Xerxes, then retir'd, 340
The queen conducts Sandauce and her train.
The princess thus to him amaz'd began :

A widow'd sister, late a wretched slave,
With these three orphans just redeem'd from death,
Sandauce greets her brother ; but her tongue 345
Would be disloyal to obtrude her tale,
Her tedious tale of sorrows on his ear.
The preservation of her king demands
His first attention ; that attention grant
To him who comes deputed by a Greek, 350
Thy friend, my guardian, saviour of those babes ;
Oh listen ! thy salvation from his lips
Receive. Fast bound by terror was the mouth
Of Xerxes.—Then Sicinus : He who ranks

Among

Among the Greeks superior in command, 355
 In talents, prudence, policy, and arms,
 Themistocles, these pledges of his truth
 And friendship sends; them rescued he restores;
 Thee next will save. Thy Hellepontine bridge
 The Greeks vindictive menace to destroy; 360
 An enterprize of horror, which his pow'r,
 His dictates singly can and will impede,
 Till thou in safety hast regain'd thy throne.

All from his presence straight the king commands,
 Save Artemisia; her in broken tones 365
 Addresses: Queen of Caria, singly wise
 Among my council, pity, not upbraid
 Thy master, suff'ring by his rash neglect
 Of thy sage voice unutterable pangs.

He paus'd in torture. Prudent, she replied: 370
 Without a cause the lord of nations droops;
 Mardonius

Mardonius well hath counsel'd thy retreat,
Who undertakes to finish, what his sword
Hath well begun thro' Macedon and Thrace,
This mighty war. Thy servant may succeed; 375
In whose behalf? His master's: Thou wilt reap
His fruits of glory; if Mardonius fail,
He the disgrace. Thy march commence by dawn;
Appoint the fleet's departure swift this night,
To guard with force collected and repair'd 380
The Hellespontine bridge; with grace accept
The proffer'd service of th' Athenian chief;
Load his returning messenger with gifts
Of royal price, and, O my gracious lord!
Fraternal kindness on Sandauce show'r. 385
Her gallant lord hath perish'd in thy cause,
Herself been menac'd by a barb'rous priest
To see her children sacrific'd; a doom
Themistocles withstood, and set them free.

190 THE ATHENAID. Book VII.

As when a timid child perceives a cloud 390
Obscure the sky, and hears the thunder's peal,
He weeps, he trembles, but the cloud dispers'd,
The clamour ceasing, and the sun restor'd,
His wonted sport resumes, forgetting fear;
So chang'd the monarch. Artemisia, go, 395
He said; the satraps instantly convene;
Th' Athenian messenger, Argestes' son,
Again before us with Sandauce call;
Ne'er will I deviate from thy counsels more.

First to Sicinus ent'ring he began: 400
Say to thy senter, I accept well pleas'd
His service pass'd and proffers; thou return;
To him ten golden talents thou shalt bear.
Thee from the depths of sorrow shall the king,
Sandauce, raise; demand a present boon; 405
Thou canst not ask what Xerxes will refuse.

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 191.

By gratitude surmounting grief inspir'd,
Mov'd to retaliate kindness in the shape
Herself had prov'd, the gen'rous suppliant thus :

In Persian thraldom is a Grecian maid 410
Of Delphian lineage, Amarantha nam'd ;
Her I demand of Xerxes, that my hand
A captive daughter to a tender sire
May render back ; from bondage free his head,
Now in Nicæa, and thus far my debt 415
Of gratitude discharge. In transport here,
Admiring such perfection of the heart,
Spake Artamanes : Ever live the king !
There is a captive whom the princess nam'd—

Fly thou in search of this requested slave, 420
Son of Argestes, interrupts the king ;
Let none withhold her from Sandauce's pow'r.
The female train before the cumb'rous host

Shall

Shall move by dawn for Theffaly, there join
 The rest of Afia's dames behind us left 425
 On our late march; the guard, ten thousand horfe,
 Thou, Artamanes, fhalt command.—He faid;
 They all retir'd. A penfive grief o'ercafts
 Sandauce, moving with her children flow,
 By flaves attended, to the vacant tent 430
 Autarctus late poffefs'd. Argeftes' fon
 Obferves her anguish, penetrates her thoughts,
 In guarded words then proffers this relief:

O faireft princefs, whose external form
 But half difplays thy excellence of mind, 435
 Wilt thou forgive thy fervant, if he feels
 With thee a prefent sorrow, which the heart
 Fobids the tongue to name? Sandauce, truft
 My pious fervice, and thofe thoughts compofe.

She, weeping, looks affent; he fpeeds away, 440
 But meets the body of Autarctus borne

By

Book VII. THE ATHENAID. 193

By Artemisia's soldiers. She at first,
With care conceal'd, had order'd from the bark
His precious reliques ; these the noble youth
With equal care delivers to that skill, 445
Which with Sabæan gums, and scented growths
Of bless'd Arabia, purifies the clay
Depriv'd of life, and Time's consuming breath
Repels. A regal car he next provides,
In full apparel of funereal pomp. 450

End of the Seventh Book.

T H E

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the EIGHTH.

THE satraps now and leaders, at the call
Of Artemisia, were collected round
Their monarch. Seated on his throne, he spake :

Ye princes, satraps, heed our fix'd decree.
Our native Asia wants her king; by morn 5
To Susa we return, but leave behind
In Greece Mardonius, and a chosen host
Of thirty myriads. With command supreme,
With our imperial equipage and state,

Him

Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 195

Him we invest ; to him submission pay 10
As to our presence. Artemisia, bear
Our sov'reign pleasure to the naval chiefs,
That all abandon, e'er the dawn return,
Phaleron's port, and hoist their sails to guard
The Hellespont. But thou, entrusted queen, 15
Thy own tried squadron to Spercheos bring ;
Whence thou must waft to Ephesus a charge
Of high import, the children of thy king.

He ceas'd. A stranger, cas'd in steel, approach'd,
In look ferocious, limbs and shape robust, 20
Of stature huge ; the satraps look'd amaz'd,
As were th' immortals, when, th' Olympian steep
Ascending, grim Briareus first produc'd
His mountain-bulk, and spread his hundred hands,
Auxiliary to Jove. The warrior stood, 25
Unbending, far as nature would permit,
His rugged brow ; when, crouching to the king,

O Xerxes, live for ever, he began :

I am Eubœan Demonax, the prince

Of Oreus late, who earth and water sent, 30

Acknowledging thy empire ; from my throne

By curs'd Themistocles expell'd, I join'd

Thy shelt'ring fleet ; at Salamis I fought.

An aid of troops and treasure can replace

Me thy true vassal, who will soon reduce 35

The granary of Athens to thy sway,

Eubœa, fertile, populous, and rich.

The monarch thus : Mardonius, thou hast heard ;

Begin to use thy plenitude of pow'r ;

Reject or favour at thy will this pray'r. 40

Mardonius then : My sov'reign liege, the truth

Flows from his lips ; twelve thousand of thy host,

With Mindarus commanding, and of gold

A hundred talents, would be well bestow'd

On

Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 197

On this important Greek. The king assents; 45
He rises; all disperse. Mardonius now
Accosts the queen, descending to the port :

Alas! how uncontrollable the will
Of Xerxes! must thou leave me? Since the day
Of Salamis, my best belov'd of friends, 50
Mastius, whether by the waves devour'd,
Or stain, or captive, to my search is lost.
Foe to inaction, though compos'd and wife,
Of courage prone to perilous attempts,
He would embark; permitted by the king, 55
Against my warm remonstrance would partake
The naval conflict. Drooping, while I doubt
His preservation, must I further lose
Thy fellowship, auspicious, generous queen!
Yet stop, a moment listen. On the march 60
To Athens first, reposing in a cave,
I had a dream, perhaps a vision saw,

To me prefaging glory—but fuccefs
 Was wrap'd in clouded myftery. My heart
 Teems with ill-boding thoughts, yet fhall not faint ;
 At leaft impart thy wifhes ere thou fail'ft, 66
 Thy laft inftructions! Fortunate thy voice,
 Benign to me; repeat one parting ftrain!
 If I fuccefsful to thy prefence bring
 The palms of conqueft, fay, accomplifh'd queen, 70
 Thou wilt accept them with a gracious hand;
 If unfuccefsful I the forfeit pay
 Of this frail being, as becomes the brave,
 Say, thou wilt praife Mardonius. Sage and grave
 She answers: Firft, despair not to regain 75
 The good Mafiftius; at the worft endure,
 That common lot, the death of deareft friends,
 With patience; long thy courage I have prais'd,
 Now moderate the flame againft a foe
 Not lefs discreet, than disciplin'd and bold; 80
 Nor let the gloom of fuperftition awe

Thy

Thy noble ardour. On the sharpest sword,
The strongest arm, on prudence, martial skill,
Not dreams and visions, looks the goddess Fame.

If Artemisia's wishes can avail, 85

Be sure to prosper, prosp'ring here to soar
Above the flight of Cyrus.—She departs.

Behind her, like the sinking globe of day,
She leaves a trail of radiance on his soul ;

But, to protect him from returning shade, 90

Her light should ne'er forsake him, never set.

O'er gen'rous cares not thus Argestes broods ;

Within his tent he meditates conceal'd ;

By struggling pride tormented, thus he strives

To footh her pangs : I see my pow'r eclips'd ; 95

Mardonius governs. Pow'r, thou fleeting gleam,

Thee I possess no longer ; why regret,

When Amarantha's beauty can exchange

Thy thorns for lilies? To my own domain

K 4

I will

I will transport her; Sipylus hath flow'rs 100
 To drop perfumes in Amarantha's walk;
 Pactolus, Hermus, my subjected streams,
 Shall furnish gold; her gems shall India send
 To deck that form, and I in pleasure's folds
 Forget ambition, stranger to the peace 105
 Which honour yields. Libidinous in thought,
 The statesman thus would cheat his baffled pride;
 Accurs'd of men! who borrow'd from one vice
 His med'cine for another (both deform
 His ravag'd bosom in alternate strife) 110
 Flagitious parent! rivalling in love
 His eldest born! prepost'rous passion, big
 With horror! while the youngest, lov'd by all,
 By Xerxes favour'd, to Mardonius dear,
 He held in detestation for his worth, 115
 Nor knew the comfort of a virtuous child.

With diff'rent thoughts that sleepless youth employ'd
 The night, serenely happy in the charge

Humanity



Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 201

Humanity impos'd. Before the dawn
His band is arm'd, Sandauce in her car, 120
Among innumerable fair the chief
In state and woe. Tears trickle at the sight
Of great Autarctus in his fun'ral pomp
Down ev'ry cheek; a solemn sadness reigns;
So oft Aurora, fable-suited, leads 125
A train of clouds, dissolving as they pass
In silent show'rs. Through Attica's waste fields,
Through half Bœotia, ere his ev'ning clos'd,
The second sun conducts them to the gates
Of antient Thebes. They enter; they ascend 130
The citadel; they find commanding there,
New from the ruins of unpeopled towns,
Fierce Mithridates. With a kind embrace,
To him the gentle Artamanes thus:

Hail! brother: twice a captive since we last
At Delphi parted, I would gladly know 136
K 5 Thy

Thy fortune. Tell me, where that beauteous maid,
Whom thou didst carry from the Delphian walls?

The grim Barbarian spoiler, quick reply'd:
Curs'd be her name, her beauty, which could melt
A heart like mine! Accurs'd my father's lust, 141
Which seiz'd my captive! Guarded by a troop
Of jealous eunuchs, and attendants arm'd,
Her in this citadel he still detains.

If I resign her, may Plataea's tow'rs, 145
May Thespia's hostile walls by me o'erthrown,
A second time to brave me rise from dust.

Oh! unbecoming strife, the brother cry'd,
Which startles nature! Thanks to Heav'n, the king
Hath now decided Amarantha's fate; 150
Her to his royal sister he hath giv'n,
A promis'd boon. Sandauce, by the foe
Restor'd to freedom, will requite that grace,
By rend'ring up this damsel to her fire,

Himself

Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 203

Himself a pris'ner in Nicæa's fort, 155

Then both release from bondage. Further know,

In Thebes to morrow Xerxes will appear

On his retreat to Susa. I conduct

This train of eastern dames. By rising dawn

To her protection will the princess take 160

The Delphian maiden, then proceed. These words

Sting Mithridates; an atrocious deed

He meditates, but artful thus conceals:

Not to my father, to the king I yield.

This said, they parted. Mithridates held 165

The town; his brother's squadrons lay encamp'd

Without the walls. The citadel contain'd

A fane of Juno, there Sandauce rests.

To Ædipus devoted was a dome,

Which Artamanes enter'd, while his heart 170

Ran cold and shudder'd at a brother fell,

And treach'rous fire, competitors in love;

K 6

Abominable

Abominable strife! His eyes he cast
 O'er all the structure, lighted by the gleams
 Of tapers blue attending; he surveys, 175
 Insculptur'd round, the horrors which befel
 The house of Laius; there th' ill-fated son
 His father slays; incestuous there ascends
 His mother's chamber; daughters he begets,
 His sisters, sons his brothers; blameless he, 180
 A man of virtues by despair oppress'd,
 Rends forth his eyeballs, on the pavement dash'd.
 There sev'n dire captains, leagu'd by horrid oaths
 Which startled Heav'n, are figur'd; down to Hell
 Amphiaraus on his martial car, 185
 Through earth's dividing entrails, there descends;
 Here Capaneus, blaspheming Jove, expires
 Amid vindictive lightnings; mangled there,
 Eteocles and Polynices fall,
 Each other's victim to fraternal hate. 190
 Full of these hideous images the youth

Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 205

Reclines disturb'd, unvisited by sleep,
Till awful midnight; broken slumber, adds
To his disquiet. In a thrilling dream
The eyeless ghost of *Ædipus* ascends; 195
The vacant sockets, where the orbs of sight
Once beam'd, are bleeding fresh; a Stygian pall
Infolds the wither'd, pale, sepulchral form;
The arms are stretch'd abroad: Forever Thebes
Must thou to horror be the guilty stage! 200
It said, and vanish'd. By the phantom wak'd,
Or by a sudden clash of mingling swords,
With shrieks and tumult, *Artamanes* rose,
Unsheath'd his sabre, grip'd his target fast,
And issued swift. Before his startled eyes 205
A beauteous woman, of majestic form,
In garb disorder'd, and with ringlets fall'n,
Sustains aloft a poinard newly drawn
From *Mithridates'* heart, who, sinking, breathes
His last beneath her feet. So *Phœbe* pierc'd 210
Orion;

Orion; so the groaning earth receiv'd
 His giant bulk, which insolently dar'd
 Attempt that child immaculate of Jove
 With violence of love. Now spake the fair :

If to defend her chastity and fame 215
 Becomes a woman, self approv'd at least
 I stand, great Timon's daughter, from a line
 Heroic sprung, in holy Delphi born;
 If to have slain a ruffian be a crime
 Among the Persians, give me instant death, 220
 Such as becomes my dignity and sex.

Her words, her looks, impress'd on ev'ry heart
 Amaze, and tam'd the savages combin'd
 With Mithridates in his impious act.
 So when, majestic on the choral scene, 225
 Her tragic pomp Melpomene displays,
 In awe profound she hushes rudest minds,

While terror humbles tyrants, Gather'd round
Were numbers now; a thousand torches blaz'd;
Sandauce last, environ'd by her guard, 230
Approach'd alarm'd. A wounded eunuch stepp'd
Before the princess; I will cloath in truth
My voice, he said. Argestes to my care
Entrusted Amarantha; from that lord,
Solicitations, threat'nings, gifts she spurn'd, 235
While I admir'd: Sure virtue hath a ray
To strike the meanest eye. To-night his son
Affail'd our dwelling; with my fellow slaves,
All butcher'd, I defended long my charge,
By Mithridates from the mansion forc'd; 240
Her chastity the noble maid hath sav'd,
Her poniard stretch'd the ravisher in blood.

To Artamanes, weeping o'er the corse,
Sandauce then: To thy consoling words
I oft have listen'd, listen thou to mine; 245

Forgive

His steed he mounts, and rapidly o'ertakes
The squadrons, op'ning on Cadmean plains.

Now Amarantha lifts her grateful head,
Intent to speak ; but, heavy on the front 265
Of her protectress, heavier in her breast
Sat grief, each sense devouring, and her frame
Enfeebling ; which, too delicately wrought,
Endures not ev'n remembrance of distress
So new, so strange in her exalted state, 270
To youth untry'd by evils. She forgets
Her late benignant act, till chance directs
Her eye to Amarantha ; when her heart,
Sooth'd by the conscience of a gen'rous deed,
Her faded cheeks relumines with a smile. 275

Then spake the prudent virgin: Persian queen,
(Sure such thou art) what marvellous event
Gave thee a knowledge of my fire, his place

Of

Of residence, and my disastrous fate?

Sense of thy goodness, from my breast would chace

The memory of troubles, if alas! 281

I did not see thy countenance o'ercast.

If thou repent thee, of thy favour deem

Me undeserving, send me to abide

The punishment ordain'd by Persian laws; 285

But if thy sorrows are thy own, unmix'd

With my misfortunes, let assiduous zeal,

Let tenderest service of my grateful hand

Strive to relieve the burdens which oppress

My benefactress. In the captive's hand 290

Sandauce drops her own; in sighs replies:

O! by thy aspect of superior mold

To all I e'er beheld of regal race,

Resembling me in fortune, lend an ear;

My soul conceives a melancholy wish 295

That thou shouldst hear my story, I to thine

Alternate

Alternate listen. Mournful converse soon
Between these fairest in their native climes
Began, continued; sev'n diurnal rounds
The fun perform'd, till intercourse of grief, 300
Communicated sighs, unite their minds
In tender friendship. Diff'rent yet their lots;
On Amarantha's cheek the bloom revives;
A joyful fire, perhaps a dear betroth'd,
Her fortune promis'd. In Sandauce's train 305
A husband follow'd on his fun'ral bier;
Her fleeting hue a sickly paleness taints,
Which Artamanes with a sad'ning eye
Observes, portent of malady. Now rose
The eighth sad morn, revealing to their sight 310
Nicæa's neighb'ring gate. Sandauce then
To Artamanes: Take this virtuous maid;
To her my promise, to her father thine
Fulfill; conduct her. Amarantha dear,
From thee I part, rejoicing in thy joy; 315

Amid

Amid thy comforts in a fire's embrace,
 Or bliss more tender with a destin'd spouse,
 Forget not me. Autarchus near the tomb
 Of Ariana by these widow'd hands
 Deposited——She stops; the weaken'd pow'rs 320
 Of health relax, nor furnish sound to grief:
 Mute too is Delphi's maid. The Persian youth,
 To leave a moment in her sick'ning state
 The princess, feels a struggle, but resolves
 In rapid haste her mandate to obey. 325

Nicæa's gate he enters; Timon soon
 He finds: receive thy daughter, swift he spake;
 Receive thy freedom from the bounteous hand
 Of Xerxes' sister; but a short farewell
 My urgent cares allow; to set thee free 330
 At thy own time I hasten to enjoin
 The chief commander here. He said, and turn'd
 Precipitate away, unheard, unmark'd

By

Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 213

By Timon, who no other voice nor form
Than Amarantha's heeds. In Carian steel 335
Now Melibœus from the gymnic school,
Where he was daily exercis'd in arms,
Approach'd; to him in transport Timon spake :

Behold my daughter!—Instant from the port
Appears Aronces, who proclaims the news 340
Of Artemisia landed. She had left
Phaleron; station'd in the Malian bay,
She waits the king's arrival, not remote
Now with his army; all advance to meet
The Carian queen; when sudden clouds of dust 345
The sky envelop; loud the hollow sound
Of trampling hoofs is heard. The portal pass'd
By Artamanes fac'd the southern sun;
An entrance eastward rudely is possess'd
By Caspian horsemen, in the hairy skins 350
Of goats all horrid; round their brawny loins

From

From shaggy belts keen cimeters depend ;

Well-furnish'd quivers rattle on their backs.

Now fifty grim-fac'd savages dismount

To seize on Amarantha. Then his arm 355

New-train'd to battle Melibœus proves ;

With native strength, agility and fire,

He springs, confronts the Caspians ; from the first

He lops the ruffian hand ; by diff'rent wounds

Five more lie prostrate. As a vessel new, 360

Compact and strong, impetuous from the dock

In her first launch divides the troubled waves,

On either side recoiling, till the weight

Of reuniting waters stops her course,

And beats her lofty ribs ; so valour drives 365

The warrior on, till rallying numbers join'd,

Arrest his progress ; fearless yet he stands

A while defensive. Timon from the dead

Lifts two forsaken cimeters ; both hands

His indignation arms ; he sends to hell 370

Three

Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 215

Three miscreants gasping at his daughter's feet.
With aiding Theseus, so Pirithous heap'd
With centaurs slain the Lapithæan hall,
When in flagitious tumult they deform'd
The nuptial banquet, and his fair espous'd 375
With violation menac'd. But the eye
Of Amarantha mark'd th' unequal fight ;
Her poniard drawn, the only succour left,
She holds intrepid, resolute on death,
No second thraldom ; when th' auspicious fight 380
Of Caria's queen revives her fainting hopes.

Stern Artemisia, rapid on the call
Of vigilant Aronces, now approach'd
In awful tone the Caspians : Sheath your blades,
Ye fierce in look, not courage, or this arm 385
(Her falchion here she waves) shall hide these streets
With your vile carrion. Despicable herd
Of rebels, led by what presumptuous fiend

Dare

Dare you invade a fortrefs of your king,
 Ev'n in my prefence, he perhaps in fight? 390

They hear; they pause. Inclos'd by thick'ning
 guards,

In multitude confiding, urg'd by luft,
 Which lends a courage new, Argeftes fell,
 Inciting loud his ruffians to perfift, 394
 Strikes her indignant eye. What wrath, what hopes
 Of juft, of long-fought vengeance fwell her breaft!
 As when the mother of a lion brood,
 From wonted chace returning, fees a wolf,
 Or treach'rous tiger ftcaling towards her den,
 Who in her abfence would fe curely prey 400
 On her defencelefs whelps, her eyeballs roll
 In fire, ſhe ruſhes on th' infidious foe
 With fangs reſiſtleſs; he contends in vain,
 His cheſt ſhe rends afunder, and his heart
 Devours unfated; ſo incens'd the queen, 405

Begirt

Begirt by Carians terrible in war,
To each Barbarian terrible who saw
Their high exploits on Salaminian waves,
Rush'd on Argestes; Melibœus brave
March'd by her side a second, whom the god 410
Of arms might rank among his foremost sons.
The Caspians shrunk; by desperation bold,
The satrap spurr'd his courser on the queen,
And whirl'd a javelin shiv'ring on her shield;
She on the forehead smote the restiff horse, 415
Who, rearing, hurl'd his rider to the ground,
Then points her dreadful weapon tow'rd the breast
Of her detested foe, intent to pierce
The trait'rous heart. This invocation first
She solemn utters: Manes of the brave! 420
Whom he devoted on the Malian fields
Unpitied victims of his hate to me,
To you, my subjects, this malignant hezd
I immolate. Hence satrap, once the chief

In pow'r and state, in vice and falsehood chief, 425
 Seek Rhadamanthus; tell him, while he frowns
 On his tribunal, Themis to my hand
 Her sword resign'd to cut thy treason short.

Her vengeance levels now the mortal blow,
 When dignity restrains her. Rise, she said, 430
 Thou criminal, unworthy by this arm
 To die; preserve him, Carians, to abide
 The ignominious lot, by justice doom'd
 To common villains. Melibœus, change
 Thy name; I clasp thee Haliartus now, 435
 My brother, prov'd by gallant deeds; at least
 No evidence but virtue I require
 For nobler union than congenial birth,
 By friendship's sacred ties to call thee mine.

She scarce had finish'd, when a second troop 440
 Of horsemen through the southern portal spread

New

New terror. In their front a splendid chief,
Who wears a regal circle ; round he casts
A searching eye, impatient soon beholds
Bright Amarantha, where she stands beset 445
By Caspians, strangers to their leader's fate,
Persisting still in pertinacious strife
Against Aronces, and her manly fire ;
Then swift as sulph'rous ether, when its flame
Divides a knotted oak or cleaves a tow'r, 450
Flies on the ruffians: Do ye list, he cries,
Your hands profane against the destin'd queen
Of Macedon? a carnage wide he spreads
Beneath his trampling steed and pond'rous blade.
Dismounting victor, he unclasps his helm, 455
Her dear betroth'd to Amarantha shews
In Alexander, Macedonia's king.
Ne'er yet so comely, so endearing look'd
A lover ; rescu'd from Barbarian spoil
She meets his arms, while Timon weeps in joy.

With Melibœus, from a stage of blood, 461
 The Carian queen approach'd, while thus the king
 His fervent soul was opening: Oh! my love,
 My Amarantha! my affianc'd love!
 I feel, but cannot paint, my sorrows past, 465
 My present joys. The day, the appointed day
 To solemnize our nuptial rites was nigh,
 I left my kingdom, flew to Delphi's walls;
 Thou wast not there. What horror, when I heard
 Thou wast a captive! by what barb'rous hand 470
 None could inform me; thence from march to march
 I track'd the Persians; tidings of thy fate
 No tongue could tell; through Attica I rang'd,
 Bœotia, Phocis, Doris; Locris still
 Was left to search. Disconsolate I join'd 475
 The royal camp last ev'ning; there I heard
 Of Mithridates by thy virtue slain;
 At Thebes, of curs'd Argestes, who had held
 Thee pris'ner there; of thy departure thence

With

Book VIII. THE ATHENAID. 221

With kind Sandauce to Nicæa's fort ; 480
But further told, that base Argestes led
The Caspian horse forerunners of the host,
Alarm'd, my troop I gather'd, I pursu'd,
Am come to save thee, nor one hour withhold
The full protection of my nuptial hand. 485

Th' illustrious virgin answer'd in a sigh :
O Alexander, I am thine, thou mine
By sacred vows ; yet thou a foe to Greece !

Then Artemisia : Noble maid, I praise
That zeal for Greece, thy country ; but forbear 490
At this momentous crisis to combine
Thy preservation with a public care ;
Thou need'st protection both of rank and pow'r.
Few can resist the lustre of thy form,
Which, left unguarded thro' the lawless course 495
Of war, might light, in others less deprav'd

L 3

Than

Than foul Argestes and his barb'rous son,
New flames to burst in violence again.

She ceases; Timon ratifies her words.

A mother's office now the queen performs 500

In preparation for connubial rites;

Nor old Aronces, nor th' acknowledg'd heir

Of Lygdamis are slow. With human blood

Impure, the streets are cleans'd, the slain remov'd;

Flowers pluck'd for chaplets, nuptial torches burn,

The altars smoke with odours, sternest hearts 506

Grow mild, Bellona's furies sleep forgot,

Her fifes and clarions soften to delight

The ear of Hymen; joy concludes the day.

End of the Eighth Book.

THE

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the NINTH.

SOFT rose the morn, and still; the azure flood
 In gentle volumes, undisturb'd with tides,
 But heav'd by zephyrs, glaz'd the pebbled shore;
 When Caria's princess, visiting the beach
 With Haliartus, and her son belov'd, 5
 Her bosom thus disclos'd: O brother! friend
 In danger tried, not yet are Asia's woes
 Complete; to Greece new trophies I forbode.
 Oh! soon transported o'er these hostile waves,
 May Artemisia rest her wearied head 10

L 4

At

At length in peace, and thou, so late redeem'd,
 With her partake the blessing! Ah! thy looks
 Reject the proffer—yet some rev'ence bear
 To Artemisia, some fraternal love.

How shall I plead? will haughty Greece admit 15

Thee to her honours, thee in humblest state,
 Tho' meriting the highest, known so long?

Halicarnassus, an illustrious town,

Among her noblest citizens will rank

The son avow'd of Lygdamis. O cast 20

A kindred eye on this my orphan boy!

Who must become his guardian, who supply
 My care, should fate precipitate my doom?

Tears down the beard of Haliartus flow'd,

Afflicted, tho' determin'd. On his hand 25

Leander hung; the captivating mien

Of Melibœus had at once allur'd

The tender youth to entertain belief

In

In old Aronces, when he first proclaim'd
The swain true son of Lygdamis. These words 30
From Haliartus broke : Thy birth, thy name,
Thy virtues, queen, I rev'rence; of thy blood.
Acknowledg'd, more ennobled in thy praise,
I feel my elevation; but thy ear
Approving lend. Three suns are now elaps'd 35
Since gen'rous Medon, by a faithful mouth,
Convey'd his promise to redeem my head,
Exchang'd for splendid captives, by his arm
In fight acquir'd; I hourly watch to hail
His peaceful mast, perhaps yon distant keel 40
Contains his person. To forsake this friend,
Whose kindness blest'd my former humble state,
Friend of my childhood, youth, and ripen'd years,
Would be an act, O thou of purest fame,
To plunge thy brother in the lowest depth. 45
Of human baseness, baseness of the mind,
Thy long-lost brother, found too soon a stain.

To Lygdamis and thee. Concluding here,
 He eyes the vessel bounding to the port,
 With branches green of olive on her head, 50
 Her poop, and mast ; the Carian sailors hail
 The fair, pacific signal. On the beach
 The warrior leaps, when Haliartus cries,
 I see my patron ! with expanded arms
 Flies to embrace him. Medon stops, and speaks : 55

In splendid mail is Melibœus cas'd ?
 Are these not Persian standards flying round ?
 Art thou enroll'd an enemy to Greece ?

No, interpos'd the queen, behold him free,
 To thee, to Greece unchang'd, in arms my gift ; 60
 He is my brother, brother to the queen
 Of Caria. Medon here : Immortal pow'rs !
 Do I survey the wonder of her sex,
 That heroine of Asia, who alone,

While

Book IX. THE ATHENAID. 227

While now the fate of empire balanc'd hangs, 65
Contributes virtue to the Persian scale?
My friend to such a sister I resign.

Ah! never, never, Haliartus cried,
Shalt thou resign me; nor th' Oilean house
Will I forsake; in that belov'd abode 70
I was too happy for aspiring thoughts.
First to redeem thy Locris I devote
These arms; will perish there before thy foes,
If such my fate, if victor in thy ranks,
Hang in thy mansion my reposing shield, 75
There make my home. Yet often will I court
Thy welcome, princess, on the Carian shore
To worship still thy virtue, on thy son
Still pour the blessings of parental love.

The Carian queen subjoins: I must approve, 80
To such clear honour yield; bring Timon, call

The king; Time presses, we must all depart;
 A sacred Delphian too from bondage freed
 Thou shalt receive, O Medon. Swift the chief
 To disembark his captives gave command; 85
 Five was their number; one beyond the rest
 In stature tower'd, his armour was unspoil'd,
 Though rich in burnish'd gold, emboss'd with gems
 Of starry light; his dignity and form
 The victors rev'renc'd. Medon to the queen: 90

These Aristides, at my efforts pleas'd,
 Gave to my choice from numbers; an exchange
 For Melibœus and the Delphian priest
 These I design'd; my friends thy bounty frees;
 Take these unransom'd from a grateful hand. 95

O lib'ral man! the Carian princess here:
 Thou dost produce Masistius; virtuous lord!
 How will Mardonius in thy fight rejoice,

How

How lift his hopes ! To her Mafiftius bow'd,
To Medon fpake : O Grecian ! if a thought 100
To die thy debtor could debase my foul,
I fhould deferve till death all human woes.
Demand, obtain ; to Afia I am dear,
Lov'd by Mardonius, honour'd by the king,
I cannot ask what either would refuse 105
To him who gave me liberty and life.

Thou canft, rejoins the chief, obtain a grace
To me of precious worth, to Xerxes none ;
Nor golden ftores nor gems attract my eye ;
I have a fifter, dearer than the mines 110
Of Ind, or wealth of Sufa, who refides
A prieftefs pure, on that Oetæan ridge
Which overlooks Thermopylæ, her name
Meliffa ; there an ancient fane is plac'd,
No fplendid feat oracular, enrich'd 115
By proud donations, but a moffy pile,

Where

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Where ev'ry Grecian hath from age to age
Ador'd the muses. Lift thy hand to swear,
Thou wilt implore of Xerxes a decree,
Irrevocable like a Median law, 120
Forbidding all to climb that holy crag.

To him Mafistius : Not the Delian isle,
By Persians held inviolate of old,
Shall boast of safety like Meliffa's hill ;
For my performance, lo ! I lift my hand 125
To Horomazes. Thou, return'd, salute
Athenian Aristides in my name ;
From me, his captive in that direful hour
Of carnage round Pfyttalia's bloody strand,
Say, that my thankful tongue will never cease 130
Extolling his beneficence and thine.
To him far more than liberty and life
I owe ; in bondage precious were the hours,
With him the hours of converse, who enlarg'd,

Book IX. THE ATHENAID. 231

Illum'd my heart and mind ; his captive freed, 135
I go a wifer, and a better man.

Now with his confort Macedonia's king,
And Timon were in fight ; a sad'ning look
Fair Amarantha mute on Timon fix'd,
On her the father : We must part, he said ; 140
Alas ! too many of thy father's days
Captivity hath wasted, sorrow more
Deploring thee, my child, while other Greeks,
Erecting brilliant trophies, have obtain'd
Eternal praise. Thee, Amarantha, found, 145
Thee wedded, happy in thy choice and mine,
I quit, my tarnish'd honours to retrieve.

She then : In him a husband I avow
Felicity unstain'd ; in him ally
To Persia's tyrant I am left unblest'd. 150
Malignant fortune still pursues thy child ;

Before

Before me holds a confort and a fire
 In adverse ranks contending. He rejoins:

I know thee, daughter, like the manliest Greek
 The wrongs of Greece resenting, but thy heart
 Keep in subjection to a tender spouse 156
 Of constancy approv'd, whose house with mine,
 From eldest times, by mutual tokens pass'd
 In sacred hospitality is link'd.
 Thy pow'r of beauty never for thyself 160
 Employ, be all compliance; use that charm,
 As kind occasion whispers, in behalf
 Of Greece alone; by counsel sweetly breath'd,
 Diffuse remembrance of his Grecian blood 164
 Thro' Alexander's heart. While these converse
 Apart, the keels are launch'd; now all embark;
 Aboard his vessel Medon leads the son
 Of Lygdamis with Timon; on her own
 Imperial deck th' attentive queen dispos'd

The

Book IX. THE ATHENAID. 233

The Macedonian with his beauteous bride, 170

And Persians freed by Medon, chief of these
Mafistius merits her peculiar care ;

Confin'd, Argestes trembles at his doom

From Xerxes' ire. Along thy rocky verge,
Thermopylæ, with sails and shrouds relax'd, 175

Smooth glide the Carian gallies thro' a calm,
Which o'er the Malian surface sleeps unmov'd,

Unless by measur'd strokes of sounding oars,
Or foam-besilver'd prows. A royal guard,
Preceding Xerxes, through that dreaded pass 180

Were then advancing, not in order'd pomp,
As on his march to Athens ; now behind

The regal chariot panic fear impell'd

On its encumber'd wheels disorder'd throngs,
As if Leonidas had ris'n and shook 185

The snaky shield of Gorgon, or his sword,
Stain'd with Pfyttalian havoc, o'er their heads
The living arm of Aristides wav'd.

On

On fight of Oeta Carian's queen relates
 To her illustrious passengers the deeds 190
 Which signaliz'd that rock, nor leaves untold
 The fate of Teribazus, nor the wound
 Of Ariana, victims both to love.

Now, where Spercheos from his spumy jaws
 A tribute large delivers to the bay, 195
 They land; Mardonius, passing tow'rd's a tent
 Magnificent, erected for the king,
 Arriv'd but newly, on his way perceives
 Mafistius; transport locks his tongue; he flies,
 Hangs on his friend, unutterable joy 200
 His tears alone discover. More compos'd,
 Though not less cordial, with a close embrace,
 First spake the late redeem'd: Receive thy friend,
 Whom wreck'd and captive on Pfyttalia's isle,
 An Attic leader, Aristides nam'd, 205
 Restores unspoil'd, unransom'd, undisgrac'd!

Mardonius

Mardonius quick : Thy unexpected fight,
By an Athenian all unfought restor'd,
Prefages all the good my warmest hopes
Could e'er suggest ; the omen I enjoy ; 210
For this shall Athens, to my friendship won,
Possess her laws, her freedom, with increase
Of rich dominion. Artemisia then :

Behold, the king of Macedon, his wife
In Amarantha. Wond'ring at her form, 215
Exclaims the Persian hero ; of one crime
I now acquit Argestes and his son ;
What ice of virtue could resist that face !

Again the queen : For other crimes my ship
Detains Argestes ; him before the king 220
To charge, immediate audience we demand.

Mardonius guides them to the royal tent.
With half his chiefs the monarch anxious sat,

His

His swift departure by the break of dawn
 Arranging. Amarantha, in her shape 225
 A deity, among them sudden spreads
 A blaze of beauty, like the sun at noon
 In dazzling state amidst an ether blue
 Of torrid climates: admiration loud
 Wounds her offended ear. She thus began: 230

What you admire, ye Persians, O that Heav'n
 Had ne'er conferr'd! the cause of woe to me,
 Of guilt in others; then a maiden hand
 Had ne'er been dipp'd in slaughter, nor these eyes
 Survey'd the pavement of Nicæa strewn 235
 With subjects made rebellious by my fate,
 Thy subjects, monarch. With a Caspian troop
 Argestes forc'd thy castle me to seize,
 Th' affianc'd bride of Macedonia's king,
 Me, to Sandauce giv'n a royal boon, 240
 Me, then in freedom by the gracious will

Book IX. THE ATHENAID. 237

Of thy imperial sister. Help, unhop'd
From Artemisia, from my husband came;
Me they preserv'd, Argestes pris'ner bring
To undergo thy justice. Caria's queen 245
With Macedon's indignant prince confirm
This accusation. On his own retreat
Secure to Susa Xerxes all intent,
Turns to Mardonius: thou be judge, he said;
Take to thyself the forfeits of this crime. 250

The king commands his servant shall be judge,
Mardonius answer'd; chief among my foes
Hath been Argestes, therefore must not die
By my decree. Let Cyra, fort-remote
On Iaxartes hide his banish'd head; 255
That care to Artemisia I commit;
His satrapy, his treasure and domain
To Artamanes his remaining son,
Thy meritorious vassal, I ordain.

This

This judgment pass'd, a murmur nigh the tent,
 Denouncing an ambaffador, is heard; . 261
 Ambaffador of Sparta. Soon appears
 The manly frame of Aemneftus bold,
 Surpassing all his countrymen in arms,
 An Ephorus in office, function high; 265
 Whose jealous vigilance imprifon'd kings
 Unjuft, or impious, or affuming pow'r
 Unwarranted by laws. No train attends;
 He asks for Xerxes, when Mardonius stern:

Before the future fov'reign of the world, 270
 With princes round him, fingle doft thou bring
 An embaffy from Sparta? Spartans hold
 One man with one fufficient in difcourfe,
 Cry'd Aemneftus. Xerxes interpos'd:

Reveal thy errand, ft ranger: He reply'd, 275
 Admonish'd by an oracle, the ftate

Of

Book IX. THE ATHENAID. 239

Of Lacedæmon, and the race divine
There dwelling, sprung from Hercules, demand
Of thee atonement for a slaughter'd king,
Leonidas, whom multitude opprefs'd, 280
While he defended Greece; whate'er thou giv'ft
I will accept. The monarch to his cheek
A shew of laughter calls; awhile is mute;
Then, breaking silence, to Mardonius points.

They shall receive th' atonement they deserve 285
From him: Thou hear'ft, Mardonius. Then, with looks
Of scorn and menace: Yes, the Spartan said,
Thee I accept my victim to appease
Leonidas; disdainful then his foot
He turns away, nor fears th' unnumber'd guard.

Meantime the royal progeny is brought 291
To Artemisia; urgent time requires,
Their Father's fears the embarkation press

For

For Ephesus that night. Them down the beach
 Mardonius follows, and the Carian queen. 295
 In secret thus addresses : Didst thou mark
 That Spartan's threat'ning words and haughty mien?
 An oracle suggested this demand,
 Strange and mysterious. On the martial field
 Him I can single from Laconian ranks, 300
 Audacious challenger! but something more
 Behind the veil of destiny may lurk
 Unseen by me. Mardonius, she replied;
 Look only where no mystery can lurk,
 On ev'ry manly duty; nothing dark 305
 O'er shades the track of virtue; plain her path;
 But superstition chosen for a guide,
 Misleads the best and wisest. Think no more
 Of this, an object like that passing cloud
 Before the moon, who shortly will unfold 310
 Her wonted brightness. Prudent thy design
 To gain th' Athenians; to that noble race

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Be large in proffers, in performance true;
Purchase but their neutrality, thy sword
Will, in despite of oracles, reduce 315
The rest of Greece. This utter'd, she embarks.

He seeks his tent, and finds Mafistius there,
Whose honour, mindful of a promise pledg'd,
Requests protection for Melissa's fane.

Him in his arms the son of Gobrias clasp'd, 320
Thus fervent answ'ring: Xerxes will renew
His rapid march to-morrow; pow'r supreme
He leaves with me, which instant shall be urg'd
To render firm the promise of my friend.
Now lend thy counsel on the copious roll 325
Of Asia's host; assist me to select
The thirty myriads giv'n to my command.

They sat till day-spring; then the camp is mov'd;
Then Amarantha, from her husband's tent

M

Ascends

Ascends a car, and traverses the vale, 330
 By fluent crystal of Spercheos lav'd,
 To join Sandauce. On her way she meets
 Artuchus, guardian of the Persian fair;
 The satrap gazes, courtesy entranc'd
 Forgets awhile her function. Thus, at length, 335
 He greets the queen: Fair stranger, who dost rise
 A second dayspring to th' astonish'd eye,
 Accept my service; whither tends thy course?
 Whom dost thou seek? and gracious tell thy name.

In rosy blushes, like Aurora still, 340
 She graceful thus: Of Macedonia's king
 I am th' espous'd; my patroness I seek,
 Sandauce, issue of th' imperial house.

Artuchus answer'd: Yesternoon beheld
 Her languid steps approach this vale of woe. 345
 Thou, beauteous princess, to Sandauce known,
 Thou

Thou must have heard of Ariana's fate;
Sandauce now is mourning at her tomb,
A grave preparing for Autarctus slain.
Mayst thou suspend despair! Not distant flows 350
The fount of sorrow, so we styl'd the place,
Frequented oft by Ariana's grief;
There oft her head disconsolate she hung
To feed incessant anguish, ne'er disclos'd
Unless in sighing whispers to the stream; 355
Her last abode is there. The myrtles shed
Their odours round, the virgin roses bloom;
I there have caus'd a monument to rise,
That passing strangers may her name revere,
And weep her fortune; from her early grave 360
May learn, how Heav'n is jealous of its boons,
Not long to flourish, where they most excel.
A marble mansion new erected nigh
Her faithful slaves inhabit; who attune
To thrilling lutes a daily fun'ral song. 365

He leads, he stops. On gently-moving air
 Sweet measures glide; this melancholy dirge,
 To melting chords, by sorrow touch'd, is heard.

Cropp'd is the rose of beauty in her bud,
 Bright virtue's purest mansion is defac'd; 370
 Like Mithra's beams her filken tresses shone
 In lustre gentle as a vernal morn;
 Her eye reveal'd the beauties of her mind;
 The slave, the captive, in her light rejoic'd.

Lament, ye daughters of Choaspes, wail, 375
 Ye Cissian maids, your paragon is lost!

Once like the fresh-blown lily in the vale,
 In Susa fair, in radiancy of bloom
 Like summer glowing, till consuming love
 Deform'd her graces; then her hue she chang'd 380
 To lilies pining in decay, but kept
 The smile of kindness on her wasted cheek.

Lament,

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Lament, ye daughters of Choaspes, wail,
Ye Ciffian maids, your paragon is lost !

O ray of wisdom, eye of virtue, form'd 385
To spread superior light, the dazzling brand
Of love malign obscur'd thy eagle fight ;
Thy vital flames are vanish'd, ours remain,
As lamps to endless mourning in thy tomb,
Till we rejoin thee in a land of bliss. 390

Lament, ye daughters of Choaspes, wail,
Ye Ciffian maids, your paragon is lost !

The song concludes. Sandauce from a bank
Of turf uprises, resting on her slaves ;
A pallid visage, and a fainting step, 395
She brings before the sepulchre and spake :

O Ariana ! listen from thy tomb,
To me in woe thy sister, as in blood !

By diff'rent fortunes both were doom'd to waste
 An early bloom in sorrow; O admit 400
 Autarctus first a neighbour to thy clay,
 Me next, who feel my vital thread unwind.
 O Heav'n! my humble spirit would submit
 To thy afflicting hand—but ev'ry fount
 Of health is dry'd; my frame enfeebled sinks 405
 Beneath its trial. When the inhuman priest
 Condemn'd my children to his cruel knife,
 The freezing sheers of fate that moment cut
 My heart-strings; never have they heal'd again;
 Decay'd and wither'd in the flower of life, 410
 My strength deserts my patience: tender friends
 Provide another grave.—For whom? bursts forth
 Emathia's queen, and threw her clasping arms
 Around the princefs; whose discolour'd hue
 In warm affection flushes at the sight 415
 Of Amarantha, as a languid rose,
 Shrunken by the rigour of nocturnal frosts,

A while

A while reviving at the tepid rays
Of wintry Phœbus, glows. For me, she sigh'd,
For me, that bed of endless rest is made. 420
Com'ft thou, neglectful of thy nuptial blifs,
'To poor Sandauce's burial! soon the hour,
When of the sun these sickly eyes must take
Their laft farewell, may call thy friendly hand
To close their curtains in eternal night! 425

These words the Grecian fair, in sorrow try'd,
In constancy unshaken, swift return'd:

Thou shalt not die, avoid this mournful spot,
Thou hast accomplish'd all thy duty here;
Let other duties, wak'ning in thy breast, 430
Strive with despair; transported in my arms,
To Alexander's capital resort.
'Thou shalt not die; returning health, allur'd
By Amarantha's love and tender care,

Again shall bless her patroness, renew 435

Her youth in bloom, in vigour, ne'er to leave

Her infants doubly orphans. At their name

The princess faints, too sensitive a plant,

Which on the lightest touch contracts the leaves,

And seems to wither in the fold of death. 440

Her lovely weight Artuchus to his tent

Conveys; a litter gentle, as it moves,

Receives her soon; her children by her side,

In Macedonian chariots are dispos'd,

Her female slaves and eunuchs. Now appears 445

Emathia's prince to guard his matchless bride;

In arms complete, resembling Mars, he rules

The fiery courser. Artamanes swift

This royal mandate to Artuchus bears:

The king, O satrap, hath begun his march; 450

Delay not thine with all thy precious charge.

To

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To Artamanes then, the Grecian queen:
Let me request thee in Sandauce's name
To visit yonder fount, of sorrow call'd,
There see th' unfinish'd obsequies perform'd, 455
To great Autarctus due. Her languid head
With me a while at Ægæ will repose,
My consort's royal seat; and, gentle youth,
If justice whisper to thy feeling heart,
That well I sav'd my innocence and fame, 460
Thou wilt be welcome to the Ægæan hall.

This said, she mounts her chariot; not unpleas'd,
He to accomplish her command proceeds.

Artuchus now conducts the female train,
Unhappy victims of ambition! These, 465
A prey to famine, to congealing blasts
From cold Olympus, from Bisaltic hills,
And Rhodope, snow-vested, were condemn'd,

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With that innumerable host in flight
Uniform'd, unfurnish'd, scatter'd, to partake 470
Of miseries surpassing nature's help.
On earth's unwholsome lap their tender limbs
To couch, to feed on grafs, on bitter leaves,
On noisome bark of trees, and swell the scene
Between Spercheos and the distant shores 475
Of Hellespontine Sestos: real scene
Of death, beyond the massacre denounc'd
By that stern angel in the prophet's dream,
When were assembled ev'ry fowl of prey
From all the regions of the peopled air, 480
At Heav'ns dread call, to banquet on the flesh
Of princes, captains, and of mighty men.

End of the Eighth Book.

T H E

A T H E N A I D.

BOOK the TENTH.

NOW is the season, when Vertumnus leads
Pomona's glowing charms through ripen'd
groves

Of ruddy fruitage; now the loaden vine
Invites the gath'ring hand, which treasures joy
For hoary winter in his turn to smile. **S**

An eastern course before autumnal gales
To Ephesus the Carian gallies bend;
While Medon coasts by Locris, and deplores
Her state of thraldom. Thrice Aurora shews

M 6

Her

Her placid face; devourer of mankind, 10
 The sea, curls lightly in fallacious calms;
 To Medon then the wary master thus :

My chief, the dang'rous equinox is near
 Whose stormy breath each prudent sailor shuns,
 Secure in harbour; turbulent these freights 15
 Between Eubœa and the Locrian shore ;
 Fate lurks in eddies, threatens from the rocks;
 The continent is hostile; we must stretch
 Across the passage to Eubœa's isle,
 There wait in safety till the season rude 20
 Its wonted violence hath spent. The chief
 Replies: An island, Atalanté nam'd,
 Possess'd by Locrians, rises in thy view;
 There first thy shelter seek; perhaps the foe
 Hath left that fragment of my native state 25
 Yet undestroy'd. Th' obedient rudder guides,
 The oars impel the well directed keel

Safe

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Safe through an inlet op'ning to a cove
Fenc'd round by rising land. At once the fight,
Caught by a lucid aperture of rock, 30
Strays up the island; whence a living stream,
Profuse and swift beneath a native arch,
Repels encumb'ring sands. A slender skiff,
Launch'd from the ship, pervades the sounding vault;
With his companions Medon bounds ashore, 35
Addressing Timon: Delphian guest, these steps,
Rude hewn, attain the summit of this rock;
Thence o'er the island may our wary ken,
By some sure sign, discover if we tread
A friendly soil, or hostile. They ascend. 40
The topmost peak was chisell'd to display
Marine Palæmon, colossean form,
In art not specious. Melicertes once,
Him Ino, flying from th' infuriate sword
Of Athamas her husband, down a cliff, 45
Distracted mother, with herself immers'd

In

In ocean's salt-abyss. Their mortal state
 Neptunian pity to immortal chang'd;
 From Ino she became Leucothea, chief
 Among the nymphs of Tethys; he that god 50
 Benign, presiding o'er the tranquil port,
 Palæmon, yielding refuge to the toils
 Of mariners sea-worn. One mighty palm
 Lean'd on a rudder, high the other held
 A globe of light, far shooting through the dark, 55
 In rays auspicious to nocturnal keels
 Which plough the vex'd Euripus. Fair below,
 Her cap of verdure Atalanté spreads,
 Small as a region, as a pasture large,
 In gentle hollows vary'd, gentle swells, 60
 All intersected by unnumber'd tufts
 Of trees fruit-laden. Bord'ring on the streights,
 Rich Locris, wide Bœotia, lift their woods,
 Their hills by Ceres lov'd, and cities fam'd;
 Here Opus, there Tanagra; Delium shews 65
 Her

Her proud Phœbean edifice, her port
Capacious Aulis, whence a thousand barks
With Agamemnon fail'd; a lengthen'd range
Eubœa's rival opulence oppos'd,
Queen of that frith; superb the structures rise 70
Of Oreus, Chalcis, and the ruins vast
Of sad Erotria, by Darius crush'd.

The Locrian chief salutes the figur'd god:
Still dost thou stand, Palæmon, to proclaim
Oilean hospitality of old, 75
Which carv'd thee here conspicuous, to befriend
The sailor night-perplex'd? Thou only sign
Left of Oilean greatness! wrapp'd in woe
Is that distinguish'd house! Barbarians fill
Her inmost chambers! O propitious god! 80
If yet some remnant of the Locrian state
Thou dost protect on Atalanté's shore,
Before I leave her shall thy image smoke
With fattest victims! Timon quick subjoins:

I see

I see no hostile traces ; numerous hinds 85
 Along the meadows tend their flocks and herds ;
 Let us, descending, and the crested helm,
 The spear, and shield, committing to our train,
 In peaceful guise salute a peaceful land.

They hear, approving ; lightly back they speed ;
 Difarm'd, they follow an inviting path, 91
 Which cuts a shelving green. In sportive laugh,
 Before the threshold of a dwelling nigh,
 Appear young children ; quickning then his pace,
 O Haliartus, Medon cries, I see 95
 My brother's offspring ! They their uncle knew,
 Around him flock'd, announcing his approach
 In screams of joy : Their sire, Leonteus, came.

As Leda's mortal son in Pluto's vale
 Receiv'd his brother Pollux, who, from Jove 100
 Deriv'd, immortal, left the realms of day,

And

And half his own divinity resign'd,
His dear-lov'd Castor to redeem from death;
So rush'd Leonteus into Medon's arms,
Thus utt'ring loud his transport: Dost thou come
To me and these a favour! When that cloud 106
Of dire invasion overcast our land,
For sev'n defenceless infants what remain'd?
What for a tender mother? Infant flight
Preserv'd us; still we unmolested breathe 110
In Atalanté; others like ourselves
Resorted hither; barren winter soon
Will blast the scanty produce of this isle,
Pale famine waste our numbers; or, by want
Compell'd, this precious remnant of thy friends, 115
These rising pillars of th' Oilean house
Must yield to Xerxes—but the gods have sent
In thee a guardian. Summon all our friends,
Elated Medon answers; ev'ry want
Shall be supply'd, their valour in return 120

Is

Is all I claim. Meantime, like watchful bees
 To guard th' invaded hive, from ev'ry part
 The Islanders assemble; but the name
 Of Medon, once divulg'd, suppresses fear,
 And wond'ring gladness to his presence brings 125
 Their numbers. He, rememb'ring such a scene
 Late in Calauria, where afflicted throngs
 Around his righteous friend of Athens press'd;
 Now in that tender circumstance himself
 Among his Locrians, conscious too of means 130
 To mitigate their suff'rings, melts in tears
 Of joy. O countrymen belov'd! he cries,
 I now applaud my forecast, which secur'd
 The whole O'ilean treasures; safe they lie
 At Lacedæmon, whence expect relief 135
 In full abundance on your wants to flow.
 Amid his country's ruins Medon still
 May bless the gods; by your auspicious aid,
 Beyond my hopes discover'd, I may bring

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No feeble standard to the Grecian camp, 140

When Athens, now triumphant o'er the waves,

With her deep phalanx in the field completes

The overthrow of Asia, and restores

Dejected Locris. So to Israel's sons,

Their little ones and wives, by deathful thirst 145

Amid the parching wilderness oppress'd,

Their legislator, with his lifted rod,

Consoling spake, who, Heav'n intrusted, knew

One stroke would open watry veins of rock,

And preservation from a flinty bed 150

Draw copious down. Leonteus lead the way,

Resum'd his brother: vers'd in arms, my youth,

My prime, are strangers to the nuptial tie;

Yet, in thy bliss delighting, I would greet

A sister, auth'ress of this blooming troop. 155

With all the clust'ring children at his side

He pass'd the threshold, and their mother hail'd.

Now

Now o'er their heads the equinoctial gusts
 Begin to chace the clouds; by tempests torn,
 The hoarse Euripus sends a distant sound. 160

Twelve days are spent in sweet domestic joy;
 Serenity returns. The master warns;
 Departing Medon reascends the bark,
 Whose rudder stems the celebrated frith,
 Where twice sev'n times the sun and stars behold
 Reciprocating floods. Three days are pass'd 166

When Sunium, Attic promontory, shades
 The resting sail; Belbina thence *they seek*
 By morn's new glance, and reach at dewy eve.
 Athenian too Belbina yields a port 170

To night-o'ertaken failors in their course
 Between Cecropia and Trœzene's walls.
 A squadron there is moor'd; Cleander there,
 Now ev'ry public duty well discharg'd
 Dismiss'd him glorious to his native roof, 175

Was disembark'd. Contemplating in thought
 His

His Aripheia, for the day's return
He languish'd; ev'ry Nereid he invoc'd
To speed his keel. Him Medon, landing, greets;
To whom Cleander: On Calauria first 180
We interchang'd embraces; now accept
A salutation doubly warm, O chief!
By Aristides pris'd, his second bold
In high exploits, which signalize an isle
Obscure before, Pfyttalia; be my guest 185
This night at least: He said; they pass'd aboard
With Haliartus and the Delphian seer.
A gen'rous meal concluded, Medon spake:

Træzenian chief, now give the mind repast;
I have been absent long; when first the flight 190
Of Asia's host and shatter'd fleet was known,
From Salamis I hoisted sail. To hear
Of Aristides and the laurell'd son
Of Neocles, to hear of all the brave,

Whose

Whose high achievements consecrate that day, 195
 From thy narration would delight my soul.

Cleander then began : To council call'd
 By Eurybiades, the leading Greeks
 A while debated, if their fleet combin'd
 Should fail to break the Hellespontine bridge ? 200
 This he oppos'd ; I readily had join'd
 Th' Athenian people, eager by themselves
 Without auxiliar Grecians, to pursue
 The arrogant invader ; but the tribes,
 In form assembled, with dissuasive words, 205
 Themistocles thus cool'd. I oft have seen,
 Have oftner heard, that vanquish'd men, constrain'd
 By desperation, have their loss repair'd
 In fight renew'd. Repelling such a cloud
 Of enemies from Greece, contented rest ; 210
 The pow'r of gods and heroes, not our own,
 Achiev'd the deed ; pursue not those who fly.

Resort to Athens; in their old abodes
Replace your women, such obsequious wives,
Such daughters; reinstate your native walls, 215
Rebuild your ruin'd mansions; sow your fields,
Prevent a dearth; by early spring unfurl
Your active sails, then shake the eastern shores.
He last propos'd, that exiles be recall'd.

Loud acclamations rose; the honour'd name 220
Of Aristides thunder'd on the beach.

O wife Athenians! Medon cordial here;
O happy man, whose happiness is plac'd
In virtuous actions! happiest now a scope
Is giv'n unbounded to thy hand and heart! 225
Proceed Cleander. He his tale renews:

Th' Athenians launch their gallies, all embark
With Aristides, chosen to that charge.

I fet

I fet my ready canvafs to perform
 The laft kind office, from Calauria's ifle 230
 And Trœzen's walls to waft their wives and race,
 Left in our truft. Meantime the diff'rent chiefs
 Meet on the ifthmus, fummon'd to decide
 Who beft had ferv'd the public, who might claim
 The higheft honours. Every leader names 235
 Himfelf the firft, but all concurrent own
 Themiftocles the fecond. Envy ftill
 Prevails ; without decision they difperf,
 Each to his home. Themiftocles incens'd,
 In eager queft of honours juftly due, 240
 Withheld unjuftly, not to Athens bends
 His haft'ning ftep, but Sparta . . . Medon here:
 Not fo would Ariftides—but forgive
 My interrupting voice. The youth purfues:

In Athens him I join'd, a people found, 245
 Whom fortune never by her frown depreff'd,

Nor satisfied with favour. Active all,
Laborious, cheerful, they persist in toil,
To heave the hills of ruin from their streets,
Without repining at their present loss, 250
Intent on future greatness, to be rais'd
On persevering fortitude: The word
Of Aristides guides. Amidst a scene
Of desolation, decency provides
The fun'ral pomp for those illustrious slain 255
At Salamis; th' insculptur'd tomb I saw
Preparing; they already have ordain'd
A distant day to solemnize the rites;
The mouth of Aristides they decree
To celebrate the valiant, who have died 260
For Athens. While Themistocles accepts
A foreign praise in Sparta, olive crowns,
A car selected from the public store,
A guard, three hundred citizens high-rank'd,
Him through their tracts are chosen to attend,

Excess of rev'rence, by that rigid state 266
 Ne'er shewn before. To small Troezen's walls
 To-morrow I return with less renown,
 With less desert, perhaps to purer bliss.
 My Aripheia calls her soldier home 270
 To give her nuptial hand. My welcome guest
 You I invite; the season rude of Mars
 Is clos'd; new combats will the spring supply;
 Th' autumnal remnant, winter hov'ring near,
 Let us possess in peace. Then Timon spake: 275

Young chief, I praise thee; be a husband soon,
 Be soon a parent; thou wilt bear thy shield
 With constancy redoubled. If defence
 Of our forefathers, sleeping in their tombs,
 So oft unsheaths our swords, more strongly sure
 Th' endearing, living objects of our love 281
 Must animate the gen'rous, good, and brave.

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I am unworthy of that praise, in smiles
Subjoins the Locrian; but thou know'ft, my friend,
I have a brother, of a copious ftream 285
The fource, he, call'd to battle, fhall maintain
Oilean fame. Cleander, I am bound
To Lacedæmon; treasure there I left,
Which, well exchang'd for nature's foodful gifts,
I would transport to Atalanté's fhore, 290
Seat of that brother; who, Leonteus nam'd,
With brave companions there in refuge lies,
A future aid to Greece. A lift'ning ear
Cleander yields, while Medon's lips unwind
The varied ferief of events befall'n 295
Himfelf and Timon, Amarantha fair,
The Carian queen, and Melibœus chang'd
To Haliartus. By th' immortal gods
We will not fep'rate, fervent cries the youth;
My Aripheia, who is wife and good, 300
Will entertain fociety like yours,

As Æthiopia, in Mæonian song,
 Receives to pure and hospitable roofs
 Her visitants from heav'n. Let youth advise,
 Not in experienc'd, but o'er land and sea 305
 To early action train'd; retaining all
 Your narrative heart-piercing, I perceive
 Your wants, and feel impatience to befriend;
 My lightest keel to Salamis shall bear
 Thy orders, Timon, for the Delphian barks, 310
 There left behind you, in Trœzene's port
 To join you straight. His counsel they accept.

The moon is rising, Salamis not far;
 The will of Timon to his Delphian train
 Is swiftly borne. The squadron next proceeds, 315
 Passing Trœzene by, whose gen'rous chief
 Accompanies to shore his Locrian guest
 At Cynofura. Spartan is this port,
 He said; with fifty followers speed thy way;

Commit

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Commit no treasure to the faithless winds ; 320

By land return to find thy ready barks,

Well-fill'd from Trœzen's stores. They part ; he sails

To joyful welcome on his native shores.

When now, unveiling slowly, as she rolls,
Her brother's light the moon reflected full, 325

Auspicious period for connubial rites,

From Lacedæmon hast'ning, Medon gains

Trœzene's ramparts ; him Cleander chose

His paranymp to lead the bridal steps

Of Aripheia. To Calauria's verge 330

He pass'd ; beneath a nuptial chaplet gay

He wore his crisped hair ; of purest white

A tunic wrapp'd his sinewy chest and loins,

A glowing mantle, new in Tyrian dye,

Fell down his shoulders. Up the shelving lawn 335

The high Neptunian structure he attains,

Where with her parents Aripheia waite

Attir'd in roses like her hue, herself
 As Flora fair, or Venus at her birth,
 When from the ocean with unrif'd charms 340
 The virgin goddess sprung. Yet, far unlike
 A maid sequester'd from the public eye,
 She, early train'd in dignity and state,
 In sanctity of manners to attract
 A nation's rev'rence, to th' advancing chief 345
 In sweet composure unreluctant yields
 Her bridal hand, who down the vaulted isle,
 Where echo joins the hymeneal song,
 Conducts the fair; before the costly shrine, 349
 Perfum'd with incense, and with garlands deck'd,
 Presents her charms, and thus in manly pray'r:

My patron god, from Salamis I come,
 One of thy naval sons, erecting there
 Thy recent trophies; let me hence convey
 With thy concurrent smile this precious prize, 355

Thy

Thy sacerotal virgin. I return
To thee a pious votary, to her
A constant lover ; on thy servants pour
Thy nuptial blessing. Yet, earth-shaking god,
Not bound in sloth thy warrior shall repose, 360
Nor languishing obscure in sweetest bliss
Desert thy glory. Soon as wintry storms
Thy nod controls, and vernal breezes court
The unfurling canvass, my unweary'd helm
Shall cleave thy floods, till each Barbarian coast 365
Acknowledge thy supremacy, and bow
To Grecian Neptune. Credulous the train,
Surrounding, in religious rapture see
The colossean image of their god
Smile on their hero, meriting the smiles 370
Of deities and mortals. Fortune adds
Her casual favour ; on Cleander's mast
To perch, a pair of turtle doves she sends
From Neptune's temple. To his vessel crown'd

With

With Hymen's wreaths, bestrewn with herbs and
 flow'rs, 375

Exhaling fragrance, down the slope he guides
 His Aripheia, priestess now no more.

So Hermes, guardian of the Graces, leads
 Their chief, Aglaia, o'er th' Olympian hall,
 Warn'd by the muses, in preluding strains, 380

The dance on heav'n's bright pavement to begin,
 And charm the festive gods. The flood repass'd,
 They, as Træzenian institutes require,
 The fane of young Hippolytus approach,
 That victim pure to chastity, who left 385

Old Theseus childless. From the youthful heads
 Of both their hair is sever'd, on his shrine
 Their maiden off'ring laid. They next ascend
 An awful structure, sacred to the Fates,
 There grateful own that goodness which decreed
 Their happy union. To the Graces last 391

Their vows are paid, divinities benign,
 Whom Aripheia fervent thus invokes :

O goddesses,

O goddesses, who all its sweetness shed
On human life! whate'er is beauteous here, 395
Illustrious, happy, to your favour owes
Its whole endearment; wanting you, our deeds
Are cold and joyless. In my husband's eye
Preserve me lovely, not in form alone,
But that supreme of graces in my sex, 400
Complacency of love. She pray'd; her look
Reveal'd, that heav'n would ratify her pray'r.

Now in her father's dwelling they remain
Till dusky ev'ning. On a bridal car,
Constructed rich, the paranymp then seats 405
The blooming fair; one side Cleander fills,
The other Medon, she between them rides,
By torches clear preceded. Lively sounds
The ceremonial music; soon they reach 409
The bridegroom's mansion; there a feast receives
Unnumber'd friends; the nuptial dance and song
Are

Are now concluded. To her fragrant couch
 A joyful mother lights the blushing bride;
 Cleander follows; in the chamber shut,
 He leaves the guests exulting to revive 415
 Their song to Hymen, and renew the dance.

Three days succeeding were to gymnic feats
 Devoted; Medon's warlike spear obtains
 A second chaplet; Haliartus won
 The wrestler's prize; to hurl the massy disk 420
 None match'd the skill of Timon, still robust,
 Tho' rev'rend threads of silver had begun
 To streak his locks of fable. Southern gales
 Now call on Medon's laden fleet to sail,
 Ere winter frowns. With Timon at his side, 425
 And Haliartus, in this gentle phrase
 His noble host and hostess fair he greets:

May ev'ry joy kind wishes can devise,
 Or language utter, hospitable pair,

Be

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Be yours for ever ! may a num'rous race 430

In virtue grow by your parental care !—

With sev'n dear pledges of connubial love

I left a brother, watching my return

In Atalanté, small, exhausted isle,

Which needs my instant succour. Gen'rous friend,

To thee I trust my treasure, thou discharge 436

The claim of Trœzen for th' abundant stores

Which load our vessels ; for a time farewell,

The vernal sun will see our love renew'd,

And swords combin'd against Mardonius bold. 440

He said : the lovely Arip'hilia weeps ;

Cleander sighs, but speeds his parting guests.

End of the Tenth Book.



