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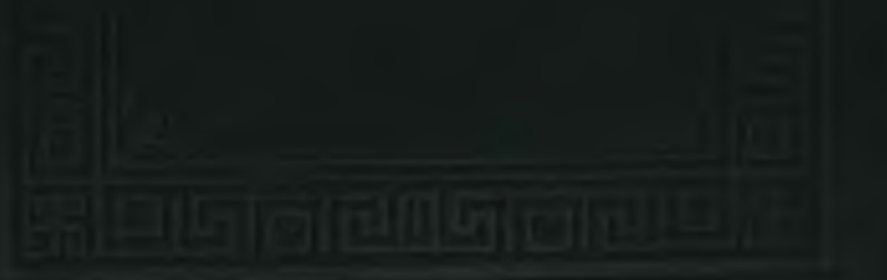
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*Adam Fyfe Findlay 18*

THE  
ODYSSEY OF HOMER

RENDERED INTO

*ENGLISH BLANK VERSE.*

BY

GEORGE MUSGRAVE, M.A.

BRASENOSE COLLEGE,  
OXFORD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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## ARGUMENT.

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### BOOK XIII.

Ulysses having related his adventures to King Alcinoüs and his consort, is, through the kind efforts of that prince, placed on board a vessel of the Phæacians while in a profound sleep, and in that state is conveyed across sea to the shore of his native isle of Ithaca. The crew lift him out of the ship and lay him down on the beach, still asleep; and having deposited at his side the valuable presents bestowed on him by the Phæacians, they embark and set off on their voyage homeward. Neptune, carrying out a threat of long-standing, transforms the ship into a huge rock, just as it was nearing the Phæacian port, and in this state it is beheld, in great consternation, by the natives. Minerva approaches Ulysses, disguised, when he has awaked from his deep sleep, and then reveals to him her real presence, and holds conference with him on the subject of Penelope's suitors. She aids him in depositing his treasures in a cave, and transforms him into an old man, bearing the appearance of a mendicant . . . 1

### BOOK XIV.

Ulysses, in the disguise effected by Minerva, finds his way to the hut of Eumæus, a devoted servant of his household in former days, and now charged with the care of numerous herds of swine. Eumæus gives him a cordial welcome: upon which he commences a narrative, mere invention, of his adventures; stating, incidentally, that Ulysses would, at no distant date, return to Ithaca;—the king of the Thesprotians having, as he asserts, intimated this to him as a certainty. At the instance of Eumæus he takes up his quarters in the homestall cottage . . . . . 25

## ARGUMENT.

## BOOK XV.

Minerva proceeds to Sparta, to withdraw Telemachus from the court of Menelaus. Appearing to him in a vision, she exhorts him to return home. Telemachus leaves Sparta, touches at Pheræ, and arrives at Pylos. As he prepares to embark on board a vessel bound for Ithaca, he is accosted by a soothsayer of Argos, of the name of Theoclymenus, stating himself to be an exile from his country, in consequence of a homicide. Telemachus yields to his entreaty to take him on board. Eumæus relates to Ulysses, though unaware of his guest's identity, how he himself first entered Ithaca. At length, Telemachus lands again in Ithaca, and sending the vessel into port, and committing Theoclymenus to the care of its crew, proceeds to the cot of Eumæus . . . . . 55

## BOOK XVI.

Telemachus, welcomed most joyfully by Eumæus, enters into conversation with the beggar-like guest, being wholly unconscious of that stranger being his own father; and, subsequently, dispatches Eumæus to the town in which the palace of Ulysses stood,—that he might there apprize Penelope of her son's (Telemachus) safe return from Lacedæmon. During his absence, Minerva causes Ulysses to resume his natural aspect, and hereupon he reveals to Telemachus that he is his father.

A selected number of Penelope's suitors who had set out with the design of waylaying the vessel in which young Telemachus would be sailing homeward to Ithaca, and of putting him to death,—having missed him, return disappointed. They are detected in forming further plans for his destruction. Penelope's upbraiding speech to their leader, Antinoüs.

Minerva again transforms Ulysses into a seeming beggar . . . . 86

## BOOK XVII.

Telemachus relates to his mother incidents of his recent excursion. He also makes known to her Theoclymenus, from whom she receives a positive declaration that her husband will to a certainty be soon in his native land and palace. Eumæus then takes Ulysses into the city, and into the premises of his own palatial home. Though in the disguise of a ragged mendicant, he is recognised by his old dog Argus, who, after twenty years' absence, recognises him, but is too feeble to rise. The faithful creature dies almost immediately afterwards. Ulysses enters the great banqueting hall of the palace, and sees the hundred and eight princes who were suitors of Penelope. He is grossly insulted by them. Penelope in her conversation with Eumæus, having learned from him that a stranger had reached his house who brought some tidings of Ulysses, requests that he may be introduced to her. Ulysses being informed hereof tells Eumæus of his design to make this visit at the close of the day, when there would be no other person in the palace . . . . . 112

BOOK XVIII.

Ulysses enters the hall of his palace while the suitors are feasting, and in the guise of a mendicant asks alms of them. Being challenged to a personal encounter by another habited like himself, a beggar, also, (named Irus) he fights and nearly kills him at the first blow. Amphinomus, a suitor, treats him with great indignity, and Ulysses inveighs against his insolence, and intimates that the lord of that mansion would soon be there. Penelope, determining to make her suitors pay richly for the privilege of being permitted to ask her hand in marriage, reminds them that they ought to make her handsome presents. They comply. The gifts described. Eurymachus in the height of his effrontery throws a footstool at Ulysses, and missing his aim, upsets the cup-bearer. At the suggestion of Amphinomus, the party breaks up . . . . . 146

BOOK XIX.

Ulysses and Telemachus, the halls being empty, cause the women to be locked up in their several chambers; and then collect together all the arms in the palace, and stow them away in the armoury in the upper part of the building. Ulysses, still in disguise, is introduced as a fugitive stranger to his wife Penelope, and recounts to her a long narrative—a fiction—in which he mentions that he had seen Ulysses in the isle of Crete. Having permitted his old nurse Euryclea to wash his feet, she recognises him by a scar left by the tooth of a wild boar on the occasion of Ulysses hunting, as a youth, in Parnassus. He strictly forbids her to mention the discovery to any one. An account of the boar hunt.

Penelope is much distressed by the long narrative, and gives orders for his being provided with a bed in the vestibule . . . . . 169

BOOK XX.

Ulysses taking up with the accommodation offered for a sleeping place in the vestibule of his own palace, lies for some time awake deliberating whether he should put to death all the female servants, of whose shameful conduct, in his long absence, he had been fully informed. Minerva, in a vision, assures him that he will be empowered to destroy all the suitors. He decides on a respite with regard to the women of the household. Telemachus provides a seat for his father in the banquet-hall, apart from the suitors. He is again insulted. Minerva produces an hysterical laugh among them, which is succeeded by misgivings, and an undefined dread of approaching evil; but they resume eating and drinking, though Theoclymenus forbodes mischief . . . . . 202



## BOOK XXI.

An account of the huge bow of Ulysses which had been stowed away in his armoury during the twenty years of his absence. Penelope proposes that there shall be a contest,—as to who, of all the suitors, should with greatest ease bend the bow and draw the string up to the arrow notch. Her hand to be the prize. One after another makes the attempt and fails. Telemachus, taking it up, is just on the point of succeeding when admonished, by a signal from his father, to lay the bow aside. Ulysses gives directions that every door and avenue of egress should be fast closed, and then calls on Eumæus to hand the bow and quiver to him. This is resisted by the suitors, who express their contempt at his presuming, as a mendicant, even to touch the bow; but Telemachus insists on his being permitted to handle and use it.

Ulysses aiming at the twelve rings or eyelets of iron, sends the arrow through the whole of them, and, nodding to Telemachus, gives him to understand that the moment is now at hand when he will turn the bow to the use he had long contemplated, and then springs on to the elevated slab of the great threshold at the door of the banquet hall . . . 223

## BOOK XXII.

Ulysses seconded by Telemachus, Eumæus, and Philætius, (the herdsman entrusted with the care of his cattle in Ithaca,) begins by shooting down Antinoüs the leader of all the suitors; and then follows the massacre of the whole number. Twelve of the female servants whose conduct had been most flagitious are hanged. Melantius, a goatherd, who had grossly outraged Ulysses, is suspended from a rafter while the suitors are being slaughtered, and is then taken down and dispatched. The bard Phemius is spared, and Medon, also, the herald . . . . . 246

## BOOK XXIII.

Having for some considerable time evinced utter disbelief of Ulysses' identity, Penelope, convinced by certain tests, most joyfully welcomes him as her long lost husband. He then gives her an authentic account of his wanderings and troubles.

In the morning, afterwards, he sets out with his son and Eumæus and Philætius, on his way to the residence of his aged father, Laertes . . . 273

BOOK XXIV.

Mercury leads to the realms of Pluto the shades of the slain suitors. The shades of Achilles, Patroclus, Ajax, and others appear on the scene: of Agamemnon also. The address of the shade of Achilles to Agamemnon's. The reply of the shade of Agamemnon, describing the funereal rites of Achilles. The account of the slaughter of the suitors given by the shade of Amphimedon to that of Agamemnon.

Ulysses makes himself known to his father Laertes. The relatives of the suitors rise in a tumultuous mass, intent on taking the life of Ulysses in revenge for the lives of the slain. Ulysses, Telemachus, Laertes, Dolius, Eumeus and others defend themselves against the insurrectionists, whose leader, Eupheithes, is killed by Laertes. A closer conflict ensues, which is abruptly terminated by Minerva, who appeals against such internecine war, and calls on the Ithacians to lay down their arms on either side. Ulysses still evincing a desire to pursue his advantage is warned by a thunderbolt. Minerva, in the guise of Mentor, ratifies conditions of Peace . . . . . 294

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CORRIGENDUM.

In page 191, l. 675, *for* Here *in read* Upon.



# HOMER'S ODYSSEY.

## BOOK XIII.

**T**HUS spoke Ulysses, as in silence all  
Beneath that palace roof sate motionless  
And into rapture charm'd: but, words, at length  
Alcinoüs found:—"Ulysses! since a guest  
At these strong brasen-bas'd and lofty halls 5  
Thou art arriv'd, ev'n thus to thine own home  
Methinks thou wilt return; nor, though so long  
By sore afflictions harass'd, will thy course  
On further wand'rings force thee. But, to you  
Phæacians! I now speak, and on you all 10  
This charge would lay who as my constant guests  
The choicest wine within our palace quaff,  
To princes only proffer'd, and the strains  
Of our Bard's minstrelsy so oft have heard.  
Know ye—that in a shining coffer laid 15  
(For full contentment of our stranger guest)  
Are vestments, high-wrought gold, and other gifts,  
All that Phæacia's senatorial lords  
Have hither brought: But, now, I say, let each  
His share contribute tow'rd's two sev'ral gifts— 20  
A cauldron and large tripod; shares which we,

Ourselves, when we assemblies shall convene,  
 As o'er the people ruling, will repay :  
 For, from a single giver such a gift  
 Too much by far demands."

Alcinoüs spoke, 25

And all assenting heard, as to their homes  
 And to Night's slumbers the assembly mov'd.  
 But when again the rosy-finger'd morn,  
 Daughter of dawn, arose, with eager haste  
 They to the ship repair'd, and store of brass 30  
 (Such as a manly chieftain's need befits)  
 They carried down ; and with adjustment nice  
 Alcinoüs the treasure stow'd ;—himself  
 Beneath the benches stooping of the ship,  
 So to dispose of all, that injury none 35  
 Might to Ulysses' rowers with their stroke  
 Of oars impetuous urging on, accrue.  
 Then, to the palace of the king return'd,  
 A banquet they prepar'd : Alcinoüs  
 An ox to Jove, the darkly clouded son 40  
 Of Saturn, sacrificing ; as to Him  
 Whose sway is over all. And when the thighs  
 They now had duly burnt, a splendid feast  
 They spread, and of abundance took their fill ;  
 Demodocus, the bard by Heav'n inspir'd, 45  
 And by the people glorified, his lay  
 Among the guests attuning ; but, intent  
 Upon the setting of the radiant sun,  
 From time to time Ulysses, whose sole thought  
 Was his Return, upon the solar beams 50  
 His glances anxious bent ; and, as a man

Under whose hands two dark red beeves the plough  
 Across some fallow have, a whole day, drawn,—  
 His ev'ning meal is craving for, while now  
 The rays of the declining sun a joy 55  
 Impart, and for his supper leave him free,  
 With lame knees to it hast'ning ;—ev'n thus dear  
 Was to Ulysses' eyes the sinking disc  
 Of that day's sun : and then immediate speech  
 With the Phæacians (of their oars so proud) 60  
 He strove to gain, Alcinoüs in these words  
 'Bove all addressing :—

“ King Alcinoüs !

Of all this race most noble ! when to Heav'n  
 Libations ye have made, oh ! speed me hence  
 Without a care ! And, now, to all ' Farewell !' 65  
 All that my heart desir'd,—an escort safe,  
 And ev'ry gift which Friendliness bestows,  
 Have to the full been granted : And may Heav'n  
 In my behalf its blessing shed hereon !  
 May I, on my return, my blameless wife 70  
 And those I love at home in safety find ;  
 And may you all who here remain the joy  
 For evermore continue of those wives  
 Whom in your youth ye wedded, and of sons  
 And daughters born to you ! Each sev'ral grace 75  
 Of Goodness may the gods upon them shed,  
 And ne'er may Fate the common weal afflict !”

He ended, and with general acclaim  
 His words they hail'd, whose matter so discreet  
 And worthy seem'd, that mandate straight went forth 80

That on his way the Stranger should be sped.  
 And then the monarch on his herald call'd :—  
 “ Pontonoüs ! when thou a cup hast mix'd,  
 To all within the palace carry wine,  
 That, having pray'rs to Jupiter uplift, 85  
 This Stranger to his country we may speed.”

He spoke, and the rich wine Pontonoüs blent  
 And unto all in order sent it round ;  
 Each to the blest immortals who on high  
 The Emyrean inhabit from his place, 90  
 Ev'n where he sate, libations off'ring.  
 And then Ulysses rose, and, the round cup  
 Into Aretè's hand delivering,  
 With these wing'd words saluted her :—“ Farewell !  
 O queen ! for evermore farewell ! till age 95  
 Extreme, and Death, which is the lot of all,  
 Shall thee in turn o'ertake : but, now, I go !  
 And may'st thou with thy children and the tribe  
 Who own thy sov'reignty, and with their king  
 Alcinoüs, in this thy palace live, 100  
 And pleasure taste unceasing.”

With these words

Noble Ulysses o'er the threshold stepp'd :  
 But, onward had the king a herald sent,  
 To the sea-shore and well-appointed ship  
 The way to lead. Aretè, too, a train 105  
 Of handmaids with him sent ;—one in her hands  
 A well-wash'd robe and vestment carrying,  
 Another, with a heavy coffer charg'd,  
 Her bidding did : a third a store of bread

And dark wine bore : and, when the ship they reach'd, 110  
His noble escort, as the several gifts  
They took on board, (provision fit of meat  
And drink) within the vessel's hold  
Stow'd it away : And, then upon the deck  
A coverlet and flaxen cloths they spread, 115  
That at the stern in sound deep sleep reclin'd.  
Ulysses might repose : but, he himself  
On shipboard stepp'd, and, utt'ring not a word,  
To rest compos'd himself, while they, each man  
His bench in order taking, from the stone 120  
(Right through for anch'rage bor'd), their cable loos'd ;  
And then, with heads back thrown, upon their oars  
The surges' spray uplifted, while calm sleep  
Upon his eyelids fell, such as through night  
No waking moments knew,—repose most sweet, 125  
The nearest semblance bearing of real death.  
But, as when four yok'd stallions, on the plain,  
By the thong's lash excited upward spring,  
And, on one impulse borne, careering fly,—  
So rose in air the vessel's stern, while waves 130  
Of deepest purple tint from Ocean's depth  
With hollow roar dash'd after it. She sped  
And sway'd not : nor could falcon hawk, of birds  
The swiftest, have on wing her pace maintain'd.  
Thus did that flying bark the waters cleave— 135  
The man conveying who a mind might boast  
With that of gods in counsel fit to cope,—  
In battles oft ; in tempests often wreck'd :—  
And now, without a fear, he sleeping lay  
And all the suff'rings of his life forgot. 140



Just as a star of most resplendent ray  
 Began to rise, whose brightness eminent  
 The light of Morning, mother of the day,  
 Is wont to usher in, the goodly ship,  
 On Ocean's ways a trav'ler, near'd the isle. 145  
 Now, on th' Ithacian coasts a port there is  
 From Phorcys nam'd, (the Old Man of the Sea,)  
 And two steep banks within it lie whose length  
 Towards the port extends, and all the force  
 Of blust'ring winds, which from without assail, 150  
 A shelter form; and in this haven safe,  
 When their secluded station they have reach'd,  
 The well-built ships without a hawser rest.

A full-leav'd Olive at the haven's mouth  
 Its foliage spreads; and nigh it is a cave 155  
 Delectable, a shaded haunt to Nymphs  
 Nam'd "Naiads," consecrate: and cups of stone  
 And rundlets in it stand; and bees therein  
 Their honey store; and distaffs all of stone,  
 Of length excessive, in that cave are seen, 160  
 The wonder of all eyes! while, in a stream  
 That ceases not, the water-springs well forth.  
 Two portals hath it. Those towards the North  
 By mortals may be enter'd: Those oppos'd  
 And Southward situate more sacred are, 165  
 And none hereby may pass;—th' immortal gods  
 Alone admittance gaining. To this point,  
 By them of erst well known, th' escorting crew  
 Urg'd onward, and by more than half its length  
 (Such was her rate of speed, and such the might 170  
 Of those who row'd,) the vessel on to land

Ran fast aground : and from that well-built bark  
They now stepp'd on the beach.\* Ulysses first  
From off the deck, in his fair coverlet  
And linen raiment wrapt, still sunk in sleep,      175  
They lifted down, and on the sand dispos'd ;  
And from the hold the treasures they remov'd  
Which, through high-soul'd Minerva's furth'ring aid,  
Phæacia's nobles (when, on his return,  
Their shores he left,) had made his own : and these      180  
Together heap'd where that fam'd Olive-tree  
Its roots outspread, they plac'd apart, secure,  
Lest, haply, ere Ulysses should awake,  
Some casual passer-by should do him wrong.  
But, they themselves upon their voyage home      185  
Forthwith embark'd. Nor of those angry threats  
Was Neptune now oblivious which at first  
He at Ulysses launch'd, but counsel thus  
Of Jove he ask'd :—

“ O Jupiter ! no more  
Shall I among th' immortals be rever'd,      190  
Since mortals,—the Phæacians, who kin  
With me would claim—no homage pay to me :  
For, 'twas but only now my word was pass'd  
That at his home Ulysses should arrive  
By long afflictions tried ; and that return      195  
I in nowise have thwarted, since thou first  
Assurance to him gavest and consent.  
But they this chief in a swift-sailing bark  
Have over sea transported,—in a sleep  
Profound immers'd,—and on th' Ithacian coast      200  
Have they just landed him : A heap of gifts—

Brass and fine gold, and a fine woven vest  
 Have they with lavish hand on him bestow'd;—  
 Abundance, such as never from sack'd Troy  
 Ulysses would have carried off, had he 205  
 Unscath'd his home regain'd, and his due share  
 Of all the spoil receiv'd."

But, to these words

The cloud-compelling Jove this answer made :—  
 "Nay, nay! all-puissant Neptune! what is this  
 That thou hast utter'd? The immortal gods 210  
 None such indignity on thee would cast!  
 No light offence it were contempt to fling  
 Upon the oldest, worthiest of their race!  
 But, if there be of living mortals one  
 Who, by tyrannic insolence and pow'r 215  
 Impell'd, would dare to spurn thee, thou the means  
 Of vengeance in the future ever hast.  
 On thine own will, and on the wish which first  
 Thy mind would prompt, decide at once to act."

To him earth-shaking Neptune this reply 220  
 Immediate made: "O thou who with dark clouds  
 Thyself surroundest!—promptly would my will  
 Thy counsel follow, but thy kindled ire  
 With dread I ever contemplate and shun.  
 This beauteous ship of the Phæacian fleet, 225  
 Now on the clouded ocean homeward bound,  
 (Ulysses' escort having all fulfill'd)  
 I fain would utterly annihilate—  
 That, henceforth, in this transport, such as men  
 In safest conduct carries, they may pause, 230

And persevere no more : and fain would I  
Around their city a vast mountain throw."

To this the cloud-compelling Jove reply  
Compliant made :—" My friend ! as I conceive,  
This best thine aim will meet :—When from the town 235  
The whole collective populace their gaze  
Shall on the ship be fixing—a vast mass  
Of stone, (the semblance bearing of a ship,)  
Do thou near land uprear, that ev'ry man  
In wonderment may stare ; And that great mount 240  
Around their city throw ! " And when the god  
That shakes the Earth had this suggestion heard,  
To Scheria, from whence Phæacia's tribes  
Their race derive, he hasten'd, and awhile  
His station there maintain'd. The ship, at length, 245  
That o'er the sea-ways had her course pursued,  
With rapid onward progress now drew nigh,  
And, alongside, the Shaker of the Earth  
That instant rush'd, and into stony rock  
Her fabric chang'd, so that in land which form'd 250  
The bottom of the sea it rooted stood :  
And this, (with stroke from downturn'd hand alone  
Inflicted,) Neptune to accomplish rose,  
And straightway to remoter regions sped.

But, that Phæacian multitude—the men 255  
Who, in long oars exulting, o'er the seas  
Such fame were wont to reap, in eager words  
Each other question'd, and with eyeballs fixt  
On him to whom he spake, one man would thus  
The other challenge :—" Who is this, alas ! 260

That thus the rapid vessel on her course  
 Ev'n into harbour speeding, in the deep  
 Has thus infix'd her? But a moment since,  
 She stood entire before us!" Thus spoke one,  
 But how this came to pass they little knew. 265

At length Alcinoüs spake, and to their ears  
 These words address'd:—"Alas! with too great truth  
 To me, at length, each presage is fulfill'd,  
 Which, in long bygone years, my sire pronounc'd,  
 That Neptune—for that we an escort sure 270  
 To men upon the wat'ry main afford,—  
 Would with his anger visit us! He said  
 That at some epoch of the time to come  
 The god a splendid vessel would destroy,  
 By our Phæacians mann'd, when homeward bound 275  
 From an escorting voyage over sea;  
 And that a mighty mountain would the breadth  
 Of our whole city cover. Such events  
 The veteran foretold; and ev'ry word  
 Is now at length confirm'd: But, come! let this 280  
 Henceforth be binding on us all, as I  
 Command now give: No longer be it ours  
 Safe conduct to provide, come here who may  
 Our native city entr'ing: and twelve bulls  
 From out the herds selected will we straight 285  
 To Neptune offer, if he will but grace  
 Relenting show, and with this dreadful mount  
 Our city overwhelm not." The king ceas'd,  
 And they with timid souls the bulls prepar'd;  
 And all the leaders and the princely chiefs 290  
 Of the Phæacian people, as beside

The altars of their sacrifice they stood,  
To Neptune, that great monarch, offer'd pray'r.

Meanwhile, Ulysses from that sleep profound  
Upon the soil of his lov'd fatherland 295  
Awaking, recognis'd it not,—so long  
Had he from that terrene an exile liv'd—  
And Pallas, now, Jove's daughter, round his form  
A vapour rais'd, that he in ev'ry eye  
A stranger might appear, and that her lips 300  
Might first to him tell all, and that nor wife,  
Nor citizens, nor friends, the chief should know,  
Ere on the suitors ev'ry cruel wrong  
Full vengeance he had wreak'd. Thus, all that met  
The prince's eye a different aspect wore— 305  
The long extended roads—the havens wide  
For shelter so well form'd—the steep cliff's sides  
To solar rays uplifted, and the trees  
In foliage so abundant! Thus stood he—  
As to his feet with eager haste he sprang, 310  
And on the region gaz'd that gave him birth;  
Till in regret he moan'd, and with his hand  
His thigh desponding struck, and sad at heart,  
Ev'n thus to grief gave words :—

“Woe! woe! alas!

'Mid all the homes of mortal men, what land 315  
Have I at last attain'd to? Are they sons  
Of violence? Of harsh and cruel mind  
Are they; and of all sense of right devoid?  
Or to all strangers would they welcome give,  
And doth a godlike spirit in them sway? 320

Where now shall I these many treasures store ?  
 And whither am I wand'ring still ? Would, now,  
 That I with the Phæacians had but staid !  
 Some other pow'rful prince I might have sought,  
 Who would his guest have made me, and his aid 325  
 In a safe escort on my voyage home  
 Have granted me ! But, in what spot recluse  
 I may these large possessions now secure  
 I know not : Here they must not lie ; for soon  
 The spoil of plund'ring hands would they become. 330  
 Unhappy me ! The leaders and great chiefs  
 Of the Phæacians in their judgment err'd,  
 And from strict right in this, at least, have swerv'd,  
 In thus to a strange coast transporting me :  
 To Western Ithaca their promise firm 335  
 Assur'd me I should come—, but this their word  
 They unfulfill'd have left. May Jove himself,  
 Who penalty retributive demands,  
 This wrong on them avenge ! Man's destiny  
 He makes his care ; and Man's offence from him 340  
 Its punishment receives. But, now will I  
 My gather'd treasures count, and by the tale  
 Discover whether that escorting crew  
 Have aught thereof purloin'd, and in their ship  
 Far hence convey'd it." Ceasing then to speak, 345  
 Ulysses of the tripods, in whose form  
 Such beauty shone, the number duly told ;  
 The cauldrons, too, he counted ; and the vests  
 Of texture so resplendent ; of which gifts  
 He miss'd not one ; but, for his native land 350  
 His soul still yearn'd, and, as along the shore  
 Of the loud roaring main he slowly paced,

In poignant grief he sorrow'd. Then, at length,  
 Pallas before him stood,—a young man's form  
 Assuming, (one that tended sheep) of mould 355  
 Most delicate, as might the sons of kings beseem.—  
 A beauteous mantle, double in its folds,  
 About her shoulders hung ;—and 'neath her feet  
 So soft she sandals wore ; and in her hand  
 A lance she grasp'd. At sight of her, great joy 360  
 Ulysses felt,—drew nigh to her, and thus  
 In rapid utt'rance hail'd her :—

“ O my friend !

Since thee in this terrene I first have met,  
 Be welcome ! and with no ungenial thoughts  
 Upon me look ! These treasures at my side 365  
 On my behalf protect, and me myself  
 From peril guard : for though as to some god  
 I this petition make, and to thy knees  
 A suppliant come. Oh ! tell me in all truth,  
 That I may fully learn,—what realm is this ? 370  
 What people ? Of what generation sprung  
 Are all these men around ? Is it some isle  
 To Westward lying ? or is this a tract  
 That from the rich-soil'd fields of the main land  
 Its length extends to seaward ?” Thus address'd, 375  
 The goddess of the gleaming eye replied :—

“ Witless art thou, O stranger ! or, from far  
 Art thou indeed arriv'd, if of this land  
 Such questions thou would'st ask. Unknown, indeed,  
 Inglorious it is not ! Many a tribe 380  
 Of those that Eastward live and face the sun,



And of the dwellers in thick darkling gloom,  
 This isle well know. A rugged face it hath,  
 For the yok'd steeds unapt;—and yet the soil,  
 In narrow bounds compris'd, no barren waste 385  
 Exhibits; for, wheat-harvests here abound,  
 And vintages therewith: the timely show'rs,  
 The rip'ning dews attend on it. For feed  
 Of goats and beeves it hath a just renown;  
 With all varieties of wood it thrives, 390  
 And constant streaming waters through it flow.  
 Wherefore, O Stranger! e'en to Troy itself,  
 Far as men say it is from Greece, the name  
 Of Ithaca would make its mention known!"

The shepherd youth here ended: and that chief 395  
 So oft in perils tried, Ulysses, all  
 With transport heard;—and in his fatherland  
 His heart at length rejoiced, as Pallas, child  
 Of ægis-bearing Jove, the truth disclos'd.  
 And now again accosting her, these words, 400  
 With rapid accents utt'ring, in a speech  
 Deceitful he inserted,—and her theme  
 Caught up to frame a fiction—the reverse  
 Of all the truth; such wily cunning still  
 His mind would fain indulge in:—"Ev'n in Crete, 405  
 That spacious isle, and over sea remote,  
 Of Ithaca I heard: but here, at length  
 Am I myself with these possessions come,  
 And yet a fugitive,—who just so much  
 Have for my absent children elsewhere left, 410  
 Since I the swift-of-foot Orsilochus,  
 Idomeneus' dear son, in death laid low—

(Him who in all the spacious isle of Crete  
All youths of enterprise with his fleet feet  
So far outshone ;—) for that my spoils from Troy 415  
He would have seiz'd—; the booty, which to win  
Such woes I had encounter'd ;—hardships dread  
'Mid foes, upon the scene of War ;—'mid waves,  
When on the ocean tost ! And this because  
His father 'mid the legion'd hosts of Troy 420  
I would not stoop to humour,—while o'er those  
Who with me serv'd a rule supreme I held,  
His death-wound with a brasen spear I gave ;  
In ambush with a comrade near the road  
Secreted, and as from the fields he came 425  
Awaiting him. Thick night the sky obscur'd,  
Nor did a man descry us ;—and his ken  
I 'scap'd, forsooth, in cutting short his life !  
And when with weapon keen this deed was done,  
I, without lingering, in a ship embark'd 430  
And the renown'd Phæacian nation sought,  
And, as their suppliant, gave them from my spoils  
Such gifts as won their hearts : And then did I  
Petition make that they would bear me thence,  
And upon Pylos land me, or the port 435  
Divine of Elis enter, where their sway  
The Epeans hold supreme : but raging winds  
Their vessels from these ports, to their great grief,  
Far distant drove them. Not a wish had they  
To play me false ! But, on the waters cast, 440  
This coast by night we reach'd, and with great toil  
Into the haven row'd. Of any food  
Our evening meal to furnish no man spoke ;  
All eager as we were to eat : but all,

Just as we were, the dark-ribb'd vessel left 445  
 And on the earth reclin'd. And here calm sleep  
 My toil-worn frame soon seiz'd: while they my goods  
 From out their ship removing, on this spot,  
 Where I upon the sandhills lay outstretch'd,  
 Disquid them all: which having done, their course 450  
 They set again they to Sicouia steer'd,  
 And I with heavy heart was left alone."

He could her eye discerned goddess smil'd,  
 And as with kneeling hand his arm she touch'd,  
 She in her form a woman's semblance took.— 455  
 One in complexion fair, in stature large,  
 And in magnificent works of art expert:  
 And she with rapid speech, in turn thus spoke:  
 "Astute indeed, and full of guile were he  
 Who in all grades of cunning should thyself, 460  
 E'en though a god thy rival were, surpass!  
 O reckless in all feeling! In thy schemes  
 For ever shifting! and in tricky feints  
 Insatiate,—even here upon the soil  
 That gave thee birth, thou would'st not false pretexts 465  
 And glosing speeches have foregone—such frauds  
 As from thy childhood have been dear to thee.  
 Come, now! since we are both in plotting vers'd,  
 Let us this theme abandon: for of men  
 Thou art in counsel and in gifts of speech 470  
 The foremost held; and 'mid the immortal gods  
 Myself in just discernment and the use  
 Of ready guile stand eminent:—But, say,  
 Did'st thou not know me, Pallas, child of Jove?  
 Me, who in all thy trials by thee stand 475

And thy defender am, and to the race  
 Of those Phæacians thy cause endear'd?  
 And hither am I come, that I some plan  
 May with thee frame, and all the wealth conceal  
 Which the Phæacians have on thee bestow'd, 480  
 Returning, as my counsel and my wish  
 Had prompted thee, to thy paternal land;  
 And that I may forewarn thee of the pangs  
 That thou art doom'd in thy palatial home  
 Ev'n yet to suffer. By thy fate constrain'd 485  
 Bear up against them all; but, no one tell  
 Amid all men and women, that thou thus  
 A wand'rer art arriv'd: the rude assaults  
 Of banded foes endure, and though thy wrongs  
 Innumerable grieve, in silence bear." 490

To this astute Ulysses thus replied:—  
 "Quick of perception as a man may be,  
 O goddess, with no sure discerning ken  
 Would he thy form be prompt to recognise;  
 For, thou the semblance canst of any take. 495  
 But, this full well I know that in times past  
 Thy kindly grace befriended me while we  
 The sons of Greece our battles wag'd at Troy.  
 But, when we had King Priam's lofty tow'rs  
 In ruin laid, and in our fleets embark'd, 500  
 And the celestial power had our hosts  
 Upon the ocean scatter'd, I no more  
 Thy presence hail'd, nor on my vessel's deck  
 Did I behold thee stepping; that thine aid  
 Might from misfortune shield me. But, my course 505  
 Was but incessant wand'ring, and my heart

Was all subdued within me, till the gods  
 From fearful peril timely rescue brought,  
 And thine inspiriting speech upon the shore  
 Of the Phæacian land my mind arous'd; 510  
 Thyself into their unknown city's street  
 My guide becoming. But, by thy great Sire  
 Do I conjure thee—for not even now  
 Think I that Western Ithaca's terrene  
 I stand upon, but on some other land 515  
 My foot have placed: nay, and I think that thou  
 In all that thou hast said, thy tale hast told  
 But to beguile me, and upon my sense  
 A cheat impose! In all good faith declare  
 If unto my lov'd country I am come." 520

Whereto the blue-eyed goddess thus replied:  
 "On this surmise thy mind incessant dwells,  
 And, therefore, in thy heaviness of heart  
 I cannot thee abandon;—for that thou  
 A fluent speaker art,—of mind acute, 525  
 And in thy judgment sound. From wand'rings wide  
 As thine have been with an exulting heart  
 Returning, any other man his wife  
 And children, his palatial halls within,  
 Would fain have striv'n to see: But, no delight 530  
 Would home to thee impart, if thou thyself  
 Should'st there take cognizance, or question ask,  
 Ere by some test thy consort thou approve,  
 Who purposeless within thy palace sits,  
 While nights and days revolving fast consume 535  
 And leave her to her sorrow. I, indeed,  
 On thy account misgivings cherish'd none,

But deep conviction felt that thy return,  
 Though all thy crew were lost, thou would'st effect.  
 But, with my uncle Neptune was I loth 540  
 Herein to strive, whose wrath implacable  
 Against thee rag'd, for that thy deed it was  
 Which blinded his lov'd son. But, now, attend,  
 And to thine eyes the sight of Ithaca  
 Will I make known, and thou wilt then believe. 545  
 The port thou see'st, the name of Phorcys bears  
 (The old man of the sea;) the olive, this—  
 Which near the haven's entrance its large leaves  
 Conspicuous shows; and near it is a cave  
 Delectable, cool, shady—to those nymphs 550  
 Call'd 'Naiads' consecrate. The wide arch'd grot  
 Is this where thou didst many a hecatomb  
 All perfect to the Nymphs on altars place:  
 And yonder is Mount Neritos with woods  
 Umbrageous cloth'd." The goddess, as these words 555  
 She ended, all that vapour which, till now,  
 Had like a cloud invested him, dispers'd,  
 And all the ground lay manifest; whereat  
 The toil-worn chief Ulysses with great joy  
 Rejoic'd indeed—as his paternal soil 560  
 With rapture he now hail'd, and on the swade  
 Of plenty-yielding grass a kiss impress'd.  
 And instantly he with uplifted hands  
 The Nymphs invok'd:—

" O Naiad Nymphs, of Jove

The daughters all! No hopes had I conceiv'd 565  
 Of ever thus beholding you:—but now  
 With humble vows these salutations glad

I here present ; and, as of old, will gifts  
 As off'rings bring, if Dian, child of Jove,  
 The huntress, her consent with all good will 570  
 Shall grant, that I may length of days enjoy,  
 And my lov'd son, too, may his line increase."

Minerva, goddess of the gleaming eye,  
 Now again spoke :—" Let not thy courage droop :  
 Nor let these thoughts of thine thy mind perplex ! 575  
 Come !—let us now at once in the far depth  
 Of this unearthly grotto all the bulk  
 Of thine acquirèd treasure safely stow,  
 That here it may uninjur'd rest : and then  
 That we in conf'rence may due counsel take, 580  
 How best to do what must ere long be done."

Thus having spoken, to the darkling cave  
 The goddess downward stepp'd, and secret nooks  
 Fit for concealment sought ; and in his hands  
 Ulysses all that round him lay uprais'd 585  
 To carry in—the gold and unworn brass  
 And vestments of make exquisite,—the gifts  
 Of the Phæacians' bounty : and all these  
 He aptly rang'd, till Pallas, child of Jove,  
 A stone to close it placed against the door. 590  
 Then near the sacred olive's roots their seat  
 For converse having chosen,—a dread doom  
 That haughty suitor train to overwhelm  
 They fail'd not to prepare. And hereupon  
 The goddess this address, as counsel, spoke : 595

" O thou, in stratagem and plot so vers'd

Laertes' Jove-born son, Ulysses, hear!  
 And ponder well how thou upon that crowd  
 Of daring suitors thine avenging hand  
 At length may'st lay;—on them who through three years  
 With sway presumptuous have thy palace rul'd, 601  
 Thy godlike consort with their hateful suit  
 And gifts of dowry harassing, while she,  
 In sorrow brooding on the heavy doubts  
 Of thy return, to each a hope holds out 605  
 And promises and messages to all  
 Vouchsafes to send; but far away from these  
 The thoughts of thy Penelope withdraw."

To this the shrewd Ulysses thus replied—  
 "Shame on it! I, too, clearly, in my turn 610  
 In my own palace should the death have died,  
 And the dire fate of Agamemnon, son  
 Of Atreus, shar'd, had not thy warning words,  
 O goddess! told these truths. Now let thy mind  
 The plot contrive which on that hateful crew 615  
 May all my vengeance wreak—and then do thou  
 Thyself beside me stand, and in my soul  
 Such dauntless valour rouse as in me wrought  
 When we the crested pride of Ilion's tow'rs  
 Cast down in overthrow. If, in that hour, 620  
 O, azure-eyed! thou would'st but at my side  
 Thy presence grant, I, with three hundred men,  
 By thy prompt succour champion'd to the fight,  
 While thou stood'st by, in conflict would engage."

Pallas thus promptly answer'd "At thy side 625  
 Most surely will I stand, nor my regards



Shalt thou escape, when our combin'd designs  
 We shall have well matur'd : and many a one  
 Among that suitor train who at this hour  
 Thy substance are consuming, with his blood 630  
 And scatter'd brains shall in thy princely halls  
 The spacious pavement foul : But, now, awhile,  
 To all that see thee will I make thee strange :  
 Thy clear fine skin on tott'ring limbs shall shrink,—  
 That dark brown hair from off thine head shall fall,— 635  
 And such a mantle will I round thee throw  
 As any man, that saw it worn, would spurn.  
 And a dim shadiness upon thine eyes,  
 So brilliant now, will I diffuse, whereby  
 In sight of all the suitors—of thy wife— 640  
 And son,—whom in thy palace thou hast left,  
 An aspect uninviting thou may'st wear.  
 But, first do thou the Swineherd's dwelling seek,  
 The keeper of thy swine : a man whose heart  
 In fondness turns to thee—who loves thy son 645  
 And thy discreet Penelope. With his swine  
 Wilt thou upon him light ; for near the rock  
 Of Corax and at Arethusa's fount  
 Are they now grazing, acorns for their food  
 That nourish strength collecting, while from pools 650  
 By mire defil'd they drink :—those aliments  
 Which in such herds the thriving fat increase.  
 With him abide, and at his side the tale  
 Of all he knoweth, hear : While I my course  
 To Sparta, (for its beauteous women fam'd) 655  
 Meanwhile must shape,—Telemachus, (that son  
 So dear to thee, Ulysses !) to protect.  
 He to wide Lacedæmon's court, the home

Of Menelaus, went ; if haply there  
He tidings aught might gain of thee, and learn 660  
If anywhere on earth thou still surviv'dst."

To this Ulysses, full of thought, replied :—  
" Omniscient as thou art, why didst thou not  
His mind hereon inform ? To this intent  
Was it, that o'er the waters of that sea 665  
Which harvests never yield, a wanderer  
He might be ever sorrowing ? and foes  
His substance waste at home ? "

To which appeal

The blue-eyed goddess thus :—" Let not thy son  
Thy thoughts o'ermuch engross : 'twas I myself 670  
That into Sparta led him, there to win  
A name of high repute ;—no toil hath he  
To strive in there ;—for, at Atrides' court  
In perfect ease he lives, and in that home  
Is plenty heap'd around him. But, a band 675  
Of certain youths there are who, in a nook  
Conceal'd, on shipboard wait for him,—intent  
His life to take ere on his native soil  
Again he sets his foot. But this, methinks,  
Shall never be.—On some one of that crowd 680  
Who at this moment all thy worldly wealth  
Are reckless wasting, sooner shall the earth  
For ever close." As thus she ceas'd to speak,  
Minerva with a wand Ulysses touch'd,  
And his clear skin contracted upon limbs 685  
That now were bending, and the dark brown hair  
She from his scalp remov'd, and all his frame

With the skin cover'd of decrepit age :  
 His eyes, till then so radiant, she dimm'd ;  
 Unsightliness still worse,—a ragged vest, 690  
 And a torn mantle with unseemly dirt  
 And murky smoke defil'd she round him threw :  
 On this again the broad and undress'd hide  
 Of a fleet deer she plac'd : a staff, besides,  
 She gave him, and a pouch of ugliest make, 695  
 With many a rent conspicuous ; and a belt  
 Of plaited rush, to sling it, from it hung.

When they, the goddess and the chief, had thus  
 Their counsels blent, they parted :—and forthwith  
 Minerva, young Telemachus to find,  
 Her way to glorious Lacedæmon sped. 701

## BOOK XIV.

**B**UT, from the haven by a rough straight path  
 Which through the mountain thickets into tracts  
 Of sylvan growth and forest regions led,  
 Ulysses bent his steps, by Pallas' self  
 Instructed where that noble high-soul'd one                   5  
 Eumæus, in whose charge were left his swine,—  
 (Of all his serving train most sedulous  
 And for his good most thoughtful—) would be found.

Seated he found him in that open court  
 Where, on a far-seen site, his homestead rose—                   10  
 A dwelling large and handsome, and so rear'd  
 That one a circuit might around it make ;  
 And this the guardian of the herd himself  
 Had, in his prince's absence, for the swine  
 Consid'rate built, when nor Penelope                   15  
 Nor aged Laertes of that forethought knew.  
 From large stones thither drawn the fabric rose,  
 And prickly pear above, as coping, bore.  
 A palisade around, thickset and close,  
 From the dark pith of some oak sapling riv'n,                   20  
 Without he fix'd: And, this wide court within

Twelve styes he built, each to the other close,  
 The herds' retreat for sleep ; and ev'ry sty  
 Its fifty sows (that in the mire itself  
 Delight to couch) contain'd ;—the females, they,           25  
 For breeding kept : but—a far smaller herd,—  
 Beyond th' enclosure lodg'd, slept all the males :  
 Fewer, indeed ; for those the despot throng  
 Of suitors, as they ate, made less and less ;  
 The swineherd ever out of that sleek stock           30  
 The fat and best surrend'ring :—Yet, of these  
 Three hundred and thrice twenty number'd he.  
 Hereto contiguous station'd slept four dogs,  
 The aspect bearing of wild savage beasts,  
 But, by Eumæus bred.

Now, he, himself,           35
 (An ox-hide measuring out, of beauteous tint,)  
 A sandal from the cuttings aptly form'd  
 To either foot was shaping : Other hands,  
 His helpers, each with sep'rate duties charg'd,  
 Had forward gone :—three with the grazing swine ;   40  
 The fourth into the city sent,—a sow  
 For the presumptuous suitors, by constraint,  
 There to deliver ; that in sacrifice  
 They to their full content on flesh might feast.  
 But, suddenly, as, ever on the bark,           45  
 Those dogs Ulysses saw, with outcry loud  
 They tow'rds him rush'd ; but, he, with wary thought,  
 At once sate down, and from his hand let fall  
 The staff he held : yet, still, might he some harm  
 Which ill would have beseem'd him, even here       50  
 Have thus encounter'd,—here, in his own folds !

Had not Eumæus with swift-flying feet  
 Through the porch entry rush'd, and on his Prince  
 Immediate follow'd, as the bullock's hide,  
 Whereon at work he sate, fell from his hands. 55  
 Then, all his dogs rebuking, he with throw  
 Most lavish of loose stones the brutes beat off,  
 In various roads dispersing them; and then  
 The prince he thus address'd :—" O agèd man !  
 With such a sudden onset those four dogs 60  
 Had well nigh kill'd thee ; and upbraidings stern  
 Hadst thou upon me heap'd : although the gods  
 Have other griefs and pangs into my lot  
 Already cast ; for, here hold I my seat,  
 A godlike prince's fate to wail and mourn, 65  
 And these sleek herds' condition to maintain  
 For strangers to devour ; while, haply, he  
 A mere subsistence craving among tribes  
 And towns of alien race is roaming far—  
 If he, indeed, as yet survives, the light 70  
 Of day beholding ! But, come, follow me,  
 And to my herdsman's cot repair, old man !  
 That there, with ample meat and wine content,  
 Thy tale thou may'st narrate, from whence thou cam'st,  
 And all the sorrows of the past detail." 75

Thus speaking, the good swineherd to his cot  
 The pathway took, and when he now within  
 His stranger guest had led, he bade him sit,  
 And 'neath him certain cuttings from the shrubs  
 In order rang'd, and over these the skin 80  
 Of a wild shaggy goat ; a couch to form  
 In breadth and depth capacious. And at heart

Ulysses joy'd, for that his swineherd thus  
 With welcome had receiv'd him, and these words  
 Hereat he spoke : " O Stranger ! May great Jove      85  
 And all th' immortal gods the dearest wish  
 Accord thee of thy heart ; for that thou hast  
 This cordial welcome granted me." Whereto  
 Eumæus, in these words replying, spake :—

" O stranger ! 'Twere a wrongful act of mine,      90  
 Ev'n should a wretch more hapless than thyself  
 Before me come, on such a stranger's claim  
 To cast contempt : for ev'ry one Unknown  
 And ev'ry Mendicant from Jove Himself  
 His claim prefers. But, small indeed though kind      95  
 Are our donations all ; as is the wont  
 Of serving men who in misgivings live  
 Continual, when young masters rule supreme.  
 For, of a truth, the gods have the return  
 Of him long thwarted, who with warm regard      100  
 Once favour'd me, and with substantial gifts  
 Ere now would have endow'd me ; such, indeed,  
 As a good master to the servant gives  
 Who hath long serv'd him, (and upon whose toil  
 God from on high hath kindly increase giv'n)      105  
 A dwelling of his own,—a plot of land—  
 And such a wife as many a one would woo :  
 Not but that here the work on which my day  
 Of life is spent augments alike and thrives.  
 Thus, had he here grown old,—my master, too,      110  
 My lot would have enrich'd. But, he is gone !  
 And truly might I wish that Helen's race  
 Had all and utterly extinct become,

Who multitudes of men to death consign'd :  
 For, he, too, for king Agamemnon's fame 115  
 To Ilium went,—that stud of matchless steeds—  
 To War's encounter with the hosts of Troy."

Thus having spoken, he his swineherd's cloak  
 In haste about him girt, and to the styes  
 With hurrying steps betook him, where the young 120  
 Of all the sows were litter'd, and herefrom  
 Having two chosen, to his cot he led,  
 And there, as sacrifices, slaughter'd both.  
 Then, having scalded and in portions carv'd,  
 On spits he fix'd them : and, when all was roast, 125  
 Hot from the spits he carried ev'ry piece  
 And by Ulysses placed it. Then, white meal  
 Upon the flesh he strew'd, and in a cup  
 Of ivy-wood the racy wine he mix'd,  
 And face to face before the Chieftain sate, 130  
 With this address exhorting him :—" Eat, now,  
 O Stranger, of the swine which we in store  
 For all the household at the Palace keep ;  
 But, on the fatten'd swine the suitors feast,  
 Who neither for that future which their deeds 135  
 Must in due time avenge, or for the claims  
 Of pity take one thought. The blessed gods  
 No favour to flagitious-acts concede ;  
 But to all honour, rectitude, and deeds  
 That piety in mortal men bespeak : 140  
 Ev'n open enemies and men of wills  
 Implacable, who on some alien coast  
 Invaders land, and unto whom great Jove  
 Hath spoil therefrom allotted, and who thus



Their ships have laded, and each homeward turn'd, 145  
 Ev'n among these, I say, a certain sense  
 Of retribution that shall come, prevails,  
 And no light dread withal. Now, even these,  
 These suitors, have some inkling gain'd, or voice  
 Of some god heard, as to my master's fate 150  
 And piteous end ; for, with no upright suit  
 Woo they my mistress ; neither to their homes  
 Consent they to return ; but, unrestrain'd,  
 With despot insolence my master's stores  
 And worldly means they ravage and consume, 155  
 And all is reckless, unreflecting waste !  
 Let pass what number may of nights and days  
 (By Jove's permission ending and begun),  
 One victim, (nay, nor two) will not suffice  
 For them as slaughter'd victims to destroy :— 160  
 And, for his wine—to never ceasing loss,  
 By rude and careless drawing of it off,  
 They subject it. And, yet, his means of life  
 Enormous were. No hero of them all,  
 Whether of dark Epirus, or the isle 165  
 Of Ithaca itself such treasure hath.  
 Not twice ten owners with their blended all  
 Such affluence can boast : but, to thine ear  
 Will I the sum detail :—Upon main land  
 Twelve herds he hath : Of sheep, as many flocks : 170  
 Of swine, the same : And strangers in his pay,  
 And shepherds, a like multitude of goats  
 In pasture tend. Eleven of these flocks,  
 Each very large, upon the point extreme  
 Of grazing land are fed ; and worthy men 175  
 Are they who overlook them : day by day

Each homeward brings a goat, whichever seems  
 In all those herds best fatten'd. But, these swine  
 Watch I and tend myself: and, of the best  
 Selection making, to that suitor train 180  
 I send it straight."

Ev'n thus Eumæus spake,  
 And rav'nously did Ulysses of the meat  
 Before him eat, and with a vehement draught  
 Drank down the proffer'd wine, but mute remain'd,  
 And in the deep recesses of his soul 185  
 A scheme of vengeance fram'd which on the crowd  
 Of suitors should alight. But, when his meal  
 Eumæus had now ended, and his strength  
 With food refresh'd, he, when the selfsame cup  
 From which he drank was to the brim re-fill'd, 190  
 The wine to his guest proffer'd, who with joy  
 The draught accepted, and with rapid words  
 His host address'd: "My friend! who is the lord  
 In wealth and influence eminent who thus,  
 As thou the tale recountest, hath thyself 195  
 With his dominions purchas'd? This thou saidst,  
 That in king Agamemnon's glory's cause  
 He lost his life: Now, tell me—for the chance  
 Of my this man already having known  
 Whom thou thus sett'st before me. Haply Jove 200  
 And all the other gods this full well know  
 That if I have beheld him I could now  
 Some tidings give thee of him; for, in climes  
 Unnumber'd have my lengthsome wand'rings been."

To this the swineherd, instant in reply, 205

These words return'd : " Old man ! In vain would one  
 Who after world-wide roaming should arrive  
 With tidings of our prince, his wife or son  
 Endeavour to convince. Mere loiterers  
 That in sheer want of victual vagrant stroll, 210  
 Yet to be messengers of truth disdain,  
 To lies at random fain would utt'rance give :  
 Of these, whoever, having long time rov'd,  
 Among the folk of Ithaca sets foot  
 Forthwith my mistress seeks, and in her ear 215  
 Some fresh imposture mutters : Whereat she  
 With kindly welcome greets him, and the whole  
 Of this deliver'd narrative perpend,  
 Till from her flooding eyes the teardrops fall,  
 As of that woman's life a usage is 220  
 Whose husband in a distant land has fall'n.  
 Nay, haply, even thou thyself, old man !  
 Some tale would'st forge, if any for thy wear  
 A cloak would give thee and close fitting vest !  
 But, no : the dogs and many a swift-wing'd bird 225  
 Have but too surely from his body's bones  
 Their cov'ring torn ; and life hath fled from him !  
 Or, fishes have his carcase in the sea,  
 May be, devour'd ;—and his denuded frame  
 In mounds of sand envelop'd lies on shore. 230  
 Thus, far from hence hath he to fate succumb'd ;  
 And heavy woe is in the future stor'd  
 For all who love him ; above all, for me :  
 For, never more, wherever I may turn,  
 Shall I another master, so benign, 235  
 So gentle, find ! no, not if to the house  
 My steps I were to bend where in this world

I first drew vital breath, and where still dwell  
 My father and my mother, whose joint care  
 My nourishment supplied : not that for these 240  
 Such deep regret I cherish, although fain  
 Would I once more on my parental soil  
 Gaze with these eyes upon them : but the grief  
 With which the lost Ulysses I deplore  
 Fills my whole heart. And though here, on this spot, 245  
 He standeth not, O Stranger ! a deep sense  
 Of reverential homage o'er me comes  
 While I his name pronounce : for wondrous love  
 He bore me ever, and in all his thoughts  
 My welfare he perpended ; for which cause, 250  
 However distant be our sep'rate lots,  
 'My elder brother' I Ulysses call !"

To this the noble, long-enduring Chief,  
 Ulysses, thus replied :—" My friend ! since thou  
 With utter unbelief my speech receiv'st— 255  
 Since not a single thought thou cherishest  
 That this return shall ever be,—and faith  
 Thy mind herein hath none,—not only this  
 Will I declare, but with an oath affirm,  
 That on his way Ulysses hither speeds : 260  
 And my good tidings do thou thus requite—  
 When once again within his own good house  
 He shall set foot, do thou, in that same hour,  
 Becoming raiment round me throw ;—a cloak  
 And vest withal : But, not ere this shall be 265  
 Will I, however urgent be my need,  
 Such garb accept ; for, he who to his want  
 Succumbing would the speech of guile employ

By me is loath'd as I the portals would  
 Of Hell itself detest. But, now, may Jove 270  
 Of Gods supreme bear witness,—and the board  
 Of this thy hospitality, and the hearth  
 Of unimpeach'd Ulysses, upon which  
 I here am standing—of a surety all,  
 As I am now to thee declaring it, 275  
 Shall come to pass : aye, in this very year  
 Ulysses will return ! This month will end,—  
 The next will open on us, and his home  
 Shall he then repossess, and full revenge  
 On that man wreak whoever in this land 280  
 Would contumely upon his consort fling,  
 Or on his honour'd son.”

To all which words  
 Didst thou, Eumæus, this rejoinder make :—  
 “ Old man ! for all such welcome tidings ne'er  
 Shall I the recompense thou namest pay : 285  
 Ne'er to his home Ulysses cometh more !  
 Drink on, and let our converse upon themes  
 From this far diff'rent dwell ; and to my mind  
 Recall the past no more : for, all my heart  
 Within me 'gins to sorrow, speak who will 290  
 Of my much-honour'd prince. The oath thou nam'st  
 We will abandon. Let Ulysses come  
 As 'tis my wish he may ; aye, and the wish  
 Of his Penelope, his agèd sire  
 Laertes, and high-soul'd Telemachus, 295  
 And now for him, anew, (the only son  
 Ulysses hath,) my heart is deeply griev'd :  
 For, like some tender scion did the gods

That offspring cherish! And my speech it was  
 That, noble as he show'd, in mind and parts 300  
 No less endow'd than his lov'd father was,  
 Would he among his fellowmen be found.  
 But, some immortal god, or some mere man,  
 His steadfast mind has driv'n distract, for now  
 Is he to holy Pylos Island gone 305  
 Fresh tidings of his father's fate to seek;  
 And those presumptuous suitors in some coign  
 Of secret watch are lurking, on his life  
 Intent, as he shall homeward bend his course;  
 And this, that all the great Arcesian race 310  
 And ev'n the name thereof from this our isle  
 Of Ithaca may ever be cut off.  
 But, let this pass; and speak no more of him,  
 A captive or far fugitive. May Jove,  
 The son of Saturn, his protecting hand 315  
 Above him deign t' extend! But, come, old man!  
 The tale of thine own suff'rings let me hear:  
 In all good faith inform me, that the truth  
 I thus may learn: Who art thou? From what race  
 Of men descended? Where, upon this earth, 320  
 Standeth thy native city? Where are those  
 To whom thy birth thou owest? In what sort  
 Of vessel cam'st thou hither? And, her crew?  
 How did they to this coast of Ithaca  
 Thy way effect? Their designation, what? 325  
 For, ne'er, methinks, this spot thou gain'dst on foot."

To this acute Ulysses thus replied:—

"Then, with account concise will I all this  
 To thee detail. But, were there at command

Such ample store of food and gen'rous wine 330  
 As might us two for yet long time to come  
 Here in this cot of thine suffice to feed,  
 And each day's leisurely repast afford  
 While those around their sev'ral tasks should ply,  
 I should not even then my tale conclude ; 335  
 No, not if the revolving year pass'd by  
 While I on my afflictions dwelt, and all  
 Which by divine decree I had to brook.

“ My lineage from the tribes of spacious Crete  
 I rightly trace, where of a wealthy man 340  
 I was the son : though many another youth  
 Was in his palace born and bred, the sons  
 Of his own wedded wife : but to myself  
 A concubine gave birth ; one who the place  
 Of mother by my father's purchase fill'd. 345  
 Castor Hylacides, from whom I sprang,  
 In like regard upheld me with his sons  
 Of lawful issue : he, himself, by all  
 Among the Cretans, like some god, esteem'd,  
 So flourishing his fortunes were,—so rich 350  
 Was all his state,—so noble were his sons !  
 Still did Death's doom to Pluto's realms my sire  
 At length consign ; and his high-spirited sons  
 His wealth between them parted, and their shares  
 By lot determin'd ; but, to me, indeed, 355  
 But little, save a house, apportion'd they.  
 Still, on the strength of my acknowledg'd worth,  
 A wife I wedded, such as wealthy men  
 Might well have chosen ; for no empty pride  
 Did I display, nor in the time of war 360

Did I a recreant prove. But, all this, now  
 Availeth me no longer : still, methinks,  
 Thou in the standing stubble wilt discern  
 All that the plant hath been. Distress extreme  
 Hath fixt its hold on me ; yet, time hath been 365  
 When Mars and Pallas all my spirit rous'd  
 To val'rous daring ; prowess which through ranks  
 Resistless rush'd, when from my troop the best  
 Of gallant soldiers I had draughted off  
 From some close covert to waylay our foe 370  
 And sore defeat inflict on him. My thoughts  
 Would never then before my eyes bring death,  
 But evermore the foremost, spear in hand,  
 Upon the hostile front to throw myself,  
 Each foe, as I displaced him, I destroy'd. 375

“ Such was I on the field of fight : Field-work  
 Had never charm for me ; nor, indoor life—  
 Though oft it proves the nursery of the great.  
 My heart was ever in the best-oar'd ships—  
 In warlike expeditions, and in spears 380  
 Of brilliant finish, darts, and implements  
 Of baneful use, from which the gen'ral mind  
 Revolted turns away. But, in mine eyes  
 These most delectable appear'd, and these  
 The Deity himself was evermore 385  
 To my young mind presenting. One man this  
 For his life's energies, another that  
 With ardour chooses. Ere the sons of Greece  
 With hostile expedition sail'd for Troy,  
 Nine times had I o'er troops and gallant fleets 390  
 The chief command 'gainst alien armies held,



And all success attended me. Herefrom  
 'Twas mine to choose the spoil that I preferr'd,  
 And much did I thereafter gain by lot.  
 Thus speedily my house began to thrive, 395  
 And I soon rose to greatness, and the show  
 Of homage 'mid the Cretans I receiv'd.  
 But, when far-seeing Jove his will had bent  
 On that abhorr'd invasion which the thews  
 And sinews of so many hath destroy'd, 400  
 The charge on me was laid and on that chief  
 Renown'd Idomeneus to head the fleet  
 Then bound for Troy: and no device avail'd  
 This service to evade; the popular voice  
 At that time domineering. Nine long years 405  
 We sons of Greece were battling. In the tenth,  
 When Priam's city was in ruins laid,  
 We homeward with our ships set sail; but God  
 The Greeks on ocean scatter'd; and on me  
 The all-wise Jove a grievous fate impos'd: 410  
 For, but for one brief month the joy I felt  
 Of my dear parents' love;—the converse shar'd  
 Of her whom in her youth I made my wife;  
 And on my gains subsisted. Then, my thoughts  
 A voyage prompted to th' Egyptian coast 415  
 With well-trimm'd ships and comrades brave to sail.  
 And nine ships fitted I, and with all speed  
 Were all their crews assembled; and six days  
 These comrades of my choice to feasting gave:  
 For many slaughter'd beasts into their hands 420  
 Deliver'd I, as off'rings to the gods  
 And for their festive board. But, on the sev'nth  
 Crete's ample territory having left

With a brisk Northern wind, right fair, we sail'd,  
As lightly, too, as if the ocean tide 425  
Were with us flowing ; nor, indeed, did one  
Of all my ships a hurt sustain ; but there  
Unharm'd we lay, and from all sickness free,  
The wind, alone, and steersmen guiding us.

“ On the fifth day at that fair-flowing land 430  
Of Egypt we arriv'd, and all my fleet  
In great Ægyptus' river-stream I moor'd,  
And on my lov'd associates laid command  
Close by their fleet to tarry, and each ship  
To haul ashore : fit sentries, too, I placed 435  
On certain points their watch to hold : But they  
To restive impulse yielding, and the bent  
Of their own will enforcing, in brief space  
The loveliest fields of the Egyptians spoil'd,  
Their wives and tender infants carried off 440  
And massacred : and quickly did the cry  
Of suff'ring reach the city, whence the crowd,  
By screams arous'd, at early morn rush'd forth  
Till all the fields around with troops of horse  
And infantry and bright brass panoply 445  
Were overspread ; and then did Jove, whose might  
In thunderbolts rejoiceth, craven fear  
In all my comrades waken, nor did one  
The risen adversary dare to face,  
Beset as from all quarters all our band 450  
That moment were with peril and dismay.  
There with keen sword-blade many of our crews  
Did Egypt's hosts hew down ; and some alive  
They captive took, and to forc'd toil condemn'd.

But, Jove, at length, this project in my mind                   455  
 Began to raise ;—(but, would that on that spot  
 I, too, my death had met, and in the land  
 Of Egypt clos'd my fate ! for, even then,  
 Fresh sufferings awaited me)—my casque  
 From off my head I took, and from my arm                   460  
 My buckler disengag'd, and from my hand  
 My spear cast down, and right before the steeds  
 Of the king's chariot rushing, on his knees  
 I threw myself and kiss'd them : whereupon  
 My rescue he effected, and the sense                   465  
 Of pity show'd, and having by his side  
 Within his chariot placed me, homeward turn'd  
 And thither led me all in tears suffus'd.  
 Ev'n as we went, full many a hostile arm  
 The ashen-shafted spear against me rais'd—                   470  
 Exasp'rate as they were ; and on my life  
 Intent they rush'd upon me, but their king  
 The death-stroke parried, while the wrath of Jove  
 (Protector of the friendless) he rever'd—  
 That god whose anger from all wrongful acts                   475  
 Above all else revolts.

For many years

I there abode, and among Egypt's tribes  
 No slender wealth amass'd ; for none were slow  
 In the bestowal of their gifts. But when  
 The eighth year's course began, a certain man,                   480  
 Phœnician born, before me came ; in wiles  
 Deep skill'd, a greedy knave, whose art  
 Abundant mischief among men had wrought,  
 And now by shrewdness overcoming me

From Egypt's shores withdrew me, and at length      485  
 Phœnicia reach'd where his domestic hearth  
 And all his substance lay. With him a year  
 Entire I liv'd; but, when the months and days  
 Their course had run, and the revolving year  
 A new career began, and, in their turn,      490  
 The seasons reappear'd, my passage he  
 In a sea-going bark to Libya bound  
 Would fain suggest, that I with him for sale  
 A cargo might convey: whereas, the scheme  
 Was but one hollow trick, whereby myself      495  
 He might on board that ship to Libya bear  
 And into slav'ry at huge profit sell!

“ In that same ship I sail'd with him, although  
 My mind was then misgiving me. Her course  
 Before a brisk and fair North wind she kept      500  
 Till midway passage beyond Crete we reach'd:  
 And then did Jove their final doom decree:—  
 For, when we now had left the isle, and land  
 No longer, but the sky and sea  
 Alone to eyes were visible, the son      505  
 Of Saturn a grey cloud above the ship  
 In air o'erhung, beneath whose gloom the sea  
 In darkness lay. Jove, with continual crash  
 Thunder'd on high, and on that merchant-ship  
 A bolt of light'ning hurl'd, and halfway round      510  
 By Jove's flash struck she reel'd, and with the fume  
 Of sulphur instant fill'd; and ev'ry man  
 From off her deck into the billows dropp'd.  
 Like sea-birds on the wave around the hull  
 There were they toss'd; but all return to them      515

The god denied, yet right into my grasp,  
 In all the anguish of my mind, did Jove  
 The yet unshiver'd floating mast direct  
 That I might yet be sav'd! Here holding fast,  
 O'er the great deep by the death-dealing winds 520  
 Was I transported. For nine days I thus  
 O'er billows drove, but in the tenth dark night  
 A huge convolving wave roll'd drifting on  
 To th' shore of the Thesprotians. There the king,  
 The hero Pheidon, the entire free gift 525  
 Of welcome on me lavish'd; for, his son,  
 As drawing nigh he found me by the cold  
 And struggling quite o'ercome, with aiding hand  
 Uprais'd me, and my leading guide became  
 Until the mansion of his sire he reach'd. 530  
 And there for raiment he around me threw  
 A mantle and a vest. And in this home  
 I mention of Ulysses heard: for he,  
 Pheidon, affirm'd that he his host had been  
 And a warm welcome on the guest bestow'd 535  
 To his own land returning. Hereupon  
 The treasure heap he show'd me,—brass and gold  
 And polish'd steel which, gath'ring for his own,  
 Ulysses had amass'd: and any home  
 To the tenth generation might that wealth 540  
 Have well maintain'd; such store of it there lay  
 In the king's palace hoarded. But that chief,  
 He said, was to Dodona gone, advice  
 Celestial to solicit from the Oak.  
 Of Jove, whose top in crested foliage tow'rs, 545  
 His voyage to direct, as now again,  
 By public entry or by screen'd approach,

The wealthy citizens of Ithaca,  
So long time exil'd, he would fain rejoin.

“ Then, on his hearth libation having made, 550  
He, on an oath, assur'd me that the ship  
Was from the shore thrust forth, and all its crew  
To prompt attendance held who should the Chief  
Conduct to his lov'd fatherland. But me  
He first despatch'd ; for a Thesprotian keel 555  
By chance was to Dulichium bound, the land  
In wheaten crops abounding : and command  
To that ship's crew he gave with escort prompt  
To lead me to the king Acastus' court.  
But, that to all past sorrows some fresh source 560  
Of suffering might be added, a base plot  
These men's minds enter'd thus to deal with me :—  
As soon as our sea-going ship a point  
From land remote had reach'd, that instant they  
To days of Slav'ry doom'd me. Upon this, 565  
My mantle and my vest—my raiment all—  
They took from me, and round my body flung  
In lieu thereof these tatters and this strip  
Of merest rags which thou with thine own eyes  
Art at this moment gazing on. That night 570  
Off the till'd lands of Western Ithaca  
They laid their ship, in which, with a stout rope,  
They tightly bound me down, and then to shore  
Betook themselves, and in all haste a meal  
Upon the shingle ate. But gods they were 575  
Who without effort all my fetters loos'd ;  
And then when I a strip about my brows  
In folds had bound, through the smooth rudder's length

I glided down, and to the briny flood  
 My breast committed, and with outstretch'd hands      580  
 The waters cleft, and swam ; and in brief space  
 The station I had quitted—from their place  
 Of landing now far distant ; But my steps  
 Into the copse of a free blossoming wood  
 Upled me, where, upon my breast laid flat,      585  
 Awhile I paus'd ; they, all the time, with moans  
 Their loss bewailing, though no good they judg'd  
 From further search could come : whereat again  
 On board they went. But, without effort made,  
 The gods thus screen'd me, and, from that retreat      590  
 Down guiding me, my steps have thus far led  
 That to this shelt'ring station I might come,  
 And reach a wise and understanding man :—  
 For, Fate so wills it,—I am still to live ! ”

To this, Eumæus, did'st thou thus reply :—      595  
 “ Most hapless of all strangers ! In my mind  
 Strong feelings hast thou rous'd, while thou thy tale  
 Hast at such length narrated : Such distress  
 Hast thou endur'd ! Thy wanderings so long !  
 But, still, methinks, the statements thou hast made      600  
 Cohere not well ; no, nor will all thou say'st  
 Of great Ulysses' fate my mind convince.  
 Becomes it thee, considering who thou art,  
 To speak thus recklessly, and idly lie ?  
 As to my prince's safe return, of this      605  
 I fully conscious am that he the hate  
 Of all the gods incur'd, for that they fail'd  
 To bow his spirit among Trojan foes  
 Or by the hands of traitor friends, when he

BOOK XIV.]	<i>HOMER'S ODYSSEY.</i>	45
Alone wound up the heavy task of War.		610
Then would all Greece have rear'd on high his tomb, And glorious fame had he achiev'd ;—renown That to his son in ages yet unborn Should have descended. But, by Harpies, now, Of all the honour wrong'd that should be his,		615
Hath he been torn away. Myself, indeed, From men withdrawn, among these swine abide ; Nor ever to the city visit make Save when discreet Penelope, as news From any quarter reaches her, may chance		620
To urge my going. But, the crowds that throng His palace-courts continual question ask— Both they who our long-exil'd prince lament, And they whose hearts exult while all his wealth (As yet unreach'd by vengeance) they consume.		625
Yet, for my part, no joy have I deriv'd From eager seeking and from question ask'd, From that day forth on which by forg'd report A native of Ætolia play'd me false, Who stated that, upon the death of one		630
By his hand slain, he over many a realm Had wander'd wide, and thus my dwelling reach'd. With sedulous zeal I welcom'd him. He said He saw Ulysses with Idomeneus Upon the isle of Crete, where he his ships		635
Shiver'd by storms was tarrying to refit. His tale was that Ulysses there declar'd That, in the summer days or autumn-tide, With many a gather'd treasure, and with bands Of noble comrades, home would he return.		640
And now, do thou, old man, in sorrow vers'd !		



For that the deity to this retreat  
 Thy steps hath led, seek not with feign'd accounts  
 To gladden me, nor my belief beguile ;  
 For, on that ground regard nor welcome none           645  
 Wilt thou from me e'er win : my sole constraint  
 Would Jove then be, who round the stranger throws  
 His guardian care ; and that mere pity's dole  
 Which, haply, is thy due."

Hereon, the Chief

In many a counsel apt, Ulysses, spoke :—           650  
 " An unbelieving mind hast thou, indeed !  
 By no sworn oath have I inveigled thee,  
 Nor would I sway thee now. But, come, this pact  
 Let us alternate frame, and may the gods  
 Th' Olympian realms inhabiting to both           655  
 Their witness bear ! If to this house of thine  
 Thy sov'reign lord shall come,—then, with a cloak  
 And vest, as my apparel, to the isle  
 Dulichium send me (where I fain would be) ;  
 But, if thy prince arrive not, as my words           660  
 Are now affirming, give thy servants charge  
 From a steep rock to fling me, that henceforth  
 Each coming beggar may the deed eschew  
 Of trying to cajole."

The swineherd thus

In turn rejoin'd : " O Stranger ! High renown           665  
 And worth, indeed, among all men at large  
 Would in that case be mine to win, in time  
 Then current, and in years that must ensue—  
 That I, when underneath this home-stall's roof

I had receiv'd thee and with welcome hail'd,      670  
 Should afterwards a murd'rous onslaught make,  
 And rob thee of thy very life! How prompt  
 Should then my deprecating pray'r, if thus  
 I could transgress, to Saturn's son ascend!  
 But, lo! for our repast the time draws nigh;      675  
 And those who here my occupations share  
 Will speedily come in, that in the cot  
 They may an ample ev'ning meal prepare."

Such intercourse of kindly speech they held.  
 And now the swine approach'd, and they, withal,      680  
 Who fed them, and whose care it was to close  
 Within their wonted sleeping place the herds.  
 And such a grunt arose from all those swine  
 Their styes re-entering as tongue of man  
 Could ill describe; but, to his fellow hinds      685  
 Eumæus these few words address'd:—"The best  
 Of all those swine bring hither, that the beast  
 I may in sacrificial slaughter kill,  
 And to my guest here offer, who from far  
 A wanderer is come. And we, ourselves,      690  
 Hereon may well regale, on whom the charge  
 Of all these white-tusk'd swine hath heavy lain  
 And no brief labour cost us; while there are  
 Who all the fruit of our perpetual toil  
 Are, unrestrain'd, devouring." As he spake,      695  
 With temper'd steel a billet log he clave,  
 And, presently, the herds a huge fat sow  
 Of five years' growth led in, and on the hearth  
 At once a standing made for it: nor then  
 Of all the rev'rence to the immortals due      700

Did that swineherd (right-minded as he was)  
 Oblivious prove, but, first fruits offering,  
 The hair from off the victim's head he pluck'd  
 And to the fire consign'd, and all the gods  
 In pray'r invok'd that shrewd Ulysses might 705  
 His home regain. Then, with the oaken brand  
 Uplifted (which he clave) the sow he smote,  
 And life was momentarily extinct. They next  
 The throat incis'd, and all the bristles singed ;  
 And with all speed the carcase was cut up. 710  
 The swineherd then upon the luscious fat  
 The cruder portions placed, from ev'ry side  
 Beginning with the limbs : some fragments, too,  
 Sprinkling with flour he on the embers cast :  
 The remnants they cut small, and on the spits 715  
 Adroitly fix'd and roasted and drew off.  
 Then upon boards the mass entire they rang'd,  
 And to his feet Eumæus rose, (whose mind  
 For all that now was due was taking thought)  
 The joints and flesh to sever ; and as thus 720  
 He carving stood, the whole in seven parts  
 He now apportion'd : one, upon a vow,  
 He to the Nymphs and Mercury assign'd  
 The son of Maia ; and to all around  
 The residue he handed : but his guest 725  
 Ulysses with the white-tusk'd sow's long chine  
 He, as of special courtesy, supplied,  
 And caus'd his princely spirit to rejoice ;  
 So that from that for ever fertile mind  
 These thoughts in words found utt'rance ;—" May'st thou be  
 To father Jove as dear as thou by me 731  
 Art at this moment held, who all this good

On such a being as in thy regards  
I must appear, hast with all rev'rence heap'd !"

But thus didst thou, Eumæus, in few words 735  
Make answer :—" Eat ! thou guest of mine, whose soul  
No earthly spirit testifies ! With all  
That now before thee lieth make good cheer !  
The deity one boon may grant, and one  
Withhold, as to his judgment seemeth best ; 740  
For is he not omnipotent !" He spake ;  
And to the gods the primal off'rings made,  
And, having of the wine libations pour'd,  
He in Ulysses' hands, (e'en those of him  
Who many a city had in overthrow 745  
Destructive laid,) the brimming goblet plac'd,  
And near his portion his own station took.  
Then did Mesaulius at that board their bread  
To each present,—he whom, of his own thought,  
(And to Laertes and the queen unknown) 750  
Eumæus, when his prince was far away,  
Had as a bondsman taken. His own means  
Of certain Taphians bought him. And on all  
That on the table spread before them lay  
Did they now lay their hand ; but, when no more 755  
For wine or viands they began to care,  
Mesaulius the feast's remains withdrew ;—  
And with abundant bread and flesh content  
They soon to bedward hasten'd. But the night  
Untoward, with a clouded moon, drew on, 760  
And through its darkling hours downpouring show'rs  
From Jove in Heaven fell, and that West wind,  
Whose blast the sure precursor proves of rain,

Began to rage ; and, while it yet blew hard,  
 Ulysses call'd to those around, as though 765  
 The swineherd he would prove, and for himself  
 Eumæus' mantle borrow,—if, indeed,  
 He would the cov'ring lend, or of some hind  
 That serv'd him there the like petition make ;  
 For, with but only a too sedulous zeal 770  
 The swineherd had befriended him : And thus  
 Ulysses 'gan to speak :—

“ Hear, now, the words,  
 Eumæus ! and all you who with him serve !  
 To which, although to vaunt I may appear,  
 I must give utt'rance ; for that crazing wine 775  
 Has set me on, which oft the wisest man  
 Ere now hath stirr'd up into noisy song,  
 Or into burst of friv'lous laughter thrown,  
 Nay, even rous'd to dancing, or some speech  
 Impulsive prompted, which 'twere better far 780  
 Had ne'er been utter'd. But, since now at length  
 This outcry I have made, what more remain's  
 To tell you I withhold not. Would that I  
 Were still in youthful prime, and that my pow'rs  
 Were now as then robust, when 'neath the walls 785  
 Of Ilion I a secret sally plann'd  
 And headed, too : Ulysses and the son  
 Of Atreus, Menelaus, took the lead,  
 And, as a third, I also held command ;  
 For this of me they ask'd. And when the town 790  
 And its high tow'ring ramparts we had reach'd,  
 We in dense shrubs around the bulwarks lay,  
 And among bulrushes and swamps crept close

Upon our weapons resting, night the while  
 With dire disasters having gather'd round, and wind 795  
 With freezing rigour blowing from the North ;  
 Snow overhead impending—and a rime  
 Of cold intense, so that about our shields  
 The ice encrusted lay. Now, in that band  
 Each man his mantle and due raiment wore 800  
 And tranquil slept, and with their bucklers all  
 Their shoulders had well cover'd. I alone  
 When with my comrades I went forth, no cold  
 Extreme like this surmising, had my cloak  
 Unwisely left behind, and on I went 805  
 With my shield only and a glossy belt  
 Accoutred ; but, when now the night one third  
 Had well nigh wasted, and the stars had set,  
 I to Ulysses spoke, who near me lay,  
 And with my elbow stirr'd him ; but, his ear 810  
 Was prompt to hearken, and my words were these :—

“ ‘ O thou in counsel ever ready ! Son  
 Of aged Laertes ! not much longer space  
 Of time shall I 'mid living men be found ;  
 For, this chill air is killing me : no cloak 815  
 Have I to wear : some god on me this guile  
 Hath practis'd, that with this sole tunic clad  
 I here should be : but, help for it is none !'  
 I ceas'd to speak ; but, he without demur  
 On this expedient lighted ;—so alert 820  
 Was he at all times to advise or fight !  
 And in an undertone he thus replied :—

“ ‘ Remain thou mute ; lest any Greek at hand

Thy voice o'erhear.' So murmur'd he, and then,  
His head upon his elbow resting, thus 825  
Aloud exclaim'd :—

' Attend to me, my friends !

A heav'n-sent dream hath on my slumbers stol'n :  
Far are we from our ships : let one of you  
To Agamemnon, son of Atreus, speed  
(The pastor of his people,) that command 830  
He may this instant issue for more men  
To join us from the fleet.' Such were his words,  
And, all alacrity, Andremon's son,  
Thoas, upstarting to his feet, his cloak  
Of purple hue threw down, and to the fleet 835  
Began to run ; and with no little glee  
Did I the while, till golden-thronèd morn  
Again shone forth, within that raiment lie !  
Oh ! that I were this moment young as then !  
Would that my vigour were as then robust ! 840  
For, then, some herd that in this home-stall serves  
His cloak would offer ; for twain reasons, too—  
From impulse of mere kindness—, and the sense  
Of det'rance owing to the man I am :  
But, as it is, while this vile garb around 845  
My body hangs, they view me with mere scorn.'

" But, to this speech Eumæus thus in turn  
Responsive spake :—' Old man ! In all thy tale  
Thyself art irreproachable, nor word  
Of idle import or to right oppos'd 850  
Have thy lips utter'd. For which cause, no vest  
Shalt thou for this time want, or aught else miss

Which should the wants of such a suppliant meet,  
 Who in keen suff'rings hath been tried, and thus  
 Entreaty makes ; but, at return of morn, 855  
 Thou thine own tatters must perforce resume ;  
 For, changes num'rous of such cloaks and clothes  
 For men to don we have not : one alone  
 Here have we for each man : But, when that son  
 Whom well Ulysses loveth shall return, 860  
 He, of his own accord, will for thy wear  
 A mantle and close-fitting vest bestow,  
 And to such place despatch thee as thy wish  
 May urge thee first to visit." With these words  
 Eumæus to his feet at once upsprang, 865  
 And near the embers on the hearth a couch  
 In order rang'd, and hides of sheep and goats  
 Upon it flung : and there Ulysses lay—  
 And over him a mantle thick and wide  
 The swineherd cast, which, should a flooding rain 870  
 Tremendous fall, might timely change supply.

Thus, in that cot Ulysses slept, and near  
 Slumber'd the youthful herdsmen ; but, no couch  
 From all his herded swine so distant placed  
 Eumæus would content ; and, stepping out, 875  
 He certain weapons chose, at sight of which  
 Ulysses' heart was gladden'd, thus to mark  
 How, when himself was distant deem'd, such zeal  
 His substance was protecting. A keen blade  
 Eumæus round his brawny shoulders slung, 880  
 And a stout, close, compactly woven cloak  
 From the rude blast to screen him, with the wool  
 Of a huge, high-fed goat, he round him threw,



And a well sharpen'd lance he grasp'd, from dogs  
Or men to hold him harmless. Thus array'd 885  
He sallied forth, that where the white-tusk'd swine  
Beneath a cavern,—from the Northern gale  
Securely shelter'd—lay, he too might lie. 888

END OF THE FOURTEENTH BOOK.

## BOOK XV.

**H**ER way, meanwhile, to Sparta's ample site  
Pallas Minerva sped, the noble son  
Of great Ulysses to remind ;—to prompt  
His voyage home ; and urge a quick return.  
And there Telemachus and Nestor's son 5  
In the guest chamber of the entrance hall  
Of Menelaus' home she found reclin'd.  
The son of Nestor in repose most sweet  
Unconscious lay : no sleep Telemachus,  
That night, subdued ; for, through its heav'n-sent hours, 10  
His anxious mind with many a heavy thought  
His absent father's destiny revolv'd :  
And Pallas, as beside his couch she stood,  
Thus 'gan to speak :—" Telemachus ! No more  
Will it avail thee, through so many days 15  
From thine own home thus absent, to remain  
A wanderer ;—in that palatial house  
At once thy treasures leaving, and a crowd  
Of proud presumptuous ones ; lest they in lots  
That wealth dividing should at length disperse, 20

And thou a thriftless voyage shalt have made.  
 Now, with all speed great Menelaus urge—  
 (That chief in fight so valiant!—) that forthwith  
 He from this port dispatch thee ; that at home  
 Thine unoffending mother thou may'st find : 25  
 Now that her father and her brothers urge  
 Her nuptials with Eurymachus,—ev'n him  
 Who all his rivals in resplendent gifts  
 Exceeds, and, in those off'rings which to brides  
 All suitors make, a lavish increase adds. 30  
 Well may'st thou dread lest from that princely home  
 Some portion of its wealth, in spite of thee,  
 Withdrawn should be. Nor unobserv'd of thee  
 Is this strong impulse in a woman's mind ;—  
 Her aim it is the house to elevate 35  
 Of him who shall her consort be ; but, thought  
 From that time forth for any offspring born  
 To her first husband, or for him to whom  
 Her maiden troth was given—(him now dead—)  
 She taketh none, nor of his destiny 40  
 Aught question asketh she ! Go, now, thyself,  
 And from thy household the most trusty choose,  
 And all that thou possessest to her hands  
 At once confide ; until before thine eyes  
 The gods a worthy wife at length shall bring. 45

“ But, more than this must I disclose ; and this  
 Perpend thou well :—Of all that suitor throug  
 The leaders at this moment eager watch,  
 In secret covert to surprise thee, keep,  
 'Twixt Ithaca and rugged Samos' isle, 50  
 Upon thy death intent, ere on the soil

Of thy paternal land thou set thy foot :  
 But, this, methinks, shall never be : The earth  
 Will sooner certain of those suitors claim  
 Who all thy means are wasting. From the isle 55  
 Steer thy good ship aloof ; and in the night  
 Spread thou thy sails, and some immortal god  
 (Whoe'er thy champion and deliv'rer be !)  
 Shall on thy stern propitious breezes waft.  
 But, when thou first on the Ithacian shore 60  
 Thy landing shalt accomplish, to the town  
 Thy ship and all its crew with haste dispatch,  
 And first the Herd seek out who of thy swine  
 The keeper is ;—who with a genial soul  
 Affecteth thee. Beneath his roof that night 65  
 Take thou thy rest, and bid him hereupon  
 The city visit, that Penelope  
 He may apprize of thee from Pylos' isle  
 Securely landed and in safety lodg'd.”

Thus having spoken, to Olympus' height 70  
 Her course she sped ; but, from his gentle sleep  
 Telemachus the son of Nestor wak'd,  
 As with his heel he touch'd him, and these words  
 In the same moment spake :—“ Pisistratus !  
 Thou son of Nestor, rise ! and, bringing out 75  
 Thy strong-hoof'd coursers, to the chariot's yoke  
 Attach them that we may our journey speed.”

But, unto this Pisistratus, the son  
 Of Nestor, answer made :—“ Telemachus !  
 However this our journey we may urge, 80  
 Through the dark night we cannot drive : but, morn

Will soon be breaking : rest awhile, at least,  
 Until that hero, on whose spear the fame  
 Of battle rests, Atrides Menelaus—  
 Of sundry gifts a donor—shall them all 85  
 Within yon chariot stow, and many a speech  
 Of cordial kindness adding, shall us both  
 Upon our journey speed. Throughout his life,  
 A guest the gen'rous man should keep in mind  
 Who to his home hath welcom'd him."

He spoke, 90

And Morning on her golden throne anew  
 In light return'd ; and Menelaus, bold  
 And brave in fields of fight, was from his couch  
 And from the fair-hair'd Helen's side upris'n,  
 And now approach'd his guests ; but, when the son 95  
 Of great Ulysses saw him, the brave youth  
 A glossy tunic with all haste drew on,  
 And o'er his manly shoulders a broad cloak  
 Enfolding, through the chamber-door went forth,  
 And thus his host address'd :—" O Menelaus ! 100  
 The son of Atreus ! thou, whom Jove himself  
 Hath cherish'd,—of thy people Chieftain nam'd !  
 Speed me, I pray thee, to that well-lov'd spot,  
 My fatherland ; for, to regain that home  
 My heart within me yearns."

To which appeal 105

That valiant warrior Menelaus thus :—  
 " Telemachus ! a ling'ring space of time  
 I will not here detain thee, thy return  
 So ardently desiring. With reproach

Should I the host upbraid who to his guests                      110  
 A welcome gave, and with extreme regard  
 One should esteem ;—another fiercely hate !  
 Those acts which to strict equity conform  
 Are worthiest ever : and the selfsame wrong  
 Doth he commit who from his home would drive                      115  
 The guest who fain would linger there,—with him  
 Who stays the man that on his way would speed.  
 And graceful is it, on a guest receiv'd  
 All friendliness to lavish ;—and to one,  
 Who fain would leave us, with a ready will                      120  
 To proffer means of quitting. But, do thou  
 With me here tarry until splendid gifts  
 I shall have brought, and on the chariot rang'd,  
 That here thine eyes may view them : and command  
 Will I unto our handmaids give, a meal                      125  
 In our palatial hall to spread : so much  
 As stores within, at present, may supply.  
 It wakens courage and a merry heart,  
 And a refreshing stay is it, on meats  
 To sit and feast ere on a lengthsome route,                      130  
 The bounds of which they know not, trav'lers start.  
 But, if through Hellas and the central point  
 Of Argos thou would'st now thy progress shape,  
 I will myself thine escort be : my steeds  
 Shall to their yoke be harness'd, and the homes                      135  
 Of men and cities shalt thou look upon,  
 Not one of whom without a parting gift  
 Will from their coasts dismiss us, but some pledge  
 To bear away will bring,—a tripod, say,  
 Of brazen work, a caldron, or two mules,                      140  
 Or a gold cup."

But, thus, in sage reply,  
 Telemachus :—" O Menelaus ! son  
 Of Atreus, cherish'd one of Jove himself,  
 Great leader of thy people ! Fain would I  
 To my own house return ; for, when that home 145  
 I quitted, no protector left I there  
 My own to care for, lest, while thus my sire—  
 That godlike man !—I seek, myself on death,  
 May be, should rush ; or, treasure of great price  
 Should, in the palace stolen, from my hands 150  
 Thus pass away for ever."

But, when this  
 Brave Menelaus heard, an order prompt  
 Both to his queen and her attendant train  
 Of handmaids he gave out a feast forthwith  
 Within the palace to prepare, such store 155  
 Of viands bringing on, as in those halls  
 Uptreasur'd lay : And Etroneus, son  
 Of aged Boëtheus, from his sleep arous'd,  
 (For, at a distance dwelt he not) approach'd  
 And from bold Menelaus order took 160  
 To kindle embers and some flesh to roast :  
 And not unmindful of that strait command  
 The serving man, as he gave ear, remain'd.  
 But, to his chambers, where sweet scented fumes  
 Were all diffus'd, great Menelaus went, 165  
 Not singly ent'ring there,—for Helen, too,  
 And Megapenthes at his side stepp'd close.  
 But when that treasury they reach'd where lay  
 His heap'd abundance, Atreus' son a cup  
 Of globous form selected, and his son 170

Young Megapenthes a wrought silver bowl  
 He bade remove ; and by the coffer's side  
 Where all th' embroider'd raiments, (by herself  
 In beauty work'd,) were lying, Helen stood :—  
 Helen ! of womankind most goddess like, 175  
 One of these garments, which by far the rest  
 In size surpass'd and in the needle's art,  
 Uprais'd to view, and brought it forth from where  
 In the last layer it lay, and like a star  
 Effulgent gleam'd. And now through all the house 180  
 They took their way, until Telemachus  
 Without they found, and Menelaus then  
 The youth address'd :—" Telemachus ! May Jove,  
 That consort of Queen Juno, who on high  
 In crashing thunder soundeth, so to thee 185  
 Thy journey homeward speed, as thou hast wish'd :  
 But, gifts from wealth within my mansion stor'd  
 Will I on thee bestow, which in themselves  
 Most ornate are and costly : a carv'd bowl  
 Present I here—all silver—but with gold 190  
 The rim is blent, and Vulcan's work is it.  
 The hero Phædimus, Sidonia's king,  
 This upon me bestow'd as from his home,  
 Where I had welcome found, I took my way ;  
 And now is it my wish to make it thine." 195

With these words ending, in his hands the cup  
 Atrides placed ; and Megapenthes next,  
 The silver bowl uplifting, brought it round  
 And right before him laid it : Helen then,  
 Who near him stood, th' embroid'ry in her hands 200  
 Awhile retaining, the young chief address'd :—



" And this, too, is a gift from me, dear youth !  
 A keepsake may it be from Helen's hands,  
 Till, when the happiest of all nuptials thou  
 Shalt in due season celebrate, thy bride 205  
 With this may be adorn'd : but now, meantime,  
 In thy lov'd mother's keeping let it rest  
 Within thy palace stor'd ; and with glad heart  
 May'st thou that noble home and country reach ! "

With this address, into the young man's hands 210  
 The scarf she gave, and he with joy elate  
 The gift accepted : and Pisistratus,  
 The presents gath'ring, in the wicker frame  
 Of his sire's chariot placed them, and for all  
 That care requir'd took thought. Then to his house 215  
 The fair-hair'd Menelaus led his guests,  
 Where, on the well-rang'd benches and on thrones  
 They took their seats ; and in a golden cruse  
 Of beauteous form a handmaid water brought  
 And o'er a silver caldron pouring it 220  
 For due ablutions car'd ; and at their side  
 A shining table placed : and then did she  
 Who o'er that house had oversight a meal  
 Begin to spread, with many a viand choice  
 The board supplying, while from food in store 225  
 Their taste she strove t' indulge. And nigh at hand  
 Boëtheus' son the meat in portions carv'd,  
 And to each guest presented ; and the son  
 Of Menelaus as their Cup-bearer  
 The wine draughts proffer'd, and on that repast, 230  
 Thus for their relish serv'd, their hands they laid.  
 But, when for wines and viands relish none

To either guest remain'd, Telemachus  
 And Nestor's noble son the horses yok'd,  
 And into their bright inlaid chariot sprang, 235  
 From the guest-chamber and re-echoing porch  
 Departure making. And, then, Atreus' son,  
 The fair-hair'd Menelaus, in his hands  
 A golden cup extending, fill'd with wine,  
 (That, ere they started, the libation due 240  
 He there might make) his youthful guests rejoin'd,  
 And, as before their horses' heads he stood,  
 He with the cup saluted them, and spake :—

“Farewell! ye youths! and greetings from me bear  
 To Nestor, ‘pastor of his people,’ nam'd— 245  
 For, through the long campaigns in which we sons  
 Of Greece with Troy did battle, he to me  
 A loving father's tenderness evinc'd.”

To which Telemachus replied :—“ Rest sure,  
 O thou of Jove upheld! that with thy wish 250  
 Compliant we, when home we shall arrive,  
 To Nestor will thy gracious words report.  
 And then, too, when to Ithaca restor'd  
 And in my home secure, may I the tale  
 To great Ulysses, under his own roof, 255  
 Recount, how I came hither, and from thee  
 Such gen'rous welcome met, and gifts at once  
 So num'rous and so costly brought away.”

While thus he speaking stood, on his right hand  
 A bird flew down: an eagle—in its clutch 260  
 A large white goose retaining, a tame fowl

From out the open court : and in its track  
 A throng of men and women with loud cry  
 Came pressing onward ; but, the bird, as now  
 Above their heads it hover'd, to their right 265  
 Wheel'd round, the horses fronting : at which sight  
 They no light joy evinc'd, and ev'ry heart  
 Around them grew elate : whereat the son  
 Of Nestor, young Pisistratus, these words  
 Enquiring spoke :—" Now ! Menelaus ! Chief 270  
 Of all this people, and of Jove himself  
 Long cherish'd ! Say, if the great god on high  
 This portent hath to us alone display'd,  
 Or to thyself ?"

Thus did he anxious ask ;  
 But, Menelaus, that illustrious Chief 275  
 Of Mars so highly favour'd, paus'd awhile,  
 As though with inward musings to decide  
 How this might well be answer'd ; but, ere word  
 Her husband spake, the long-rob'd Helen thus  
 The youth address'd :—

" Now, to my speech attend— 280  
 And, as th' immortals shall my thoughts impel,  
 (Moreover, as, methinks, will come to pass,)  
 This presage I enounce :—Ev'n as this Bird  
 From that high mountain which its birthplace is,  
 And where its young are fledg'd, at one fierce swoop 285  
 The goose bore off which in these princely halls  
 On dainty food has thriven,—even thus  
 Ulysses by unnumber'd suff'rings tried  
 And on far regions as a wand'rer cast,

Will homeward come, and his full vengeance wreak, 290  
 Or, is ere now arriv'd, and fate condign  
 For all the suitors of his wife prepares."  
 To this discreet Telemachus replied:—  
 "May Jove whose crashing thunder peals on high,  
 Consort of Juno, thy divining words 295  
 In time fulfil! Then, in my father's home  
 Would I to thee my vows uplift, as though  
 A goddess there invoking!"

With these words

The scourging thong on either horse he laid  
 And with impetuous start the city left, 300  
 Making at once for th' plain. And through that day  
 The steeds their yoke upon their shoulders shook  
 Until the sun went down, and dusky gloom  
 All paths and causeways darken'd: Pheræ then  
 They reach'd, and into Diocles' abode 305  
 At once their entry made; (The son was he  
 Of that Orsilochus whose sire the name  
 Of Alpheus bore,) and there, to sleep compos'd,  
 That night they lay; and Diocles with gifts  
 Enrich'd them both; such as a host to guests 310  
 Is wont to offer. But, when rosy morn  
 Upon them shone the steeds again they yok'd  
 And into that bright inlaid chariot stepp'd,  
 And from the porch and corridor where winds  
 Loud echoes rais'd, their way began to speed. 315  
 And sharply did the charioteer the pace  
 Of those fleet horses quicken, as the thong  
 He constant plied; though, nothing loth, they flew.  
 Soon reach'd they Pylos' soaring tow'rs, and then

Telemachus thus Nestor's son address'd :— 320  
 " O son of Nestor ! how wilt thou that word  
 To me fulfil which, granting my request,  
 Thou did'st in good faith pledge ? We, from the first,  
 Ev'n for the love our fathers interchang'd,  
 Fast friends must term ourselves : our ages, too, 325  
 Co-equal make us ; and to make us one,  
 Henceforth, in mind, this journey more and more  
 Will now avail : but, further than the ship  
 Convey me not ; let me here take my stand ;  
 Lest, while my will far otherwise inclines, 330  
 Thine agèd sire, upon the thought intent  
 Of making me his guest, should in his house  
 Entreat me stay : whereas, an urgent cause  
 My prompt return enforces."

Thus spake he,  
 And Nestor's son reflected how aright 335  
 He should the promise keep ; perpending which  
 This seemingly best counsel he pursued :—  
 His horses to the ship and ocean's brink  
 Aside conducting, those resplendent gifts,  
 The raiment and the gold, so recent brought 340  
 From Menelaus' home, in the ship's stern  
 He made secure ; and, as to use all speed  
 His friend he counsell'd, in wing'd accents spake :—  
 " Enter without delay thy ship, and word  
 To all thy comrades send, ere I my home 345  
 Regain, and my aged sire of this apprise :  
 For on my mind imprest,—and deeply, too—  
 Is that quick temp'rament my father owns.  
 He would not part with thee, but would himself

Here, on this spot, his welcome speak : nor yet, 350  
 Methinks, wilt thou hence empty-handed sail,  
 For hot will be his anger !”

With these words

The glossy-coated horses he drove home  
 To holy Pylos' city, and with speed  
 His dwelling reach'd. Telemachus, meantime, 355  
 With eager exhortations on his crew  
 Commandment laid :—“ Now, in our dark-ribb'd ship,  
 My friends ! her gear arrange ; and we ourselves,  
 Our voyage to complete, will put to sea.”

So spake he, and they all with ready ear 360  
 The orders heeded, and in haste the deck  
 Ascended, and upon the benches sate.  
 Thus earnestly to all the toils impos'd  
 Was he his thoughts devoting, as with pray'r  
 To Pallas, at the stern, he off'rings made, 365  
 When, on the sudden, right before him stood  
 An alien, a soothsayer, from the town  
 Of Argos fleeing, on the death of one  
 By his hand slain : He from Melampus' race  
 His generations trac'd, who of old time 370  
 In Pylos liv'd,—the mother of sleek sheep—  
 And wealth had he possess'd,—a noble house  
 Among the Pylians owning, till at length  
 Among some other tribes a home he sought  
 From his own people fleeing, and from one 375  
 Of all men living the most noble deem'd,  
 High-minded Neleus, who through one whole year  
 Had all the substance of his wealth by force

To his own lands annex'd : But he, the while,  
 By tie and pledge severe was in the house 380  
 Of Phylacus a captive held, and pangs  
 Most cruel there endur'd, both in his suit  
 Of Neleus' daughter, and through a dread blow  
 His mind awhile deranging, which that Pow'r,  
 The Fury, fearful to encounter, struck. 385  
 But, from the threaten'd doom of death he fled,  
 And when from Phylace to Pylos' meads  
 The bellowing oxen he perforce had driv'n,  
 For noble Neleus' most unworthy acts  
 He vengeance took, and to his brother's joy 390  
 A bride for him o'er sea escorted home.  
 Then with another race his day of life  
 Awhile he spent, and Argos made his home,  
 Whose fertile meads in thriving flocks abound :  
 And there, so will'd his Fate, he tarried long 395  
 And over many an Argive clan held rule :  
 A wife, too, there he wedded, and a house  
 Whose vaulted roof rose high in air he built.  
 And of two gallant sons, Antiphates  
 And Mantius, the sire became. The first 400  
 In after years Oicleus' father was ;  
 And this Oicleus parent was, in turn,  
 Of that Amphiaræus styl'd of old  
 " The rallier of the nations," whom at heart  
 The ægis-bearing Jove and Phœbus, too, 405  
 With ev'ry show of favour dearly lov'd :  
 Still on the threshold, even, of old age  
 He never stood, but victim to the bribes  
 By faithless woman taken, died in Thebes.  
 Alcmaeon and Amphiloehus his sons 410

Surviv'd him :—and to Mantius, too, were born  
 Two sons : the elder, Polyphides nam'd,—  
 The younger Clytus : but, Aurora, thron'd  
 In golden light, from among living men  
 Young Clytus took away ; (a fate which he 415  
 Solely to his surpassing beauty ow'd,  
 That with th' immortals only he might live.  
 But, when this Amphiaraus was no more,  
 Phœbus on Polyphides, as a sage  
 Of thoughts sublime, and among men the best 420  
 Of mortals held, prophetic pow'r bestow'd ;  
 And, (while to indignation by his sire  
 At that time mov'd) the Hyperesian state  
 He rul'd supreme, and from his fixt abode  
 To men at large in divination spoke. 425  
 This man's son Theoclymenus it was  
 Who now was drawing nigh, and within sight  
 Of young Telemachus his station took  
 As near the dark-ribb'd ship that youth his pray'r,  
 Libations duly made, was off'ring up : 430  
 And with wing'd words he thus accosted him :—

“ O friend ! for that I meet thee on this spot  
 In hallow'd rites of sacrifice engag'd,  
 By these, and by the deity himself,  
 Yea, and by thine own proper self and all 435  
 Who with thee company, declare to me  
 Thus of thee question asking,—and the truth  
 Withhold not—Who art thou ? and of what race  
 Of men descended ? In what spot of earth  
 Standeth thy city ? And thy parents, where ?” 440



Discreet Telemachus thus answer made :—  
 “Stranger! in phrase sufficiently exact  
 Will I inform thee :—I from Ithaca  
 My lineage trace : Ulysses, (if, indeed,  
 Such a man ever liv'd !) my father is : 445  
 But, no :—to death, and in some fearful shape,  
 Hath he succumb'd ; and for this cause a crew  
 Of comrades choosing and a dark-ribb'd ship  
 I hither came, my long lost father's fate  
 Alas ! to learn.”

Then Theoclymenus 450

Still further spoke :—“And from my native land  
 I, too, must now absent myself, this hand  
 A kinsman having kill'd. He brothers had  
 And friends, too, many, in the Argive realm,  
 And potent is the influence of Greece. 455  
 The doom, then,—the destruction which from these  
 Appears to threaten me, I flee : and fate  
 A fugitive, too, made me among men.  
 Oh ! let me, therefore, in thy ship embark  
 Thy suppliant as I am, and into flight 460  
 Thus driven ; lest my life they take,—for now,  
 Ev'n while I speak, methinks they track my steps.”

To him Telemachus : “From my good ship  
 I surely will not spurn thee, if therein  
 Thou fain would'st forward speed : Come thou with me,  
 And on such store as in reserve we hold 466  
 Shalt thou regale.” Thus speaking, from his hand  
 He took his brass-tipp'd spear, and on the deck  
 Of the trim ship secur'd it ; he himself

His vessel's side ascending, and his seat                   470  
 In the stern taking. Theoclymenus  
 He at his side bade sit, as now the crew  
 The hawser ropes were loosing : and command  
 Telemachus now issued the ship's gear  
 To get in trim ; and they with eager will                   475  
 At once complied, as in its hole the mast  
 Of pine-tree they uprais'd, and with stout ropes  
 To the cross-deck secur'd it, and the sails  
 With twisted ox-hide hoisted. And a wind  
 Propitious did the blue-eyed Pallas grant—               480  
 A breeze that on the currents briskly blew,  
 So that with quicken'd speed the ship her course  
 Might through the ocean's briny billows speed.  
 At length they Crouni near'd, and Chaleis fam'd  
 For its fair-flowing waters ; and the sun                   485  
 Now set, and all the highways of the deep  
 In shrouding darkness lay. The vessel then  
 By a good tack made Pheræ, as she drove  
 Before the genial breeze of a fair wind  
 By Jove himself vouchsaf'd. The hallow'd site             490  
 Of Elis next they reach'd, where sway supreme  
 The Epians hold. And from this point his bark  
 Telemachus upon the isles bore down  
 Whose promontories sharp just catch the eye,  
 Doubtful if he should death itself evade,               495  
 Or, on some evil like a captive fall.

Meanwhile, Ulysses in the swineherd's hut  
 With noble-soul'd Eumæus feasted well ;  
 And nigh at hand regaling lay the hinds  
 Who at that station labour'd. And when now             500

To eat or drink yet longer none desir'd,  
 Ulysses thus began,—intent to test  
 The swineherd whether welcome such as this  
 He still would proffer, and entreaty make  
 That he would in that shepherd's cot remain, 505  
 Or to the city let him bend his way :—

“Eumæus : and all you who round him serve !  
 Mark what I now would say : At early dawn  
 I fain would to the city turn my steps  
 And there solicit alms, that staying here 510  
 Thine and thy comrades' store I may not spoil.  
 Complete instructions give me, and a guide  
 Reliable supply, who may my way  
 From hence point out : but, I from street to street  
 Will, as of urgent need, a vagrant roam, 515  
 For chance of a poor cup-full, and a cate  
 Of wheaten bread. And when within the halls  
 Of the high-soul'd Ulysses I arrive,  
 I shall new tidings to Penelope  
 Pretend to bring, and 'mid that saucy throng 520  
 Of suitors will I throw myself, their hearts  
 To prove, if they who at unnumbered feasts  
 Luxurious feed, to me a scrap would spare !  
 Adroitly as a serving man could I,  
 Command me as they might, among them wait ; 525  
 For, this may I well say,—and, mark me well  
 And hearken :—by good-will of him who bears  
 The messages of Jove,—that Mercury  
 Who upon all that men can deftly do  
 A kindly favour and repute confers, 530  
 No living man would with me try to cope

In cherishing the fire upon the hearth,  
 In cutting up sear kindling wood ; in th' art  
 Of carving meat and roasting, and in th' act  
 Of pouring out the wine—; such offices 535  
 As for their fellow-men of high degree  
 Subordinates perform."

But to this speech

Eumæus ! worthiest swineherd ! in distress  
 Thou thus repliedst :—" Alas ! alas ! my guest  
 How can a thought like this thy mind have cross'd ! 540  
 Surely, on death itself thy heart is bent  
 If thou among those suitors,—a bold throng  
 Whose arrogance and outrages to heav'n  
 Itself uprise, would'st throw thyself. Such men  
 As thou among them serve not, but mere youths 545  
 In cloaks and vests attractively array'd,  
 Who with their bright and glossy heads of hair  
 And features full of beauty on them wait.  
 The tables, highly polish'd, bear a load  
 Most ponderous of bread and meat and wine. 550  
 No : bide thou here ! No one,—nor I, nor those  
 That with me serve can by thy presence loss  
 Of anything sustain : but, when the son  
 Of great Ulysses shall at length arrive,  
 A mantle and a tunic on thy limbs 555  
 Will he himself bestow, and speed thy way  
 To whatsoever home thou fain would'st reach."

Hereto Ulysses, who of cares and ills  
 Such weight had borne, this answer made : " To Jove  
 May'st thou, Eumæus ! ever be as dear 560

As thou by me art held, whose welcome here  
 An end of all my wand'ring and of toils  
 Most harassing hath made. What plight more ill  
 On Man entails than being forc'd to roam !  
 But, through their baneful gluttony how oft 565  
 Do men with troubles load themselves, whose lot  
 Is exile and adversity and woe !  
 Well, then ! since here thou would'st that I should stay,  
 And bid'st me that dear youth's return await,  
 Tell me, I pray thee, how the Mother fares 570  
 Of thine Ulysses,—and his Father, whom  
 When he from Ithaca set sail, he left  
 Upon the confines of a ripe old age :  
 Are they, as chance may have ordain'd, still found  
 'Mid those on whom the sun yet throws his beams, 575  
 Or, both deceas'd, to Pluto's realm consign'd ?"

To him Eumæus thus :—" A faithful tale,  
 Stranger ! will I narrate : Laertes lives—  
 But, pray'r to Jove is ever off'ring up  
 That ling'ring, as he doth, the walls within 580  
 Of his own palace, life that earthly frame  
 May soon relinquish : for, with anguish keen  
 He sorrows for his long-lost son, and her  
 Whom in her maiden prime he took to wife,  
 (Right minded as she was !) who, by her death 585  
 In poignant grief immers'd him, and the sense  
 Of premature decay induced ; for, she  
 Whelm'd in regret for her illustrious son  
 A death most piteous died ! May no such end  
 Be any one's that, near my dwelling lodg'd, 590  
 My friend hath prov'd, and kindly deeds perform'd !

While yet she liv'd, indeed, my joy it was  
 To seek her out, and question ask of her ;  
 For, with her noble daughter Ctimena  
 In flowing garments rob'd, her youngest born, 595  
 My infancy she cherish'd ; with that child  
 My training I receiv'd, and hardly less  
 Than Ctimena did she myself regard.  
 But, when to loveable Youth's prime we grew,  
 To Samos was this daughter sent ; and great 600  
 The dowry presents were, by suitors made.  
 But, for myself a rural home was chos'n,  
 Where with a mantle and close-fitting vest,  
 Raiment most splendid, she had furnish'd me,  
 And sandals for my feet supplied, when now 605  
 Her love for me more kind than ever prov'd :  
 All which I now must miss ; but the blest gods  
 On that employ to which my time I give  
 Increase of profit have bestow'd, and thus  
 Provision have I found of meat and drink, 610  
 And, upon supplication any, whose appeals  
 My rev'ence claim'd, have timely succour giv'n.  
 But, from my queenly mistress not one word  
 Of comfort,—not one proof of kind good will  
 Hath it been mine to meet with, since that pest 615  
 Upon her home hath fall'n,—that tyrant throng  
 That seek her hand. And freedom great of speech  
 Would her attendants, even to her face,  
 Fain exercise, and into all things pry :—  
 On gluttony and wine their minds are set, 620  
 And, thereupon, through rural haunts to range—  
 Of some fresh tale the bearers ; which the mind  
 Of all such servants evermore elates."

Whereto Ulysses, in reply :—" 'Tis strange !  
 Eumæus ! that when thou an urchin wast 625  
 Thou should'st so far from thy paternal soil  
 And from thy kin have wander'd : Come, now, say  
 And in good faith, inform me—Did thy home,  
 (That broad and spacious town within whose walls  
 Thy parents dwell) to rapine fall a prey, 630  
 Or did some fell marauders on thee rush  
 While over flocks or herds thy lonesome watch  
 Thou wast maintaining, and on board their ships  
 Embarking bear thee off to the domains  
 Of him thou here art serving, and did he 635  
 By righteous purchase gain thee ?"

## Whereunto

The chief of all Earth's swineherds thus replied :—  
 " Stranger ! since thus thou questionest, and fain  
 So much from me would'st learn, remain thou mute,  
 And, thy seat here maintaining, take thine ease 640  
 And drink that wine : The nights are lengthsome, now,  
 And we to slumber may betake ourselves,  
 As we may equally with raptur'd ears  
 To some recital listen. 'Tis not well  
 That thou before thy wonted hour the couch 645  
 Of rest shouldst seek : for, slumber in excess  
 A hurt becomes. And, yet, let any here  
 Who in good earnest wishes it, go hence  
 And freely sleep ; but, when, at morning light  
 He his repast hath made, let him take thought 650  
 For my dear master's swine. Let us, meanwhile,  
 Within this hut potations free enjoy,  
 And to our full contentment eat, while each

The mem'ry wakens of his own past griefs ;  
 For, let but time enough elapse, the man 655  
 Who has sharp trials brook'd, and through the world  
 A wand'rer rov'd, will on his by-gone woe  
 Exulting dwell. However, to the tale  
 Proceed we, which shall thy enquiries meet :—

“ An isle there is, whose name thou may'st have heard, 660  
 Which off Ortygia lies, where Sol appears  
 To turn his course ; 'tis Syria call'd :—in breadth  
 Not far extending, but exceeding rich  
 Is all its soil ; for grazing stock most apt ;—  
 In flocks abounding, and of vineyards full, 665  
 In wheat crops, too, prolific. Famine there  
 The natives never visits ; nor, indeed,  
 Comes baneful malady in any form  
 To make the people suffer, but, as men  
 Their families among, in the chief town, 670  
 In age begin to droop,—that god who wields  
 The silver bow, Apollo, at his side  
 Diana bringing, with those gentle shafts  
 Which painless wounds inflict, the agèd ones  
 Assails and kills. Two cities in this isle 675  
 And two departments are there ;—each of which  
 By equal distribution shares alike :  
 And there did Ctesius Ormenides,  
 My father, like some god, o'er both hold rule.

“ At this our isle, at length, arriv'd a crew, 680  
 Phœnicians all,—(that nation which on sea  
 Renown have ever won)—shrewd, greedy knaves  
 Who an enormous cargo had on board



Of toys and playthings. Now, about this time,  
 Beneath my princely father's roof there liv'd 685  
 A woman of their country, with the gifts  
 Of fairest features and fine stature grac'd,  
 And in all female's fancy-work expert.  
 This woman to these subtle traders soon  
 A victim fell. One, converse with her held 690  
 Where, near the moorings of their ship, the sea  
 Her bath supplied : and here his couch and love  
 He wheedled her to share : Persuasion strong  
 Which, be their skill and talents what they may,  
 The minds of women into folly leads. 695  
 Then question ask'd he of her, who she was—  
 And of what land a native ;—whereupon,  
 With answer prompt, her father's house she nam'd :—  
 ' Sidon my birthplace is,—a site which brass  
 Abundant yields ;—and I the daughter am 700  
 Of Arybas, a rich and affluent sire—  
 But, certain Taphians, men to rapine prone,  
 Rude hands upon me laid, as from the meads  
 My steps were homeward wending, and, at once  
 On shipboard thrusting me, to that same house 705  
 Where now I serve they bore me off,—a sale  
 Thus of my freedom making ;—but, a sum  
 Of no poor mean amount the buyer paid.'

" But, further question the Phœnician ask'd :—  
 ' Doth, now, thy mind impel thee with ourselves 710  
 Thy home again to visit, there once more  
 Thy father's and thy mother's house to see,  
 And on themselves to bend thine eyes ? For still  
 Are they both living ;—still reputed rich.'

“ And thus replied she :—‘ Ev’n thus let it be :                   715  
If by a vow you mariners your faith  
Consent to bind, that to my native home  
Unharm’d you will transport me.’ And the oath,  
As she prescrib’d, they swore. And when their word  
They thus had pledg’d and ratified, once more                   720  
The woman spoke, and with them parley held :  
‘ Henceforth, remain ye mute ; and let not one  
Of your associates, when upon the road  
Or, haply, by the bubbling spring we meet,  
A word to me address, lest any one,                               725  
Into the mansion having made his way,  
Should my aged lord apprize, and he, some guile  
Surmising, should myself in cruel bonds  
Forthwith confine, and some sure project frame  
To work your ruin. Now,—all speech repress,                   730  
And such provision as you need, go, buy :  
And when your ship is with due victual stor’d  
Let a prompt message reach me in the house,  
And gold, and whatsoever else to hand  
May at the moment come, will I bring down,                   735  
Aye, and with all goodwill would I much more,  
My voyage-costs to pay, as value give.  
For in this good man’s palace have I charge  
Of his own son, a knowing wily child,  
That alongside in open air could run,                               740  
And he, too, in your vessel should embark,  
And, to whatever foreign tribe you sell,  
He would a gain of no light worth secure.’

“ Thus speaking, to the lordly house she sped :  
But, they, among our people a full year                               745

Abiding still, a cargo of great bulk  
 For their large vessel bought, and when its hold  
 Was with its full freight loaded, and the time  
 For their return arriv'd, a messenger  
 Was to this woman sent. A cunning man 750  
 My father's house thus enter'd, in his hand  
 A golden necklace bearing, ev'ry link  
 With bits of amber jointed : and our maids  
 And my rever'd, lov'd mother, (at that time  
 Within the palace group'd) on ev'ry side, 755  
 As in their hands they mov'd it to and fro,  
 The necklace view'd, and on it fix'd their gaze,  
 And payment for it tender'd ; but, a sign  
 This dealer to my nurse in silence made,  
 Which done—he to the vessel's side return'd ; 760  
 And she, that very instant, by the hand  
 When she had seiz'd me, into open air  
 From out the house went forth, and in the porch  
 The cups and tables lighted on where those  
 Who on my father waited had regal'd, 765  
 And now were to the public meeting gone,  
 And to the people's council. Hereupon,  
 With rapid action, in her bosom's folds  
 Three bowls she hid, and safely took away,—  
 I, witless ! running with her,—as the sun 770  
 Began to set, and every road and track  
 In shrouded darkness lay. But, with all speed  
 The well-known port we reach'd, off which there lay  
 The fleeting fast Phœnician ship, whose crew  
 When they on deck had placed us, hoisted sail 775  
 And o'er the wat'ry ways their voyage made,  
 Jove granting wind propitious. Night and day

For six whole days we through the waters sped,  
 But, when the son of Saturn, mighty Jove,  
 The morning of the seventh day led in, 780  
 Dian,—that arrow-queen, the woman smote ;  
 And with a hollow heavy sound,—a cry  
 Like some sea-bird emitting,—in the hold  
 She downward fell ; whence, to become the food  
 Of porpoises and fish, upon the deep 785  
 They cast her forth, and I, a mourning child,  
 With them remain'd : but, wind and the sea-wave  
 Their course befriending, to th' Ithacian coast  
 At length the vessel took, where with his means  
 Of wealth Laertes bought me ; and to this 790  
 I owe that with these eyes of mine the land  
 Of Ithaca I ever saw."

## Hereto

Ulysses,—from the race of Jove himself  
 Divinely sprung,—congenial answer made :—  
 " Eumæus ! much hast thou my mind impress'd, 795  
 Thy tale to me recounting, and the wrongs  
 Thy spirit hath encounter'd. Nathless, Jove  
 With all this dire adversity much good  
 Hath also blended ; for that at the close  
 Of long continuing labours thou at last 800  
 The house hast enter'd of a kindly soul  
 Who meat and drink in ample store provides ;  
 And fortunate appears the life thou liv'st,  
 While through Earth's scatter'd cities and the homes  
 Of man so long a wand'rer, here I stand." 805

Such commune held they ; no long sleep t' enjoy,

So brief a time reclining: for, the morn  
 In beauty thron'd soon broke. But, on the beach  
 The comrades of Telemachus their sails  
 Had now begun to strike, and in all haste 810  
 The mast were low'ring, that the ship itself  
 They might into the port by rowing bring.  
 The anchors they cast out, the hawser ropes  
 Made fast, and on the ocean-brink stepp'd forth;  
 And, their repast preparing, the dark wine 815  
 Diluted for their drink. When now, howe'er,  
 Their fill of this provision they had ta'en,  
 Discreet Telemachus thus spoke:—"Launch now  
 Our ship, and for the city make, while I  
 Inland awhile proceed, my hinds to see; 820  
 But, in the eventide, when I my lands  
 Now under tillage have survey'd, myself  
 Will to the city also bend my steps,  
 And with the morning light, the wage will I  
 To each man for his ended voyage pay, 825  
 And ample shall your feasting be on meat  
 And sweetly flavour'd wine."

To whom again  
 Spoke Theoclymenus:—"But, my dear son!  
 Whither shall I betake myself? Whose house,  
 'Mid all who rugged Ithaca control, 830  
 Shall I presume to visit? To the home,  
 At once, of thy dear mother, thine own house,  
 Shall I proceed?"

To which Telemachus:—  
 "But for good reasons, I should bid thee seek

Our house, direct, where failure none could be 835  
 Of prompt and cordial welcome: As it is,  
 Thou ill enough would'st fare: for I, myself,  
 Perforce must absent be; and audience none  
 Will my lov'd mother grant, for by that throng  
 Of suitors rarely is she seen; but far 840  
 From all remov'd she in an upper room  
 A web is ever weaving. But, the name  
 Of one, indeed, will I to thee disclose  
 To whom, as to thy host, thou may'st resort—  
 Eurymachus, the noble-minded son 845  
 Of Polybus the wise, whom all the mind  
 Of Ithaca, as though a god, reveres:  
 For, he by far the worthiest is; and keen  
 Is his desire the consort to become  
 Of my wooed mother, and the homage win 850  
 Which is Ulysses' own. But, Jove whose throne  
 Is on Olympus,—Jove, who in the skies  
 Immortal dwells, alone the future scans  
 Which may the day of their o'erwhelming doom,  
 Long before marriage, to its ending bring." 855

While thus he spoke, a hawk—the herald swift  
 Of Phœbus—on his right appear'd, a dove  
 In its claws holding, as the bird it tore  
 And to the ground its feathers threw midway,  
 Between the ship and great Ulysses' son. 860  
 And Theoclymenus from out the throng  
 Of his associates calling him and hold  
 Of his hand taking, to Telemachus  
 These words address'd:—"Telemachus! This bird  
 Flew not upon thy right without th' intent 86

Of the celestial pow'r; for when these eyes  
 Its coming right before me mark'd, I kenn'd  
 A portent from on high. 'Mid all the clans  
 Of Ithaca no generation shows  
 More princely than thine own: but, to all time 870  
 Its honours will be dominant."

The son

Of great Ulysses thus rejoin'd:—"I well  
 May wish, O stranger! that these words of thine  
 Just utter'd may, in time, be all fulfill'd;  
 For, promptly then should'st thou of my goodwill 875  
 Full proof behold, and presents from my hand  
 So many win, that all who thee should see  
 Thus richly gifted would thy fortune hail  
 And call thee happy."

To Piræus, next,

His comrade true he spoke:—"Piræus! son 880  
 Of Clytius,—seeing that in all things else  
 More faithfully than all who with me sail'd  
 To Pylos thou obey'dst me,—so, ev'n now,  
 This stranger here, within thy walls receiv'd,  
 With all due zeal make welcome; and the shows 885  
 Of all observance testify till I  
 Myself shall be returning."

In few words

Piræus—whose good spear renown had won—  
 Thus answer'd:—"Though, Telemachus! thou here  
 Should'st for long time be tarrying, I this man 890  
 With due regard will tend, and nought that host  
 To guest should kindly proffer shall he want."

Then the ship's deck Telemachus again  
Ascending, bade his comrades speed on board  
And loose the cables ; and with earnest haste 895  
They muster'd all, and on the benches sate :  
He, the meanwhile, beneath his feet a pair  
Of beauteous sandals binding, as a spear  
Of supple strength whose point with sharpen'd brass  
Was deftly wrought, he from the deck withdrew ; 900  
And then the ropes they loos'd, and launching forth  
They to the city, as Telemachus  
Had order issued, instantly set sail.  
But, he with quickly pacing feet his way  
Uphill pursued, until the hut he reach'd 905  
Where lay the herds of his unnumber'd swine,  
'Midst whom Eumæus,—noblest of his race  
And to his masters kind and faithful—slept. 908

END OF THE FIFTEENTH BOOK.



## BOOK XVI.

**M**EANWHILE, Ulysses and that noble herd,  
 The guardian of his swine, in the lone hut,  
 Some embers having kindled on its hearth,  
 For their repast made ready, and the hinds  
 Despatch'd with-swine that on the herbage graz'd. 5  
 But, now did those same dogs, whose wont it was  
 To bark in fierceness, on Telemachus  
 Begin to fawn, nor, as he nearer drew,  
 Rais'd they a yell : and, when their kindly mood  
 Ulysses mark'd, and the sound overheard 10  
 Of human foot's approach, these few wing'd words  
 He to the swineherd spoke :—" 'Tis very sure,  
 Eumæus ! that some inmate of thy home  
 Will soon his entry make, or one with thee  
 Familiar grown ; for, look ! the dogs bark not, 15  
 But fondly gather round him, and the sound  
 I hear of coming feet."

Scarce had these words  
 His lips escap'd when at the entrance gate  
 His lov'd son stood ! The swineherd, all amaz'd,

Sprang to his feet, and, as he rose, the cups 20  
Which for the mixing of the dark rich wine  
He at the moment handled, from his hold  
Fell instant to the ground. He forward stepp'd  
The prince to hail, and on his brow a kiss  
Of salutation press'd and both his eyes, 25  
So radiant, and his hands ;—and the warm tear  
From his own eyes down flow'd the while, and as  
When some fond father in a close embrace  
His son enfolds—his only one—the child  
Of his old age, from some far distant land 30  
In the tenth year returning, and for whom  
Full many a bitter pang of anxious care  
He hath encounter'd,—so that high soul'd man  
The swineherd, as Telemachus he held  
And hung upon, all over kiss'd ; as one 35  
From death deliver'd—and in tones of grief  
These hurried words pronounc'd :—“Then art thou come,  
Sweet light of mine ! Telemachus ! What time  
Thou in that ship to Pylos sail'dst, I said  
I never more should see thee : but, draw nigh— 40  
My own dear child ! Come in :—that on this spot  
I may with joyful spirit, in my hut,  
These eyes upon thee fix, so fresh arriv'd  
From regions far from home ! Unfrequent, too,  
Have been thy visits to these rural haunts, 45  
Or among those who o'er thy many herds  
Take oversight ; for, 'mid the gen'ral mass  
Of the Ithacians liv'st thou,—since thy will  
Spectator hath constrain'd thee to remain  
Of all that waste and havoc which the crowd 50  
Of suitors on thy father's house have brought.”

Telemachus thus answer'd :—" My assent,  
 My friend ! thou hast : since for thy sake, indeed,  
 Am I here come, that with these eyes of mine  
 I may upon thee gaze, and from thy lips 55  
 Sure tidings learn, if in our palace yet  
 My mother lives, or whether of that crowd  
 Some suitor have her wedded lord become,  
 And that same couch, whereon Ulysses lay,  
 So long left tenantless, be cast aside 60  
 And by defiling cobwebs overgrown."

Eumæus, best of men, this answer made :—  
 " Most certainly in thy palatial home  
 She liveth still, and with a tranquil soul  
 Endureth long ; but, all her nights and days, 65  
 So dreary, she in tearful grief consumes."  
 Thus,—speeches interchang'd—Telemachus  
 His brazen spear resum'd, and, passing on,  
 Cross'd the stone threshold ; but, as nigh he drew  
 To where Ulysses sate, the father fain 70  
 Would from his seat have mov'd, but, as in front  
 Telemachus now stood, he this forbade,  
 And thus exclaim'd :—" O stranger ! where thou art,  
 Sit, prithee, still ; for, in this cot of ours  
 Some seat shall we discover, and the hand 75  
 Is nigh which will provide it." Thus spoke he,  
 And stood no longer, for, with brushwood green  
 The swineherd piled a heap, with woolly fleece  
 Surmounted, and Ulysses' much-lov'd son  
 Thereon sate down. And, near them both, the herd 80  
 Roast flesh in trenchers placed ;—meat from their meal  
 Of the day previous left ; and bread with haste

In baskets serv'd he up, and in a cup  
 Of ivy-wood a luscious wine draught mix'd ;  
 And then to great Ulysses face to face 85  
 His station took ; and all to that repast  
 Thus duly ranged before them laid their hands ;  
 Till, when nor meat nor drink could further tempt,  
 Telemachus the swineherd thus address'd :—  
 “ My friend ! whence comes this stranger ? In what mode  
 Did any mariners on this our coast 91  
 Contrive to land him ? Of what race did they  
 Themselves declare to be ? For here, methinks,  
 As a pedestrian came he not ! ”

Whereto

Eumæus ! thus replied'st thou :—“ All this, child ! 95  
 Will I correctly state :—In spacious Crete  
 His lineage he would trace, and mention makes  
 Of peopled cities numberless whereto  
 His wanderings had driven him ; a fate  
 To which some god had destin'd him. At length, 100  
 A fugitive from some Thesprotian ship,  
 He to my hut has found his way, from whence  
 To thee will I consign him. Thine own will  
 Consult. He is thy suppliant declar'd.”

To this Telemachus :—“ In all thou say'st, 105  
 Eumæus ! thou my spirit hast much griev'd,  
 For, how could I a welcome in my home  
 To this strange guest afford ? I am but young,  
 And on my hands rely not yet, the man  
 To thrust aside who first on me would fain 110  
 A quarrel fix : and in my mother's mind

Doubt lingers still, and oft doth she revolve  
 Whether with me to tarry here, and charge  
 Of our domain to keep, her husband's couch  
 With due regard revering and the voice 115  
 Of all our people,—or, that Greek accept  
 And follow, whosoever in the crowd  
 That now their suit are pressing worthiest proves  
 And richest dowry offers. But, since now  
 This stranger to thy hut is come, a cloak 120  
 And vest will I provide,—apparel rich ;  
 A two-edg'd sword, too, as a further gift,  
 Shall he receive, and sandals for his feet :—  
 And whither his desire may be to sail  
 I will his transport care for. But, if thou 125  
 Would'st this fain do,—let him thy care become  
 And in thy homestead keep him. Raiment meet  
 And victual, too, abundant will I send,  
 That neither thine nor thy associates' store  
 He may improv'rish. But, among that crowd 130  
 Of suitors entrance none, with my consent,  
 Shall he attempt : for, far too mad a pride  
 Exhibit they ; and, what if they should jeer,  
 And mock him ! That to me were bitter grief !  
 No light exploit has one lone man t' achieve 135  
 Who would contend with many,—let his might  
 Be what it may : and his they far exceed."

To this Ulysses—that high-minded one,  
 So oft in trials vers'd,—rejoin'd :—" My friend !  
 Since I with freedom may thus speak, I'll say 140  
 Thy words have torn my very heart, while thus  
 Thou to my ear the odious tale hast brought

Of all that in that palace (as thou say'st)  
 The suitors are designing, to the will  
 So adverse of a being like thyself! 145  
 Tell me—: Hast thou without a murmur stoop'd  
 To this controlment? or, to some god's voice  
 Their judgment yielding, do the common herd  
 Their public hatred vent on thee? or, blame  
 Dost thou attach to brothers on whose strength 150  
 A man would fain rely, arise what might  
 From fierce contending strife? Oh! would that I  
 Were but as young in body as in mind!  
 Or that Telemachus, or even he  
 (That chief without reproach!) Ulysses' self 155  
 Might hither find his way, a wanderer,—  
 (For even yet, may be, a hope survives)  
 Oh! then might any mortal man this head  
 From off my shoulders take, if I my foot  
 Once having on Ulysses' threshold placed 160  
 Prov'd not to all that crew a deadly bane!  
 But, if, indeed, my single-handed pow'r  
 Were by their multitude o'erwhelm'd, ev'n then  
 Far sooner in my own palatial home  
 Would I my deathblow meet, than day by day 165  
 Such shameful outrage look upon, as blows  
 To strangers rudely given,—handmaids dragg'd  
 Most brutally through those most noble halls,—  
 The wine drawn off incessantly, and bread  
 In wanton waste consum'd;—no good, no end 170  
 In all this aim'd at; on pretext of that  
 Which never is to be."

Telemachus

Thus answer made :—" In all good faith will I  
 To this reply, O stranger! Anger none  
 Cherish the people 'gainst me ; no, nor hate ; 175  
 Neither impeach I brothers on whose strength  
 A man would fain rely, arise what might  
 From fierce contending strife. For, Saturn's son  
 Hath thus our house left isolate : one son  
 Alone Arcesius had, Laertes—sire in turn 180  
 Of our Ulysses only, whose sole child  
 I myself am, and in his lonely house  
 He left me, and in me had comfort none.  
 For this cause, foes unnumber'd throug our home:  
 As many princes as these islands sway— 185  
 Dulychium, Samos, and Zacynthus crown'd  
 With forest growth ; as many, too, as pow'r  
 In rugged Ithaca assume, their court  
 Are to my mother paying, and the source  
 Of all our means are hasting to destroy. 190  
 The odious suit she cares not to reject,  
 Nor any termination to 't contrive :  
 But they, meanwhile, my substance idly spend  
 And will to nought reduce it, aye, and soon  
 An end will make of *me*. But, all this still 195  
 Rests on the will and pleasure of the gods.

" Father Eumæus ! speed thou quickly hence,  
 And to discreet Penelope impart  
 That I from Pylos am arriv'd and safe,  
 And here will I abide : but, when this news 200  
 Thou hast to her, and her alone, convey'd,  
 Return thou hither ; nor let any Greek  
 Among them all the wiser be ; for great

The number is on my destruction bent."  
 Then, O Eumæus! spakest thou :—" Of this 205  
 I am aware, and all have well discern'd :  
 Thou speak'st to one who taketh thought hereon.  
 But, say—and tell me frankly, shall I now  
 At once with message on this errand speed  
 To sorrow-struck Laertes, who though long 210  
 For his Ulysses sorrowing would oft  
 Our works of husbandry inspect, and ate  
 And drank with those who in the palace serv'd  
 When humour so impell'd him ; but, since thou  
 To Pylos in that ship thy voyage mad'st, 215  
 Nor eats, nor drinks (for such is the report),  
 Nor labour sup'rintends, but moaning sits  
 In heaviness and grief, until the skin  
 Shrinks on his agèd bones."

## Telemachus

In turn :—" Thy news are painful ; but, to grief 220  
 We for the present must abandon him :  
 For, if at all 'twere giv'n to mortal men  
 Their dearest wish to single out and gain,  
 Far before all would I the safe return  
 Of my lov'd father ask for. No :—do thou, 225  
 When thou thy tale hast told, the hut regain,  
 And stray not in the fields in search of him,  
 But charge my mother that, of all unseen,  
 She send, at once, that handmaid whose sole care  
 The household rules, the vet'ran to apprise." 230

Thus spoke the prince, and on the swineherd press'd  
 Compliance with his counsel : and forthwith



Eumæus, sandals taking up, his feet  
 For journeying bound and tow'rds the city sped.  
 Yet, did he not, as from the hut he mov'd, 235  
 Minerva's glance elude, who now drew nigh  
 In form most like a woman fair in mien  
 And tall in stature,—one in all the arts  
 Of female handiwork expert: and thus  
 At the door-entry of the hut she stood 240  
 To great Ulysses manifest, but from sight  
 Or notice of Telemachus withheld:  
 For not unto all mortals do the gods  
 Themselves reveal. Ulysses and the dogs  
 The goddess saw; but not a bark was heard;— 245  
 For with a howl the creatures through the hut  
 Rush'd right across, as with a winking eye  
 Minerva signall'd; and with conscious glance  
 Ulysses hail'd her present deity.  
 Then from the hut forth stepping, till the space 250  
 Beyond the main wall lying round he reach'd,  
 The Chief at length before th' immortal stood,  
 And Pallas thus address'd him:—"Jove-born son  
 Of aged Laertes! in so many wiles  
 Expert! Ulysses! In the hour that is 255  
 Thy son apprise, nor longer hide the truth  
 That all thy counsels being now matur'd  
 Which shall upon those suitors' heads their death  
 And doom bring down, he and thyself may now  
 The far-fam'd city enter; nor will I • 260  
 For any lengthen'd space of time withdraw;  
 So keen is my desire in this sharp fight  
 My part with ye to bear."

Minerva spoke,  
 And with a golden wand Ulysses touch'd :  
 A robe of purest freshness, and a vest                   265  
 About his chest she drew, and increase great  
 Of bulk, and aspect of more youthful years  
 Bestow'd on him ; and now again his skin  
 A swarthy hue assum'd ; his hollow cheeks  
 Fill'd out, and downward, too, from chin to gorge           270  
 Cropp'd out a gorgeous beard of rich black hair.  
 Thus having wrought, the goddess disappear'd,  
 And to the hut Ulysses bent his steps,  
 At sight of whom, with eyes upon him fixt,  
 His lov'd son in astounding wonder stood,                   275  
 And by a sudden dread o'ercome, as though  
 In presence of some god, his glance awhile  
 Averted, as in these wing'd words he spake :—  
 "O stranger ! to my sight transform'd thou seem'st  
 From what a moment, only, since thou wast !               280  
 Diverse is all thy raiment, and thy skin  
 The tint it lately bore no longer shows.  
 Thou, of a certain truth, some god must be  
 And an immortal habitant of high heav'n.  
 Thy grace bestow on me, that sacrifice                   285  
 That shall be welcome we may celebrate  
 And gifts in gold elab'rate offer thee."

Whereon, that patient Chief, Ulysses, thus  
 In answer instant spoke :—"No god am I !  
 What semblance would'st thou to th' immortal ones   290  
 In me discover ?—I thy father am,  
 On whose account thou, with a sadden'd heart,  
 Woe upon woe encount'ring hast so long

From lawless ones indignant outrage borne."  
 Then did he kiss his son, as down his cheek 295  
 A tear he shed which fell to ground ; for yet  
 Had he, without once yielding, his full heart  
 Perforce restrain'd : but, young Telemachus  
 (Nowise convinc'd that this his father was)  
 This prompt rejoinder made :—"No :—thou my sire 300  
 Ulysses art not ! But, herein some god  
 Would fain beguile me, that with grief enhanc'd  
 I may continue sorrowing. No man  
 Of mortal born by any pow'r of mind  
 Could this which I now look upon have wrought ; 305  
 For that no easy feat would ev'n a god,  
 Howe'er desirous, find it, thus to make  
 A man, or young or old ! But only now  
 Thou wast, of a most certain truth, in years  
 Well stricken, and in garb repulsive cloth'd : 310  
 And, now, behold ! thou all the semblance hast  
 Of those blest gods whose home is in the skies !"

But, answer thus Ulysses made :—" My son !  
 No longer will it now be just that thou  
 Should'st thus beyond all bounds in wonder muse, 315  
 And as one stupefied the coming greet  
 Of thy dear father hither : for, than he  
 No other as Ulysses on this land  
 Will ever set his foot :—but I, the man  
 Himself, in many a dire affliction tried, 320  
 And to long wand'ring doom'd, have now, in this  
 The twentieth year, upon my native soil  
 At length a landing made. The change thou seest  
 The work of that Minerva is whose soul

In forays oft delighteth, and whose pow'r,  
 (For such a pow'r she hath) from time to time      325  
 My semblance fashion'd at her will; the form  
 Now choosing of a mendicant, and next  
 Of youthful visag'd man, around whose limbs  
 Hung raiment elegant. A facile act      330  
 Is it with those who th' Empyrean hold  
 A being of the Earth to elevate  
 Or to degrade."

Thus speaking, he sate down ;

But, now, Telemachus, in close embrace  
 His noble father folding, wept indeed ;      335  
 And tearful was that tenderness ;—for both  
 Tow'rds sorrow yearn'd, and with a louder plaint  
 Did each to grief give utt'rance than that cry  
 Which eagles or crook-talon'd vultures raise,  
 From whom some hinds their unfledg'd young have stol'n.  
 Drops, that might move to pity, from their eyes      341  
 Were they now shedding, and upon the flood  
 Of that most tearful sadness would the beams  
 Of the fast-setting sun have haply fall'n,  
 Had not Telemachus in hurried speech      345  
 His father thus appeal'd to :—" In what ship,  
 Dear father mine ! did mariners to this coast  
 Of Ithaca convey thee ? Of what land  
 Did they report themselves ? for that, methinks,  
 As a pedestrian thou cam'st not here."      350

Patient Ulysses thus :—" The facts, my child,  
 I will relate to thee. That people, fam'd  
 For good ship-service, the Phæacians,

Whose wont it is sure passage to provide  
 For whosoever on their shore alights, 355  
 To this our coast escorted me. A crew  
 Who o'er the main in a fast sailing bark  
 Convey'd me (by profoundest sleep subdued)  
 Left me, still sleeping, here : and splendid gifts  
 Had they bestow'd on me, of brass and gold 360  
 Abundant, and choice raiment from their looms ;  
 Treasures which, by celestial promptings led,  
 I left to lie in caves hard by. And now  
 By counsel of Minerva am I come  
 A conference to hold which shall decide 365  
 The bloody doom and death of all our foes.  
 Speak, then : their numbers in my ear rehearse :—  
 Describe, them, too ;—that I at once may learn  
 How num'rous and of what degree they are ;  
 For, then will I,—when counsel of that mind 370  
 I shall have ta'en which no upbraiding knows—  
 The doubt resolve, if we by other hands  
 Unaided could against them all make head,  
 Or, failing this, external succours seek."

Telemachus discreetly thus replied :— 375  
 " O father ! Of thy glorious renown  
 Have I through life been hearing :—that thy hands  
 Were all in all a warrior's ; that thy thoughts  
 In conf'rence were all wisdom : but, these words  
 Of thine are somewhat startling,—and surprise 380  
 Intense comes over me. It cannot be  
 That two should in a conflict singly strive  
 With many and most pow'rful. For, not ten  
 Alone, nor twice ten, only—; many more

The throng compose, and speedily shalt thou 385  
 Their force discover :—From Dulichium  
 Come fifty-two young men, select esteem'd,  
 And six attendants form their train. A score  
 And four from Samos island, too, arriv'd :  
 Twenty there were who from Zacynthus came,— 390  
 All youths of Greece :—From Ithaca itself  
 Twelve ; and all held to be the best o' th' isle :  
 With these the herald Medon companies,  
 And that old bard of heav'n-inspired song ;  
 Two serving-men, in culinary art 395  
 Adepts esteem'd, the multitude complete.

“ If with all these in one compacted band  
 We should within the palace have to cope,  
 What have I not to fear lest, there arriv'd,  
 Thou would'st at but too dire and dread a cost 400  
 The wrongs their arrogance has wrought avenge.  
 If thou to any one, whose aiding hand  
 Would succour bring, thy thoughts could'st now direct,  
 Name him at once, and say whose willing mind  
 With zeal would thus befriend us.”

This appeal 405

Ulysses answer'd thus :—“ Then shalt thou hear :  
 Perpend thou this, and listen ; and reflect  
 Whether Minerva and our father Jove  
 Would meet our need ;—or, shall I further still  
 For champions seek, to aid us ?”

In his turn 410

Telemachus thus spoke :—“ These whom thou nam'st

Are powerful allies, indeed! albeit thron'd  
 On high, in th' clouds of Heaven: and their sway  
 O'er all the race of mortal Man extends,  
 And o'er Immortals, too!"

The godlike Chief                    415

To this made answer:—"But for a brief space  
 Will these celestials tarry ere the cry  
 And din of that sharp conflict shall be heard,  
 And the dread issues of the slaught'ring Pow'r  
 Shall, in my own palatial halls, between                    420  
 These hated suitors and ourselves be tried.  
 But, at the break of day return thou home  
 And all thy wonted converse with the crowd  
 Of those false-hearted ones renew; for then  
 Shall our Eumæus lead me to the town,                    425  
 As a mean mendicant and agèd man  
 Again disguis'd: and if in mine own house  
 They contumely should cast on me, do thou  
 With a stout heart endure it while I thus  
 Such outrage may be suff'ring; aye, although                    430  
 They through the house should hale me by my feet,  
 Or, even darts and missiles throw at me.  
 Though of all this thou may'st a witness prove,—  
 Forbear, and check thyself; yet, in soft terms  
 Thou may'st appeal, and from those senseless acts                    435  
 Exhort them to refrain; but, to thy words  
 Regard will they pay none:—for, that dread day  
 Which shall pronounce their doom is but too nigh.  
 And further will I counsel thee, and this  
 Keep well in mind: When Pallas (all whose thoughts  
 Are wisdom) shall such admonition give,                    441

With inclination of my head a sign  
 Will I to thee convey, at sight whereof  
 Do thou as many martial weapons seize  
 As in the palace lie, and in the depths 445  
 Of the high chamber stow them ; and, when quest  
 Shall by the suitors for those arms be made,  
 With gentle speech beguile them, and say thus :—  
 ‘ Beyond the reach of smoke are they secure :  
 So unlike as they now appear to those 450  
 Which, when for Troy he sail'd, Ulysses left :  
 For, foul are they become in ev'ry part  
 Where vapour from the fire has sullied them ;  
 And this, too, which of greater import seems,  
 The son of Saturn bade me keep in mind :— 455  
 The hazard that, if, haply, through excess  
 Ye should break forth inebriate, and in strife  
 Among yourselves be struggling,—with those arms  
 Ye might each other pierce, and all the grace  
 Of hospitable banquets and the suit 460  
 Which ye are here pursuing, turn to shame :  
 For the steel blade itself lures men to blood.’

“ But, for ourselves, Telemachus ! alone—  
 Leave thou two swords, two spears, and two good shields  
 Of bull's hide form'd, upon our arms to bear ; 465  
 That when on these we shall have thrown ourselves  
 We instantly may handle them ; and then  
 Pallas Minerva and the allwise Jove  
 A spell of weakness on our foe will cast :  
 And, more than this I lay on thee : my words 470  
 Most faithfully observe ! If thou indeed  
 Art a true child of mine, and if my blood



In thee be flowing,—let no mortal learn  
 That in that home Ulysses is arriv'd :  
 Let not Laertes, nor Eumæus know, 475  
 Nor any one that in that palace serves,  
 No, nor Penelope herself :—for, thou  
 And I alone the female mind must sift  
 That there prevails ; and all the serving men  
 In turn approve ; each one that in his heart 480  
 Reveres and fears us ; or with mere contempt  
 Regards us both, and without thought of thee,  
 (Considering who thou art !) thine honour wounds."

The noble son then spoke :—" O Father mine !  
 The spirit that I own, in time to come 485  
 Methinks thou wilt discern. No thoughtless turn  
 Hath my mind ever taken ;—but, thy plan,  
 Methinks, will neither of us twain befriend ;—  
 And, I beseech thee, ponder on't awhile :  
 For, tedious would that session be which thou, 490  
 On this stern scrutiny intent, must hold,  
 While, in thy palace undisturb'd, that crowd  
 With ruffian hands are laying waste thy wealth  
 And nothing sparing. I would urge thee, still,  
 Those women to discover by whose acts 495  
 Thou outrag'd art,—and, those without offence.  
 But, fain would I forego the men to test  
 At their own dwellings ; for, at later date  
 This work might we accomplish, if, indeed,  
 Thou of some guiding portent knowledge hast 500  
 By ægis-bearing Jove to thee vouchsaf'd."

Thus interchang'd they counsel ;—but, meantime,

That goodly bark which young Telemachus  
And all his comrades had from Pylos borne,  
Was to th' Ithacian port brought in,—and now, 505  
When through the deepest water they had pass'd,  
The ship they dragg'd ashore, and the brave crew  
The weapons took therefrom, and all those gifts,  
So splendid deem'd, to Clytius' house convey'd.  
A herald then to find Ulysses' house . 510  
They forward urg'd, who to Penelope  
The tidings might announce that on the isle  
Telemachus had landed, and the ship  
Still under sail had to the city sent ;  
That the illustrious queen in timid doubt 515  
No tear should shed of tenderness. The twain,  
Herald and swineherd, of the self-same news  
To the princess dispatch'd to make report,  
Met on the way ; and when the house they reach'd  
Of their high-minded prince, the herald thus, 520  
Amid the handmaids standing, cried aloud :—  
“ O Queen ! thy much lov'd son is safe arriv'd ! ”  
But, having to Penelope drawn nigh,  
The swineherd to her ear the message brought  
Entire, which her dear son had bid him give. 525  
And, when he all had told, his way he took  
The herd-stall to regain, and from the courts  
And palace turn'd away. But, all the throng  
Of those proud suitors sadden'd were at heart,  
And in amazement ponder'd : and, forthwith, 530  
From out the palace issuing, the space  
Before the mansion's outer wall they fill'd,  
And there, at each gate-entry took their seats.

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus  
 An exhortation thus commenc'd :—" My friends !        535  
 A bold exploit, indeed, hath, with display  
 Of wondrous daring, by Telemachus  
 Been just achiev'd ;—I of this voyage speak,  
 Which we affirm'd he never would effect !  
 But, come :—we will our fleetest vessel launch,        540  
 And fishermen as rowers will enlist,  
 Who, with all expedition us'd, our friends  
 May thus advise and quickly homeward send."

Scarce had he ceas'd, before Amphinomus,  
 His station shifting, the dark ship descried        545  
 In the deep harbour floating, and the crew  
 Taking in sail, and in their hands the oars  
 On high uplifting : and with careless laugh  
 He thus exclaim'd :—" No longer need have we  
 To speed a messenger ! Here, in the port        550  
 Are all our crew ! And some immortal god  
 Hath their informant been, or, they themselves  
 The ship descried through ocean making way,  
 And fail'd to overtake it."

Thus spake he,  
 And they, all rising, to the beach repair'd        555  
 And drew their ship ashore ;—their serving-men  
 (A worthy band) the weapons from the hold  
 To land removing. But, the suitors now  
 The Forum in a body sought ; though none  
 Into that council-hall admittance found,        560  
 Or young or old, themselves except ; or seats  
 Beside them shar'd. And here Antinoüs,  
 Son of Eupithes, his harangue commenc'd :—

“ Most strange is this ! How have th’ immortal gods  
This man from peril rescued ! Day by day 565  
Our scouts, in turns, upon those breezy heights  
That jutt’d out to sea their watch maintain’d,  
And from the setting of the sun we ne’er,  
Throughout the livelong night, on shore took sleep,  
But, in our rapid sailing bark, at sea 570  
The morn awaited ; as in covert close  
On this Telemachus to fall we lay,  
Whom having seiz’d we there should have destroy’d.  
Meanwhile, some god upon this very shore  
Has landed him ! Now, let us here some scheme 575  
Complete which may Telemachus take off,  
Nor let him e’er again our grasp elude :  
For, while he lives, I certain am, our ends  
Will never be attain’d. In matters grave  
Whereon t’ advise, and in all pow’r of thought, 580  
He is, himself, most able ; and the voice  
Of all the populace has long since ceas’d  
To bring to us reports we care to hear.  
Now, ere he can the Greeks to conf’reuce call,  
Take you good heed :—for, as I think, no more 585  
Will he inactive prove, but on us all  
His anger vent, and, being once stirr’d up,  
He will to ev’ry one proclaim how we  
To kill him by a bloody death had schem’d,  
And fail’d to seize our man. Then, as these deeds, 590  
So wicked deem’d, their hearing reach, the crowd  
Will adverse sentence pass ; and fear there is  
That they herewith may offer violence,  
And from this land of ours expel us all,  
And we some alien home perforce must seek. 595

Let us beforehand with him prove, and far  
 From where he in the city is,—in fields,  
 Or in some road where he is journeying,  
 His life proceed to take ; and thus may we  
 His wealth and all his substance make our own,       600  
 By lots the whole partitioning, and then  
 The palace to his mother's use concede,  
 And to the lord she may in wedlock choose.  
 But, if such reasoning please you not— ; if this  
 Your will the rather is, that he his life       605  
 And all the wealth of his forefathers' home  
 Should still retain,—no longer let us here,  
 In numbers thronging, with our wonted waste  
 Those treasures squander which their owner's heart  
 So dear esteems,—but, let each man of us,       610  
 No longer in the palace lodg'd, his suit  
 With proffer'd dowry press ; and then may she  
 To the most lavish donor of such gifts  
 (The man by fate allotted) yield her hand."

He ended ; and they all sate mute :—Whereat       615  
 Amphinomus uprose,—[the noble son  
 Of Nisus, king Aretias' princely heir]  
 Who from Dulichium's verdant meads and plains  
 For rich wheat harvests fam'd, the leader was  
 Of fifty-one young suitors ; he, himself,       620  
 As one with gifts of pleasant speech endow'd,  
 By queen Penelope most welcome held :  
 For the best sense had he, and us'd it, too.  
 He, with a kindlier mind, this grave address  
 To all around deliver'd :—" No—my friends !       625  
 Myself, for one, can no desire avow

To kill Telemachus. An awful crime  
 Is it to slaughter one of kingly race !  
 First let us from the gods some guidance seek,—  
 Then—if the will of Jove omnipotent, 630  
 As by the oracle declar'd, this deed  
 Shall counsel us to do,—myself the blow  
 Will strike, and all of you to action urge :  
 But, if the gods our purpose would divert,  
 My earnest word of counsel is—Forbear !” 635

Thus spake Amphinomus, and his appeal  
 Their full approval gain'd, and from their seats  
 Uprising all towards Ulysses' house  
 Their steps began to bend ; and, there arriv'd,  
 Upon a polish'd throne each suitor sate. 640

But, startling was the fresh surprise prepar'd  
 The minds of that proud overbearing crowd  
 To overtake, which now Penelope  
 Herself was framing, who in her own home  
 The menac'd murder of her son had heard 645  
 By Medon told, the herald who their plot,  
 While list'ning, had discover'd ; and she now  
 With all her female train into the hall  
 Of that palatial mansion entry made ;  
 And, as the haughty crowd her eyes discern'd, 650  
 A station near the pillar which upbore  
 The goodly roof above her she assum'd,  
 And to her cheek a veil she held while thus  
 Her speech she to Antinoüs address'd  
 And (by his name arraign'd) upbraided him :— 655

" Antinoüs ! malignant that thou art—  
 Malicious plotter ! Common fame, forsooth !  
 Speaks of thee as the ablest of thine age,  
 Both in sound judgment and in speech, 'mid all  
 Who here in Ithaca resort : but, no— 660  
 Thou of a truth art not that man ! Mad fool !  
 Wherefore hast thou the death and mortal doom  
 Of my Telemachus design'd ? nor heed  
 To suppliants takest aught, whose cause and claims  
 Jove testifies ? Unhallow'd is the thought 665  
 That injury against our neighbour schemes.  
 What ! Hast thou never learn'd how to this home  
 Thy father, fleeing here, for safety came,  
 By panic terror of our people scar'd,  
 Indignant as they were, for that, intent 670  
 On chasing across sea the Taphian crews  
 (That pirates were,) he the Thesprotians' rights  
 Had reckless spurn'd ? And these were our allies :  
 Aye—and they fain thy parent would have kill'd,  
 His heart's life-blood have taken, and his wealth, 675  
 Ample and precious as it was, dispers'd ;  
 But that Ulysses stay'd their hands, and though  
 To wreak their vengeance raging, drove them off :  
 And this same man's inheritance thou now  
 With contumely art squandering ; his wife 680  
 Thou with thy suit art harassing ;—his son  
 Thou seek'st to murder, and upon myself  
 A load hast heap'd of mis'ry ! But, henceforth,  
 I bid thee pause : and see that thou like charge  
 To all thy fellows give."

In prompt reply 685

Eurymachus the son of Polybus

Uprose and spake:—"Most just Penelope!

Daughter of Icarus! Renounce distrust:—

Let nought that thou hast dwelt on be to thee

A cause of dread. The man exists not here, 690

Nor here will ever come, nor will be born,

Who on thy son Telemachus his hand

Will dare to lay, while I, at least, survive

The sunlight to behold. For, this to thee,

O queen! I here declare,—and all my words 695

Fulfill'd shall be—his life-blood from my spear

Should in an instant drop; for that the Chief

Who many a city had in ruins laid,

Ulysses, oftentimes, when upon his knees

He, in my childhood, seated me, choice bits 700

Of roasted meat between my fingers put,

And 'twixt my lips, red wine! And for this cause

Telemachus to me the dearest far

Of all men living is; nor warning aught

Would I for my part give him, death to dread 705

From any suitor here: From hand divine

No man that fate can shun."

Thus ended he,

Her spirit comforting,—but, in his heart

He was a murder compassing! Then pass'd

Penelope into those upper rooms 710

Where splendour shone around, and there, in tears,

She her lov'd husband mourn'd, till o'er her eyes

Minerva sweetly soothing slumber shed.

At even-tide the swineherd, homeward bent,



Ulysses and Telemachus rejoin'd ; 715  
 And they, a tender swine of one year's age  
 For the repast of ev'ning having slain,  
 Their meal, like men well practis'd, had prepar'd :  
 But, now, Minerva, at Ulysses' side  
 Her station taking, struck him with a wand, 720  
 And all the semblance of an agèd man  
 Once more in him created, and vile garb  
 Around his person cast, that in this guise  
 Eumæus, as his master face to face  
 He look'd upon, no feature might detect 725  
 And in his mind perpend it ; or forthwith  
 To queen Penelope thereon report.

Telemachus first spoke : " Here, then, thou com'st,  
 Most excellent Eumæus ! Now, what tale  
 Is in the city current ? Are the throng 730  
 Of tyrant suitors from that lurking place  
 Where late they lay in watch, come home again ?  
 Or do they still their vigil keep, myself  
 And ship expecting ? "

To which words,  
 Eumæus ! thou thus gav'st reply :—" Concern 735  
 I felt not this to learn or question ask,  
 As through the streets I pass'd ; for, all my care,  
 When of my message rid, was with all haste  
 This herd-stall to regain : But one whose speed  
 Was great indeed,—a herald from thy crew 740  
 With news dispatch'd,—fell in with me, and he  
 Thy mother first inform'd :—But,—for this fact  
 I well can speak, as with these eyes of mine

I saw it: Just as now beyond the walls  
I hurried of the city, where the ridge      745  
Of Hermes runs, a swiftly sailing ship  
I saw our harbour ent'ring; and a troop  
Of men were there on board;—deep laden, too,  
It seem'd with shields and iron-shod long spears;  
And 'These are they! methought—: though for a truth  
I must not vouch it!' ”

   Thus Eumæus spoke:      751  
And at his words Telemachus with smiles  
His eye upon his father fix'd, but glance  
On good Eumæus bent he none.    At length  
From all exertion ceasing, as a meal      755  
Of ample viands they had now prepar'd,  
They ate at ease, nor thought had they to take  
Lest each should not his equal portion share.    •  
But, when for drink or eating relish all  
Began to cease, their thoughts to bedward turn'd,      760  
And all the blessed gift of slumber shar'd.

## BOOK XVII.

**B**UT, when the rosy morn, dawn's offspring, rose,  
 Telemachus, with beauteous sandals shod,  
 And with a sturdy jav'lin arm'd, which well  
 His grasping palm befitted, tow'rds the town  
 His journey took ; and to the swineherd thus                   5  
 At parting spoke :—" Now, fatherly old man !  
 I to the city must my steps direct  
 That my lov'd mother may, at length, her eyes  
 Upon me bend ; for, this pernicious grief  
 And flooding sorrow never, as I think,                   10  
 Will she abandon, until face to face  
 She shall thus see me : but, this earnest charge  
 I lay on thee—Our hapless stranger guest  
 Conduct thou to the city, that he there  
 May as a mendicant some food entreat ;                   15  
 And then may any one at will a cate  
 Of wheaten bread and a small cupfull give :  
 But, hamper'd and distracted as my mind  
 With trouble is, I cannot for the needs  
 Provide of all. And if the stranger's ire                   20  
 Hereat shall chafe, so much the worse for him !  
 For in frank phrase to speak is my delight."

The shrewd Ulysses hereupon thus spoke :—  
 “ My friend ! No wish of mine would stay me here :  
 ’Tis better that a mendicant in town 25  
 For food should be a suppliant than in fields :  
 For, whosoever hath a kindly will  
 May thus befriend me. And, no longer now  
 Avails my age that here, among the swine,  
 I should abide, and such a master serve 30  
 As would to all requirements of his will  
 Obedience claim. Go thou ;—and this good man,  
 With thy request compliant, will forthwith  
 Conduct me to the city ;—when, at least,  
 From these hot embers on the hearth some warmth 35  
 I shall have felt, and heat from the sun’s rays  
 Shall from on high be gleaming : for the garb  
 Which on my limbs is hanging is so spare  
 And wretched, that the early matin rime  
 May with its chill o’erpow’r me ; and ye say 40  
 The city distant lieth.” Thus spake he,  
 And with light onward step Telemachus  
 Through the hut hasted,—schemes of vengeance dire  
 On all the suitors plotting. But, when now  
 He had the palace reach’d, his spear he lower’d— 45  
 By the tall bearing-pillar of the roof  
 Awhile to leave it ; and, the threshold stone  
 Of that proud mansion crossing, pass’d within.  
 Him, long before the eyes of others saw,  
 His nurse, aged Euryclea recognis’d 50  
 As on each throne-like seat, which cunning art  
 So variously had fashion’d, she a fleece  
 Of wool was laying ; and with tearful eyes  
 She onward rush’d. All the handmaidens, too,

That with her in the princely mansion serv'd 55  
 Of brave Ulysses, round about him throng'd,  
 And, with most tender welcome, on his brow  
 And shoulders many a kiss of joy impress'd.  
 Then from her chamber came Penelope—  
 The goddess-presence of Diana's self 60  
 Or golden Venus rivalling, and, all tears,  
 Her darling son in her enfolding arms  
 Awhile she held, and kisses on his head  
 And both his eyes, so radiant, impress'd,  
 And in the tones of sorrow these wing'd words 65  
 Began to utter :—"Thou, at length, art come!  
 Telemachus! my own sweet light! My thought  
 Hath long time been that never, never more  
 Should I upon thee look,—since in that ship  
 Without my knowledge and against my wish 70  
 Thou sail'dst to Pylos,—of thy father's fate  
 Fresh tidings there to learn. But, tell me, now,  
 What, haply, have those eyes of thine beheld."

To this discreet Telemachus replied :—  
 "O Mother mine! renew not thou my woes 75  
 Nor move my heart within me, who but now  
 From death in its most fearful form have fled;  
 But, having thine ablutions made, and robes  
 Of spotless purity around thee thrown,  
 With all thy female train to th' upper room 80  
 From hence go forth, and there to all the gods  
 A vow pronounce that hallow'd hecatombs  
 Thou wilt on altars offer up, if Jove  
 The deed of our retributive revenge  
 Will anywise effect for us. But, I 85

Must to the Forum speed, a stranger thence  
 To bring along who on my voyage home  
 Hath my associate been, and whom, indeed,  
 With my brave comrades onward I dispatch'd,  
 And on Piræus this commandment laid 90  
 That when he home had led him, he as host  
 Should welcome him and with all zeal regard  
 Till I myself should come."

He ceas'd to speak,

But, ev'ry word, unwing'd, sunk deep in her ;  
 And Queen Penelope, when in her bath 95  
 Ablution she had made, and with the robes  
 Of spotless purity her form array'd,  
 To all the gods a solemn vow pronounc'd,  
 That on the altars hallow'd hecatombs  
 She would as off'rings lay, if Jove himself 100  
 The deed of just retributive revenge  
 Would anywise effect. Then, spear in hand,  
 Telemachus the palace left,—his dogs  
 So swift o' foot, close following ; and a charm  
 Unearthly did Minerva round him throw, 105  
 As all on his advancing presence gaz'd  
 With admiration wond'ring. Ev'n the crowd  
 Of those presumptuous suitors throng'd around  
 With speeches fair upon their lips,—but wrongs  
 Most foul in mind and heart contemplating. 110  
 But, as he from this concourse turn'd aside,  
 Telemachus to Mentor made advance,  
 With whom in converse join'd sate Antiphus  
 And Alitherses, who from earliest years  
 His father's friends had prov'd ; and at their side 115

He sate him down, as they, all eagerness,  
 Bade him from first to last his tale narrate.  
 And then drew nigh Piræus (he whose spear  
 So oft had won him fame) the stranger guest  
 Leading into the Forum,—from whose side 120  
 Telemachus, but for a moment, turn'd,  
 And then approach'd them, when Piræus thus :—  
 “Telemachus ! send women with all speed  
 To where I dwell, that I may send to thee  
 All Menelaus' gifts.” But, to these words 125  
 Telemachus discreetly thus replied :—  
 “Piræus ! On the issues of these days  
 We cannot reckon : If the hateful crowd  
 Of suitors should within the palace walls  
 By treach'ry take my life, and all the wealth 130  
 Which from my ancestors on me devolv'd  
 Attempt to make their booty, my heart's wish  
 Is that thyself, or some of these our friends,  
 Should claim and ever hold it as your own.  
 But, if the seed I am about to sow 135  
 Shall in the death and overwhelming doom  
 Of these fell suitors germinate,—do thou  
 In gleeful triumph bring (while large content  
 My own heart fills) those gifts to my own home.”

Then did he that long harass'd man, his guest, 140  
 Into the palace lead, and when they now  
 Within the mansion stood, their cloaks they laid  
 On couches and on thrones, and in the baths  
 Of shining marble their ablutions made ;  
 And when th' attendant maidens had their feet 145  
 First lav'd, and oily unguents on them pour'd,

In woollen mantles and more seemly garb  
They rob'd themselves, and from those polish'd baths  
Forth issuing, upon the couches sate.  
Then in a sumptuous golden vase contain'd 150  
A handmaid brought in water : this she pour'd  
Upon a laver all in silver wrought  
And for all cleansing apt : and close at hand  
A polish'd table placed : And then did she  
Who, winning all respect, had oversight 155  
Of the palatial storehouse, set on bread,  
And many cates therewith before them placed  
Of zest most delicate, therewith to please  
As the supply at hand her wish might serve.  
And opposite sate Queen Penelope 160  
Upon a couch recumbent where the shaft  
Of a tall column of the palace rose,  
And in her hands the threads of finest wool  
She from a distaff wound. And now did they  
The proffer'd viands handling freely eat, 165  
Until, when appetite no longer crav'd,  
Penelope, appealing, thus began :

“ O my Telemachus ! to th' upper room  
Will I, indeed, ascend ; and on that couch  
There throw myself which, flooded with my tears, 170  
So wretched hath become since with the sons  
Of Atreus my Ulysses sail'd for Troy.  
And now, alas ! though at this moment none  
Of all that hateful crowd of suitors yet  
Have in the palace set their foot—, thyself 175  
From me th' exact recital would'st withhold  
Which of thy father's coming home might speak,



Or tidings any of his destiny  
From anywhere report." To which in turn  
Telemachus :—

" To all that thou hast ask'd      180

Assenting, O my mother ! I will now  
A faithful tale narrate. To Pylos first  
Our course we shap'd, and Nestor's regal home—  
(The pastor of his people call'd) : and he  
In those high halls as an accepted guest      185  
With cordial welcome nobly greeted me ;  
And, as a father hails with joy the son  
Just to that home return'd from which by space  
And time he long hath parted been, ev'n thus  
With zealous care did Nestor and his sons,      190  
Illustrious as they are, my welfare tend.  
But tidings none, from any one on earth,  
Of the forlorn Ulysses had he gain'd,  
Or living or defunct ; but, on my way  
With two yok'd horses and a car complete      195  
Did Nestor speed me to that prince whose spear  
In war had won imperishable fame—  
Atrides Menelaus ; and with him  
Saw I that Argive Helen, in whose cause  
(So will'd the gods) the legion'd hosts of Greece      200  
And Troia such afflictive ills endure'd.  
And Menelaus, who, in battle strife  
So valiant ever shone, with question prompt  
The earnest wish desir'd to learn which thus  
To glorious Sparta had transported me :      205  
And all the truth I instantly reveal'd ;  
And he thereon thus spoke :—' Ah ! shame upon't !

These puny dastards, then, would fain the couch  
 Have slept in of the bravest of the brave!  
 As when a hind that wanders from her young      210  
 But lately dropp'd, and still from parent's milk  
 Their nurture drawing—, lays them where but now  
 A lion couch'd;—then strays to browse, and roams  
 The hill-side woodlands through and verdant meads—  
 And that fierce lion, to his den return'd,      215  
 A direful doom on fawn and hind inflicts,  
 So will Ulysses on those foes of thine  
 The sternest vengeance wreak. O Father Jove!  
 Minerva, too, and Phœbus I invoke—  
 Would he were now as when, in days gone by,      220  
 In Lesbos' city,—beauteous in its site—  
 He rose to wrestle in a contest sharp  
 With Philomela's son, and with rude force  
 Gave him a fall;—to all the Greeks a joy!  
 Should this Ulysses on those suitors fall,      225  
 Their doom were prompt enough: their nuptial days  
 In bitter rites would end! But, for that tale  
 Which at my hands thou askest and with prayer  
 So earnest plead'st for, utterance of mine  
 Evasive should not 'scape me, nor would I      230  
 Thy hope deceive; but what that prophet true—  
 The old Man of the Sea to me disclos'd,  
 I will repeat;—withholding not one word.  
 This he affirm'd, that in a certain isle  
 Ulysses, so long harass'd, he beheld      235  
 All bath'd in tears, in the palatial home  
 Of that fam'd nymph Calypso, who, by force  
 Was there detaining him; nor pow'r had he  
 To reach his native land: for, not a ship

With oars equipp'd had he, or fit comates 240  
 To pilot him across the spreading seas.  
 Such was the tale by Menelaus, son  
 Of Atreus, told ;—on hearing which, my course  
 I homeward turn'd, and the immortal gods  
 Who to the shore of my lov'd fatherland 245  
 Sped that return, propitious breezes sent."

Thus spake Telemachus ; and many a thought  
 And feeling in his list'ning Mother rous'd—  
 When Theoclymenus thus zealous spoke :—  
 "O august consort of Laertes' son ! 250  
 Herein this youth no certain knowledge hath—  
 But, mark thou well my words ;—for, error none  
 In those averments will be found which now  
 I am about to utter ; nor reserve  
 Will I maintain. Let Jove, o'er Gods supreme, 255  
 My speech attest :—that board, too, where thy guests  
 Such welcome meet ; and great Ulysses' hearth  
 Whereto I have drawn nigh—, that at this hour  
 Ulysses may in his own fatherland  
 Be sitting found, or slowly stealing on, 260  
 As he into the gross atrocious wrongs  
 That here are rife an inquest stern pursues,  
 And for each suitor of them all a doom  
 Which shall o'erwhelm them hastens. Of all this  
 The omens I discern'd as on the deck 265  
 Of our good ship I lay, and to thy son  
 Telemachus, that moment, I spoke out."

To whom Penelope :—" I would, indeed,  
 O stranger ! that these auguries of thine

Might their fulfilment meet ! For, promptly then      270  
 Shouldst thou my cordial kindness feel, and gifts  
 From me receive, possessing which, all friends  
 That met thee thy good fortune would salute."

Such interchange of speech awhile they held :  
 Meanwhile, upon the flat smooth levell'd swade,      275  
 Before Ulysses' princely courts outspread,  
 The suitors of Penelope were met  
 With quoits and lances to disport themselves,  
 Where, in days past, with scorn and contumely  
 Their wont had been to revel.      But, as now      280  
 The hour of ev'ning meal approach'd, and flocks  
 From all the pastures round came thronging in  
 (The wonted herdsmen leading them), these words  
 The herald Medon to the suitor train  
 Began t' address :—(For, of the heralds, he      285  
 Most favour'd of them was, and at their feasts  
 Attendance gave :) " Young men ! since from your games  
 Thus far contentment large you have deriv'd,  
 Re-enter now the mansion, that our feast      \*  
 We may in order set ; for, as the hour      290  
 Most opportune for night's repast draws nigh,  
 'Tis no unwise resolve to eat thereof !"

He ended : and, with one accord upris'n,  
 They to the palace turn'd ; and, there arriv'd,  
 Their mantles on the couches and the thrones      295  
 They threw aside, and of the full-grown sheep  
 And prime condition'd goats made sacrifice,  
 And fatten'd swine they added, and a cow  
 From off the pastures taken, that the feast

Complete might be: But, in the self-same hour 300  
 Ulysses and Eumæus from the hut  
 Were their departure hast'ning for the town :  
 And thus the high-soul'd swineherd reas'ning spake :—  
 "O Stranger ! since thine earnest wish it seems  
 (And 'twas my master's charge upon me laid) 305  
 This day the town to enter,—be it thus :—  
 But, fain would I myself in thee behold  
 The trustful overlooker of these stalls :  
 Yet, with the homage of respect and fear  
 Herein to him must I defer, whose wrath 310  
 I haply might provoke ; and the rebukes  
 Of those who with a sov'reign power rule  
 Are in their nature stern. But, speed we now !  
 For day hath well nigh glided past, and when  
 The eve sets in the air will keener prove." 315

But, full of many counsels, to these words  
 Ulysses thus replied :—" All this I know :  
 What thou hast urg'd, escap'd me not ; and that  
 Which thou enjoimest is to one address'd  
 Who well hath comprehended : Go we, then, 320  
 And all the journey through be thou my guide ;  
 But, if thou chance to have by thee a shoot  
 Already from its parent stem lopp'd off,  
 Bestow on me the same, my weight to poise,  
 For, of a slipp'ry path thou mention mad'st." 325

He spoke :—and from his shoulders downward slung  
 A leathern pouch most mean to look upon  
 And full of rents ; a plaited band withal.  
 But now Eumæus in Ulysses' hand

A staff which might a man in spirit plac'd ;      330  
 And forward sped the twain : the dogs, meanwhile,  
 And men behind them leaving, o'er the hut  
 Safe guardianship to keep ; and in this guise  
 The swineherd to the town his master led ;  
 The semblance bearing of a mendicant      335  
 In sorriest plight, and of one bow'd by age  
 And by a staff supported ; vilest garb  
 About his body hanging. Even thus,  
 Along the rough road trudging, they at length  
 The town approach'd, and that fair bubbling fount      340  
 Drew nigh to—(by the skill of man contriv'd)—  
 The people's constant and entire supply—  
 Which Ithacus and Neritus of old  
 Had with Polyctor giv'n. All circling round  
 Arose a copse of poplar trees whose growth      345  
 In kindly moisture throve ; for, from a crag  
 That high in air uprose, a frigid stream  
 Was ever downward rushing. On that height  
 An altar stood whereon whoever there  
 Their journey's course directed, to the Nymphs      350  
 A votive off'ring made :—And, at this spot  
 Melantius, son of Dolius, with the twain  
 Ulysses and Eumæus met ; as he  
 The goats was leading which of all the herds  
 The sleekest were by far—; an ev'ning meal      355  
 To furnish for the suitors ; and two hinds  
 Were following close : But, as, at length, his glance  
 On the wayfarers fell, he with vile speech  
 By name Eumæus taunted, and at both,  
 With gestures full of outrage and affront,      360

Began to rail, and brave Ulysses' ire  
 Awak'd within him as he thus exclaim'd :  
 " Here, sure ! is the mean leader of the mean !  
 And thus the deity for evermore  
 The like links with the like. Unhappy wretch, 365  
 Eumæus ! whither may'st thou chance to lead  
 This starveling wight, this pest'ring mendicant,  
 This kill-joy at our meals ! who, as from door  
 To door-post he his shifting station takes,  
 His shoulders will be rubbing, while for bits 370  
 He (not for tripod or for caldron) begs !  
 Should'st thou to me thy comrade here consign  
 About my house-stalls to keep watch,—my pens  
 To clean,—and a green bough to hold in hand,  
 To lure the kids along—, If nought but whey 375  
 His bev'rage were, he would a stout thigh grow !  
 But, no ! Since he in mischief an adept  
 Must long have been, with no good will would he  
 To labour turn : he, at the people's heels  
 For ever cowering, his choice has made 380  
 For his insatiate maw to beg alone :  
 But, frankly I declare to thee,—(and all  
 Thus told and threaten'd will fulfilment meet,—)  
 If to Ulysses' mansion he should come,  
 His ribs, while he with missiles through the halls 385  
 On ev'ry side shall be assail'd, will soon  
 Full many a footstool graze and fret away  
 As, from men's hands, around his head they'll fly !"

He ended, and as by Ulysses' side  
 He onward pass'd,—in his mad insolence 390  
 He at the prince's hip a leap essay'd

And kick'd it ; but, displacement from the spot  
 Compell'd he none :—unstagger'd and unmov'd  
 Ulysses stood, but, pausing, mus'd awhile  
 Whether with rapid onset he at once      395  
 Melantius' life should with the cudgel take,  
 Or, having from the ground his body rais'd,  
 The head dash down to earth. But, he forbore,  
 And bent his mind t' endure. Whereat, with eyes  
 Upon him fix't, the swineherd words of blame      400  
 Began to utter, as, with hands and voice  
 Uplifted he thus pray'd :—“ O fountain nymphs !  
 Daughters of Jove ! If, ever, at your fane  
 Ulysses hath the thighs of victims burnt,  
 With luscious fat of lambs or tender kids      405  
 The portions cov'ring—, grant me but the boon  
 That this same Prince may hither live to come,  
 And may the deity his escort prove !  
 Then would he all those insults which thou, thus,  
 Melantius ! flingest—, scatter to the winds—      410  
 Stray vagabond as in this town of ours  
 Thou long hast been ! For, shepherds villanous  
 Make sheep and herds as vile !”

Melantius

The goat-herd thus retorting spoke :—“ How now !  
 What has this dog, in all pernicious arts      415  
 So vers'd, been pleas'd to tell us !—that same one  
 Whom on some coming day, from Ithaca  
 On board a well appointed dark-ribb'd ship  
 I shall to distant regions see dispatch'd,  
 Where a rich living he may earn for me :      420  
 For, may Apollo of the silver bow



The first of these was the great hall  
 which was built by Henry the second  
 and which was the largest in the world  
 at that time. It was built in the  
 year 1133 and was finished in the  
 year 1155. It was built in the  
 year 1133 and was finished in the  
 year 1155.

425

The second of these was the great  
 hall which was built by Henry the  
 second and which was the largest  
 in the world at that time. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155.

430

The third of these was the great  
 hall which was built by Henry the  
 second and which was the largest  
 in the world at that time. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155.

435

The fourth of these was the great  
 hall which was built by Henry the  
 second and which was the largest  
 in the world at that time. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155.

440

The fifth of these was the great  
 hall which was built by Henry the  
 second and which was the largest  
 in the world at that time. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155.

445

The sixth of these was the great  
 hall which was built by Henry the  
 second and which was the largest  
 in the world at that time. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155. It was  
 built in the year 1133 and was  
 finished in the year 1155.

450

That folding close are with no mean skill wrought :  
 A palace, truly, such as none would scorn :  
 But, a dense throng, meseems, are in its halls  
 A high feast holding, and a savour rich 455  
 Of some burnt sacrifice is rising here,  
 And a melodious harp, too, from within  
 Its tone gives out, by the immortal gods  
 Associate of these banquetings ordain'd."

Where to, Eumæus ! thou this answer mad'st :— 460  
 " Well hast thou judg'd, who on none other theme  
 Discernment want'st ; but, come ! how next to act  
 Let us due counsel take. Wilt thou the first  
 This noble dwelling enter, I the while  
 In this spot tarrying ? Or, if to stay 465  
 Thou would'st prefer, I will myself precede :  
 But, linger not,—lest any one that here  
 His glance may cast on thee, should with a blow  
 Assail, or spurn thee hence : for which ill chance  
 I charge thee to take thought."

To whom, in turn, 470  
 Patient Ulysses thus :—" This know I well—  
 I am reflecting : and what thou advis't  
 Is by my forethought met. Advance thou first,  
 And I will here abide, for, stranger none  
 Am I to wounds by throw of missiles made, 475  
 Or to assailant blows. Within this breast  
 Is a stout heart to suffer ! On the waves,  
 And on the fields of fight, how many shocks  
 Have I encounter'd ! So let this mischance  
 Befal me as it may. But, power none 480

Hath man a hungry stomach to hide close!  
 A pestilent exactor, which at times  
 To ills unnumber'd among men may lead.  
 On its behalf, broad ships with all their gear  
 Are for the seas equipp'd, and plagues inflict 485  
 On those whose ports befriend them not."

Ev'n thus

They converse held. Now, ARGUS, the aged dog  
 Of the wayworn Ulysses, stretch'd at length,  
 His head and ears was seen to raise! Of old  
 Ulysses' self had fed and rear'd him up, 490  
 But use of him made none;—for, but too soon  
 To sacred Ilion he his voyage took.  
 The youngsters had, ere then, the mountain-goats  
 And deer and hares pursued with him; but, when  
 His owner from that home was distant gone, 495  
 ARGUS,—despis'd—amid manure was left  
 Of mules and oxen, which in heaps immense  
 Before the doors was mass'd, until some hinds  
 That in Ulysses' homestead serv'd, a load  
 Would thence cart out upon the spacious lands 500  
 As compost to disperse: and thus the prey  
 Of insects vile lay ARGUS. But, when now  
 So nigh Ulysses he beheld, his tail  
 He to and fro mov'd cheerily: his ears  
 He instant dropp'd; but, to that master's feet 505  
 Once more to drag him—strength avail'd him none.

Ulysses, as the faithful swineherd's glance  
 With ease he shunn'd, and from a distant spot  
 Upon the creature gaz'd, a falling tear

From his eye wip'd away ; but to his herd      510  
 In the same moment spake :—" A marvel 'tis,  
 Eumæus ! that in such defiling dirt  
 That dog should lie ! Of beauteous form is he,  
 But, whether he, thus gifted, in the course  
 Was fleet as he is handsome ; or, for use      515  
 Was valueless, as are the hounds which men  
 Beneath their tables keep, I cannot learn :  
 As a mere show do masters for him care ?"

Hereto, Eumæus ! in reply thou spak'st :—  
 " This, I may truly tell thee, is the dog      520  
 Of one who far from hence has died the death.  
 Were he but all, in frame and in exploits,  
 That of old time he was, when from this home  
 Ulysses sail'd for Troy, thou at the proof  
 Both of his speed and spirit would'st, indeed,      525  
 Have wond'ring gaz'd : for, never from the beasts  
 That chasing into glens and forests dense  
 He had t' encounter, was he known to flinch ;  
 And well traced he their whereabouts ! But, now  
 Is he on evil fallen, and his lord      530  
 Hath in some unknown region, from this soil  
 (His fatherland) remote, to fate succumb'd.  
 The reckless handmaids here no kindly care  
 On ARGUS have vouchsaf'd : but, servants thus,  
 When their employers can no longer rule,      535  
 All inclination lose to what is right :  
 And Jove, that from on high beholds us all,  
 One half of any man's good points annuls  
 When that day comes upon him which his life  
 To a slave's lot reduces."

With these words 540

The noble house he enter'd, and his steps  
To where the suitor train were thronging bent.

But, in the selfsame hour in which his eyes  
Upon Ulysses, after twenty years,  
One moment rested, the dark gloom of death 545  
On ARGUS fell.

But, as Eumæus, now,  
The palace hall was entering, the eye  
Of young Telemachus, 'mid all that there  
Were gath'ring round, by far the foremost was  
The swineherd to descry; and by a sign 550  
He promptly to himself Eumæus led,  
Who, as he round him glanc'd, a casual seat  
From that attendant's side remov'd who heaps  
Of viands to the crowd was offering  
That there had met to feast. The seat thus ta'en 555  
He at the table of Telemachus,  
Now fronting him, arrang'd: and there a place  
Himself assum'd; whereat, as he his share  
Drew forth, the herald meat before him rang'd,  
And bread from out the basket drew.

And now, 560

After brief lapse, ULYSSES his own hall  
Had well-nigh enter'd,—as a mendicant  
Disguis'd, and as an aged decrepit man  
That on his staff walk'd feebly: raiment vile  
About his limbs was hanging, and a place 565  
Upon the inner ashen sill he chose

Where, 'gainst a cypress column (which, of old,  
Some artist hand had with ingenious toil  
To a high polish brought; and all its length  
By plummet rul'd)—he sate him down and lean'd. 570

But, to his side the swineherd summoning,  
Telemachus thus spoke—(a loaf entire  
From out the splendid basket drawing forth,  
And meat—so much as in his clasping hands  
He could comprise,—into Eumæus' own, 575  
The meantime, heaping) “To yon stranger take  
What here I give thee, and to him the whole  
Present; and then an alms let him entreat,  
And all the crowd of suitors supplicate.  
No mendicant his diffidence should plead.” 580

He spoke, and at the words Eumæus sped,  
Till, by Ulysses standing, these brief words  
He utter'd:—“Stranger! this Telemachus  
To thee a gift hath sent, and charge on thee  
He lays to ask of all an alms; the throng 585  
Of suitors thus petitioning,—and adds  
That mendicants no diffidence should plead.”

Ulysses, ever ready, this reply  
In turn address'd:—“O Jove! 'mid men at large,  
May happiness on this Telemachus 590  
For ever light: and whatsoever thought  
His mind revolves, with all success desir'd  
Be it to him fulfill'd.” Such were his words,  
And in both hands the portion having ta'en,  
He at his feet, where that mean wallet lay, 595

Outspread it ; and while Phemius in the hall  
His minstrel melody was tuning, ate.

Ulysses ceas'd to eat,—the bard to sing,  
And loud the din of suitors' voices rose,  
When Pallas to Ulysses drawing nigh 600  
With exhortation urg'd him in that crowd  
An off'ring to beseech of wheaten cakes ;  
That of the suitors he the reverent  
And godless might discern. Not that herein  
A single one from his impending doom 605  
The goddess would exempt. Thus, from the right  
A circuit making, of each guest an alms  
With outstretch'd hands, as one to begging train'd,  
He 'gan to ask : and they, as pity mov'd,  
Gave, in their turns,—but in amazement gaz'd, 610  
And of each other question, who this man  
Might be, and whence, began to ask ; until  
Melantius the goat-herd with this speech  
The crowd address'd :—“ Ye who the noble queen  
Are here with your suit urging, to my words 615  
Attend awhile : they to this stranger point—  
For, I before have seen him. To this spot  
The swineherd has conducted him ; but I  
No certain knowledge of him yet have gain'd,  
Nor of what tribe he comes at all can learn.” 620

He ended : but, Antinoüs with blame  
Eumæus thus arraign'd :—“ O Swineherd ! thou  
Thyself but too well known ! Why to this town  
Hast thou this man conducted ? Of the tribes  
Of vagrants and mean mendicants that prey 625

As kill-joys on our banquets, have we not  
 A concourse ample? Is it nought to thee  
 That such as these, here gath'ring, all the means  
 Will of thy master waste? And whence, forsooth,  
 Hast thou thus forward call'd him?"

But, hereto 630

O Swineherd! didst thou instant answer make:—  
 "Antinoüs! though thou may'st fortune boast,  
 Thou speakest as but ill beseemeth thee:—  
 For, who that from an unfamiliar home  
 Himself at feasts arrives, a stranger-guest 635  
 Would welcome make save from the number chos'n  
 Of handicraftsmen, soothsayers, or those  
 Who can diseases heal, or galleys build,  
 Or some inspirèd minstrel who with song  
 The guests might charm; for these o'er the wide world 640  
 Are at all feasts made welcome. None the hand  
 Of this good fellowship to one so like  
 To eat him out of house and home would give!  
 But, above all that here as suitors sit,  
 Thou ever to Ulysses' household stern 645  
 And harsh thyself approvest; and to me  
 This in excess. But none account hereof  
 Make I at all while Queen Penelope  
 And noble-soul'd Telemachus these halls  
 Shall dwell in as their own."

To which, in turn, 650

Telemachus:—"Remain thou mute;—nor thus  
 In many words rejoin: Antinoüs  
 In carping speech is ever wont to strive



And others prompts to follow him." He spoke,  
 And to Antinoüs turning thus in haste 655  
 These words appealing cast :—" Antinoüs !  
 Ev'n as a father would his son's, so thou  
 My welfare guardest !—who from this my home  
 Would'st urge me, in these harshest terms of speech  
 A stranger to expel. Ne'er may the god 660  
 This act accomplish'd see ! Take of those meats  
 And on the man bestow it. No demur  
 Make I, forsooth ! For, 'twas my own command.  
 Nor is such dole my mother's will, nor that  
 Of any that in all the household serve 665  
 Of noble-soul'd Ulysses. As to thee,—  
 No impulse thus to give in all thy heart  
 Finds place ; for thou far rather would'st thyself  
 Those viands gorge, than aught for others spare."

Antinoüs, in retort :—" Telemachus ! 670  
 Braggart in speech,—in temper uncontroll'd !  
 What words have pass'd thy lips ? If ev'ry one  
 Among us suitors number'd to this man  
 The like should give, thine house for full three months  
 Might well suffice to keep him in his home !" 675  
 Thus having spoken he a footstool seiz'd  
 Which underneath the table where he sat  
 Till now had lain, and, while the feast should last,  
 On this he rested his anointed feet.  
 All other suitors from their portions gave, 680  
 And on Ulysses' wallet bread and meat  
 In turn bestow'd ; and he, as now again  
 The threshold he approach'd, on these the gifts  
 Of Grecian men's compassion to regale,

His station near Antinoiis chose, and thus      685  
 That chief harangu'd:—"Friend! give thou in thy turn:  
 Thou seem'st not, in mine eyes, the meanest grade  
 Among these Greeks to fill,—but over all  
 Pre-eminence to hold, who, as it were,  
 A princely state maintainest: for which cause      690  
 It well would thee become some richer dole  
 Than thy compeers have given to bestow;—  
 Not bread alone:—And o'er the wide terrene  
 We live on I'd extol thee: for, in truth,  
 I, too, in times bygone, of ample means      695  
 Possess'd, a goodly home enjoy'd whose wealth  
 'Mid fellow-men was flourishing; and aid  
 On roaming strangers, of whatever rank,  
 And whatsoe'er their wants might be, bestow'd.  
 And crowds, too, I maintain'd of serving men,      700  
 And much had I of all which in this life  
 A prosp'rous lot maintains, and by mankind  
 Is affluence call'd. But, Jupiter himself,  
 The son of Saturn, (such was the caprice  
 Of his high will) my wealth's destruction wrought,      705  
 Who on a lengthsome voyage, which my death  
 Untimely compass'd, with a roving band  
 Of pirates sent me forth, th' Egyptian coast  
 To land upon: and in Egyptus' stream  
 Our galleys did I moor. And by this fleet      710  
 My comrades charg'd I to abide, and hale  
 Each keel to shore. Injunction, too, I gave  
 On ev'ry jutting point a watch to set.  
 But, they by wanton lawlessness impell'd,  
 And their own will asserting, with all speed      715  
 The fairest pastures of th' Egyptians' lands

Began to spoil ; their wives and infant babes  
 They captive took and slaughter'd, till the cry  
 Of panic with all speed the city fill'd,  
 And in the early morn, while yet the shouts 720  
 Were in their ears, in thickly must'ring troops  
 The burghers onward came until the plain  
 With hosts of infantry and horse (whose brass  
 Shone dazzling bright) on ev'ry side was throng'd.  
 But, Jove, who in the thunder-crash delights, 725  
 A sudden fright among my comrades spread,  
 And not a man dared face his foe : the doom  
 Of their impending ruin hemm'd them in ;  
 And on that spot did the Egyptian arm  
 With its keen sword kill many : Some, indeed, 730  
 That with me companied they captive took  
 And living spar'd, who with forc'd labour might  
 Henceforth in Egypt toil. Myself, howe'er,  
 They to a casual stranger yielded up—  
 Demetas, son of Iasus, who rule 735  
 O'er Cyprus held ; and unto Cyprus' shore  
 Would thence transport me. From which isle, at length,  
 After sharp suff'ring am I hither come."

Still, on retort intent, Antinoüs thus :—

" Now ! Which of all the gods this plague hath sent !  
 This kill-joy,—to our feast ? Thy station, then, 741  
 Take thou in yonder centre,—from the board  
 Where now I sit far distant ; lest betimes  
 Upon an Egypt as replete with harm  
 And Cyprus, too, thou haply should'st alight : 745  
 Some bold and barefac'd mendicant art thou !  
 To all thou mak'st approach, and without thought

On thee they waste their bounty ; for, no check  
Nor thought consid'rate weighs where from the goods  
Of others all are giving, while each man      750  
So much has to enjoy !”

But, to this speech

Ulysses, ever ready in reply,  
As he withdrew, thus answer'd :—“ Sad, indeed,  
Appareth this, that with thy graceful shape  
Thou hast no feelings ! For, from thine own house,      755  
Thou would'st not on a suppliant at thy feet  
The merest grain of salt bestow ; ev'n thou  
Who, at this moment, at the gen'rous board  
Thus sitting of another, mercy none  
Could'st in thy bosom feel of yonder bread      760  
To take and give me ; while before thy face  
So great abundance lieth !”

Thus spoke he :

Whereat Antinoüs with fiercer ire  
Began to chafe, and as a savage glance  
He cast at him, in these wing'd accents spoke :      765  
“ Now, to a certainty opine I not  
That thou from hence wilt safely make thy way,  
Who such revilings dar'st to fling !”

And now,

The footstool seizing, on Ulysses' back  
'Neath the right shoulder he a blow let fall :      770  
But, rock-like, all unmov'd, the Chieftain stood,  
Nor ev'n to make him stagger did the stroke  
Thus by Antinoüs hurl'd at him avail.

Ulysses, mute continuing, shook his head,  
 As in his inmost soul the day of fate 775  
 He brooded on ; and, to the threshold stone  
 Returning, he his seat resum'd, and there  
 His now well-loaded wallet placed, and thus  
 To all the suitors spoke :—

“ All ye who here

The suitors are of the most noble queen, 780  
 Your audience grant while I to ev'ry thought  
 My heart is prompting shall my utt'rance give :—  
 No heaviness of spirit, nor regret  
 Should that man feel who, to defend his own,  
 On conflict rushes and a wound receives, 785  
 For his fat oxen fighting or white sheep :  
 But, this Antinoüs my shoulder hit  
 My stomach's claims resenting—, that fell cause  
 Of mortal bane ! that mischief-working plague  
 Which many a disaster upon men 790  
 Is known to bring ! But, if there gods should be  
 Or dread avenging Powers which the cause  
 Of hapless Need befriend, may Death his course  
 Before his nuptial day untimely close !”

To this Antinoüs, Eupithes' son, 795  
 Rejoin'd :—“ O Stranger ! eat thou, and be still !  
 And keep thou there thy seat, or from this hall  
 Betake thyself, lest, railer as thou art,  
 Our youngsters either by thy feet or hands  
 Should in a moment draw thee through the house 800  
 And scrape thy skin from off thee !”

Here paus'd he—

But, all that crowd with anger vehement  
 Took to themselves the shame ; and, of the youths  
 One cried aloud :—" Antinoüs ! that blow  
 But ill became thee which yon wand'ring wretch 805  
 From thee receiv'd,—doom'd as thou art for this,  
 If any god in heav'n there be—to die.  
 For that the gods, like strangers from some land  
 Remote appearing, and in many a form  
 By men beheld, throughout their cities walk, 810  
 Th' impiety or virtues of our race  
 With scrutiny contemplating."

Such words

Ev'n from the suitors issued ;—though regard  
 Antinoüs paid none. But, anguish keen  
 Felt young Telemachus for him who thus 815  
 A blow had to abide : No tear to earth  
 Did he, that moment, from his eyelids shed,  
 But mute remain'd and shook his head,—as deep  
 In thought the scheme of vengeance he revolv'd.

Now, when Penelope the tidings learn'd 820  
 Of him who this fell outrage in her halls  
 Had but just brook'd, she to her maidens cried :—  
 " Ev'n thus may he, the god who from his bow  
 Such glory wins, Apollo, smite thyself !"  
 To whom Eurynome, who o'er that house 825  
 Had oversight, this answer promptly made :—  
 " Ev'n so ! And were the boon, for which our pray'rs  
 Continual plead, but granted, not a man  
 Of all these suitors would the dawning see  
 Of golden-thronèd morn !"

## Penelope

Thus further spake :—" Nurse! Odious are they all— 831  
 For, baneful are their plots and wiles; but, he,  
 Antinoüs, above them all the guise  
 Of Fate's dark agent bears. Some wretched one,  
 A stranger, through the palace haply roams, 835  
 And, by his need compell'd, a bounty asks :  
 The gen'ral crowd his wallet well supplied  
 And of their portions gave; but, with a stool  
 This fellow smote his shoulder!"

## Thus spake she

Amid the handmaids in her chamber thron'd. 840  
 Meanwhile Ulysses on his ample store  
 Was left to feast: but, having to her side  
 The swineherd called, Penelope these words  
 In brief address'd :—" Hence, good Eumæus! speed  
 And bid that stranger hither come, that I 845  
 Myself may here some commune with him hold,  
 And question ask if of Ulysses aught  
 He tidings may have heard, or with his eyes  
 Upon him look'd: for, he the aspect wears  
 Of one who much in hapless plight hath roam'd." 850

But, thus, Eumæus! didst thou answer make :—  
 " Lady! if these assembled Greeks were hush'd,  
 The tale he could relate would, of a truth,  
 Thy bosom cheer: for, I, myself, three nights  
 This stranger lodg'd; and three days in my hut 855  
 Besought him to abide; since he the first  
 My home approach'd when from the ship his flight  
 He had effected: but, not even yet

Hath he the narrative of all the ills  
 He hath encounter'd clos'd : And, as when one 860  
 A minstrel eyes who, gifted of the gods,  
 That lay attunes which men delight to hear,  
 And they would fain in one incessant song  
 To his sweet singing listen,—so, in truth,  
 Did he, as near me in my cot he sate, 865  
 My senses woo. And this his story is—  
 That he in times bygone the father's friend  
 Of thine Ulysses was, and that in Crete  
 (Cradle of Minos' race) he us'd to dwell :  
 From thence is he come hither, by distress 870  
 Much harass'd and from shore to shore his course  
 'Mid rough repulses urging. And this tale  
 He holds to, that report to him was made  
 Of thine Ulysses being yet alive  
 And with a wealthy people domicil'd, 875  
 From the Thesprotian nation not remote :  
 Moreover, that much wealth he homeward brings."

To him, in turn, Penelope :—" Attend !  
 And to my presence summon him ; that he  
 Himself may speak before me. As for these, 880  
 The suitors, at the portals let them sit,  
 Or in the halls dispos'd ; if thus to mirth  
 Their hearts incline. In their own homes, forsooth,  
 Undamag'd rests their substance ;—all their bread  
 And wine withal : stores which their serving men 885  
 As their support consume ; while these, their lords,  
 Day after day this our palatial home  
 Their sole resort regarding, all our beeves  
 And sheep and fatten'd goats in sacrifice



Cease not to slaughter, but continual feast 890  
 Regale in, and our purple streaming wine  
 With reckless waste are quaffing, while a store  
 Immense of household treasure melts away :  
 For, no such man, forsooth, among us stands  
 As was Ulysses, from this princely house 895  
 Such outrage to avert : But, should he come  
 And on this land that gave him birth set foot,  
 A speedy vengeance would he with his son  
 On all these injuries wreak ! ”

She ended thus,

And, at this moment, young Telemachus 900  
 Sneez'd boist'rously,—that all the palace through  
 The echoes rang resounding ; and the queen  
 Laugh'd at the noise, outright ; and with wing'd words  
 Eumæus thus address'd :—“ Come, Swineherd, now—  
 That stranger bring before me. See'st thou not 905  
 How to each utter'd word of mine my son  
 Hath just now sneez'd ? As sure as this hath happ'd  
 No death-blow its accomplishment shall want  
 That on those suitors falls : not one shall death  
 And the Fates' doom evade. But, more I'll say— 910  
 And mark it well ! If I, in all he saith  
 Shall truth discern, a mantle on his limbs  
 Will I bestow,—a tunic, too ; such garb  
 As shall be beauteous deem'd.”

She ceas'd to speak,

And, at her bidding, forth the swineherd sped, 915  
 And at Ulysses' side thus quickly spoke,—  
 “ Fatherly stranger ! Queen Penelope,

The mother of Telemachus, this call  
 On thee hath made. The workings of her mind,  
 Ev'n in her sorrow, urge her thus to seek      920  
 Some tidings which her husband's fate may tell :  
 And should she in thy speech the tale of truth  
 Hereby discern, thy body with a cloak  
 And tunic will she clothe ; whereof thy need  
 At present is extreme : and then for bread      925  
 Among the people suppliant, with food  
 Thou wilt thy stomach fill, and ev'ry one  
 Whose mind inclines will of his bounty give."  
 But, patient-soul'd Ulysses thus replied :—  
 " Eumæus ! at no distant day will I      930  
 The whole true tale to sage Penelope,  
 The child of Icarus, relate : for, much  
 Do I of her Ulysses know, who once  
 The self-same heavy perils with him shar'd.  
 But, of that throng of suitors whose fell pride      935  
 And savage outrages at Heav'n itself  
 Defiance cast, I own my fear. Ev'n now  
 That wretch who struck me, as along the hall,  
 An unoffending man, I took my way,  
 Hath giv'n me pain, which nor Telemachus'      940  
 Nor any other's arm avail'd t' avert.  
 Entreat thou, then, Penelope, howe'er  
 These thoughts may press, that she till set of sun  
 Within the palace rest ; and in that hour  
 Let her these questions ask of me who then      945  
 Of her lov'd husband's voyage home may speak ;  
 And to the kindled embers on her hearth  
 May she enjoin me nigher to approach ;  
 For, sorry raiment have I worn, as thou

Thyself can'st testify, from the first hour 950  
In which thy suppliant I became."

He spoke,

And, thus address'd, the swineherd through the hall  
Mov'd onward ; but, as on the threshold stone  
His foot he placed, Penelope these words  
Enquiring spoke :—"Eumæus ! would'st thou not 955  
The stranger hither lead ? What thoughts are these  
Which he, poor wand'rer, cherishes ? Doth dread  
Of any one discourage him ? or from aught  
Within our palace shrinks he ? He whose life  
Is but a vagrant's his own foe becomes 960  
When to false shame succumbing."

To which words

Eumæus ! thou responsive spak'st :—"Herein  
With judgment hath he spoken, as, indeed,  
The thought would be of others,—fleeing thus  
From the rude scoffs of overbearing Man. 965  
He prays thee till the set of sun forbear.  
And for thyself, O lady, wouldst thou best  
Herein consult, discourse with him to hold,  
All else withdrawn ; and his recital hear."

Penelope hereto replied :—"This man, 970  
Whoe'er he be, no thoughtless one appears :  
For, in none other spot of Earth are men  
Who thus like these run riot, and in acts  
Of such mad outrage revel."

Thus spake she,

And as in that presumptuous throng again 975

Eumæus mingled, these few rapid words  
 He in the ear of young Telemachus,  
 That none might overhear, close whisp'ring breath'd :—  
 " Friend! I shall now depart,—the swine to heed,  
 And other cares,—which thy possessions are 980  
 And my life's means supply. But, in this home  
 Claim thou the gen'ral oversight : thyself  
 'Bove all take heed to : think thou—and beware  
 That thou no wrong encounter ; for, these Greeks,  
 Too many, only, are on mischief bent, 985  
 Whom, ere we suffer wrong, may Jove confound !"

To whom Telemachus :—" O father mine !  
 This will I do : and thou, too, when the meal  
 Of parting day is eaten, go thy ways,  
 And with the morn choice sacrifices bring ; 990  
 For, to all these, the rites prescrib'd, will I  
 With the Immortals' heed, in season, give."

Thus spoke Eumæus, and upon a couch  
 By polish burnish'd bright his seat resum'd,  
 Whence, when on proffer'd meat and drink withal 995  
 He had regal'd, he to the home-stall sped,  
 And the wide courts and the palatial hall  
 (Now throng'd with feasters) left ;—for they, the crowd  
 Of suitors, in the dance and song their sport,  
 As eventide drew nigh, rejoic'd to take. 1000

END OF THE SEVENTEENTH BOOK.

## BOOK XVIII.

**N**OW to that hall of feasting, came there one—  
 A common mendicant—, who through the streets  
 Of Ithaca's fair city ask'd for alms ;  
 But, in his gluttony all beggars else,  
 Eating and drinking ever, far outdid. 5  
 Nor thews, nor sinews had he of man's strength,  
 But, to the eye a huge and heavy bulk  
 Of stature he display'd. The name he bore,  
 Arnæus, from his birth his mother gave ;  
 But Irus, only, all th' Ithacian youths 10  
 Were wont to call him ; for, that at command  
 The messages of any he would bear.

Upon the spot arriv'd, from his own halls  
 This mendicant would have Ulysses driv'n ;  
 And with rebuke abusive thus began :— 15  
 " Away ! old man ! and from this porch retreat,  
 Ere by the foot thou hence be dragg'd along :  
 Seeest thou not that all around are signs  
 To me, this moment, making, and their wish  
 Convey that I should hale thee forth ? But, shame 20  
 As yet deters me. Come ! arise, and go—

Lest hand to hand encounter should erelong  
 Between us hap." But, with fierce, angry glance  
 The shrewd Ulysses eyeing him, thus spoke :—  
 "Fellow ! No injury by deed or word 25  
 Am I on thee inflicting ; nor the gifts  
 Of others' bounty envy I, which thou  
 Abundant tak'st. This threshold ample space  
 For both of us affords ; and shame it were  
 That thou with thy invidious soul shouldst grasp 30  
 At that which is another's to receive !  
 But, thou a vagrant's life appear'st to lead,  
 As, indeed, is my lot ; for that the gods  
 Pause long ere they the gift of wealth bestow.  
 But, in this manual conflict to engage 35  
 Provoke me not too urgently,—lest rage  
 Thou shouldst excite, and it may chance that I,  
 Old as I am, that chest of thine and lips  
 May here with blood disfigure ; and more peace  
 To-morrow would be mine ! For, to these halls 40  
 Of Prince Ulysses, aged Laertes' son,  
 I cannot think thou ever wouldst return."

Hereto the vagrant Irus, in high wrath,  
 Rejoinder made :—"Ye gods ! how trippingly  
 This greedy beggar, here, holds forth ! so like 45  
 To some old crone that in the furnace works—  
 But, to his hurt I'll something try :—A blow  
 From these two hands of mine would all his teeth  
 From either jaw upon the earth disperse,  
 As though a swine's they were, that in the field 50  
 On stubble feeds. Now, then, thy belt secure !—  
 That all here sitting may our conflict view,

'Gainst one another match'd : Yet, how canst thou  
With me, thy junior, fight?"

To such fierce strife

Incited both, they on that threshold stood 55

Which in the front of the high portals shone,

And to the struggle did Antinoüs

Urge either on, as, with a joyous laugh,

He on the suitors call'd :—" My friends ! such feat

As this hath never yet been here achiev'd ! 60

Oh ! what a merry pastime hath some god

For this fair house provided ! To such strife

Are this strange mendicant and Irus rous'd

As with their fists to battle ; and at once

We man to man will place them." As he spoke, 65

All, laughing loud, uprose, as round the twain

Of ill-cloth'd mendicants they circling throug'd :

And then Antinoüs, Eupithes' son,

The crowd address'd :—" Most noble suitors ! Hear !

While I some preface make : kids' paunches here 70

Are on the embers lying, which, with fat

And blood for supper stuff'd, are set apart :

Now—whichsoever of these two shall win,

The better man thus proving,—from his place

Let him step forth, and from those condiments 75

His free selection make : and from henceforth

In our good company that man shall feast,

Nor will we other mendicants permit

These halls to enter and our bounty claim."

Antinoüs ended, and right well his speech 80

The list'ning throng contented ; but, just then

Ulysses—ever in all counsel prompt  
 And with shrewd thought consulting, briefly spoke :—  
 “ Good men ! ’tis an unequal match which he  
 Who with old age is stricken, and his strength           85  
 In suff’ring has exhausted, undertakes,  
 When with a junior he contends : but, Want,  
 The craving need of victual, goads me on  
 And to hard knocks oft subjects me. Come ! then,  
 Pronounce ye, all here present, solemn vow           90  
 That none around me, for this Irus’ sake,  
 Will with the hand of violence myself  
 While fighting smite, and with o’erpow’ring force  
 Crush me and give him vict’ry.”

Thus spake he—

And they, as he besought, an oath pronounc’d           95  
 Such act abjuring. And, when all had sworn  
 And their oath ratified, Telemachus  
 Ulysses thus address’d :—“ If with thy strength  
 And thy bold spirit, stranger, thou prevail  
 To thrust him out,—fear not one Grecian here !           100  
 For, whosoe’er on thee should lay his hand  
 With a whole multitude must look to cope :  
 I at this feast preside : Eurymachus,  
 Antinoüs, too,—both lords of regal rank,  
 My feelings share.” He ended, and assent           105  
 The general mind express’d ; and hereupon  
 Ulysses with his mean and ragged garb  
 His waist engirding, fair, stout thighs display’d,  
 And then, too, did his shoulders broad and chest  
 And vig’rous arms their might declare, as now           110  
 Minerva, to his side drawn near, the limbs



Of this staunch chieftain of his race enlarg'd.  
 The suitors, one and all, in wonder gaz'd ;—  
 And one, with glances on his neighbour bent,  
 These jesting words enounc'd :—“ No long time hence 115  
 This carrier of our errands on himself  
 Miscarriage direful will have brought! Such thighs  
 From underneath his tatters this aged man  
 Hath brought to view !” Such comments they exchang'd.  
 But Irus' spirit with a dire alarm 120  
 Was miserably scar'd ; though, in his plight  
 Of terror the retainers in that hall  
 For the encounter girding him, by force  
 The beggar drew along, as all his frame  
 In panic shook. But, with reproaches stern 125  
 Antinoüs thus upbraided him :—“ Now ! mark !  
 Thou gross, pretentious braggart ! May thy days  
 At once be ended, and career cut short,  
 If thus thou tak'st to quaking, and in awe  
 So terrible this agèd man wouldst dread, 130  
 Worn as he is with suff'ring, which his days  
 Of trouble brought upon him. But, in phrase  
 Distinct I speak to thee, and this my speech  
 Shall be fulfill'd,—If he the battle win  
 And thou inferior prove,—in some dark ship 135  
 I to Epirus will transport thee hence,  
 And to its king consign thee—Echetus—  
 All men's Destroyer call'd, who, with the knife  
 Relentless will thy nose and ears cut off,  
 And on thy very groin his hounds let loose 140  
 And bid them fill their maw.” Thus stern he spoke ;  
 Whereat still greater tremor Irus' frame  
 Began to shake ; but, to a central spot

They led him out, until the two their fists  
 In air upheld: And now th' heroic prince,      145  
 Ulysses, doubtful paus'd,—such blow to strike  
 As should upon the spot—where down he'd fall—  
 The wretch's life determine,—or, a stroke  
 Less heavy aim, and fell him to the ground.  
 And better counsel seem'd it, as he thus      150  
 Reflecting mus'd, with gentler force to hit—  
 That not a Grecian there his proper self  
 Might recognise. Both combatants their hands  
 Before them raising,—Irus, first, a blow  
 On the right shoulder of Ulysses dealt;      155  
 Whereat, the Chief his neck below the ear  
 Struck quick, and all the bony structure broke.  
 That instant, from his mouth the dark blood rush'd,  
 And prostrate on the ground he moaning lay,  
 And ground his teeth, and with his sprawling heels      160  
 The pavement beat. But ev'ry lordly prince  
 That suitor crowd among, as high in air  
 Their hands they rais'd, with laughter wellnigh died,  
 As now Ulysses, having by the foot  
 Fall'n Irus seiz'd, straight through the vestibule      165  
 His body drew, until the court thereof  
 And doors he reach'd, and there, at length, his bulk  
 Deposited, and, 'gainst th' enclosing wall  
 Dispos'd him all aslant, as in his hand  
 His staff he placed, and in brief accents spoke:—      170  
 "Here take thou up thy station, and the hounds  
 And hogs beat off; nor, poltroon as thou art,  
 The lord and master henceforth claim to be  
 Of strangers and of mendicants; lest ill,  
 Perchance, more grievous still, should thee befall!"      175

He ended, and his wallet poor and mean,  
 And all in rags, about his shoulders flung,—  
 A plaited band sustaining it. And thus,  
 The threshold-stone regaining, he sate down.  
 The suitors all, with jocund laugh, in words 180  
 Of courteous speech saluting him: "May Jove  
 And all the gods, O stranger, thy heart's wish  
 And all thy mind would most desire, fulfil!  
 Thou! that this wretch, whom nought could satisfy,  
 Hast from the people among whom he begg'd 185  
 Just driven out for ever! For we soon  
 Will to Epirus send him, and its prince  
 King Echetus—the common bane of men."

Thus spoke they: and in these portentous signs  
 The great and noble-soul'd Ulysses joy'd: 190  
 And now Antinoüs beside his seat  
 A kid's paunch placed, with fat and blood well fill'd;  
 And, after him, Amphinomus, two loaves  
 From out his basket lifting, rang'd them near,  
 And from a golden cup this pledge pronounc'd:— 195  
 "Fatherly stranger! health to thee! May fate,  
 In time to come, befriend thee! though as yet  
 Thou be with evil hamper'd."

To which speech

Ulysses thus replied: "Amphinomus!  
 A judgment most discreet, methinks, thou hast: 200  
 And wise, too, was thy father, of whose fame  
 Report hath reach'd me: I of Nisus speak,  
 Who in Dulichium's isle is valiant deem'd  
 And wealthy. Thou his son accounted wast,

And willing seem'st to be, and able, too,      205  
 On converse thus to enter: for which cause  
 I thus incline t' address thee: and may'st thou  
 My words perpend and heed. Of all that lives  
 And moves on Earth, nought feebler it sustains  
 Than Man himself, who, while th' immortal gods      210  
 With prowess gift him, and he all his strength  
 In supple knees can exercise, from bane  
 In years to come believes himself exempt:  
 But, let the same blest deities his lot  
 With sorrow sadden,—all his spirit grieves,      215  
 And with reluctance sullenly submits.  
 For, by the existence self which Jove the sire  
 Of men and gods accords, the mind of Man  
 Is ever form'd! The day hath been, when I  
 In this world flourish'd; blindly foolish acts      220  
 At times committing;—and while on my sire  
 And brothers I relied, to might and strength  
 Abandon'd wholly. No: to wickedness  
 Let no man yield; but with a quiet soul  
 The bounty of the gods (whate'er may be      225  
 Their gifts) enjoy. To what outrageous wrongs  
 Have I here been a witness! by this crowd  
 Of suitors schem'd, who in such ruthless waste  
 The substance are consuming, and the wife  
 Insulting, of a man who, as me seems,      230  
 Will not much longer from all those he loves  
 And from his home be absent, but to both  
 Prove very near! But, to thine home (by eyes  
 Unseen) may some god guide thee, when that prince  
 To his lov'd native country shall return!      235  
 For, not without bloodshedding will that throng

Of suitors and Ulysses part, when he  
Beneath this roof his presence shall declare."

Ulysses ended ;—and Autonymus,  
Libation having to the gods outpour'd, 240  
The rich wine drank, and in the Stranger's hand  
(The chieftain of the people!) placed the cup.  
But, through those princely halls the suitor paced  
Like one in spirit drooping, as his head  
From time to time he shook, and at his heart, 245  
E'en now, misgivings felt : but, not to him  
'Twas giv'n his doom to shun ;—Minerva's self  
Decreeing, that the hand and wielded spear  
Of young Telemachus in bold assault  
His life should take. And on the thronèd seat 250  
By him so recent fill'd, Autonymus  
His place resum'd.

Now Pallas, in that hour,  
The mind of Icarus' fair daughter mov'd  
Her presence to the whole assembled band  
Of suitors to display : their inmost heart 255  
To open and to test, while kindly grace  
And rev'rence from her consort and her son,  
Exceeding all past fondness, she should win.  
With a forced laugh her mind was thus reveal'd :  
" Eurynome ! My humour 'tis (howe'er 260  
Herefrom, as yet, I shrunk) this suitor train—  
Ungential to my soul, as they all are,  
To stand before : but, to my son a word  
In season spoken, would I fain address—  
That with less cordial fellowship this crowd 265

Of suitors he should greet ;—a haughty crew  
Whose speeches are so fair, and whose designs  
With foulest purpose follow.”

To which words

Eurynome, who o'er the household train  
Had oversight, thus answer'd :—“ In good sooth,       270  
My child, hast thou all this discreetly urg'd :  
Go,—and thy son exhort, and nought withhold—  
But, thine ablutions make,—thy cheeks anoint—  
As now thou art appear thou not ! thy face  
By weeping marr'd : So real an ill is it       275  
In endless grief to fret. Thy son those years  
Can number now which that,—a bearded man—  
He might attain, thou on his natal morn  
With passionate entreaty didst the gods  
Immortal supplicate.” To whom, in turn,       280  
The queen rejoinder made :—“ Eurynome !  
All zealous as on my behalf thou speak'st,  
This counsel, prithee, tender not,—that I  
These limbs should lave,—this skin with oil anoint,—  
For those immortal deities who thrones       285  
In high Olympus fill have all the charms  
Of beauty taken from me since my lord  
In his broad ships departed :—but, bid thou  
Antinoë attend, and at her side  
Hippodamia,—that beside me they       290  
Their station in the palace-hall may fill :  
For, 'midst that crowd, alone, 'tis not for me  
(Who well may shrink) my presence to accord.”

She spoke, and the aged woman through the courts  
Of that palatial house obedient sped,       295

With the queen's mandate to the maidens charg'd,  
 And their return commanding. Then anew  
 Did Pallas, goddess of the gleaming eye,  
 Her thought employ, and o'er Penelope  
 A gentle sleep diffus'd,—wherein reclin'd 300  
 Awhile she slumber'd, as along the couch  
 In perfect ease resolv'd her body lay ;  
 The goddess, meantime, those celestial gifts  
 Bestowing which the Greeks' enraptur'd gaze  
 Would instant fix. Her lovely features first 305  
 With that ambrosial unction she bedew'd  
 Wherewith anointed bright-zon'd Venus shines  
 When the love wak'ning choral train she joins  
 Of all the Graces. To her stature height—  
 To all her shape she fulness gave, for eye 310  
 To rest on ; and sawn ivory less white  
 Than her fair skin had shone. The goddess now  
 (Her gracious will accomplish'd) disappear'd,—  
 And from the palace, as in fluent talk  
 They onward hasten'd, the two handmaids came : 315  
 And at that moment her soft soothing sleep  
 The slumb'ring queen forsook, and with both hands  
 Her lineaments she smooth'd, as thus she spake :—  
 “ The gentlest of all slumber hath but now,  
 E'en while in sadness steep'd, my senses wrapt ! 320  
 Oh ! that the chaste Diana would at once  
 Like mild dismissal of my spirit grant,  
 That I, no longer sorrowing in heart,  
 My day of life should thus consume,—the gifts  
 So numberless of a lov'd consort's worth 325  
 Deploring ever ;—in such high esteem  
 Throughout all Greece he shone ! ” She ceas'd to speak,

And from the beauteous upper chamber stepp'd,  
 Not unattended, for in her descent  
 Two handmaids follow'd close. And, as the throng 330  
 Of suitors they approach'd, Penelope  
 Her station at the bearing-pillar took  
 Of the firm massive roof, and to her face,  
 (While on each hand a modest damsel stood,)  
 A veil of texture exquisite upheld. 335  
 Each suitor at that sight throughout his frame  
 A tremor felt; and by love's witchery  
 Were they beguil'd! Whereat more keen and fierce  
 The passion raged that beauteous one to win!

Then to Telemachus appealing thus 340  
 The queenly mother spoke:—"Telemachus!  
 No longer is thy spirit resolute—  
 Nor stable thy designs: Ev'n when a child  
 For thine advantage didst thou better think.  
 But, now—to thy full stature grown, and thus 345  
 The flow'r approaching of young man's estate,  
 (And would not any stranger, as thy form  
 And comeliness he gaz'd on, in thee hail  
 The son of one most blest!)—thy bent of thought  
 And purpose ill become thee: What an act 350  
 Is this within our palace perpetrate,  
 That thou so vile an outrage to sustain  
 A stranger hast permitted? How is't now?  
 If any stranger, that in these our halls  
 A seat should fill, such usage is to brook 355  
 As from that seat would drag him, on thyself  
 At th' hand of ev'ry man would fall the shame  
 And censure most degrading."



In reply

Telemachus thus spoke :—" O mother mine !  
 My spirit chafes not at thy wrath. Whate'er 360  
 May here transpire,—good may it be or worse—  
 I mark, and in my inmost thoughts revolve.  
 In days bygone I a mere childling was ;  
 But, the best counsels ever to think out  
 I find not : for, this throng that side by side 365  
 Continual sit and baneful schemes concoct  
 My sense confound ; and helpers have I none.  
 But, nowise at the bidding of these lords  
 (Thy suitors) did the stranger mendicant  
 With Irus fight. The stranger's strength by far 370  
 More sturdy prov'd ! O father Jove ! and ye  
 Minerva and Apollo, I invoke—  
 Grant that in this our palace overthrown,—  
 Some in the vestibule, some in the house,—  
 These suitors may at length their heads, too, shake, 375  
 And each with limbs unnerv'd be prostrate laid  
 As in the court gate-entry, at this hour,  
 Yon Irus, like one drunk, from side to side  
 His head lets drop,—unable on his feet  
 To stand or homeward to return,—if home, 380  
 Forsooth ! he have : but, shatter'd there he lies."

Such converse held they : but, Eurymachus  
 Penelope thus greeted :—" Daughter fair  
 Of Icarus,—discreet Penelope !  
 If all th' Iasian Argive Greeks on thee 385  
 Their gaze might bend, a train more numerous  
 Of suitors would with each returning morn  
 In this thy home be feasting found ; for, all

Of womankind, in loveliness and shape,  
As in all gifts of mind, dost thou surpass." 390

To whom Penelope :—" Eurymachus !  
The gods of all my merits, all my grace  
And beauty reft me when the Grecian force  
For Troy on shipboard sail'd, among whose host  
Went forth my spouse Ulysses. Were he now 395  
Upon his home to enter, and, the charge  
At once assuming, all this household rule,  
My good report might haply into realms  
More distant spread, and ampler homage win :  
But, sad is now my destiny ; such woes 400  
Have the gods thrust upon me ! When from hence  
My consort went, and his lov'd fatherland  
Prepar'd to quit, my right hand by the wrist  
He took, and thus exhorted me :—" My Queen !  
That all the well-greav'd Grecians should from Troy 405  
Unscath'd return I cannot hope :—" Report  
The Trojan people names as men of war,  
Spearmen and archers, horsemen that on steeds  
Swift-footed fight ; who in brief space of time  
The mighty conflict of a gen'ral war 410  
Would to its issues bring : and for this cause  
Within my knowledge falls it not to say  
That God to this my home a safe return  
Will deign to grant, or that before Troy wall  
I be not captive taken. But, the charge 415  
Of all around thee here on thee I lay :—"   
For both my parents that within these walls  
Palatial dwell, take thought ; with that same love  
Protecting them which guards them now,—nay, more

(When I shall absent be) of care impend. 420  
 And, for our son,—when thou upon his chin  
 A beard shalt see,—the consort to thyself  
 Take thou whom thou may'st choose ; and of our house  
 Telemachus leave inmate.'

“ All these words

Were by my husband spoken ; and th' events 425  
 Are come to pass. But, dark will be that gloom  
 Which upon nuptials whence my soul recoils—  
 Lost as I am !—would fall ; and all my wealth  
 Has Jove now wrested from me. And the sense  
 Of this rude wrong affects me :—Ne'er, as now 430  
 It hath befall'n, did suitors woo whose aim  
 A worthy bride, the child of some rich chief,  
 It was to win, and who in rivalry  
 Would ever vie. They oxen and fat sheep  
 Were wont to send for the young virgin's friends 435  
 A feast to make ; and splendid gifts they gave ;  
 But, not upon the substance did they prey  
 Of others, and at others' cost make waste.”  
 Thus spake she ; and Ulysses' noble soul  
 Exulted as of presents from that crew 440  
 She thus laid hold, and with such glozing speech  
 Their hearts entrapp'd ; but he in other schemes  
 From these remote, to these unlike, was wrapt.

Antinoüs, Eupithes' son, in turn  
 Thus briefly spake :—“ Penelope ! fair child 445  
 Of Icarus ! whichever of us Greeks  
 Shall presents bring to thee, accept them all :  
 For graceless is refusal of a gift.

But, we to occupation none will turn  
 Nor elsewhere lodge, till thou of the best man      450  
 'Mid all the Greeks that woo thee, shalt be bride."

Thus spoke Antinoüs, and with his words  
 All seem'd well-pleas'd;—and each a herald sent  
 The gifts to bring: and to Antinoüs first  
 A broad and gorgeous robe, with many a hue      455  
 Embroider'd, came: Twelve golden clasps in all  
 Were in it work'd, and with well-twisted hooks  
 Throughout fast clos'd. And to Eurymachus  
 Without delay a necklace came of gold  
 In amber set, resplendent as the sun,      460  
 And by inventive art superbly wrought.  
 And by two servants to Eurydamas  
 Were ear-rings brought with three bright brilliants strung  
 Of handiwork most exquisite, whence rays  
 Of beauty sparkled. To Pisander, prince      465  
 Of regal rank, Polyctor's son, his train  
 Attendant a rich collar brought;—a gift  
 In all its features splendid: gifts diverse,  
 And all most costly, from the sev'ral Greeks  
 Thus flowing in. And now to where on high      470  
 Her chambers lay the noble queen return'd,  
 And at her side the handmaids of her train  
 The splendid gifts for dowry offer'd bore.  
 Meanwhile, her suitors, to the dance and song  
 Delightful all devoted, until eve      475  
 Their feast prolong'd; and the dark shades of night  
 Upon their sport descended. Then did they  
 Within those halls three frames for burning brands  
 Above the pavement raise, which light might yield,

And sear wood all around them heap'd, long since 480  
 Of moisture freed, and in extremest state  
 Of dryness cut, and with sharp metal cleft.  
 And torches of the pine herewith they blent :  
 And these the maidens in Ulysses' halls  
 Were left by turns to kindle : but that Chief 485  
 In mind so noble, in design so prompt,  
 Thus to the damsels spake :—" Ye handmaids all  
 Of Prince Ulysses' house !—(that Chief from home  
 So long estrang'd !—) the palace-chambers seek  
 Where sits your honour'd queen ; and at her side 490  
 The spindles turn, and while beneath that roof  
 Ye serve, for her contentment working sit  
 And thus her spirit recreate,—the wool  
 Meantime with your hands carding. I myself  
 For these below the fire-light will maintain ; 495  
 And if till break of golden-thronèd morn  
 Their humour be to revel, not ev'n thus  
 Shall they my spirit weary :—Strength have I  
 Excessive toil to cope with."

Thus spake he,

But with a mocking laugh that female group 500  
 His speech contemn'd, and at each other stared.  
 Fair-faced Melanthe with a shameless jeer  
 Insulted him : She Dolius' daughter was,  
 But, by Penelope from childhood rear'd,  
 And, while with toys her fancy she amus'd, 505  
 As her own offspring cherish'd : but, no pang  
 Of sorrow did Melanthe know, when grief  
 Penelope a mourner made : Her love  
 She to Eurymachus unhallow'd gave,

But with insulting tongue Ulysses spurn'd :— 510

“Thou miserable stranger! all whose wits  
Are palsied, and who neither in some forge  
Nor in the beggars' haunt thy sleep would'st snatch,  
Here hast thou to a crowd with saucy speech  
Been holding forth, and nothing seem'st to fear! 515

'Tis wine that hath thy senses seiz'd, or thus  
On gossip is thy very nature bent.

In empty boasting, then, would'st thou, as one  
Beside himself with joyfulness—indulge,  
For that the wand'ring Irus thou hast crush'd! 520

Take thou good heed, then, that no abler man  
Than Irus soon appear, whose sturdy hands  
Thy head belab'ring shall from out the house  
With streaming blood disfigur'd drive thee forth.”

To whom Ulysses, grimly frowning, thus :— 525

“Go forth from hence, and quickly, too, I will—  
Thou shameless one! and to Telemachus  
Thy speech rehearse, that, not long hence, his sword  
May limb by limb thy carcase cut and hew!”

Thus speaking, all that female crew he scared— 530  
And through the palace with all haste they sped,  
Their knees in terror shaking; for, at heart  
Felt they how surely all might come to pass!

But, there the Chieftain stood; his glance on all  
Around him casting, as from those hot hearths 535

The flick'ring light he scatter'd, while his thoughts  
On deeds were musing which not unfulfill'd  
The future was to leave. But, in those taunts  
Which well the heart might wound did Pallas yet

The suitors leave t' indulge, as though anew 540  
 By sufferings Ulysses' soul to try :  
 And thus Eurymachus, with scornful gibes  
 At great Ulysses flung, a mocking laugh  
 From ev'ry suitor forc'd :—" Now, mark my words,  
 All ye who here to this majestic queen 545  
 Your court are paying,—while to ev'ry thought  
 My mind conceives I utterance shall give :—  
 Not without guidance, seems it, of some god  
 Cometh this stranger to Ulysses' house ;  
 But, as to me appears, that torch-like flame 550  
 Is from himself,—from his own head diffus'd :  
 For hair thereon none, not a lock, hath he !"  
 Then at that Chieftain, who in overthrow  
 Had many a city whelm'd,—this scoff he threw :—  
 " Stranger ! would'st thou to work consent, were I 555  
 In some far-distant corner of the land  
 To place thee, (and good wages should'st thou take)  
 Where thou might'st stones for building walls pick up  
 And tall trees set in earth ? A year entire  
 Would I with victual feed thee, and thy limbs 560  
 With raiment clothe ; aye, and beneath those feet  
 Would sandals fit. But, no :—since thou the trade  
 Of vice hast learn'd, with no good-will would'st thou  
 Thy work incline to finish : All thy wish  
 Is thus among the populace to beg, 565  
 Till thou that rav'nous maw of thine canst fill !"

To whom Ulysses thus :—" If, in Spring time,  
 Eurymachus ! when days more lengthsome are,  
 We might as rivals in the meadow work,  
 And well to hand the grassy herbage lay, 570

And I a well-curv'd sickle had, and thou  
The like wert handling, that an ample proof  
We of our labour might thus make, till dark  
Both fasting ;—or, again, if beeves there were  
Which we might have to guide,—prime of their kind, 575  
Fat, bulky, and with hay well fed, in age  
Alike, and the same weight inur'd to bear,  
And no weak points betraying in their strength ;  
And, if a field, four acres in its breadth,  
Before us lay, the clods whereof, when plough'd, 580  
Would to the coulter yield,—then would thine eyes  
Their witness bear, as furrows I would cleave  
On furrows following :—or, if, again,  
Jove, on this very day, in any spot  
To mortal strife should call me, and a shield, 585  
Two jav'lins, and a helmet,—brass entire—  
About my brows I had, myself should'st thou  
Among the foremost in the front ranks see,  
And on my craving stomach cease to jest.  
Thou grossly hast revil'd me ; for, thine heart 590  
A bad one is : a high and mighty lord  
Thou deem'st thyself, for that a very few  
(And those, too, far from good,) thy comrades are ;  
But, should Ulysses homeward come, and this  
His native soil attain, yon palace-gates, 595  
However wide, too strait for thee would prove,  
When through the vestibule, in panic flight,  
Thou should'st beyond the doors essay to run !"  
He finish'd : but Eurymachus in wrath  
More rabid still, and with a savage glance, 600  
Thus instantly retorted :—" Ah ! thou wretch !  
Some hurt, be thou assur'd, and not long hence



Will I engage to do thee, who hast thus  
 In this assembly such audacious speech  
 Presum'd to use; and with no sense of fear                   605  
 Thy mind declar'st. The wine thou hast imbib'd  
 Thy wits hath craz'd, or from thy birth, forsooth,  
 Thou vapid babbler! this thy way hath been.  
 Of this, then, would'st thou make thine empty boast,  
 That thou the vagrant Irus hast subdued?"                   610

With these words ending, he a footstool seiz'd ;  
 But by Dulichian Amphinomus,  
 Close to his knees, Ulysses lay,—in dread  
 Of what might from Eurymachus befall—  
 And the Cup-bearer, when that stool was hurl'd,                   615  
 On his right hand was smitten, and the bowl,  
 Down dash'd upon the pavement, loudly rang :  
 But, with a moan the bearer of that cup  
 Fell prostrate : and an uproar from the throng  
 Of suitors in the darken'd hall arose ;                   620  
 And one, as he his neighbour eyed, thus spake :—  
 " Would that this vagrant stranger in some spot  
 From here remote had died the death, ere here  
 He had arriv'd ; for, such a strife as this  
 He then had ne'er provok'd : But, here are we                   625  
 About a mendicant disputing, all  
 And further relish of a noble feast  
 Shall we know none ; for, all that is most vile  
 Is the ascendant gaining."

Then, at length,  
 Telemachus—that prince most excellent—                   630  
 Thus speaking interpos'd :—" Sirs! Ye in this

Like madmen bear yourselves ! No more can ye  
 Your wild excess in meat and drink disguise :  
 Some god, may be, hath rous'd ye ! Now, as all  
 Have well regal'd, let each man to his home 635  
 At once repair, and, as the will may prompt,  
 Upon your couches throw yourselves : yet, none  
 Would I from hence unwilling send."

He ceas'd,

And they, as in their smother'd rage their lips  
 Were biting, on Telemachus with looks 640  
 Of wonder gaz'd ; for that with such free speech  
 He thus his mind declar'd. But, in reply,  
 Amphinomus, king Nisus' son, whose sire  
 Aretias was, these words emphatic spake :—  
 " My friends ! No man among you who in terms 645  
 Of wrangling hath an onset made, can well  
 At that which in right reason hath been urg'd  
 Indignant feel. No longer with affronts  
 This stranger vex, nor any others here  
 That in the noble-soul'd Ulysses' house 650  
 Attendance give. Come ! let the cup-bearer  
 The primal off'rings with the goblets make,  
 That, all libations made, we in our homes  
 Repose may seek ; and in these princely halls  
 Let us the stranger to Telemachus 655  
 And to his care, as his own guest, commend ;  
 For, at a liberal home is he arriv'd."  
 He spake, and with these words which to the mind  
 Of all were welcome deem'd, his counsel clos'd.  
 And Melius,—a herald in the isle 660  
 Dulychium train'd, Amphinomus to serve,

A bowl of blended wine for all prepar'd,  
And unto each in order bore the cup,  
Till ev'ry one, to the immortal gods  
Libations having pour'd, rich liquor quaff'd: 665  
But, when again they had drink-off'rings made  
And of that wine to full contentment drunk,  
Each to his home return'd, and sank to rest. 668

END OF THE EIGHTEENTH BOOK.

## BOOK XIX.

**M**EANWHILE, in his own princely palace left,  
 Ulysses with Minerva on that doom  
 Which on the suitors was ere long to light  
 Grave counsel took. And to Telemachus,  
 No longer pausing, he thus promptly spoke :— 5  
 “All martial weapons thou, at once, my son,  
 Within must hide : The suitors, when, perchance,  
 For these our arms they ask, with gentle speech  
 Thou wilt beguile, and say :—‘From smoke secure  
 Have I at length dispos’d them ; for that now 10  
 No semblance to that panoply they bear,  
 Which, when to Troy he sail’d, Ulysses left :  
 Ev’n as the reek of fire hath on them pass’d,  
 So are they now begrim’d : and reason still  
 More grave, hereto impelling me, have I— 15  
 Ev’n from on high thus counsell’d—lest, may be,  
 Yourselves by wine incited, and in strife  
 Vindictive raging, should each other wound ;  
 And on our banquets and the suit you urge,  
 Dishonour bring ; for the steel blade itself 20  
 Lures men to blood.’”

He ended, and herewith  
 Telemachus compliant to the Nurse

Aged Euryclea call'd and order gave :—  
 “ Nurse ! heed me well : within the chambers close  
 All females here confine ; while I those arms 25  
 In brightness once so splendid (my dear sire's)  
 Shall in some chamber store ; all which by smoke  
 Defil'd have been, while from his home remote  
 Ulysses hath been ling'ring, and no care  
 His armour hath protected. I, indeed, 30  
 But a mere infant was : but my desire  
 Would now in some sure shelter place them all,  
 Where the hot air might enter not.”

Hereto

His fond nurse Euryclea thus rejoin'd :—  
 “ Ah ! would that thou, dear child, due thought would'st  
 take, 35  
 Thyself discreetly care for, and this home  
 Protect, and of thine own the guardian prove !  
 Yet, stay !—Who at thy side a light shall bear ?  
 For, those, the handmaids, who the kindled torch  
 Before thee would have borne, thine interdict 40  
 Forbids me summon.”

To her question, thus

Telemachus replied :—“ This stranger's hands  
 The lights shall bear : for, thus unoccupied  
 Will I no longer leave the man who bread  
 Of mine has eaten, though from far he come.” 45

He spoke ; and in her mind his word deep sank :  
 And all the gates of that palatial house  
 She duly clos'd. And now with eager haste  
 Ulysses and his noble son the helms

And central-bossèd shields and sharpen'd spears            50  
 In deep recesses stor'd :—Minerva's self  
 A golden lamp from which soft beauteous light  
 Before them glisten'd carrying : Whereupon  
 Telemachus, all eager, spoke :—" Mine eyes,  
 O Father ! upon this stupendous sight            55  
 Are wond'ring fixt :—The palace-walls around,  
 The panell'd bays, the pine-wood beams, the shafts  
 Of the tall pillars all at once in light  
 As from some ardent flame before me shine !  
 Most surely, some divinity, some one            60  
 Of those who in the boundless skies above  
 Eternal reign, is here !"

But, to these words

Ulysses thus :—" Remain thou mute—: thy thoughts  
 Awhile control ; nor question of me ask.  
 This is the priv'lege by the gods enjoy'd            65  
 Who in Olympus reign. But, go thou hence,  
 And on thy couch seek slumber. Here will I  
 My station hold, that curious in th' extreme  
 I may thy Mother render, and the train  
 That on her presence wait : for, from my lips            70  
 Will she, in sadness, all my hist'ry ask."

Thus spake the prince ; and through the palace halls  
 Telemachus withdrew ;—that place of rest  
 Where, when in gentle slumbers sunk, his wont  
 Had been to lie ; and here the heav'nly morn            75  
 Awaiting he reclined. Below, meanwhile,  
 Ulysses with Minerva, on that doom  
 Which on the suitors was ere long to ligh

Deep consultation held. And in this hour,  
 (Diana's self, or golden Venus, like) 80  
 Forth from her chambers came Penelope :  
 Her throne-like seat with ivory adorn'd,  
 And silver, which Icmalius' art had wrought,  
 Was by the glowing embers on the hearth  
 In order rang'd ; that footstool for her feet 85  
 Surmounting which the craftsman's skill thereto  
 So deftly had conjoin'd : and on the stool  
 Was stretch'd a noble fleece. Hereon she sate.  
 Then from the palace white-arm'd handmaids came ;  
 And bread abundant, and the banquet-boards, 90  
 With all the cups in which that lawless crew  
 So recent had been revelling, remov'd.  
 The fire from out the glowing brands they threw,  
 And on the ashes ample store of wood  
 Began to cast, a light to give, and heat 95  
 Around diffuse : and now again her scoffs  
 Melantho at Ulysses cast :—" What ! still,  
 O Stranger ! would'st thou all our house annoy,  
 Thus in the night through these palatial courts  
 Intent on roving ? At us women all 100  
 Art thou thus come to stare ? Beyond the gates  
 Betake thyself, thou wretch ! and eat thy food ;  
 Or, soon, and with a torch belabour'd, too,  
 Shalt thou out-doors be driven."

But, hereto,

With darkling frowns beholding her, reply 105  
 Ulysses made :—" Thou wretch ! why thus on me  
 With that malignant heart of thine launch forth ?  
 Is't that I am but lean, and on my limbs

Poor raiment wear, and of the people beg?  
 Need lays its burdens on me; and the lot      110  
 Of wanderers and mendicants I share;  
 But, I, in times bygone, (of ample means  
 Possess'd,) a goodly home enjoy'd, whose wealth  
 'Mid fellow-men was flourishing; and aid  
 On roaming strangers, of whatever rank      115  
 And whatsoever their wants might be, bestow'd;  
 And crowds, too, I maintain'd of serving-men,  
 And much had I of all which in this life  
 A prosperous lot maintains, and by mankind  
 Is affluence deem'd: but, Jupiter himself,      120  
 The son of Saturn,—such was the caprice  
 Of his high will—my wealth's destruction wrought.  
 Take thou good heed, then, Woman! lest those charms  
 Wherewith, 'mid all these handmaids, thou art deck'd,  
 Thou cease to wear: for, peril may there be      125  
 That or thy mistress, bearing thee some grudge,  
 Her anger make thee feel,—or, that his home  
 Ulysses' self regain: for, of such hope  
 A portion yet remains. But, if to death  
 He have ere this succumb'd, and no such pow'r      130  
 Thus to return be his, by Phœbus' grace  
 A son (and what a son he is thou know'st!)  
 Telemachus, he hath; and women none  
 Of all that in this palace with high hand  
 Have sinning liv'd, his scrutiny shall 'scape;      135  
 For, he no more a stripling will be found."

He ended; and Penelope, his words  
 O'erhearing, on her handmaid cast rebuke,  
 And, menacing, thus spoke:—"Presumptuous thou



And impudent ! Thou shalt my judgment feel— 140  
 An act audacious rushing on, for which  
 Thou with thy head shalt answer ! Well thou know'st  
 Ev'n by myself appriz'd, that from the lips  
 Of this same stranger who within our walls  
 Is hither come, I, sorrowing as I am, 145  
 Would tidings of my absent husband ask."

She ended, and to her who o'er that house  
 And all its stores had oversight, these words  
 Address'd :—" Euryome ! a seat bring thou  
 And o'er it spread a fleece, that, at my side 150  
 Here placed, the stranger may his tale recount,  
 And to my own words listen ; so great wish  
 Have I to question him."

Thus spake the queen,  
 And with all speed Euryome a seat  
 With brilliant polish shining duly brought, 155  
 And o'er it stretch'd a fleece, whereon at length  
 That long-enduring, noble-minded man  
 Ulysses sate : and thus Penelope  
 Upon that converse enter'd :—" Stranger guest !  
 I, for my part, must this first query make— 160  
 Who art thou ? Of what race ? Thy city, where ?  
 Thy parents, who ?"

But, thoughtful and astute,  
 Ulysses in these words responsive spoke :—  
 " O Lady ! None that o'er th' interminous Earth  
 As mortal men exist could thee impeach ! 165  
 Thy good report to Heav'n itself ascends !  
 Ev'n as the glory of some king whose name

Lives irreproachable,—who, like some god,  
 O'er multitudinous and valiant tribes  
 Dominion holds, and law and truth maintains.      170  
 For him the dark rich loam of Earth its crops  
 Of wheat and barley bears ; and trees with fruit  
 Abundant bend, and pastures thriving flocks  
 Of sheep send forth—while, to his righteous sway  
 Its homage paying, Ocean yields its fish.      175  
 Beneath that monarch's rule the public mind  
 To goodness leans. While, then, within these walls  
 Thy presence I behold, of all things else  
 Bid me here speak ; but, of the line I boast,  
 And of my native soil inquiry none,      180  
 I pray thee, make ; lest, as the sadd'ning past  
 To mem'ry I recal, thou with fresh grief  
 This heart afflict. In many a heavy sigh  
 My sorrow speaks ; but, in a stranger's home  
 On this account to groan and melt in tears      185  
 Would ill become me ; for, with endless plaints  
 To cherish thus one's mis'ry doth itself  
 A sadder ill become ; and fear there is  
 That from among thine household some reproach  
 Might on me fall,—nay, Lady, thou thyself      190  
 Might'st comment make injurious, and affirm  
 That with excess of wine alone depress'd  
 I thus gave way, and over-swam with tears !”

But the discreet Penelope these words  
 In answer spake : “ O stranger ! of a truth      195  
 The gods of all my merits, all my grace,  
 And beauty reft me when the Grecian force  
 For Troy on shipboard sail'd, among whose host

Went forth my spouse Ulysses. Were he now  
 Upon his home to enter, and, the charge 200  
 At once assuming, all this household rule,  
 My good report might haply into realms  
 More distant spread, and ampler homage win :  
 But, sad is now my destiny ;—such woes  
 Have the gods thrust upon me ! For, those chiefs 205  
 That o'er Dulychium and Samos' isles  
 As sov'reigns sway, and in the sylvan realm  
 Wield power of Zacynthus, and these lords  
 That here in Western Ithaca hold rule,  
 Are one and all with courtship to my will 210  
 Most adverse urging me, and all the wealth  
 Of this my home consuming : For which cause  
 No heed take I of strangers, or of those  
 Who here resort as fugitives ; nor aught  
 Regard I any heralds who their posts 215  
 Among the people fill : for, all my heart  
 For my Ulysses yearns and melts away.  
 But, these my nuptials fain would force ; and I,  
 Like one that into clews her wool would wind,  
 Beguiling feints spin out ; Some god at first 220  
 Into my mind the thought instill'd,—as here  
 I in my palace sate,—a robe to work  
 Of breadth exceeding ; and a web whose threads  
 Were of the finest (being, itself, immense)  
 I then erected, and began to weave ; 225  
 And hereupon my wooers thus address'd :—  
 ' Young men ! who seek my hand—since that great Chief,  
 So like a god, Ulysses, is no more—  
 Forbear to press my nuptials till this veil  
 I shall have finish'd ; that the threads I use 230

May not with purpose unfulfill'd be spoilt.  
 A shroud is it, for that heroic chief  
 Laertes, when that fearful doom is nigh  
 Which shall arrest and lay him out at length ;  
 Lest any one among the dames of Greece 235  
 Upbraidings should upon me heap, if he,  
 Who liv'd in affluence, entomb'd should lie  
 Without such covering.'

These were my words,  
 And their proud spirits for the time complied.  
 But, hereupon, throughout the day, my work 240  
 I plied of weaving upon that vast web,  
 And when the night drew on, with torches placed  
 Beside me, ev'ry thread did I unloose !  
 Thus through three years did I my work conceal,  
 And o'er those Greeks by stratagem prevail'd, 245  
 But, as the hours sped on, and this fourth year  
 At length was come, the months expiring fast  
 And all the number of the days summ'd up,  
 They all the feint detected ; on my work  
 With sudden onset rushing :—to this act 250  
 By certain of our shameless handmaids led  
 Who to keep watch no longer cared,—and then  
 They with upbraidings bitter loaded me.  
 Thus did I, most unwilling, and by force  
 Of sheer constraint, that web at last complete. 255  
 But from these nuptials I no rescue see—  
 Alternative, expedient,—none appears !  
 My parents eagerly such marriage urge,  
 My son the utter loss of all his means  
 With indignation views ;—for, all their

By him is noted,—now, as a man grown  
 And of great Jove himself to honour rais'd,  
 Right competent his own to hold and rule.  
 Nathless thine origin reveal—; the stock  
 From whence thou sprang'st :—for, neither from an oak 265  
 Of ancient story could'st thou trace thy birth,  
 Nor from a stony rock !”

To which appeal

Astute Ulysses thus :—“ O thou ! who wife  
 Most honour'd of Ulysses art—, the son  
 Of aged Laertes—would'st thou not forbear 270  
 From question of my lineage ?—Then, will I  
 Hereon begin to speak ; though sadder still  
 Wilt thou my sorrow render than till now  
 It yet hath prov'd. And this must ever hap  
 When from his native land so long estrang'd 275  
 A man hath liv'd,—as I am, still—, whose lot  
 A wanderer hath made me, and through homes  
 Unnumber'd of Earth's citizens have roam'd  
 Distressful woes enduring : but, though thus  
 My destiny declares itself, the tale 280  
 Thou at my hand art seeking I will tell ;—  
 Thy questions I will answer :—

In the midst

Of the dark ocean is a certain isle  
 Beauteous in aspect, fertile in its soil,  
 (Of Crete I speak) by water compass'd round, 285  
 And with vast numbers peopled, whose amount,  
 O'er ninety cities spread, unknown remains.  
 'Mid habitants of race diverse thus fus'd  
 Tongues as diverse prevail : Achaians there

BOOK XIX.]      *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.*      179

And Eteocretans, men of noble minds,      290  
Commingled dwell,—Cydonians and that race  
Of Dorians whom men the 'triple tribe'  
Are wont to call, and the Pelasgian stock  
Of noblest generation. 'Mid all these  
Stands a vast city, Cnossus, where of old      295  
Reign'd Minos who at each revolving term  
Of nine years with the mighty Jove himself  
Was commune said to hold ;—the father he  
Of my own sire Deucalion the Great.

Deucalion two sons begot— ; myself      300  
And king Idomeneus who, in those ships  
That with curved prows the waters cleav'd, to Troy  
With Atreus' sons the expedition join'd.  
My name, and not unhonour'd, Æthon is,  
And I the junior am : my brother, first      305  
By birth, was, also, in repute the best.  
In Crete I saw Ulysses, on whom gifts  
Which hosts to guests should offer I bestow'd.  
The storms had thither driv'n him, as his ship  
To Ilion he was steering, and his course      310  
From off the Maleans tow'rds Amnisus shap'd—  
A port most perilous, where from the gale  
He scarce a rescue found. Here stands the grot  
Of Ilytheia. And, without delay  
To Cnossus hast'ning, for Idomeneus      315  
He search began, as one to him endear'd  
And as a guest much honour'd :—but, for Troy  
Ten or eleven days before, this friend  
In his good ship had sail'd. Then, I myself,  
To my own home conducting him, with zeal      320

Ulysses greeted, and from ample means  
 Which by me lay a cordial welcome gave :  
 Wheat-meal in our great city's streets procur'd ;  
 Before him and his comrades, too, I placed,  
 And, (by some means procuring it,) supply 325  
 Of purple wine, and oxen for a feast,  
 That full contentment they might feel, I brought.  
 Twelve days these noble Grecians here remain'd :  
 A Northern blast of mighty force their ships  
 From shore was ever driving, nor aground 330  
 Permitted them to run ; (some adverse god  
 Was in the gale) but, on the thirteenth morn  
 The wind was hush'd, and they their anchor weigh'd."

He paus'd ;—a tale of fictions most like truths  
 Having thus far narrated ; and her tears, 335  
 As pale and paler she became, fast flow'd :  
 And as on some high mountain peaks the snow  
 Which, on the breeze of ev'ning borne, had fall'n,  
 Thaws and disperses in the early morn,  
 And river-torrents from the melting mass 340  
 Increase of flood derive ;—e'en thus her cheeks,  
 So lovely, seem'd with ev'ry falling tear  
 In sorrow to resolve themselves,—while plaints  
 Regretful she was pouring forth for him  
 Her husband, who, that moment at her side 345  
 Was seated close ! And the heart's tender pulse  
 Of pity felt Ulysses for the wife  
 Thus grievously lamenting ; but, like horn  
 Or steel his eyes were set,—nor in their lids  
 Was tremor seen ; for, by a feint the tears 350  
 From starting he restrain'd. But, to the fill

Her flooding sorrow having thus indulg'd,  
 Penelope this answer made :—

“Thy truth,

O Stranger ! may I, as it seemeth, test :  
 If this be certain, as thy words affirm,      355  
 That thou my husband and his chosen friends  
 Hast in thy dwelling welcom'd,—tell me, then,  
 In what apparel were his limbs array'd ?  
 Himself describe : What aspect as a man  
 Presented he ? And those associates      360  
 That with him companied ?—These, too, pourtray.”

Ulysses, ever-ready, thus replied :—

“O Lady ! this to tell thee, after time  
 So long since past not easy is ; for now  
 The twentieth year revolving is since hence      365  
 Ulysses went, and from my country sail'd :  
 But, as to my remembrance all thou ask'st  
 May now recur, the same will I relate.  
 High soul'd Ulysses in a double cloak  
 Of purple wool was habited : a brooch      370  
 Of gold thereto was fitted, in two sheaths :  
 But, all the top was in Mosaic wrought,  
 Wherein a dog was seen, with his fore-feet  
 A speckled fawn fast holding, and his gaze  
 Upon its struggles fixing. Wrought with gold,      375  
 The work was deem'd a wonder : One, the hound,  
 The young deer throttling, seem'd therein to joy :  
 The gasping captive, striving to get free,  
 Its feet ~~covered to use.~~ This splendid garb  
 About      which like the rind      380



Of some dried succulent bulb it seem'd t' invest ;  
 In texture all so delicate,—in hues  
 As radiant as the sun : and many a dame  
 In admiration eyed it. But, of this  
 Would I remind thee,—and for this, indeed, 385  
 Thou thought must take.—Unknown is it to me  
 Whether with this apparel here, at home,  
 Ulysses had his form array'd,—or, all  
 That thus he wore, from one of his comates  
 When in the fleet embarking for the war, 390  
 Or from some stranger, as a gift, receiv'd :  
 For, lov'd was he by many ; and in Greece  
 His fellow rarely could be found. Myself  
 A brazen sword bestow'd on him,—a cloak  
 Of purple hue, most fair to look upon, 395  
 And doubling in its folds ; a tunic, too,  
 Which to his feet descended : and with marks  
 Of rev'rence, in a well-appointed ship  
 I from the port despatch'd him. In his train  
 There walked a certain herald, one whose years 400  
 His own somewhat outnumber'd ; and of him  
 And of his aspect can I speak : for, round  
 His shoulders seem'd, and dingy was his skin,  
 And thick and curling was his shock of hair :  
 The name Eurybates he bore, and best 405  
 Among the band that his associates form'd  
 Ulysses this man deem'd ; for he it was  
 Whose ev'ry thought accorded with his own."

He paus'd awhile, and in her sorrowing heart  
 Still sadder griefs awaken'd as she thus 410  
 The tokens by Ulysses with such truth

Recorded, well discern'd. But, now, her fill  
 Of weeping having ta'en, again she spoke :—  
 “ From this time forth, O Stranger ! though, in truth,  
 When thou in this my palace first appear'dst,      415  
 My sympathy was with thee—thou most dear  
 To me must ever prove, and in regard  
 Most highly held ;—for, I, with these my hands,  
 The raiment to Ulysses gave, whereof  
 Thy tale hath mention made : from th' inner room,      420  
 Where they were folded, bringing them : that broech  
 So brilliant, to adorn him, I affix'd !  
 But, never more to his lov'd native land  
 Restor'd shall I regain him : a dire fate  
 Was that which my Ulysses in his ship      425  
 To Ilium sent,—that city of all ills !  
 Which I abhor to name.”

Whereto the Chief,

In counsels so well vers'd :—“ O thou, the wife  
 Most honour'd, of Ulysses ! with this grief  
 On thy lov'd lord's behalf no longer mar      430  
 The beauty of thy countenance ; nor waste  
 The powers of thy mind : not that reproof  
 Of mine, indeed, could'st thou herein incur—  
 For, any matron of that consort reft  
 Whom marriage rite had duly made her own,      435  
 To whom her love she gave, and children bore,  
 (Though with Ulysses he might never vie,  
 Whom to a god the common voice compares)  
 Must for that lost one grieve : but, from this time  
 Forbear thou all lament ;—and mark my words,—      440  
 For, of a truth will I declare, and this

From thee withhold not,—that but now  
 A brief time only since, I tidings learn'd  
 That to th' Ithacian shore, his native land,  
 Ulysses was returning ; that to live 445  
 He still was spar'd, and with a wealthy race  
 Neighbours to the Thesprotians domicil'd ;  
 That treasure in abundance and most rare  
 He homeward was conveying,—gifts indeed,  
 From divers tribes solicited : but those, 450  
 His well-lov'd comrades in his journeyings,  
 Their ship, too, as from the Trinacrian isle  
 Their course they were pursuing, he had lost.  
 Jove and Apollo with indignant ire  
 Against him rag'd ; for, his comrades had slain 455  
 The oxen of the Sun. Their fate they met  
 Beneath the swelling waves of the great deep :  
 But on the keel of the wreck'd bark to shore  
 A mighty billow drove him, and the land  
 Of that Phæacian people who to gods 460  
 Have been by mortals liken'd, he thus reach'd.  
 Such homage here he met as to some god  
 Was rather due : their gifts they heap'd on him,  
 And escort offer'd which to Ithaca  
 His course should speed, unscath'd : and long ago 465  
 Here had Ulysses landed, but the thought  
 His mind was swaying, over wide expanse  
 Of foreign realms to roam, and store of wealth  
 To gather in : for, of all men that live,  
 Ulysses best the source of profit knew ! 470  
 Nor with him would another think to cope,  
 As Pheidon, king of the Thesprotians,  
 When in his palace a drink-offering

He had out-pour'd, assur'd me,—and with oath  
 Declar'd that for Ulysses a fit ship      475

Had to the beach been drawn, and all its crew  
 To start prepar'd, who should his escort be  
 To this his native shore. But, in advance  
 The monarch sent me ;—a Thesprotian bark,  
 Being to that Dulichium bound where wheat      480

In richest crops is garner'd. And the king  
 Those treasures, which Ulysses had amass'd,  
 Display'd before me—; substance which might well  
 To the tenth generation of his line  
 Another man maintain : so great amount      485

Of wealth, Ulysses' own, in this king's house  
 Was there preserv'd. His guest, the monarch said,  
 Was to Dodona gone, advice divine  
 From the high soaring oak-top of great Jove  
 In that inquiry to obtain, whereby,      490

When on his native shore he should have stepp'd,  
 (Though now so many years therefrom estrang'd)  
 The mode of his return he best might shape ;  
 In sight of all, or in concealment close.

“ Therefore, in safety he survives ; and nigh      495

Is fast approaching, never more so long,  
 No, nor so far from friends and fatherland  
 Hereafter to be sever'd. But a pledge  
 Will I here tender,—and may mighty Jove  
 In goodness as in pow'r above all gods      500

Supreme,—the hearth, too, of Ulysses' home  
 (That chieftain irreproachable !) whereto  
 I have drawn nigh—the oath I swear, attest—  
 All that I have recounted shall forthwith

Most surely, as I told thee, be fulfill'd : 505  
 Ulysses in the twelvemonth that now is—  
 This actual month concluded, and the next  
 In its due course succeeding,—will arrive.”

Penelope thus answer'd :—“ Would that all  
 Thou hast announc'd might surely come to pass ! 510  
 Thy friend thou soon should'st find me ;—at my hand  
 Such num'rous gifts receiving as, when seen,  
 Would many a greeting on thy fortunes prompt :  
 But, this alone is on my thoughts impress'd  
 Which, only, is to happen :—To this home 515  
 Ulysses comes no more ! And from this place  
 No conduct must thou look for : None there are  
 Who in this palace can commandment give  
 As once Ulysses did, (but will no more)  
 The parting guest to speed, or welcome give 520  
 To strangers, worthiest of all regard.

“ But, handmaids mine ! This stranger's bath prepare—  
 A place of rest—, couch, cloaks, and coverlets  
 Of glossy brightness strew for him,—that warmth  
 Through night, till golden-thronèd morn the day 525  
 Bring on, may cherish him. But, at the dawn  
 At his ablutions tend him, and with oils  
 His limbs anoint, that near Telemachus  
 In these our chambers seated, he (my son)  
 May for his meal take thought. And woe to him 530  
 Amid the inmates all who shall this man  
 Annoying grieve ! No longer on this home  
 Shall such offender thrive, be his affront  
 Or choler, what it may ! For, how should'st thou,

Stranger ! this excellence above my sex      535

In mind and thoughtfulness at all discern

If in a guise so wretched,—in a garb

So vile, thou should'st within my palace walls

Sit here and eat ? Man's life is brief, indeed— !

He who, himself, is hard, and to the deed      540

Of harshness is consenting, is the one

On whom, while living, all his fellow-men

Will execrations heap ; and at his death

The contumely of scorn contemptuous fling :

While he who is, himself, without reproach,      545

And of offence his conscience void would keep,

In this esteem is held,—that through the world

Will strangers witness to his goodness bear,

And multitudes shall of his merits speak."

But, to these words Ulysses, in his mind      550

Full many a thought revolving, thus replied :—

" O honour'd consort of Ulysses,—son

Of aged Laertes ! cloaks and coverlets

Of sumptuous fabric have in my regards

A mere encumbrance seem'd, since in my bark      555

By long oars over ocean depths impell'd,

The snow-topp'd mountain range of Crete I left.

No : fain would I, as through long waking nights

I used to lie, still rest : for, in a bed

Most pitiful to view for many a night,      560

The beauteous morn awaiting, have I slept.

" The baths in which ablution for my feet

Thou offerest, to me no solace are :

None of the females who in this thy home

Attendant serve, my feet, to lave, shall touch : 565  
 Save that some agèd one there be whose mind  
 Full well her duty knows, and, like myself,  
 Hath many a burd'ning care ere now endur'd.  
 That such a one as this my feet should wash  
 Demur would I make none."

Penelope 570

Thus ans'ring spake :—" Dear stranger ! (dear, I say—)  
 For, not until this moment to our house  
 Hath stranger from afar with such a mind  
 As thine drawn near,—in all its thoughts discreet ;  
 Nor such a welcome hath receiv'd ;—such tact 575  
 Thy fluent speech in all that's just displays.  
 An agèd matron have I here at hand—  
 Prudence itself is she,—who in the days  
 Of infancy his faithful nurse became  
 And rear'd him—poor unhappy child ! with hands 580  
 Which from his mother in the natal hour  
 The prince Ulysses newly born receiv'd.  
 She, though but feeble now, thy feet shall lave.  
 ' Come, then—, my trusty Euryclea ! rise,  
 And in the foot-bath wash the feet of one 585  
 Who with thy master equal years may count :  
 For, haply, may Ulysses' self in feet  
 And hands be now his counterpart : so quick  
 In its approaches is old age when men  
 In suffering or in years are doom'd to grow.'" 590

She ended : and the agèd one, her brows  
 With either hand concealing, the warm tears  
 Of sadness shed, as, with lamenting voice  
 She thus exclaim'd :—" Ah ! woe is me, poor child !

On thy behalf so pow'rless, so perplex'd!      595  
 Jove, of a truth, above all mortals born  
 With grudge must have pursued thee, though thy mind  
 Was ever godlike : For, no living man  
 Hath ever to that thunder-loving Jove  
 So many thigh-bone sacrifices burnt,      600  
 And hecatombs select on altars laid,  
 As thou to him hast offer'd, with the pray'r  
 That into age advanc'd thou for thyself  
 Thy son in peace and quietude might'st rear ;  
 And, lo ! he hath the day of thy return      605  
 Thus utterly denied thee ! And with jeers  
 Full many a woman, haply, dares to mock,  
 (Ev'n as these shameless handmaids have on *thee*  
 Their insults flung, O Stranger !) when in homes  
 Of foreign hosts he, as a guest, is lodg'd.      610  
 From their gross outrages and endless scoffs  
 Thou art withdrawing, nor consent would'st yield  
 That any hands of theirs thy limbs should lave :  
 But, lo ! the daughter of fam'd Icarus,  
 Penelope,—that prudent queen,—on me,      615  
 Thereunto nothing loth, this charge hath laid,  
 And, therefore, will I, both for her lov'd sake  
 And for thine own, thy feet, O Stranger ! lave :  
 Not but that all my inmost thoughts the while  
 Perturbèd are with many an anxious doubt ;      620  
 For, mark thou well my words— ; Full many a guest  
 Long before now in sorry plight hath come,  
 But, never have I, as methinks, on one  
 These eyes of mine yet fix'd who, both in form,  
 In tone of voice, in shape of feet,—so like  
 To great Ulysses seem'd ! ”



To which the Chief,

In answer ever ready, thus replied :—

“ Woman ! in age well stricken as thou art !  
 What thou hast now affirm'd hath been by all  
 That on Ulysses and myself have look'd 630  
 Alike asserted ;—that resemblance strong  
 Between us both is manifest ;—as thou  
 Not without judgment hast, thyself, declar'd.”

He finish'd speaking, as the agèd one  
 A shining caldron took, which for a bath 635  
 His feet to wash should serve ; and copious streams  
 Of cold and tepid water mix'd, while yet  
 Ulysses at the hearth his station held ;  
 But, on the sudden, to a dark recess  
 He, in all haste, withdrew,—quick as the thought 640  
 Across his mind was passing, that the Nurse  
 When she upon his scar her eye should fix  
 Himself at once might hereby recognise,  
 And all his plans and purpos'd deeds make known.  
 She, to her princely master drawing nigh, 645  
 His feet began to wash, and, at a glance  
 The scar descried. Now, this a wound reveal'd  
 Which, in a time long past, with its white tusk  
 A boar had made, as in Parnassus' woods  
 He with Autolycus and his two sons 650  
 To hunt was speeding. This the noted sire  
 Of his own mother was ; one who his race  
 In knavery outdid and idle oaths,  
 By the god Mercury himself inspir'd,  
 Upon whose altars he the welcome thighs 655  
 Of lambs and kids had offer'd : but, the chace

Ulysses with this prince, all joy! pursued.  
 Autolycus, of erst, among the homes  
 Of Ithaca's most wealthy lords arriv'd,  
 The new-born son of his lov'd daughter found, 660  
 And when of supper he an end had made  
 This Euryclea on his parent knees  
 The infant placed, and thus appealing spoke :—  
 “ Autolycus! thine be the choice a name  
 To this dear child, thy daughter's son, to give, 665  
 In many a pray'r long ask'd for!” Whereunto  
 Autolycus :—“ Do ye, my son-in-law,  
 My daughter, too—the name whereof I now  
 Shall utt'rance make bestow on him; for, here  
 Am I at length arriv'd, by many a man 670  
 And woman on this many-feeding Earth  
 At heart detested; for which cause the name  
 ‘ ODUSEUS’ let him bear; and, when a man  
 Uprgrown, he to his great maternal house  
 Here in Parnassus where my treasures lie 675  
 Shall one day come, and hence a gift shall take,  
 And homeward shall with merry heart return.”

Mindful hereof, Ulysses, that his host  
 Might richly gift him, to Parnassus went.  
 Autolycus himself and all his sons 680  
 With outstretch'd hands and words of blindest speech  
 Their welcome gave: but, Amphithea,—she  
 Who his own mother's parent was, her arms  
 Around Ulysses throwing, on his brow  
 And both his radiant eyes a kiss impress'd: 685  
 And then Autolycus on his brave sons  
 Commandment laid a banquet to prepare;

And to his urgent voice they, as they heard,  
Obedience instant yielded; and a beeve  
Of five years' age,—all promptitude—led in,  
And skinn'd and dress'd and into quarters hew'd,  
With aptest handling sev'ring it; the flesh  
On spits to fix, and skilfully to roast;  
And all the parts they portion'd; at which feast  
From morn till eve they sate: nor, could desire  
More equally divided banquet crave.  
But, when the sun declin'd, and the thick gloom  
Of night upon them fell, to rest they hied  
And slumber's gift enjoy'd. The roseate morn,  
Daughter of dawn returning—for the chace  
They started all; Autolycus' two sons  
And dogs withal, and in their hunt conjoin'd  
Ulysses; and Parnassus' soaring slopes  
With forests clad they reach'd, and at quick speed  
The breezy summit gain'd,—the solar rays  
From the soft fluent swelling ocean depth  
Ev'n at that instant rising, on the face  
Of Earth to strike: and now into the glen  
The huntsmen sped, their dogs, in front, the track  
Of wild boars seeking; in their rear, the sons  
Of old Autolycus close following;—  
And, hast'ning tow'rds the dogs, Ulysses' self  
A long spear wielding which upon his path  
Its shadow cast. Within a copse, hard by,  
With shrubs impervious, a huge boar lay.  
The currents of the winds with moisture charg'd  
Through that dark jungle never blew: the Sun  
With his bright beams in vain essay'd to pierce:  
No falling rains could soak through there: so dense

Appear'd the brake, the wild boar's lair, where nought 720  
But strew'd sear leaves in heaps stupendous lay.

But, now, around was heard th' approaching tread  
Of hunters and of hounds, as with a rush  
They onward forced their way ; and in their front  
Out of the forest brake the monster rose, 725  
His bristly mane erecting, and with eyes  
That flashing seem'd with fire ! Before all else  
Ulysses foremost sprang, with sturdy hand  
His long spear wielding,—all intent to strike  
And wound ; but, with a stroke, which all his speed 730  
Outsped, the boar his knee attack'd, and flesh  
In a broad gash ripp'd up, as all oblique  
His tusk he drove ; though, bone he fail'd to touch.  
But, on the monster, with a thrust direct  
Through his right shoulder piercing, did the spear 735  
Of great Ulysses lunge, till the bright point  
Transverse projected, and with shrieking groan  
The wild boar sank in dust ; and life so fled.

Then with all zeal did those true-hearted youths  
The wound of great Ulysses tend ; their skill 740  
Expertly binding it, and the dark blood  
By incantation staunching,—till with speed  
Their father's house was reach'd. Autolycus  
And his brave sons a perfect cure perform'd,  
With sumptuous gifts enrich'd him ; and, elate 745  
With joy, Ulysses on that journey sped  
Which to lov'd Ithaca a happy man  
Proceed'd,—and with glad exulting hearts

Question on question asking,—how the scar 750  
 Inflicted was,—what anguish he endur'd :  
 And faithful was his narrative, which told  
 How at Parnassus, with Autolycus  
 And his two sons, arriv'd, the chace he join'd,  
 And how the white-tusk'd boar assailant smote. 755

BUT agèd Euryclea, as the limb  
 She on her hand laid flat and would have wip'd,  
 The scar descried, well knowing it; and loose  
 From her hands' grasp let fall the foot;—his leg  
 Into the caldron falling, which aside 760  
 That instant roll'd; and from the hollow brass  
 Went forth a resonant clang, as o'er the ground  
 The outpour'd water rush'd. Delight and pain  
 In the same moment the aged matron's mind  
 O'ercoming quite;—her eyes with tears suffus'd, 765  
 Her voice by thick and frequent sobs suppress'd,  
 As on Ulysses' beard her hand she laid,  
 And thus exclaim'd:—"My child! my precious one!  
 Thou of a very truth Ulysses art!  
 Though, not till I had thus around my lord 770  
 These hands so freely thrown, the certain truth  
 Did I attain to." Such were her glad words,  
 And to Penelope her eyes she turn'd,  
 All eager to apprise her that e'en there  
 Her consort, in the house, before her stood. 775  
 But, neither on the matron, face to face,  
 To gaze, nor ev'n her presence there to note,  
 Was it that moment to Penelope  
 Accorded, all whose thoughts Minerva's self  
 Was present to direct: but, as his arm 780

Ulysses stretch'd, the matron by her throat  
 He with his right hand seiz'd ; and with the left  
 His body tow'rds her shifted, and these words  
 In tremor spoke :—" Nurse ! Why would'st thou a doom  
 Destructive bring upon me ? Thou it was                      785  
 Who in thy bosom cherish'd me : Behold !  
 How, after endless suff'rings, I am thus,  
 Ev'n in the twentieth year of exile, come,  
 And on my native country's soil I stand :  
 But, now,—that with thy recognising glance                      790  
 Thou hast discern'd me,—and 'tis God himself  
 That this perception gave thee,—be thou mute !  
 Lest, haply, in this palace other ears  
 Hereof should knowledge gain ; for, this to thee  
 I here announce,—and it shall come to pass—                      795  
 If God shall under my avenging hand  
 These vaunting suitors crush,—[and thou prove false]  
 Ev'n though my nurse thou wast, I will not then  
 Thyself from death exempt, when, in that hour  
 The guilty women of this house I slay."                      800

Whereto the prudent Euryclea thus :—  
 " What utterance of thine is this, my child ?  
 Well knowest thou my stedfastness : my mind  
 No weakness knows, for, like the stubborn rock,  
 Or steel itself, will I reserve maintain.                      805  
 More will I tell thee, and my speech mark thou—  
 If God these vaunting suitors at thy feet  
 Vouchsafe to prostrate, then will I the tale  
 By numbers give thee of that female crew  
 That in thy palace serve ; of those whose acts                      810  
 Thyself insult, and those who guiltless live."

To whom Ulysses :—" Nurse ! why thus on thee  
 Should it devolve th' offenders to declare ?  
 The need of this exists not : well can I  
 Myself these women designate, and each 815  
 Amid the numbers know : do thou, meantime,  
 From speech hereon, in all reserve, refrain ;  
 And to th' immortals all our cause refer."

He ended ; and from that palatial hall  
 The agèd Euryclea went her way 820  
 A second bath to bring,—for, from the first  
 All water had escap'd : and when he now  
 Had this ablution made, and she the oil  
 Anointing had applied, once more his seat  
 Ulysses to the hearth, for warmth, drew nigh, 825  
 But, with his tatter'd garb the scar conceal'd :  
 And then Penelope discourse renew'd :—  
 " Stranger ! For yet a little longer space  
 Would I of thee ask question, though the hour  
 Approacheth fast for slumber and repose 830  
 For all on whom, ev'n in the depth of woe,  
 Delightful sleep may fall ; but, on myself  
 The deity hath countless sorrows heap'd,  
 And, through the day, this my resource hath been,  
 To sigh and moan, and of my chosen tasks 835  
 And my handmaidens' work take oversight,  
 Till, at approach of night, when slumber's couch  
 To all lies open, I upon my bed  
 In turn recline where ceaseless, poignant cares  
 My heart still fret, and make life one lament ! 840  
 As when the nightingale, (the daughter nam'd  
 Of Pandarus) that from some thicket green

In early Spring her charming song outpours—  
 'Mid the dense boughs high perch'd,—and changeful notes  
 With her far-sounding voice incessant trills,— 845  
 A dirge for her lov'd Itylus, whom, of old,  
 (A royal progeny,—King Zethus' son)  
 With brasen weapon she unconscious slew ;—  
 So, by two thoughts at variance,—first to this,  
 Then to that counsel leaning, is my mind 850  
 Disturb'd and harass'd : whether with my son  
 Here to abide and with determined sway  
 All that is mine, my wealth, my household train,  
 And this vast lofty palace duly guard,  
 And reverence to all my nuptial vows 855  
 And to the voices of my people pay ;  
 Or, with that best of all the Greeks consort  
 Who here within my own palatial halls  
 His suit is urging, and with countless gifts  
 For bridal meet enriches me. While yet 860  
 My son a child and thoughtless was, a bar  
 To marriage stood oppos'd ; for, in the house  
 Of him who had my husband been, that child  
 Was not to lodge alone : but, now, adult  
 And into man's estate upgrown, his pray'r 865  
 Implores me from this palace to depart,  
 Indignant as he is when to that wealth  
 A thought he gives, which, to his utter loss,  
 These Greeks are daily wasting. But—, attend !  
 This dream for me interpret, and with ears 870  
 Attentive list :—In this my house a score  
 Of geese from water-troughs were eating wheat ;  
 And I, as I beheld them, felt delight,  
 Till a large curve-beak'd eagle, at one swoop



From some high mount descending, broke their necks 875  
 And kill'd them all ; and in the palace court  
 Were they all left in heaps ; but he aloft  
 Rose soaring into air. Though in a dream,  
 In tears was I suffus'd, and cried aloud ;  
 And the fair-hair'd Greek women in a group 880  
 Around me gather'd with lamentings loud  
 For that this eagle had my geese destroy'd ;  
 When, to the spot returning, on that beam  
 Which our roof cornice form'd, the slayer sate,  
 And, from his station, with the voice of man 885  
 Detain'd me, thus exclaiming :—

‘Cheer thy heart !

Thou daughter of the far-fam'd Icarus !  
 This no illusion, but all real, is :  
 All which shall be fulfill'd to thee : The geese  
 Thy suitors are, and I who, heretofore, 890  
 An eagle was, am now, thy husband, come,  
 Who upon all these suitors will a doom  
 Most ignominious bring.’ These words he spake,  
 And I awoke ; and, glancing round, the geese  
 Their wheat-grains eating in the self-same spot 895  
 Again beside the water-trough I saw !”

To which Ulysses thus replying spoke :—  
 “Lady ! Interpretation of thy dream  
 Beside this can be none ! for, how its truth  
 Will be fulfill'd, Ulysses hath, himself, 900  
 To thee announc'd : and all these suitors' doom  
 Is manifest become, nor will a man  
 That destin'd death elude.”

But, now, in turn

Rejoin'd Penelope:—" And, yet, do dreams  
 O Stranger! all solution oft defy, 905  
 And mere confusion prove; nor, unto men,  
 Comes ev'rything to pass: For, all these dreams,  
 So evanescent, through two portals pass:—  
 One gate of horn, and one of ivory:  
 Whatever dreams through that sawn ivory come 910  
 Delusive are, and such announcements make  
 As ever come to nought; but, those, again,  
 Which through the polish'd horn come forth, the truth  
 Will to the mortal who has seen them prove.  
 Yet, from this gate the fearful dream I saw 915  
 I cannot think hath issued: of a truth,  
 Most welcome to myself and to my son  
 Were its fulfilment. But, this more, besides,  
 Will I disclose to thee: perpend it well—  
 This is the morning—hateful to hear nam'd— 920  
 Which from Ulysses' home must me remove;  
 For, as a trial of contending skill  
 Will I those battle-axes forward bring  
 Which, twelve in number, like some vessel's ribs,  
 His wont it was in these palatial courts 925  
 In set array to fix; through all of which  
 He, at wide distance station'd, would with ease  
 His arrow send. Now, to these suitors all  
 Will I this challenge offer:—Whosoe'er  
 With greatest ease Ulysses' bow shall bend 930  
 And through the same twelve axes shoot the dart,  
 Shall bid me follow him, and I this home  
 Will leave, where, as a maiden, rich in  
 Of beauty and of wealth, I entrance m

Event, which, haply, as I think, may still                   935  
To mem'ry even in a dream recur."

And hereto shrewd Ulysses: "Honour'd wife  
Of Prince Ulysses! Let no more delays  
This contest in thy house defer; for he,  
Ulysses, in all counsels vers'd, will here                   940  
His entry make ere they this shining bow  
In their hands clutching shall its string outstretch,  
And through those iron rings the arrow drive."

And thus the queen replied:—"If 'twere thy will,  
O Stranger! at my side, these walls within,               945  
Thus seated to continue, sleep this night  
Mine eyelids would not close: but, slumberless  
And waking ever, not a man could live:  
Th' immortal gods to ev'ry mortal man  
Throughout this teeming Earth a certain lot               950  
And order have assign'd: but, for my part,  
Within the upper chamber on that couch  
Shall I recline which, water'd with my tears,  
A bed of sorrow hath become to me  
Ev'n from that hour when for unhappy Troy               955  
(A name to be abhorr'd!) Ulysses sail'd  
There, there, shall I recline: but, in our home  
Take thou thy rest; upon the floor itself  
A sleeping place contriving, or let some  
A couch for thee arrange."

  These parting words             960  
She utter'd, and towards the couch on high,  
In her fair chamber, hasten'd; not alone

Book XIX.]      *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.*      201

But, by her handmaids companied ; and there,  
While they around her in attendance stood,  
She for Ulysses her lov'd consort wept,—      965  
Till, on her eyelids, as she mourning lay,  
Blue-eyed Minerva a sweet slumber shed.      967

END OF THE NINETEENTH BOOK.

## BOOK XX.

**I**N his own vestibule Ulysses slept,  
Where on the ground an ox's hide untann'd  
He for a couch had spread, with many a fleece  
From sheep supplied, which, for their lavish feasts  
The Grecian guests had sacrific'd. O'er these,  
As he recumbent lay, Eurynome  
A mantle threw ; and thus with sleepless lids  
Awhile he mus'd, as on th' avenging doom  
Which now, at length, o'er all those suitors hung,  
His thoughts were deeply pond'ring. And the throng  
Of those vile handmaids who in revel loose  
With the Greek guests consorted oft, were now  
Forth from the palace trooping, in free sport  
And jocund laugh elate : Whereat enrag'd  
Ulysses the resolve, a moment, weigh'd  
Whether upon that crew to rush, and death  
To all and each deal out, or, for once more  
And the last time, their converse with the crowd  
Of suitors to endure ; his very heart  
Growling, as 'twere, within him : and as when  
The dogs among their whelps at strangers snarl,  
Ready to fly upon them,—even thus

Did great Ulysses' spirit, murmuring, groan,—  
By this effront'ry stagger'd ; and his breast  
Indignant beating, he the heart within 25

In these sad words rebuk'd :—" Bear up, my soul !  
The time hath been when outrage worse than this  
Thou hadst to undergo, upon that day  
When CYCLOPS, irresistible in strength,  
Thy comrades brave devour'd : To this awhile 30

Wast thou constrain'd to yield, till from his cave,  
When to thy thoughts Death certain seem'd, by craft  
Thou wast deliver'd." With such reprimand  
His spirit he restrain'd, and that brave heart  
At anchor rode, and Patience held it fast : 35

But, ev'n as when a man at some fierce fire  
A savoury paunch with fat and blood replete  
From side to side turns oft, intent with speed  
Most prompt to roast it ;—so, from right to left  
Ulysses swaying lay, as he his plans 40  
Revolv'd how, single against numbers, he  
That daring band of suitors might arrest.

And, now, from Heav'n descending, to his side  
Minerva's self drew near,—a female form  
Presenting, as above his head she stood, 45

And in these words appealing spake :—" Why thus  
A sleepless watcher liest thou, whose fate  
'Bove all men's seemeth hardest ! This same house  
Where thou art lodg'd is thine ; and in this home  
Is thy wife living ; and thy son, too,—one 50  
Whom any man would joy to call his own."

To whom Ulysses, upon counsels grave  
Continually intent, replied :—" With truth,

O goddess ! hast thou spoken ; but, my thoughts  
 On this, incessant, dwell—, how, I—all lone, 55  
 My grasp on this bold daring crowd may lay :  
 They in one mass are ever must'ring here.  
 And, what yet more would all my care engross,  
 Should I, by Jove's own counsels and thine own,  
 These suitors slay, how would my secret flight 60  
 Thereafter be secur'd ? For this, I pray,  
 O goddess, counsel take."

But, Pallas thus

In turn replied :—" Distrustful one ! Man's faith  
 Would even on his fellow-man rely,  
 A mortal—, one inferior, far,—nor vers'd 65  
 In counsels and expedients infinite :  
 But, I, a deity, before thee stand,  
 In all thy trials guarding thee : and this  
 In phrase express I here to thee declare,  
 Though fifty bands of mortals that in speech 70  
 Articulate use their tongues around us rose  
 In conflict fierce to kill us both intent,  
 Still should'st thou prove the man that all those beeves  
 And fatten'd flocks should to thy homestall drive.  
 But, now let Sleep prevail on thee— ; a grief 75  
 Is it throughout the livelong night to watch.  
 From all thy sorrows shalt thou soon be freed."

The goddess ceas'd, and o'er Ulysses' eyes  
 Sound sleep induc'd, as to th' Olympian height  
 She upward soar'd ; and slumber all his frame 80  
 At once possess'd ; and every carking care  
 Was in that sleep resolv'd, and ev'ry limb

Relax'd; but, one there was who sleepless watch'd—  
 That wife who all her duties knew, and now  
 On her soft couch sate weeping, till, at length,                   85  
 With sorrow sated, the high-minded queen  
 Thus to Diana pray'd:—"O Dian! child  
 Of Jove! thou goddess evermore rever'd!  
 Would that an arrow in my troubled heart  
 This moment thrusting, thou with sudden wound                   90  
 My life would'st end, or that some thunderstorm  
 Tearing me hence would with impetuous rush  
 This body through the dim, dark road of Death  
 Transport, and to the refluent ocean's floods  
 At once consign me: As when, of old time,                   95  
 The whirlwinds Pandarus' daughters snatch'd away,  
 (The gods both parents slaying) in their home  
 All orphans left, whose nourishment to aid  
 Celestial Venus cheese and honey sent  
 And luscious wine; and Juno, as her gift,                   100  
 Excelling loveliness and wisdom gave  
 'Bove all their sex transcendant. Dian chaste  
 Hereto tall stature added; and all skill  
 In Works of Art Minerva's grace conferr'd.  
 But, when celestial Venus to the heights                   105  
 Ascended of Olympus, there to sue  
 In these young orphans' cause for that assent  
 Which should the contract of their nuptials seal,  
 Of Jove himself, who in the thunder-crash  
 On high exults, the suppliant she became—                   110  
 Jove, who men's prosp'rous destinies discerns  
 And all their adverse, too: but, while she thus  
 On high was pleading, each of these fair maids  
 Was by the spoiler Harpies borne away,



Who to the Furies (those detested three) 115  
 As ministrants consign'd them :—Thus, ev'n thus,  
 May those immortals, who th' Olympian homes  
 On high inhabit, my existence close ;  
 Or, may fair-hair'd Diana's dart destroy,  
 If even in the nether realms of Earth 120  
 By all abhorr'd, on my Ulysses' form  
 I might but bend these eyes ; and no worse mind  
 Than his survive to gladden. What ! though Man  
 With heavy heart throughout the livelong day  
 The tear of sorrow shed,—this is a doom 125  
 Which, if through night he sleep, he will endure :  
 For, when his eyelids are in slumber clos'd,  
 Oblivious lieth he of all,—of good  
 Or ill : But on my senses hath some god  
 Ungenial visions forced ; for, in this night 130  
 Methought that one who his resemblance bore  
 Beside me lay,—the counterpart of him  
 Who for the Grecian camp this palace left :  
 And gladness fill'd my heart, for, I no dream,  
 Methought, was seeing, but a sight most real !” 135

She ceas'd to speak, but, as the golden morn  
 That instant rose, the voice of her lament  
 The ear of great Ulysses reach'd, and doubt  
 His mind awhile perplex'd, for, near his head  
 And recognising him she seem'd to stand. 140  
 But, from his place of rest the cloak and fleece  
 Upraising, which through night beneath him lay,  
 Upon a throne that in the palace stood  
 He ranged them ; but the ox's hide without  
 Before the portals laid, and with his hands 145

To Jove uplift, in supplication pray'd :—  
 “ O Father Jove ! and you, ye gods ! whose will  
 Benignant over the dry land and sea  
 To mine own home hath brought me,—for, that ye  
 With many a grief have tried me,—Grant that one 150  
 'Mid those who on this spot may waking be  
 May with a voice of portent from within  
 Now speak to me ; and, from the court without  
 Let some sure sign divine from Jove appear ! ”

Thus spoke he, suppliant, and the all-wise Jove 155  
 His invocation heard, and from the heights  
 Resplendent of Olympus, amid clouds  
 That instant thunder'd ; and Ulysses' heart  
 Thereat rejoic'd :—And from the house itself  
 A female slave that near him stood, and corn 160  
 At his own mills was grinding,—a good word  
 Of presage spoke. Twelve females in these mills  
 Incessant labour'd, as the flour they made  
 Of barley and of wheat (“ Man's marrow ” term'd).  
 All, save herself, their wheat-grain having ground, 165  
 In slumber lay : she, only, of their band  
 The most infirm, to toil had not yet ceas'd ;  
 But, the mill stopping, pray'd—, and in her words  
 An omen to her lord unconscious spoke :—  
 “ O Father Jove ! who over gods and men 170  
 Dominion hold'st, thou from the starry heav'n  
 With heavy peals hast thunder'd, yet, no cloud  
 In all the sky above apparent is :  
 This as a portent to some man vouchsaf'd  
 Hast thou display'd : fulfil, now, to myself 175  
 Unhappy being that I am, this boon

Which of thy grace I ask : Upon this day  
 May all the suitors of Penelope  
 For the last time from now for evermore  
 A meal to make them joyful in these halls 180  
 Of great Ulysses eat,—the self same they  
 Who with this painful labour have my knees  
 (While I their grain stood grinding here), relax'd :  
 Aye,—at a final banquet may they feast !”

So spoke the woman ; her presaging voice 185  
 And Jove's loud thunder, in Ulysses' heart  
 Great joy awaking,—for, believ'd he now  
 That vengeance on th' offenders must descend.  
 Then woke the other handmaids, in that home  
 So ornate and superb ; and on the hearth 190  
 A fire, which none might soon extinguish, lit.  
 And, from his couch Telemachus upris'n  
 His raiment donn'd, and a keen-bladed sword  
 Around his shoulder slung,—('neath his smooth feet  
 Most beauteous sandals binding,) and a spear 195  
 Of stubborn strength with sharp brass tipp'd assum'd.  
 The threshold having reach'd, he paus'd, and thus  
 Agèd Euryclea question'd :—“ Say, dear nurse !  
 Whether thou in our palace hast a couch  
 And fit refreshment for this stranger found ? 200  
 Hath he, where best he could, uncared-for lain ?  
 For, even thus, all thoughtful as she is,  
 Might my lov'd mother act ! Two men here came,  
 With the same faculty of mortal speech  
 Alike endow'd ; but, of these twain, the worst 205  
 She with distinction gratifies,—and hence,  
 Not without slight, the best she hath dismiss'd !”

But, in rejoinder—Euryclea :—“ Child !  
 The irreproachable reproach thou not !  
 For, seated here, for just so long a space 210  
 As his own humour pleas'd, the wine he quaff'd ;  
 And, as to bread—(one ask'd him)—he thereof  
 No more desir'd : but, now when she herself  
 For night's repose and sleep was taking thought,  
 Thy mother to her handmaids gave command 215  
 A couch to spread for him : but, he like one  
 By weariness quite vanquish'd, and by fate  
 Most adverse bow'd, desire none express'd  
 On bed or coverlet his sleep t' enjoy,  
 But, on a bull's hide all untann'd and skins 220  
 Of sheep set up his rest ; and o'er his limbs  
 A mantle we then threw.”

Such were her words,  
 And from the palace, spear in hand, forth went  
 Telemachus,—his fleet hounds following :  
 The well-greav'd Greeks he in the Forum join'd, 225  
 And, as the courts he trode, aged Euryclea,  
 Daughter of Ops, Pisenor's son, the throng  
 Of handmaids thus instructed : “ Hither now  
 In numbers come ! Use speed ! These pavements sweep  
 And sprinkle : upon all these high-wrought thrones 230  
 Rich purple cov'rings spread : and in their turn  
 Let others of you with the moisten'd sponge  
 Those tables wipe all round ; each goblet cleanse  
 And all the double cups with high wrought art  
 Ornate : Let others from the fountain side 235  
 With haste the water bring : for, from these halls  
 Brief will the suitors' absence be ; so soon

Is their return appointed, and the feast  
 A gen'ral banquet is to be for all."  
 Thus spoke the matron, and with ready ears 240  
 Her words they noted. Twenty to the fount,  
 That in the shade rose darkling, instant sped ;  
 And others in the palace their set tasks  
 With all expertness plied. Then, following close,  
 Came all the servants of the Greeks, by whom 245  
 The wood with sure and dext'rous axe was cleft,  
 As now the women from the spring return'd ;  
 And, leading in three fatten'd swine, the prime  
 Of all the styes, the swineherd next arriv'd.  
 These in the beauteous courts to graze awhile 250  
 Eumæus left, and then, in tones subdued,  
 Ulysses question'd :—"Stranger ! do these Greeks  
 With show of more respect observe thee now,  
 Or, as at first, within these walls, their scorn  
 Upon thee fling ? To whom Ulysses thus :— 255  
 "Eumæus ! Would that vengeance from the gods  
 Might on that bold presumptuous pride alight  
 Wherewith, in wanton outrage, ev'ry scheme  
 Of infamy in this palatial house  
 (No home of theirs !) they cease not to design, 260  
 And shame's restraints repudiate." In these words  
 Thus briefly commun'd they : But, hereupon  
 Drew nigh Melantius, a flock of goats  
 Conducting, which, of all that graz'd at field,  
 Were finest deem'd, yet for the suitors' feast 265  
 Were now to serve. Two hinds that with him came  
 Beneath the echoing corridor these goats  
 Awhile bound fast : and then with sneering taunts  
 Melantius Ulysses thus assail'd :

"What! Stranger! wilt thou still this house infest, 270  
 At each man's hand a mendicant? Out-doors  
 Wilt thou not bide? Now, ne'er shall we, methinks,  
 Our matter end ere with these hands of ours  
 We fight it out. All decency defied,  
 Here art thou begging! Other feasts than this 275  
 Are there by Grecians given!" Thus rail'd he:  
 Ulysses answer made not, but his head  
 In silence shook, as in his inmost heart  
 The schemes he fram'd of vengeance. After this,  
 A heifer leading in and fatten'd goats, 280  
 All for the suitors' feast, Philæti<sup>us</sup> came;  
 One who might well a leader be. But, these  
 The ferry-men had carried o'er, whose boat  
 Might any others, whosoever would,  
 Across the stream convey: And all the herd 285  
 Within the echoing corridor he bound,  
 And of Eumæus next inquir'd, who nigh  
 Beside him stood:—"What stranger may this be,  
 O Swineherd! who so lately in our homes  
 Hath his appearance made? Of what descent 290  
 Doth he declare himself? Where is his race?  
 And where his fatherland? Ill fated man!  
 Yet, in his aspect princely! But, the gods  
 In many a sorrow will those mortals plunge  
 Who roam and ramble oft; when ev'n on kings 295  
 They toil impose and trouble." Ending thus,  
 Ulysses he approach'd, and, with the hand  
 Of fellowship out-stretch'd, thus eager spake:—

"Fatherly stranger! hail! Though many a grief  
 Lie heavy on thee now, in years to come 300

May'st thou all happiness enjoy! O Jove!  
 None of the gods more hurtful ills than thou  
 Inflicteth ever: Sympathy with man  
 Even with mortals thine own offspring deem'd,  
 Thou testifiest none; but, in distress 305  
 And bitter sorrows blendest all alike.  
 In ev'ry pore the shock I felt, when first  
 On thee I look'd, O Stranger! and mine eyes  
 With tears began to stream, when at that sight  
 Ulysses I to mind recall'd; for, thus, 310  
 Methought, he in such sorry raiment cloth'd  
 May, at this very moment, among men  
 A wand'rer be,—if he, on any spot  
 The breath of life be breathing, and the light  
 Of Heaven's sun beholding: but, if gone, 315  
 And in the home of Pluto with the dead  
 An inmate be,—alas! for that just man  
 Ulysses! who, when I a stripling was,  
 Amid the Cephalenians, in charge  
 Of all his oxen placed me; and those herds 320  
 One hardly now could count; nor could increase  
 Of such broad fronted beeves in like extent  
 To any other man accrue. Yet, this  
 The flock I lead, mere strangers bid me bring  
 That they themselves may feed thereon; nor thought 325  
 Take they for that dear son who in these halls  
 Palatial dwells; nor vengeance from on high  
 Seem they to dread, all eager as they are  
 The wealth to seize of the long exil'd prince.  
 Oft have my thoughts thus ponder'd: 'Twere most vile  
 While yet the son is living, that the shores 331  
 Of some strange nation I, with all these herds,

Should strive to reach, and into alien hands  
 My charge consign : But, this more painful is,  
 My station here to hold and o'er the beeves 335  
 That others are,—not mine—a watch maintain,  
 And grief like this encounter. Long ago  
 Had I gone hence, and as a fugitive  
 Some other potent ruler's homestead reach'd,  
 (For, wrongs like mine can be no more endur'd) 340  
 But that the thought still weigh'd with me, that he,  
 That most ill-fated man, might from some realm  
 At length arrive, and a wide scatt'ring make  
 Of all those suitors to their sev'ral homes."

But, hereto answer great Ulysses made :— 345  
 " Herdsman ! for that thou neither of the vile  
 Nor of the foolish any semblance bear'st,  
 And I assurance feel that all thy thoughts  
 Are by right judgment rul'd,—I'll speak to thee,  
 And to my speech this sacred oath will add,— 350  
 And may great Jove, o'er all the gods supreme,  
 That oath attest,—and th' hospitable board  
 And th' irreproachable Ulysses' hearth,  
 Whereto I came a stranger, witness bear—  
 Ulysses, of a certain truth, his home 355  
 Will reach whilst here thou art, and, if thou wilt,  
 With thine own eyes shalt thou the destin'd death  
 Of all the suitors that here rule behold."

Whereto the herdsman, guardian of those beeves,  
 These words in turn address'd :—" Oh ! that the son 360  
 Of Saturn might these words of thine fulfil !  
 Soon should'st thou learn, O Stranger ! what my strength



And hands avail to do!" And with like pray'r  
 Eumæus all th' immortal gods invok'd  
 That to his own Ulysses might return. 365

Such commune held they; while the suitors' plot  
 The doom and death of young Telemachus  
 Again was compassing: but, on their left  
 Flew a high-soaring eagle, in its clutch  
 A trembling dove retaining: at which sight 370  
 Amphinomus the suitors in these words  
 Emphatic warn'd:—"My friends! the plot we schemed—  
 The taking off of young Telemachus—  
 Will in our hands but fail. The feast, alone,  
 Be now our care." Thus spake Amphinomus, 375  
 And they assenting heard; and now, at length,  
 Ulysses' mansion ent'ring, on each couch  
 And throne the cloaks they spread, and full-grown sheep  
 And prime sleek goats they slaughter'd: fatten'd swine  
 And a young grass-fed cow they sacrific'd, 380  
 Whereof the roasted entrails in due shares  
 They portions offer'd; but, in mixing-bowls  
 The wine they blended, and the cups to each  
 The Swineherd bore; and then in baskets rich  
 Philætius bread distributed; and wine 385  
 Melantius stood out-pouring, while all hands  
 Were on the viands which before them lay  
 In that high festival outstretch'd. And now  
 Telemachus, on shrewd expedient bent,  
 Up to the threshold entrance of the hall 390  
 His father led, and near him a mean stool  
 And paltry table placed, whereon a share  
 Of th' inner-meat was serv'd; and as the wine

Into a golden cup he pour'd, these words  
 Therewith pronounc'd :—" Retain thou here this seat, 395  
 And when men drink, drink thou ; for, I, myself,  
 The insults and the hands from thee will ward  
 Of ev'ry suitor here ; for that this house  
 For gen'ral concourse serves not : this the home  
 Of Prince Ulysses is, and for myself 400  
 Did he, the owner, hold it :—And from word  
 Or deed that may give pain (to you I speak,  
 Ye Suitors !) see that ye refrain ; lest wrath  
 And conflict sharp should follow on't !"

He ceas'd,

And they, as each his teeth indignant ground, 405  
 Such fearless speech with wonder heard,—till one,  
 Antinous, Eupithes' son, thus spoke :—  
 " Grecians ! however hard it be to bear,  
 Let us the menace of Telemachus  
 In good part take : He this address has made 410  
 And no light threat appended. Jove himself,  
 The son of Saturn, our designs forbade,  
 Or in these halls, loud speaker as he is,  
 Should we have hush'd his talking !"

In such phrase

Antinous spake ; but, heed to any word 415  
 Telemachus gave none. And now in pomp  
 Of sanctity the heralds through the streets  
 A hecatomb to the immortal gods  
 Were bringing onward, and the long hair'd Greeks  
 Within far-shooting Phœbus' shadowy groves 420  
 In thronging numbers round that off'ring met.

But, when, within the palace, those who serv'd  
 The outer-parts had roast, and, drawing forth,  
 To ev'ry guest his portion had assign'd,  
 A glorious banquet was in order set. 425  
 And manciples before Ulysses' seat  
 A portion placed as ample as their own,  
 In shares assign'd,—and the strict charge herein  
 Of his lov'd son Telemachus obey'd.

And yet, exemption total from all jeers 430  
 Which, from the mocking suitors, in that hour,  
 His heart might sting, Minerva granted not ;  
 That sadness still might with this access try  
 Laertes' son, Ulysses. In that throng  
 Of suitors sate there one, in wickedness 435  
 Long vers'd, Ctesippus nam'd, whose native home  
 In Samos lay, and who, in his sire's wealth  
 All confident, the wife presum'd to woo  
 Of long-estrang'd Ulysses ; and he thus  
 That band of insolents address'd :—" Your ears, 440  
 Ye lordly suitors ! give me, while a word  
 I at this time would offer : Equal share  
 With all, as of old custom,—so it seems—  
 This stranger, here, must needs enjoy : for, gloom  
 To cast upon the spirits of such guests 445  
 As to the mansion of Telemachus  
 May chance to come, nor gracious were nor right :  
 But, look you,—I a hospitable boon  
 Will on this man bestow, that he in turn  
 May either to the keeper of the baths, 450  
 Or to some other of the menial train  
 That in the house of great Ulysses serve,

Gratuity may offer!" As he ceas'd,  
 With his coarse hand an ox's foot, which near  
 Had chanc'd to lie, he from the basket drew, 455  
 And hurl'd it from him ; but, with slight incline  
 Ulysses' head the missile shunn'd, as he  
 In bitterness a grin sardonic smil'd ;  
 But, only on the firm compacted wall  
 Did that ox-foot alight : Whereat this speech 460  
 Telemachus at vile Ctesippus cast :—  
 " Ctesippus ! hadst thou known it, 'twas thy gain  
 That thou the stranger fail'dst to hit : The blow  
 He deftly scap'd ; and, but for that, my spear  
 Right through thy body would these hands have thrust ; 465  
 And then for thine *interment* would thy sire  
 Have here been sometime busied ;—not on rites  
 Of *marriage* all intent ! This understood—  
 Let no one in this house of mine, henceforth,  
 Vile outrage offer me ! A child, indeed, 470  
 I for a time continued ; but, with all  
 Am I now conversant : with good and ill  
 Am I familiar. With forbearance long  
 Have we refrain'd, when this our eyes beheld—  
 Our fatlings slaughter'd, our wine drunk, our bread 475  
 Alike consum'd : So hard is it for one  
 The might to stem of many ! But, beware !  
 In this malignant spirit further wrong  
 Attempt not to inflict on me : though this  
 I here announce,—if with the sword itself 480  
 Thou fain my life would'st take, this, even this,  
 My own desire would be ! and better far  
 Were Death itself, than upon acts so vile  
 Unceasingly to look ; on strangers thus

With outrage gross insulted, and on men 485  
 That through these walls the women-servants hale,  
 In revelry most shameless."

With these words

He finish'd speaking, and in silence all  
 As hearers sate, till Agelaus thus  
 (Damastor's son) began :—

" My friends ! with speech 490

On justice bas'd no suitor here, whose words  
 That carp at and condemn it, should be wroth.  
 No further insults on this stranger cast,  
 Nor servant outrage that in this the house  
 Of great Ulysses works. Yet, one mild word 495  
 Would I to young Telemachus but speak  
 And to his Mother—, if with their goodwill  
 That word might meet : So long as all our hopes  
 On shrewd Ulysses' coming home relied,  
 Without reproach, indeed, might she her days 500  
 In this her mansion spend, and on the crowd  
 Of suitors that surround her law enforce :  
 More seemly this, if, to his native land  
 Restor'd, Ulysses this his home should reach :  
 But, this must now apparent be to all, 505  
 That here he comes no more !—Telemachus !  
 Thy station at thy Mother's side go, take !  
 And this injunction lay on her—, the man  
 She shall prefer,—with gifts the most profuse—  
 At once to wed ; that thou with merry heart 510  
 Th' estate of thine inheritance may hold,  
 And banquet keep and wassail ; she, the while,  
 On the domain of others entering."

But, in reply, Telemachus :—" Not so—  
 O Agelaus ! By great Jove himself, 515  
 And by my father's wrongs, I swear,—(whose death  
 May but too certain prove, or, who in realms  
 From Ithaca remote may, at this hour,  
 A wand'rer be—) no interpos'd dissent  
 Of mine my Mother's marriage has delay'd. 520  
 My exhortation was, that one to wed  
 On whom her choice might fall, and from whose hand  
 Most costly gifts were lavish'd : But, from hence,—  
 My palace—'gainst her wish ! and with the speech  
 Of harshness to extrude her ! Shame forbids— 525  
 And ne'er may God permit it !"

Thus spake he,

But, now it was that in th' assembled crowd  
 Of all those suitors, Pallas a wild laugh  
 Of ecstasy awak'd, and all their minds  
 Into confusion plung'd. Unnatural 530  
 And forc'd was all that mirth. Crude meat they ate  
 With blood, as 'twere, defil'd ; and ev'ry eye  
 With tears began to fill, and each man's mind  
 Began to bode some evil. Then it was  
 That thus spake Theoclymenus :—" Poor fools ! 535  
 What plague is now upon you ? All your heads,  
 Features, and knees beneath, are in dark gloom  
 Alike involv'd ! An outbreak of distress  
 Is here ! and cheeks with overflow of tears  
 Are moisten'd all ! The walls and panels, too, 540  
 'Twi'x columns fram'd, so beauteous ! are with gouts  
 Of blood besprinkled ! Ev'n the portico—  
 The hall, itself—with shapes is throng'd, that seem

The gloom to enter of the nether world !  
 The Sun itself from out the heav'n above 545  
 Is perishing,—and a thick gath'ring mist,  
 As though in judgment sent, around us hangs ! ”

He ended ; but, they all with laugh jocose  
 His words receiv'd, as, turning to the crowd,  
 Eurymachus, the son of Polybus, 550  
 This comment made :—“ This stranger, who so late  
 From unknown quarters is among us cast,  
 Is weak become in intellect ! Young men !  
 With all dispatch do ye through yonder door  
 Into the Forum speed him ! since this scene 555  
 He is with Night comparing ! ”

But, hereto

In answer Theoclymenus rejoin'd :—  
 “ Eurymachus ! on no account from thee  
 Would I such guides request : for eyes have I  
 And ears and my two feet ;—a mind withal 560  
 By no means pitiful,—by aid whereof  
 Will I through yonder portals pass, who see  
 The evil which before you lies, the doom  
 So nigh at hand, and by no suitor here  
 Of all your number to be shunn'd, who now 565  
 While many a man in great Ulysses' hall  
 You mock and outrage, are for evil deeds  
 Inventive counsels taking.”

With which words

The noble pile he quitted, and at once  
 Piræus sought, who with a cheerful heart 570  
 His welcome gave. The suitors all, meantime,

As on the other each his glances bent,  
 And at the guests of young Telemachus  
 (The strangers) jeer'd,—his spirit rous'd to wrath,  
 When one rash youth thus arrogantly spake : 575  
 “ Telemachus ! No man that guests receives  
 Has viler than thine own : a mendicant  
 And vagrant hast thou here,—his need of bread  
 And wine declaring,—in all handicraft  
 Most ignorant, in strength contemptible,— 580  
 A mere dead weight on Earth ! The other, too,  
 Must needs begin to utter prophecies !  
 But, would'st thou only on my counsel act,  
 This would, indeed, our interest best serve,  
 If both these strangers in a roomy bark 585  
 We hence could ship, to some Sicilian mart  
 Consigning them, where we might sell them well ! ”

Thus spoke in turn the suitors : But their speech  
 Telemachus contemptuous heard, as mute  
 His eyes he now upon his Father fix'd, 590  
 The moment waiting when on that vile crew  
 He should avenging hand begin to lay.  
 Meantime, upon a beauteous seat enthron'd,  
 Which all th' assembly fronted, the fair child  
 Of Icarus, Penelope, the words 595  
 Of each that spoke o'erheard. But, they, all glee,  
 For their high banquet now prepar'd, whose sweet  
 And heart-delighting relish gave to all  
 Contentment full : for, sacrifices vast  
 Had for the viands in that feast been slain :  
 Yet more ungenial meal wherewith a man  
 His day should end there could not be than that



Which the celestial Goddess and the prince,  
So noble-soul'd, were, in a little while,  
About to place before these very guests  
Who, long before, in machinations vile,  
Their joint exploits in shameless sin had plann'd ! 607

END OF THE TWENTIETH BOOK.

## BOOK XXI.

**B**UT now in Queen Penelope's pure mind  
Minerva, goddess of the gleaming eye,  
This counsel prompted, that the bow itself  
And pale steel-pointed arrows which, reserv'd,  
In Prince Ulysses' palace still had lain, 5  
She should before the throng of suitors bring,—  
The guerdon of a contest first to prove ;  
Precursor, next, of carnage ! And for these  
The steep stair mounting of that princely house,  
A well-wrought, beauteous, brazen key she took, 10  
And in her own fair rounded hand its ring  
Of ivory held. Herewith, as all her train  
Of handmaids on her waited, she in haste  
The furthest chamber sought where lay upstor'd  
The prince's treasures—, brass and gold and steel 15  
Of work elaborate : and 'mid the heap  
Repos'd his unbent bow ;—the quiver, too,  
Receptacle of shafts, wherein secur'd  
Was many a dart which groans of agony  
Might well awake ;—gifts, which in times bygone  
One Iphitus, the son of Eurytus,

A stranger, but with god-like mind endow'd,  
 In Lacedæmon meeting him, bestow'd.  
 Their earliest greetings on Messene's soil  
 They interchang'd, when with Orsilochus 25  
 (A warlike host) located. At this spot  
 A debt to claim, of the whole people ow'd,  
 Ulysses had arriv'd.—Messenian men  
 Three hundred sheep and those who of the flock  
 Had oversight, in vessels over sea 30  
 From Ithaca had snatch'd, and for all these  
 (As on a mission in the public cause)  
 By his own sire and other chiefs dispatch'd,  
 Ulysses, a mere youth, had made demand.

But Iphitus in search of his lost steeds 35  
 Was thither come :—twelve mares and, under them,  
 Hard drudging mules which at no distant day  
 His doom and death entail'd on him : his guest  
 First to the mansion leading him of one  
 Who in exploits of mightiest eminence 40  
 No rival knew,—the hero Hercules—  
 That high-soul'd son of Jupiter himself,  
 Who, though unto his hearth this Iphitus  
 He had a welcome giv'n, slew the man :  
 Hard-hearted one ! who neither wrath divine 45  
 Consider'd, nor the hospitable board  
 Which he before him spread ; but in his house  
 Those hard-hoof'd steeds of Iphitus detain'd.  
 A day arriv'd when he, with his own hand,  
 To death consign'd himself. But Iphitus, 50  
 While on his mares intent, Ulysses met  
 And this bow gave him which great Eurytus

Of old had wielded, but, who in his home,  
 (A lofty mansion,) dying, to his son  
 As a bequest transferr'd; and in his turn                   55  
 Ulysses to this stranger a sharp sword  
 And a stout lance presented,—the first pledge  
 Of kindness which might close alliance bind:  
 Yet did they never at such mutual board  
 Thereafter sit, for, Hercules the blow                   60  
 That life destroy'd, ere that could be, had struck.  
 This bow, then, at the hand of Iphitus  
 Ulysses gain'd, but in that dark-ribb'd ship  
 Which was to bear him to the scene of war  
 He took it not. In these palatial halls                   65  
 A kindly stranger's mem'ry to revere  
 It ever lay, though, ere his home he left,  
 O'er his own lands that bow Ulysses bore.  
 But, when the noble queen her chamber reach'd  
 Its oaken threshold crossing which of old                   70  
 A craftsman had with dext'rous art made bright  
 And by the standard squar'd—(In this erect  
 Stood bearing pillars and 'mid these were doors  
 Of entry interspers'd, that brilliant shone)  
 She in all haste the thong o' the ring releas'd,                   75  
 And, with a hurrying hand the key t' insert,  
 The door bolts backward drove, as straightest aim  
 At either she directed: and a sound  
 Re-echoed which the lowing of some bull  
 Grazing in verdant mead might emulate;                   80  
 So loudly resonant rung those ornate doors  
 As each by keys was stricken, and at once  
 They open stood before her. Here arriv'd,  
 The topmost floor she sought where in array

The coffers stood, and in them many a vest 85  
 With richest perfume fragrant. And from hence  
 With outstretch'd hand detaching it, the bow  
 From its suspending wall-hook she releas'd  
 And the bright sheath which cas'd it. Then, awhile,  
 Down sitting there, Penelope the sheath 90  
 Upon her knees sustain'd, and with loud cry  
 To plaintive sadness yielded. But, the bow  
 From out its covering at length she drew,  
 And having now her fill of sorrow's tears  
 In weeping ta'en, the palace and its hall 95  
 Of banquet she re-enter'd, and the throng  
 Of noble suitors sought,—the bow unstrung  
 And its full quiver bearing, in whose sheath,  
 With death-groans fraught, so many arrows lay.  
 A coffer, too, the handmaids with her brought, 100  
 Wherein lay steel, in ample store, and brass,  
 The treasure of the prince. But, now, at length,  
 Into the presence of her suitors brought,  
 Penelope her station near the shaft  
 Of a roof-bearing pillar chose, a veil 105  
 Of finest tissue 'round her features drawn,  
 And a discreet handmaiden on each side  
 Her royal presence tending; and these words  
 To all the throng there gather'd she address'd:—  
  
 “Hear me! ye princely suitors! who to feast 110  
 Continual of viands and of wines  
 Within these walls resort, and on our home  
 Oppressive burdens lay while so long time  
 My consort absent lingers, and no ground  
 Can for your trespass herein urge, but hopes 115

Of nuptial contract making ; and myself  
 The bride to be ! Attend to me, whom thus  
 The prize of competition you have made—  
 This mighty bow, Ulysses' own, I here  
 Before you all produce ; and whosoe'er 120  
 This self-same bow, as here he handles it,  
 With greatest ease shall stretch, and through the rings  
 Of all twelve axes shall an arrow shoot,  
 The man will be whom I shall follow hence,  
 This palace quitting which, while yet a girl, 125  
 I enter'd, rich in beauty, rich in wealth  
 Life's maintenance providing ; all of which  
 Long hence shall I in memory retain,  
 Aye, ev'n in dreams recalling !”

Thus spake she,

And on the noble-minded Herd command 130  
 Immediate laid the bow and weapons bright  
 To place in view of all. With flooding eyes  
 Eumæus from her hands the bow receiv'd  
 And put it forth. The herdsman, too, whose glance  
 From a remoter spot beheld, his tears 135  
 Restrain'd not when his master's bow he kenn'd :  
 But, in rebuke, Antinoüs challeng'd both :—  
 “ Ye senseless clowns ! who thus upon the things  
 That for the passing day alone suffice  
 Such thought can take, and such concern evince ! 140  
 Ye poor, faint-hearted couple ! wherefore thus  
 Have ye your tears let flow, and the queen's heart  
 Within her sadden'd, whose afflicted soul  
 Since she her much lov'd consort lost, enough  
 Of grief has had to bear with ;—Sit ye mute, 14

At this our feast, or, out of doors remov'd,  
 Go, snivel there! but, leave us here the bow  
 A contest to originate which must  
 Ambition leave insatiate: for, methinks,  
 No suitor here will this bright shining bow 150  
 With ease succeed in bending. No such man,  
 'Mid all our number, as Ulysses lives!  
 These eyes of mine have look'd on him: My mind  
 Recalls him still,—but I a mere child was."

He ended: but a hope he had at heart 155  
 That he the string would stretch, and through each axe  
 An arrow shoot: howbeit, this same lord  
 The first was fated of an arrow's point  
 To taste directed by Ulysses' hand,  
 His, whom in his own palace, as he sate, 160  
 He with contempt had mock'd, and all the throng  
 Of suitors rous'd against him. But, at length,  
 Telemachus thus spoke:—"Now, of a truth,  
 Hath Jove, the son of Saturn, o'er my brain  
 The sense induc'd of craziness! So sound 165  
 In judgment as she is, my mother, here  
 To all declares that from this home withdrawn  
 She a new spouse will follow! I must laugh—  
 And in my silly mind feel all elate!  
 But, look you! All you suitors! Forasmuch 170  
 As for a prize this contest is to be,  
 There is not, at this moment, in all Greece,  
 In holy Pylos, or in Argos be 't,  
 Nor in Mycenæ, nor in Ithaca  
 Itself, or dark Epirus, woman born 175  
 That with my mother can compare; and this

Ye, of yourselves, well know : Why should I, then,  
 My mother thus extol ! But, come you, now,  
 By no excuses parry this, nor pause  
 Evasive longer make in these attempts 180  
 To bend yon bow ; that we with our own eyes  
 May see you all : nay, I myself the feat  
 Would now essay ; but, if herein I won  
 And through the axes should an arrow shoot,  
 My honour'd mother, with another join'd 185  
 Should ne'er behind her leave me in this home  
 To grieve all sorrowful,—let be what might  
 My pow'r my father's noble prize to gain."

He ended, and upon his feet erect  
 His purple cloak from off his shoulders threw 190  
 And his keen sword, too, disengag'd ; and first  
 The battle axes he set up ;—a trench  
 In one long line then digging and by rule  
 Its straightness testing ; and around each axe  
 The earth he gather'd close, down stamping it, 195  
 While wonder all beholders seiz'd who mark'd  
 With what adjustment nice the axes all  
 (Before that moment never seen) he rang'd,  
 And, on the threshold stepping, there he stood  
 And tried the bow, and thrice he felt it bend, 200  
 All eager as he was to draw it home,  
 But, thrice his pow'r he check'd, not without hope  
 That he the string would stretch, and through the rings  
 An arrow shoot : And, now, at the fourth turn,  
 With force upon it brought to bear, his thought 205  
 Was to have bent it fully, but a nod  
 From great Ulysses stay'd him all intent



To bend and shoot. Whereat Telemachus  
 These words to all address'd :—" Fie on't! In times  
 That yet must come I shall a poltroon prove, 210  
 Or puny, or, maybe, my youth it is!  
 And in these hands reliance place I not  
 A man, who first should urge me, to repel.  
 But, onward come! ye others, who in strength  
 My masters are; Try you, and let us end!" 215

Thus speaking, on its end the bow he placed,  
 'Gainst the bright panels slanted of the wall,  
 And on its beauteous tip the weapon left.  
 This done, the seat just quitted, he resum'd :  
 And then Antinoüs, Eupithes' son, 220  
 These words suggestive spake :—" Now, to the right  
 Rise all of you ;—from that spot starting whence  
 The pourer of the wine his range begins."  
 Antinoüs thus :—And all assent express'd.  
 Leiodes, son of CEnops, from his seat 225  
 First rose : The suitors' priest he was, who slew  
 And offer'd victims. Near the golden vase  
 And in the furthest corner he his place  
 Habitual fill'd—; a man whose mind on pride  
 And sin alone was bent ; and with a grudge 230  
 Eyed ev'ry suitor present. With his hand  
 The bow he clutch'd ; the arrows, too, he eyed,—  
 And to the threshold stepping he the bow  
 Essay'd to bend, but stretch'd it not ; for, soon,  
 His hands in archery untried and soft, 235  
 He 'gan to tire ; and thus the crowd address'd :—  
 " My friends! I cannot bend it : to the hand  
 I yield it of another :—for, this bow

From many a chief among you will his life  
 And spirit take ; and better were such death 240  
 Than to live on and onward, but to fail  
 Of that for which, as day to day succeeds,  
 We muster here ! Ev'n in this very hour  
 Some one a hope is nursing, some one thinks  
 He shall Penelope, Ulysses' wife, 245  
 In marriage win : but, when this bow his eyes  
 Have well examin'd and his hands have tried,  
 Let him some other woman 'mid the throng  
 Of Grecian maids, so beauteous in attire,  
 With courtship and rich bridal presents woo : 250  
 And let Penelope that suitor choose  
 Of dowry-gifts most lavish, and who comes  
 As though predestin'd for her."

Thus spoke he,

And set aside the bow where, deftly join'd,  
 The bright-faced folding-doors their panels show'd, 255  
 And on its beauteous tip the weapon left,  
 Aslant to rest, as his vacated seat  
 He hasten'd to resume. But, with rebuké  
 Antinoüs his soothsayer thus met :—  
 " Leiodes ! what ungenial, scaring words 260  
 Are these that thou hast utter'd ! With disgust  
 I hear thee say that since no pow'r of thine  
 That bow can bend, it shall of life and soul  
 Rid many a suitor here ! For archery  
 Thou wast not born : To draw the bow and shoot 265  
 Into this world thy mother brought thee not :  
 But, lordly suitors many here there are  
 Who speedily that bow shall bend."

He ceas'd—

And to Melantius the goat-herd thus  
 Commandment gave:—" Now ! with all speed a fire 270  
 Within these walls enkindle, and, close by,  
 A long bench place, and skins upon it spread,  
 And some stiff fat from th' offices within  
 Forthwith produce ; that we who younger are  
 May o'er the embers hold the bow, which, warm'd, 275  
 We will with fat besmear and supple make,  
 Then try to shoot, and all this contest close."

He ended ; and Melantius the fire  
 Which with a flame unwearied burn'd soon lit,  
 And, a bench thereto bringing, near the flame 280  
 He placed it, and a skin upon it spread :  
 Then brought he from within the stiffen'd fat  
 Wherewith the bow, now warm'd, the youths around  
 Anointed ; and the bow again they tried  
 And bend't they could not ; for, in needful strength 285  
 Far short they fell. But, for a time, aloof  
 Antinoüs and brave Eurymachus,  
 In all the suitor-train pre-eminent,  
 From further trial stood. And, now, the herd  
 And swineherd of Ulysses from that hall 290  
 Together went : Ulysses on their steps  
 Quick following : The gates and courtyards past,  
 Ulysses then in gentle tones these words  
 To both address'd :—" O herdsman ! and to thee  
 O swineherd ! too, I speak : Shall I at once 295  
 This revelation utter, or withhold ?  
 Yet are my feelings urging me to speak :  
 If from some quarter, and most suddenly,

Ulysses now should come: or, if some god  
 Should hither lead him,—what would be your minds, 300  
 What men would ye, his person to defend,  
 Approve yourselves? Would ye these suitors here  
 Abet and aid? Say, to whose cause your hearts  
 And minds would lean?"

The herdsman of the beeves

First spake:—"O father Jove! would'st thou but grant 305  
 The wish that this same man might come, some god  
 To this spot guiding him! thou then should'st learn  
 What these two hands and strength of mine could do!"

Even thus, also, to the gods on high  
 Eumæus pray'd that, to his home restor'd, 310  
 The thoughtful, shrewd Ulysses might appear.  
 And now, (their inmost feelings full well learn'd,)  
 He thus at once address'd them:—"Know ye, then,  
 That on this spot I, even I myself,  
 By countless suff'rings tried, before you stand! 315  
 In this, the twentieth, year upon the soil  
 That gave me birth am I arriv'd, and well  
 I know that of my household I from you  
 Glad welcome shall receive; though not a wish  
 Have I in any other's pray'r o'erheard 320  
 That to this home I ever might return!  
 To you my real intents, then, and the wish  
 I fain would see fulfill'd will I disclose:—  
 If God these lordly suitors by my hand  
 Shall overthrow, on both of you fit wives 325  
 Will I bestow, and substance give and homes  
 Near to mine own erected; and thenceforth

The comrades and the brothers shall ye be  
 Of my Telemachus : and simple proof  
 Will I, moreover, grant you, (that myself 330  
 Ye may most surely recognise, and test  
 Most certain use, that credence to confirm)—  
 The scar—which erst, at date remote, a boar  
 With its white tusk inflicted when the chace  
 I with the sons of prince Autolychus 335  
 Had in Parnassus followed.” With these words  
 His tatter’d garb from off that wound he rais’d,  
 And they the scar beholding and right well  
 Of all the truth herein assur’d,—both wept,  
 Their arms around him throwing, and his form 340  
 In their embraces folding, as his head  
 And shoulders, too, they kiss’d ; and he, in turn,  
 Upon their heads and hands his kiss impress’d :  
 And on that joyful weeping would the sun  
 At length have set had not Ulysses thus 345  
 The twain repress’d, and, timely speaking, sooth’d :—  
 “ To tears and sighs give way no more ; lest sight  
 Hereof some comer from the palace gain,  
 And this our meeting speak of. To that hall  
 Return we not together : one by one,— 350  
 I first ; and you next following ; and be this  
 The secret of our plan :—That crowd, forsooth,  
 Of haughty suitors will to you refuse  
 The bow and quiver in my hands to place :  
 Do thou, Eumæus, through the palace courts 355  
 Thyself that weapon bring, and in my hands  
 Deposit ; and on all the female train  
 Injunction lay to lock the palace doors,  
 (All which close fitted are) and if, perchance,

Of all that in our courts attendance give      360  
 There should be one who moanings overhear  
 And tumult in the palace,—from the doors  
 Let none step forth, but, at their own set tasks  
 In silence bide. Philæti<sup>us</sup>! to thee  
 This charge I give that ev'ry entry-gate,      365  
 The courts within, thou with a key secure  
 And o'er each lock its fast'ning promptly throw."

Thus having spoken, he the goodly pile  
 Re-enter'd, and the seat he vacant left  
 Resum'd: and next the herd and swineherd came:      370  
 Meanwhile, as in his grasp Eurymachus  
 The bow still held, and either side in turn  
 By the bright flame made warm, yet, even then,  
 In vain essay'd to bend it, his proud heart,  
 Ambition's prizes seeking, deeply griev'd,—      375  
 And in vexation thus he spake:—"Shame on't!  
 Pain,—pain which not myself, alone, but all  
 Cannot but goad! 'Tis not the chance thus lost  
 Of marriage with the queen that I deplore,  
 Griev'd as, at heart, I am;—for, many a dame      380  
 In Greece is there,—e'en here in Ithaca,  
 And other cities, too: but, that in strength  
 So far inferior to this high-soul'd man  
 Ulysses we should prove that ev'n his bow  
 To bend we all have fail'd: discredit gross!      385  
 For ev'n remote posterity to learn!"

But, thus Antinoüs, Eupithes' son,  
 Hereto replied:—"Eurymachus! not thus  
 Is it to be; and thou, thyself, the truth

Cannot but know ; for, at this present hour, 39  
 The people, here, a sacred festival  
 To their great god are holding. Who, then, now  
 That how should bend? In quiet for a while  
 Let us the weapon leave : the axes all  
 We, likewise, may permit to stand ; for, none, 39  
 Methinks, this palace ent'ring will approach  
 To move them hence. And, come ! let him who here  
 The wine outpours drink-off'rings with the cups  
 Prepare to make, that, these libations o'er,  
 We may the bow deposit : and, at dawn, 40  
 Melantius the goat-herd do thou bid  
 That kids, the best of all the flock, he bring,  
 The thighs whereof to Phœbus off'ring up  
 (That Archer so pre-eminent !) again  
 The bow we'll try and all this contest end." 40

Thus spoke Antinoüs, and with them all  
 His words a welcome found. Upon their hands  
 The heralds water pour'd ; each vase with wine  
 The young men crown'd, and when from ev'ry cup  
 First off'rings were outpour'd, their shares to all 41  
 They portion'd out. And now, libations made,  
 And wine to full contentment drunk, a feint  
 The shrewd Ulysses schem'd, and in these words  
 The crowd address'd :—" Hear me ! ye lords who here  
 Your suit to this most noble lady urge, 41  
 While to my thoughts I thus would utt'rance give.  
 And, herein, to Eurymachus in chief  
 And great Antinoüs,—for that his speech  
 Sound judgment marks,—I chiefly would appeal :  
 Let no one, for the present, for that bow 42

Take further thought : To the immortal gods  
 Commended be it ! With returning morn  
 The god will strength upon that man bestow  
 To whom his will inclines. But, hand me now  
 That shining bow, that I in hand and strength 425  
 May with you try to cope ; if that, indeed,  
 I still the nerve retain which in these limbs  
 Now so relax'd I once could boast ; unless  
 My roaming life and want of tending care  
 Have of all prowess reft me."

With these words 430

Ulysses ceas'd ; but indignation fierce  
 In all th' assembly rag'd, as though in fear  
 That he the shining bow might haply bend ;  
 And in stern reprimand Antinoüs  
 These words address'd :—" Thou wretch of all who thus 436  
 As strangers come ! Not ev'n a particle  
 Of sense hast thou. What ! is it not enough  
 That thou may'st here among us puissant lords  
 This feast partake ! that without slightest stint  
 The banquet thou hast shar'd, and all our talk 440  
 And speeches listen'd to ;—no stranger guest  
 Or mendicant, save thou thyself, a word  
 Of all we said o'erhearing ! Wine so rich  
 Brings thee to harm, which others, also, hurts  
 Whoe'er they be that to excess will swill, 445  
 And decent measure heed not. Wine it was  
 That that notorious Centaur of old time  
 Serv'd to distract,—Eurytion—when, as guest  
 Of great Pirithoüs, the Lapithæ  
 He had t' encounter, and his brain with drink 450



He had confounded. Deeds of dreadful note  
 In his host's house he, like a maniac, wrought ;  
 And when indignant fury the whole crowd  
 Of those illustrious injur'd heroes seiz'd,  
 They on Eurytion and all his crew 455  
 Vindictive rushing haled them through the porch,  
 And in the open air their ears cut off  
 And nostrils with the sword. He from thenceforth  
 In ev'ry feeling outrag'd, trod his course,  
 With endless suff'rings frantic ; and 'twixt man 460  
 And Centaur was there evermore fell hate :  
 But, all this direful ill upon himself  
 Eurytion, through excess in wine, drew down.  
 Thus do I to thyself most fearful ill  
 Announce if thou that bow shall bend ; for aid 465  
 In any home of ours none thou'lt find,  
 But, in some galley, to king Echetus,  
 ' All men's destroyer ' call'd, we'll send thee straight ;  
 And thence is no deliv'rance. Without stir  
 Thy wine drink down, and with far younger men 470  
 Attempt not thus to vie."

But, in her turn

Penelope thus spake :—" Antinoüs !  
 It neither gracious is, nor rightful seems  
 The guests of my Telemachus, whoe'er  
 They chance to be, thus gibing to insult. 47  
 Think'st thou that if this stranger, in his hands  
 And single prowess trusting, should yon bow—  
 The great bow of Ulysses—bend, he to his home  
 Would think to lead me, and his consort make ?  
 That hope hath never in his breast found place. 48

Neither let any of yourselves that here  
 At this our banquet sit this thought conceive  
 And fret therewith ; for, most unworthy 't is."

Eurymachus, the son of Polybus,  
 In turn rejoin'd :—" O just Penelope ! 485  
 Daughter of Icarus ! None here opine  
 That he will homeward lead thee : That, indeed,  
 Improbable all deem ! But, we with shame  
 The vague reports reflect on which both men  
 And women scatter : lest, in days to come, 490  
 Some Greeks of low degree should thus exclaim :—  
 ' A paltry band are these who have the wife  
 Of a renown'd and faultless chieftain wooed !  
 For none of them his polish'd bow could bend :  
 A wand'ring mendicant at length appear'd, 495  
 With great ease bent the bow, and through each axe  
 The arrow shot : '—Now, this would they put forth,  
 And our fair fame revile !"

Penelope

Thus answer'd :—" O Eurymachus ! fair fame  
 Can never in the people's mind be theirs 500  
 Who a good man's possessions eat to waste,  
 And, without ceasing, injure him ! Why thus  
 Upon yourselves such inculpations bring ?  
 This stranger is of lofty height ; well built,  
 And, in extraction, hath himself declar'd 505  
 The offspring of a noble. Come ! To him  
 That shining bow hand over, that our eyes  
 May witness bear ; for this I here announce,  
 And this, too, in performance shall not fail :

If he should bend it, and Apollo grace                   §10  
 Around him shed and honour,—I myself  
 Will with a cloak and tunic, beauteous garb,  
 This man array, and a sharp lance will add,  
 All dogs and hostile men to keep at bay ;  
 A double edged sword, too, shall be his ;               515  
 And sandals for his feet ; and to such home  
 As thought and wish may urge him to regain  
 I will at once dispatch him."

To which speech

Telemachus in turn :—" Of all these Greeks,  
 O mother ! none here present can that bow           520  
 Concede to any, or refuse,—but as  
 My will assents : be they the lords that rule  
 In this our rugged Ithaca, or sway  
 In the rich pastur'd isles of Elis hold.  
 Now, of these princes none shall my designs         525  
 Presume to thwart, should my own choice decide  
 Upon this stranger to bestow the bow  
 And make it his, to take it to his home.  
 Now, hie thee to thy chamber,—ply thy task,  
 The web and distaff, and thy handmaids charge     530  
 That they with speed their sev'ral biddings do.  
 But, for the bow—, man's province 'tis due thought  
 To take for it ; though this my special care  
 Must now become,—in that within these walls  
 The sole controul as lord I exercise."             53!

Much wond'ring as he spake, Penelope  
 At once withdrew ; her son's judicious words  
 Deeply revolving : but, when with her maids

The upper chamber she regain'd, the tears  
 For her Ulysses flow'd, and there she mourn'd 540  
 The husband so well lov'd, till sweetest sleep  
 Upon her lids the blue-eyed Pallas shed.  
 Meanwhile Eumæus, having on the bow  
 His hands just laid, was bearing it, when all,  
 From ev'ry side of that presumptuous crowd 545  
 That throug'd the palace hall, in fierce reproach  
 The swineherd's passage stay'd ; and one vain youth  
 Thus shouted :—" Whither, now, unhappy wretch !  
 Thou mad-brain'd swineherd ! art thou that curv'd bow  
 From hence conveying ? Some of those fleet hounds 550  
 Thou hast among thy swine been feeding up,  
 Of all men else, shall make an end of thee,  
 And that, too, soon enough, if that the god  
 Apollo and th' immortal deities  
 Will but our cause befriend."

Thus clamour'd they ; 555

Whereat Eumæus handling bow and shafts  
 In fear replaced them all ; the outcries fierce  
 Of that great crowd impelling him : and then  
 With menace loud from where, oppos'd, he stood,  
 Telemachus thus cried :—" Now, then, old friend ! 560  
 Hie onward with that bow !—(Small gain to thee  
 Who would'st obey us all alike !) lest I,  
 The youngest, should up country speed thy way  
 With many a stone pursuing thee, whose strength  
 Is more than match'd by mine :—And in such might 565  
 How fain would I all this assembled crowd  
 Of suitors that this palace throug excel !  
 Soon would I from this home of mine some man

From out their number in most fearful plight  
 Upon his journey send : for what but ill 570  
 Are they for ever plotting !”

In such words

Spoke out Telemachus, but with loud laugh  
 The speech they met, and all their bitter rage  
 As though in mirth compress'd. Eumæus then,  
 As through the banquet-hall his way he made, 575  
 At length approach'd Ulysses, and the bow  
 Into his hands deliver'd : then, aside,  
 To Euryclea he these words address'd :  
 “ Most thoughtful Euryclea ! this command  
 Telemachus enjoins thee : that all doors, 580  
 Close fitting as they are, this mansion through,  
 Thou straightway lock : and, if, these courts within,  
 Our household should the sound of heavy moans  
 Or tumult overhear, let none abroad  
 Step forth, but their own work in silence ply.” 585

Such warning word he spoke, and in her mind  
 Unwing'd it settled down. And ev'ry door  
 In that well peopled mansion-house she lock'd.  
 Philætius, meantime, with silent tread 590  
 From out the house into the open air  
 A leap effected, and the gates he clos'd  
 Of the well guarded court. Now, 'neath the porch  
 There chanc'd to lie a ship-rope from the plant  
 Papyrus twisted, with which band each gate  
 Philætius made fast, and then went in. 595  
 Here did he once again the seat resume  
 Not long before left vacant, and his eyes

Upon Ulysses fix'd, who now his bow  
 Was in his hands upraising,—ev'ry part  
 In turn inspecting ; on this side and that 600  
 With scrutiny most nice all through its length  
 The weapon eyeing, in the dread of worms  
 That might, while he the sovereign prince in lands  
 Remote had liv'd, the horn have eaten through.  
 And one by-stander, as his neighbour's glance 605  
 He chanc'd to fix, thus spoke : " This man, forsooth,  
 Is an admirer of all bows, or oft,  
 Maybe, purloins them, or at his own home  
 Hath such another, or his wish it is  
 The like to fabricate : so earnestly 610  
 Doth he, mere vagrant as he is, and apt  
 At all iniquity, that bow turn round,  
 And this and that part handle." Next in turn  
 A haughty youth thus shouted : " So much gain  
 May this man reap as, at some distant date, 615  
 Is his to be when he the bow shall bend."

Thus talk'd by turns the suitors ; but that chief—  
 In counsels shrewd and numberless long vers'd—  
 Ulysses, when the mighty bow in hand  
 He freely held, and on all sides survey'd, 620  
 (Like one who, both in harp and song adept,  
 With ease a string to a new peg adapts,  
 The sheep-gut at both ends well fastening)  
 Bent with all ease that pond'rous bow, whose string  
 With his right hand he seiz'd and, stretching, tried ; 625  
 And with euphonious note it instant twang'd  
 Which might a swallow's emulate : whereat  
 Dire consternation o'er the suitors fell,

And pallid grew each countenance, as Jove,  
 His portent granting, thunder'd loud on high : 630  
 And then did that high-soul'd one,—by such toils  
 Unnumber'd tried, Ulysses, joy in heart,  
 The omen marking which on his behalf  
 The son of wily Saturn thus vouchsaf'd ;  
 And at this moment he an arrow seiz'd 635  
 Which, out of sheath, was lying nigh ; the rest  
 Within the quiver stor'd, as but too soon  
 Those Grecians were to learn. And when this shaft  
 Across the centre piece between the horns  
 Of that great bow was laid, the string he drew 640  
 And the notch, thereto fitted, of the dart ;  
 Yet, from his seat arose not, but with aim  
 At the mark straight before him levell'd, shot :  
 Nor, in that line of axes, from the ring  
 That first stood open miss'd he one : the dart 645  
 Brass-pointed through and through the distant door  
 Its point had driv'n : and now Telemachus  
 He thus address'd :—" Telemachus ! the man  
 Who as a stranger in thy palace sits  
 Hath no discredit done thee ; for the mark 650  
 I have in nowise miss'd, nor space of time  
 Consum'd I in attempts to bend that bow :  
 My powers are unshaken. On this point  
 These suitors who their insults on me fling  
 No longer can impeach me ! But, 'tis time 655  
 That, while the daylight serves, these Greeks a meal  
 To close the day should spread ; and in the song  
 And harp, which fitly crown a feast, rejoice."

He ended thus, and with uplifted brows

Book XXI.]      *HOMER'S ODYSSEY.*      245

To his lov'd son Telemachus a sign      660  
That moment gave, who his keen bladed sword  
About him girded, and upon his spear  
Laid a firm hold ; and, thus, in shining brass  
His station at his Father's side he took.      664

END OF THE TWENTY-FIRST BOOK.



## BOOK XXII.

**A**ND now Ulysses, of his beggar's guise  
 Th' encumb'ring tatters having cast aside,  
 On to the broad and spacious threshold leap'd,  
 The bow and the full quiver in his hands  
 Fast holding, till, outpour'd before his feet 5  
 The arrows on the pavement lay; and thus  
 The suitors he address'd:—"At length, the end  
 Of all this contest is attain'd, and none  
 Can overturn it: but, I now must learn  
 Whether with like success another mark 10  
 I may but hit, which not a man as yet  
 Hath ever touch'd: but may Apollo's self  
 My pray'r's entreaty hear!" And, as he ceas'd,  
 The deadly arrow at Antinous  
 Ulysses pointed, as a beauteous cup 15  
 Two handled, all of gold, he with both hands  
 Was at that moment lifting, on a draught  
 Of wine intent: but, of th' impending stroke  
 Of gory death no dread surmise felt he!  
 For, who that at a feast 'mid countless guests 20  
 A place should fill, could for the deed take thought

That one there was who, by a thronging crowd  
Surrounded, would, alone, however strong  
And in vast might confiding, such a doom  
Of fearful death and overwhelming fate 25  
Upon his head bring down ! But, at his throat  
Ulysses aiming sent the shaft direct,  
And through that flesh so delicate the point,  
His neck transfixing, pierc'd ; and, backward fall'n,  
The wounded wretch turn'd over, as the cup 30  
Fell from his hand, and through his nostrils' tubes  
Man's life-blood gush'd. The table by his foot  
Was forward thrust ; the meats that lay thereon  
Were o'er the pavement scatter'd ;—bread and flesh,  
For that feast roast, in foul disorder mixt, 35  
At once were spoilt. But, when the prostrate lord  
Was by his fellow suitors seen, a din  
Of loudest clamour through the mansion rose :  
They bounded, each man from his seat : in fright  
On all sides they the building eyed,—their gaze 40  
Upon the strong compacted walls they fix'd,  
But, not a shield, nor good strong spear was there  
That hand might clutch, as they with raging wrath  
Their fierce reproaches on Ulysses cast :—  
“ Stranger ! accursèd is thine aim which thus 45  
An arrow shoots at men ! From this day forth  
Hast thou with contests done : a death condign,  
Aye, and most certain, waits thee, who the youth  
Hast but this moment kill'd, of all the prime  
Of Ithaca the noblest : and for this 50  
Shall vultures in this spot thy flesh devour.”

Each in his mind his thoughts hereon revolv'd :

For this surmis'd they all, that with design  
 Ulysses had not kill'd. Insensate they !  
 Who felt not in that hour that one and all 55  
 Upon the verge of their own ruin stood !  
 But, with a grim regard, Ulysses thus  
 Indignant cried :—" Ye hounds ! Your thought it was  
 That never more should I, to home restor'd,  
 From Troy return : And therefore all my means 60  
 Of Life's subsistence have ye here laid waste—  
 The handmaids of my household with rude force  
 Your wont hath been to outrage, and, while I  
 Myself a living man on earth surviv'd,  
 Ye have as suitors my espousèd wife 65  
 In marriage sought ; the anger of the gods  
 That rule on high despising,—and the thought  
 Of that revenge which, at some future day,  
 Should overtake you from the hands of men.  
 A ruin that shall overwhelm you all 70  
 Is now at hand : 'tis here !" He ceas'd to speak,  
 And panic, that all faces blanch'd, the crowd  
 That instant seiz'd ; and each his eager eyes  
 Around him cast and refuge sought, to 'scape  
 The horrid fate impending. One, alone, 75  
 Eurymachus, a speech essay'd :—" If thou,  
 Ulysses of this Isle of Ithaca,  
 Art really hither come, thou hast with truth  
 Of what hath past been speaking,—aye, of all  
 The Grecians here have done ;—the acts of sin 80  
 Within the palace and in lands beyond  
 Foully committed : But, now lies he there  
 Who all this set on foot, Antinoüs !  
 He, he it was, who brought these deeds to pass ;

And this without fond wish or craving need      85  
 That should a marriage long for, but with thought  
 On object most diverse, which Jove the son  
 Of Saturn hath denied him—ev'n that he  
 Antinous himself should o'er this realm  
 Of pop'lous Ithaca as sov'reign rule :      90  
 And fain would he thy son, in ambush caught,  
 Have done to death. But, now is he at length  
 By a most righteous retribution slain.  
 Spare us who thine own lieges are, and we  
 Among ourselves, as with the common voice      95  
 Of a whole people, will the sum make up  
 Of all that in thy palace hath been drunk  
 Or eaten : each of us our sev'ral debts  
 Herein discharging ;—ev'ry man his score  
 Of beeves contributing and brass and gold      100  
 To thy heart's full contentment ; though till now  
 None might thine indignation's wrath condemn."

But, hereupon with frowns of bitter scorn  
 Ulysses thus retorted :—" Not if all  
 That thou wast heir to, O Eurymachus !      105  
 All thy possessions, in the hour that is,  
 Thou would'st to me surrender,—with the gift  
 Of all that thou from any source on Earth  
 Could'st to that fortune add, would I my hands  
 From this their bloody work of death withhold      110  
 Till ev'ry wanton outrage and foul wrong  
 By this crew perpetrate I had aveng'd :  
 Now shall you all election make,—in fight  
 Here hand to hand to brave me, or to flee—  
 So many as from death and fate condign      115

Can their deliv'rance gain! But, not a man  
Believe I will his deadly doom evade."

Thus cried Ulysses, as their trembling knees  
Shook under them, and ev'ry heart gave way :  
And to the crowd appealing yet once more 12  
Eurymachus was heard :—" O comrades mine !  
On you I call,—for, his resistless hands  
This man will never stay :—That bow he holds  
And quiver, too ; and from his standing-place  
On that bright threshold will he arrows shoot 12  
Till all of us lie low. Let the stern joy  
Of Battle now be uppermost ! Your swords  
From out their scabbards draw ye, and, for shields,  
'Gainst those quick-slaying darts the tables lift,  
And then let all in one compacted mass 13  
Make head against him, if from where he stands,—  
Ev'n from that threshold and the door beyond—  
We can but drive him forth : Then, street by street,  
Let us the city scour, and, with all speed  
That man can use, be loud alarms rais'd : 13  
Then not long ling'ring will that moment be  
When his last shaft on Earth this man shall shoot !"

Thus speaking he his brazen falchion drew  
Two edg'd and keenly trenchant, arm'd with which 14  
As he a fearful howl sent forth, a spring  
He on Ulysses made, who, as he leap'd,  
An arrow shot which, near the nipple driv'n,  
Pierc'd through the breast till in the liver's lobe  
The flying shaft stuck fast. Eurymachus  
His brandish'd sword flung down, and with a rush 14

The table's end to reach, down, reeling, fell,  
And, in that fall, from off the festal board  
Were with him swept the viands and round cup ;  
And heavily did his brow the pavement strike,  
In the heart's anguish writhing, while the throne, 150  
His empty seat, now rock'd at ev'ry blow  
From both his feet in death's convulsions giv'n,  
Till darkness dimm'd his eyes. Then, with a bound  
Upon Ulysses rush'd Amphinomus ;  
And his keen blade he drew, as by the door 155  
A passage, haply, to enforce ;—but this  
Telemachus foresaw, and with his spear,  
Brass-pointed, from behind, Amphinomus  
Between the shoulders smote, till, through his chest  
The weapon pierced, and with resounding clash 160  
He forward fell and with his front entire  
The floor beneath him struck : yet from that spot  
Telemachus with haste withdrew ; the spear  
In the slain man thus leaving, as the thought  
With no light terror sway'd him, that some Greek 165  
While he from out the body that long lance  
Would fain be drawing, might upon him fall,  
And with a sword transfix him, or with stroke  
In front deliver'd, wound. Thus, with a run,  
His post he shifted, and in earnest haste 170  
His father soon rejoin'd, and at his side  
These hurried words pronounc'd :—“ O father mine !  
A shield will I now bring thee and two spears,  
A brazen casque, too, which thy brows may fit ;  
And I, myself, with haste a suit will fetch 175  
For this encounter apt, wherein my limbs  
I may invest : the like, too, shall be found

Both for Eumæus' and the herd's defence :  
For well 'twill be 'gainst this affray to arm."

To whom Ulysses :—" Run ! and with thee bring 18  
The arms thou nam'st, while I have shafts still left  
That may defend me ; lest,—my single might  
Alone oppos'd—they move me from this door."

He spoke ; and, on his father's words intent,  
Telemachus that upper chamber sought 18  
Where lay his noble weapons. From that store  
Four shields, eight lances, and four brazen helms  
With horse-hair plumes thick crested, he drew forth  
And with the burden to his father sped ;  
But, first did he on his own limbs the brass 19  
Defensive gird ; and, in like panoply  
Refulgent arm'd, the twain retainers true  
Their station took, and round Ulysses stood.  
He, while the store of arrows serv'd the foe  
To keep at bay, transfix'd them, one by one ; 19  
As at each suitor he the weapon aim'd,  
And side by side they fell. But, when, at length,  
Th' exhausted heap the sov'reign prince's bow  
No more could arm, he 'gainst a column's shaft,  
Which by the walls of that fair palace rose, 20  
The weapon left to stand ; and now did he  
A shield of four ox-hides around him brace ;  
A helm with plume of horse-hair, which in shape  
Of crest most formidable shook on high,  
He to his head secured, and two great spears 20  
With brazen points surmounted took withal.

Now in that well-compacted palace-wall  
 A lofty door there stood by stairs approach'd,  
 And, (nigh the threshold which remotest lay,)  
 The passage to a narrow lane would lead ; 210  
 But, this with doors of nicest work was clos'd :  
 And here Ulysses bade the swineherd watch,  
 His station taking near ; for, through this pass  
 Alone could access be attain'd ; and this  
 From Agelaus an appealing speech 215  
 To all the suitors drew :—" O comrades mine !  
 Will none amongst us to that door aloft  
 His way essay to force, and rouse the town ?  
 With instant speed should we th' alarum spread,  
 And then, may be, this man for the last time 220  
 An arrow will have shot."

But, to this cry

Melantius the goat-herd answer'd thus :—  
 " O Agelaus ! who from Jove himself  
 Thy race derivest ! none could this effect :  
 The noble gates of this palatial hall 225  
 Are very high :—the head of that strait lane  
 Most arduous is to enter ; and one man  
 If of a gallant spirit might alone  
 Repel us all ; but, look you, I, myself,  
 Will from the armoury fit weapons fetch 230  
 Wherewith to fence you ; for, therein, methinks,  
 And there, alone, Ulysses and his son,  
 So noble deem'd, the arms we need have stow'd."

Thus speaking to the chamber-loft he sped,  
 Through the strait corridors of that vast house 235



His passage making, and from thence twelve shields,  
 And spears and brazen helmets twelve with plumes  
 Of horse-hair thickly crested he drew forth,  
 And with dispatch most prompt he re-appear'd  
 His burdens bearing, and among the throng 240  
 The weapons soon divided : at which sight  
 Ulysses' knees beneath him 'gan to shake,  
 And his bold heart gave way, to see them thus  
 With his own weapons arming, and his spears  
 In hostile hands thus brandish'd. This, he thought, 245  
 A fearful ending threaten'd, and these words  
 In hurried accents to Telemachus  
 He now address'd :—"Telemachus ! this fight  
 With evil fraught hath by some female slave  
 That in the palace works been forced on us, 250  
 Or by Melantius' self."

But, in reply,

Telemachus : "O father ! I, myself,  
 This oversight confess ; and no one else  
 The cause hath prov'd. That chamber door, which close  
 Is in its structure fitted, I but now 255  
 Left open ; and their watcher with more thought  
 His bidding did : But, good Eumæus ! haste  
 And close that door, and learn thou if this act  
 Be of our women's doing, or of his,  
 Melantius, the son of Dolius, 260  
 Whom strongly I suspect." Thus commun'd they,  
 As, for the second time, Melantius  
 Was to the chamber hast'ning, fresh supply  
 Of those bright arms to bring. But, note hereof  
 Had the shrewd swineherd taken, and these words 265

To great Ulysses, by whose side he stood,  
 In haste address'd:—"Ulysses! thou shrewd son  
 Of old Laertes! to that armoury  
 In th' upper chamber, is that very man  
 Whom we suspect, pernicious as he is, 270  
 Again about t' ascend:—Speak thou but once—  
 Whether, if I the better of the twain  
 In strength should prove,—my hand should slay him there,  
 Or hale him here to thee, that countless acts  
 Flagitious in this house of thine by him 275  
 Committed, thou may'st thus avenge." Whereto  
 Ulysses thus:—"I and Telemachus  
 Will these illustrious suitors that are here  
 Within the palace thronging, let their rage  
 Fume as it may, withstand: but, go ye two, 280  
 And when above his head both feet and hands  
 Ye shall have backward bent, into that room  
 Melantius cast and that same chamber's doors  
 Behind you make secure:—around his waist  
 A twisted cord bind fast, and up the shaft 285  
 Of some tall pillar hoist him, till his head  
 The ceiling well nigh touch, that while as yet  
 The life is in him he, for a long spell,  
 May in this torment linger."

Thus spake he:

They heard; and, all obedience, went on high 290  
 Melantius' glance evading, who within  
 For arms was searching in that chamber's store,  
 While these two near the pillars took their stand.  
 At length, across the threshold came he forth,  
 In one hand bearing a most beauteous casque, 295

And in the other a broad buckler, old,  
 High dried and worthless, which, in years bygone,  
 Laertes own'd, and as a youth had borne,  
 But, now apart was thrown ; and ev'ry thread  
 That bound the belts was broken. With a rush 3c  
 These twain upon the wretch Melantius fell,  
 And by his hair into the chamber dragg'd  
 To cast him on the floor, while he his fate  
 In dolorous plight was rueing. Hands and feet  
 With such a fetter as his heart, indeed, 3c  
 Might bring to grief, they bound ; that backward turn  
 Observing well to give them which, in charge  
 Most strict Ulysses had enjoin'd : and then,  
 A cord around him winding, with a hoist  
 They to a lofty pillar drew him up, 31  
 And near the ceiling rafters left him slung.

And thus, O swineherd ! with a bitter scoff  
 Did'st thou deride him :—" Now Melantius !  
 Throughout the night thou shalt thy vigil keep  
 On a soft couch reclining, as thyself 3  
 Might well become : nor, when from Ocean's flood  
 The daughter of the dawn, the golden-thron'd,  
 Shall visit Earth will she thy ken evade  
 While for the suitors thou towards this house  
 The goats shalt drive,—provision for a feast !" 3

Thus was Melantius left, in doleful chains  
 To hang upon the stretch. His foes, the while,  
 Their armour having donn'd, and the bright door  
 Behind them closing, to Ulysses sped :  
 And there again they stood, the very breath 3

Of valour's self exhaling! They whose feet  
 The threshold made their station, four alone!  
 The band that in the palace hall stood mass'd,  
 Large numbers counting still, and still unawed.

But, now, behold! The daughter of great Jove, 330  
 Minerva's self drew nigh, in Mentor's form  
 And voice disguis'd; and greatly did the heart  
 Of bold Ulysses joy when thus his eyes  
 On Pallas fell:—"O Mentor! in this scene  
 Of conflict be our shield! In me recall 335  
 The comrade dear to thee, who in my time  
 Good service render'd thee; and we in years  
 Of life are equal."

In such phrase he spoke,  
 In full belief that Pallas he address'd,  
 Who stirs the minds of nations. But, with threats 340  
 Were all the suitors raging, who their front  
 Opposing held; and, first, Damastor's son—  
 Young Agelaus, in rebuke exclaim'd:—  
 "Mentor! Let not Ulysses with that tongue  
 Cajole thee 'gainst the suitors to take part, 345  
 And him to screen and succour! For, herein  
 Will our intents, as I conceive, be met:—  
 When we these twain, both sire and son, have kill'd,  
 Thou wilt, thyself, in turn,—who with such thoughts  
 Would in this palace work thy will—be slain, 350  
 And here beside them lie; with thine own life  
 For all their acts atoning. When thy might  
 We shall with stroke of sword have thus laid low,  
 All that thou hast of treasure, in thy house

Or in thy lands, we with Ulysses' wealth 355  
 Will blend in common, nor a son of thine  
 Or daughter will we tolerate in homes  
 Of thine to live ; no, nor thy cherish'd wife  
 Within the city of this Isle to dwell."

He ended : but, Minerva's outrag'd soul 360  
 Was more and more exasp'rate, and, in speech  
 Indignant, at Ulysses this reproach  
 The goddess cast :—" Thy prowess fails thee now,  
 Ulysses ! Valour hast thou none, as when,  
 In white-arm'd, noble father'd Helen's cause, 365  
 Through nine years warring with the hosts of Troy  
 Thou foughtest, and no intermission knew'st.  
 How many did'st thou in that fearful strife  
 In death lay low ! The wide-way'd citadel  
 Of Priam by thine own shrewd counsels fell. 370  
 Why, therefore, now—to home and wealth restor'd,  
 In thine own house an inmate, hast thou thus,  
 Among these suitors thrown, in spirit quail'd ?  
 But, draw thou nigh, my weakling ! At my side  
 Thy station take—, and an exploit attest, 375  
 That thou may'st learn how, when a foe assails,  
 Mentor Alcimedes can good repay."

Thus spoke Minerva ; but, triumphant might  
 Which should th' antagonist at once subdue  
 She to Ulysses gave not ; all the strength 380  
 And all the valour both of sire and son  
 (That youth upon a warrior's fame intent)  
 She tested still, and to the vaulted roof  
 Of that refulgent palace soaring high,—

BOOK XXII.]	<i>HOMER'S ODYSSEY.</i>	259
The semblance of a swallow having ta'en—		385
A station she assum'd. Damastor's son,		
Young Agelaus, with exciting shout		
The suitor crowd inspiriting, as did		
Eurynomus and bold Amphimedon,		
With Demoptolemus, Pisenor (son		390
Of fam'd Polyctor,) and brave Polybus :		
For, these in courage all their peers outshone—		
So many as, indeed, yet liv'd ! and still		
For life were battling desp'rate : for, the bow		
And its swift flying arrows had the rest		395
In death laid low ; and Agelaus thus		
His comrades urg'd :—" My friends ! that man will now		
The arm we deem'd resistless cease to wield :		
For, even Mentor, after those vain boasts		
On his behalf, has quitted him : Our foes		400
At the first gate their station hold, alone,—		
Now, therefore, hurl not all at once your spears,		
But, onward come—six first—in the advance,		
If Jove on high will but the boon concede		
That this Ulysses may here wounded drop,		405
And we the honour reap : for th' other three,		
When he lies low, no thought have we to take.		
Thus urg'd he them, and, as the word he gave,		
They in all furiousness their lances hurl'd ;		
But, so Minerva rul'd, they useless flew :		410
One struck a column of the princely hall—		
Another the compactly fitted door—		
An ashen spear, brass-loaded, in the wall		
Its point infix'd :—and, now, when ev'ry lance		
Ulysses had evaded by the arms		415
Of those proud suitors hurl'd, he on his son		

And the two herdsmen, his retainers, call'd :—  
 " Now, dear ones ! would I say—"Tis now for us  
 Our spears to fling into this hostile band  
 Who, upon wrongs already done, this wrong 420  
 Would further heap that they our blood would shed ! "

He spoke ; and right ahead their javelins flew :—  
 Ulysses Demoptolemus struck down :  
 Telemachus,—Euryades :—and next  
 Fell, by Eumæus' weapon, Elatus. 425  
 The herdsman's spear Pisander prostrate laid.  
 All these the spacious pavement with their teeth,  
 Down smitten, bit : The still surviving band  
 To the far corner of the hall gave way ;  
 Whereat Ulysses and his three a rush 430  
 Upon the slaughter'd made, and from each corpse  
 The javelin drew, as, with an impulse wild,  
 Spear upon spear, again, the suitors hurl'd :  
 But, so Minerva rul'd, they useless flew—  
 One struck a column of the princely hall— 435  
 Another, the compactly fitted door—  
 An ashen spear, brass loaded, in the wall  
 Its point infix'd, when now Amphimedon  
 The hand of young Telemachus just graz'd,  
 As o'er his wrist the brazen weapon pass'd, 440  
 The first skin slightly wounding. His long lance  
 Ctesippus at the herd Eumæus aim'd—  
 Above his shield a lightly scratching wound  
 Upon the shoulder leaving ; for, beyond  
 The weapon flew, and on the pavement dropp'd. 445  
 Fresh onset then Ulysses' little band  
 Upon the suitors made,—their piercing spears

Into the masses thrusting ; and that chief  
 Ulysses who in direst overthrow  
 So many citadels had raz'd, Eurydamas      450  
 Now with a spear laid lifeless, as his son  
 Telemachus Amphimedon struck down,—  
 And the staunch swineherd, Polybus. The herd  
 In charge of whom Ulysses' oxen graz'd,  
 Ctesippus wounded on the chest, and thus      455  
 Above him cried exulting :—" Now, O son  
 Of Polytherses ! who so fond of jeers  
 Hast ever been—, to this thy fool's caprice  
 Give way no more ! nor in great swelling words  
 Presume to speak. All matter for the tongue      460  
 Defer thou to the gods, whose pow'r herein  
 Transcendeth thine indeed ! A good return  
 Am I now making thee for all the use  
 Thou gavest to Ulysses of thy foot,  
 Upon a day when as a mendicant      465  
 This his own house he paced." The herd, whose wont  
 'Mid crook-horn'd beeves it was to toil, these words  
 Upbraiding spoke, while, hand to hand, in fight,  
 Ulysses, with a lance, Damastor's son  
 Assailant smote ; and young Telemachus      470  
 Evenor's son, Leiocritus, with wound  
 Continuous through the midriff pierc'd,—the point  
 Right through transfixing him ; and on his face  
 He fell, and all the space his eyes between  
 Upon the pavement press'd.

And now it was      475
 That from on high, the lofty roof beneath,  
 Pallas her man-destroying ægis held,



And ev'ry suitor of them, all, the fright  
 Of panic felt, as through the princely halls  
 In flight they rush'd : as when in vernal prime 480  
 When daylight lingers long, a herd of beeves,  
 In grassy meadow grazing, all at once  
 Are by some roving gad-fly driven wild—  
 And as those crookèd talon'd, hook-beak'd birds—  
 The vultures—from some mountain heights to earth 485  
 Down flying, on those little feather'd ones  
 Unpitying fall, which o'er the plain, in dread  
 Of bird-nets, cowering creep,—and with a swoop  
 Kill ev'ry one,—and nought is there at hand  
 That could protect, or their escape secure— 490  
 (But, men in prey thus captur'd ev'n exult !)  
 Thus did Ulysses and his three a rush  
 Upon those suitors make,—on ev'ry side  
 Down hewing till a bellow most uncouth  
 From smitten men arose, upon whose skulls 495  
 The death stroke fell ; and all the pavement round  
 Was with the carnage reeking. Then it was  
 That at Ulysses' feet a suppliant prone  
 Leiodes knelt ; and, as his knees he grasp'd,  
 In hurried accents spake :—“ I prostrate fall, 500  
 Beseeching thee, Ulysses ! Heed my pray'r  
 And mercy grant ;—for, to no woman here  
 That in thy palace serves have I in word  
 Or deed done wrong ;—nay, when the suitors all  
 Were upon evil bent 'twas even I 505  
 That would have stay'd them ; but, to my restraint  
 Obedience none they yielded which from acts  
 Flagitious had deterr'd them. Thus, through sin,  
 Through their own vices, this degrading doom

Have they drawn down upon them ; while I now      510  
Who have in nought transgress'd, and who to them  
A priest have been and soothsayer, must needs  
Lie down and die : so void of all reward  
For righteous deeds the future ever proves."

But, with indignant frown, Ulysses thus      515  
Leiodes answer'd :—" If these men among  
Thou hast an Augur call'd thyself, thou oft  
Must in this palace have thy pray'r uplift  
That such an ending as my safe return  
Might ne'er be mine to meet ; that my lov'd wife      520  
Might, also, in thy train a bride walk forth,  
And offspring bear to thee : And, for all this,  
The death that to a hard cold bed thy limbs  
At once consigns, thou wilt not now evade."

Thus having spoken, with his sturdy hand      525  
A sword Ulysses clutch'd which, as he fell,  
Young Agelaus to the ground had dash'd :  
Herewith, as through the middle of his neck  
The weapon drove, he slew him ; and his head,  
With a loud shriek, was mingled with the dust.      530

But, Phemius, the son of Terpius,  
The bard who at the suitors' feasts his songs  
Had only by compulsion sung, this doom  
Was not to share. He, near the highest gate  
His station kept, and his melodious harp      535  
Was holding still, as in his inmost thoughts  
Two counsels he revolv'd—, these halls to quit  
And at the altar of Hercœan Jove

To hold his seat, where in burnt sacrifice  
 Laertes and Ulysses many a thigh 540  
 Of oxen had consum'd—, or, rushing forth,  
 Ulysses' knees embrace, and with the pray'r  
 Of suppliants make appeal: At length, his harp  
 Upon the pavement resting, 'twixt the cup  
 And silver-studded throne, Ulysses' knees 545  
 He rush'd upon, and, holding there, these words  
 In hurried utt'rance spake:—"With earnest suit,  
 Ulysses! I implore thee: With respect  
 Thy suppliant look upon, and pity show!  
 In sorrow only at some future day 550  
 Would it recoil on thee, if thou in death  
 Should'st at this present lay me low,—a bard  
 Who to the gods above and men on Earth  
 Am wont to tune my lay: Self-taught am I—  
 And God it is who with all strains of song 555  
 Alone my mind inspir'd: and to thyself,  
 As to some god, am I not bound to sing?  
 Oh! take not thou my head from me: That son  
 Whom thou well lov'st, Telemachus, to this  
 Would witness bear, how neither with good-will 560  
 Nor with desire have I to these thy halls  
 At any time drawn nigh, among the crowd  
 Of suitors that here feasting sate, to sing.  
 By men in numbers banded,—men in strength  
 My own o'erpow'ring, was I, by mere force, 565  
 To this thy palace brought."

So pray'd the bard,  
 And just Telemachus his words o'erheard,  
 And promptly thus his father, standing nigh,

Exhorted :— “ Stay thine hand ! On no account  
 This unoffending man with sword of thine 570  
 Think thou to wound :—The herald Medon, too,  
 Will we preserve, who, in this very home,  
 When but a child I was, with constant care  
 Was wont to tend me ; if Philætius  
 Or the good swineherd, in this slaught'ring fray 575  
 Have not already kill'd him ; or, with thee  
 Thyself in wrath he met when in the hall  
 Thou wast on conflict rushing.” This he spake—  
 And Medon, a shrewd thinker, heard it all ;  
 For, 'neath a throne-like seat he cowering lay, 580  
 And, such a dismal ending to elude,  
 A bullock's hide around him, newly flay'd,  
 He there had wrapp'd ; and from beneath the seat  
 He instant rose, and promptly from his limbs  
 The hide detaching, to Telemachus 585  
 He forward rush'd, and, as his knees he held,  
 Thus suppliant and in trem'lous utt'rance spake :—  
 “ O friend of mine ! here, surely, am I still—  
 But, calm thyself—and to thy father speak,  
 That, all tremendous as in might he is, 590  
 He with the sword make not an end of me,  
 In this the height of his indignant wrath  
 Raging against those suitors who his wealth  
 Have in this princely home been squandering,—  
 Fools ! that to thee no court, no honour paid !” 595

But, as he smil'd on him, Ulysses thus  
 The herald cheer'd : “ Be of good courage, then,  
 For that Telemachus hath set thee free,  
 Aye, and from death preserv'd ;— that hereupon

Thou may'st reflect, and 'midst thy fellows urge,           600  
 How wiser far good conduct ever proves  
 Than bad. But, quit thou now these inner halls—  
 Make for the porch, and from this scene of blood  
 Apart withdrawn, sit thou out-doors with him  
 Who in so many songs abounds,—the bard ;           605  
 While I my labours in this house complete,  
 Which need may yet compel."

Thus ended he,

And, from the palace going forth, those twain  
 Their station at the altar of great Jove  
 Together took ; their eyes from side to side           610  
 Around them casting, as at ev'ry turn  
 Their fate they still distrusted. But, with search  
 Most eager did Ulysses each recess  
 Of that vast house explore, on any man  
 Still living thus to light who there might lurk           615  
 An awful fate eluding. But, his eye  
 Beheld them all in blood and dust laid low  
 And in great heaps dispers'd, the finny prey  
 Resembling which the fishermen to shore,  
 From out the surging sea, in meshes fine           620  
 Cast on the shelving beach, where ev'ry one  
 Among that scaly tribe, now on the sand  
 Thrown out, its loss of Ocean's flood bewails,  
 While the sun's torrid radiance each fish  
 Condemns to die : Ev'n thus that suitor train,           625  
 One on another lying, scatter'd lay.  
 And now Ulysses his lov'd son address'd :—  
 "Telemachus ! list ! Summon to my side  
 Nurse Euryclea, that with her awhile

I may confer." Telemachus his sire      630  
 At once obey'd, and, throwing back the door,  
 The nurse address'd :—" Rise thou! and hither speed  
 O agèd one! Thou matron, full of years!  
 Who over all the handmaids that here serve  
 The charge hast held: Come—, 'tis my sire that calls, 635  
 That he may speak to thee." Herewith he ceas'd;  
 But, not a word on her was lost :—The doors  
 Of that thick peopled mansion-house she op'd,  
 And to his presence hasten'd, as her steps  
 Telemachus preceded. There at length      640  
 Ulysses 'mid the slain and dead she found,  
 With human gore and carnage all defil'd:  
 As when a lion who some pastur'd ox  
 Hath just devour'd strides forth, and all his breast  
 And either jaw with blood besmear'd is seen,      645  
 And all his countenance terrific glares ;—  
 So reeking stood Ulysses,—feet below  
 And hands above ensanguin'd. But, at sight  
 Of corpses strew'd around 'mid flow of blood  
 Unutterably great,—exploit immense      650  
 To gaze on! Euryclea rais'd a shout:  
 But, with preventive check and firm restraint  
 Ulysses all her ardent impulse stay'd,  
 And thus in haste address'd her :—" In thy breast  
 Confine these transports, agèd one! Be calm!      655  
 Hence with all exclamations! All the joy  
 Unhallow'd is that over a slain foe  
 Would thus exult. The fate by Heav'n decreed  
 And their own senseless acts the men thou seest  
 Have thus o'erthrown: for, none of mortals born      660  
 Deprav'd or righteous that this home approach'd

Did they regard ; and through blind folly's acts  
 Have they this ignominious fate invok'd :  
 But, look thou ! Euryclea ! From thy lips  
 Let me the numbers of those women learn 665  
 Who, in this palace serving, on my home  
 Disgrace have cast, or from offence are free."

To him, in turn, the well lov'd Nurse replied :—  
 "Thou question ask'st ; and, for this cause, the truth  
 Will I declare :—In this palatial home 670  
 Thou fifty female servants hast, all whom  
 In execution of allotted works  
 We have been training ;—either to card wool,  
 Or in mere menial offices to serve.  
 Of these there twelve have been who on a course 675  
 Of life immodest have set out, and heed  
 To me, or to Penelope, paid none.  
 Telemachus has but of late to age  
 Adult attain'd ; and, so his Mother rul'd,  
 To these our women orders issued none. 680  
 But, come, now ! To that chamber, which on high  
 In this thy mansion's upper story shines,  
 I will forthwith ascend, and to thy wife  
 On whom some god hath genial slumber shed,  
 All this discov'ry make."

But, to her speech 685  
 Ulysses thus replied :—"Not for a while  
 From that repose awaken her : Bid thou  
 Those women hither come who, in days past,  
 Have such dishonour wrought."

He ceas'd to speak—

And through his palace the old matron sped, 690  
 His mandate to convey, and in that hall  
 Their presence to command. His son, meanwhile,  
 The swineherd and the herdsman to his side  
 Ulysses call'd, and with wing'd words the three  
 Forthwith address'd :—" Now, from this spot convey 695  
 The dead that lie around, and aid therein  
 Let certain women give : and then with sponge  
 And water all these very beauteous thrones  
 And tables cleanse ; and, when the house within  
 Ye shall in order most complete have ranged, 700  
 Bring out therefrom the handmaids just condemn'd ;  
 And when between the circling vestibule  
 And the fair court of this palatial hall  
 Ye shall have led them, with your long swords strike,  
 And with redoubled stroke those women wound, 705  
 Till ye have ev'ry life destroy'd, and they  
 All memory of Venus shall have lost,  
 To whom, in secret union with the crowd  
 Of these dead suitors they their minds had giv'n."

He ended ; and in one collective throng 710  
 Came in those handmaids,—many a dolorous moan  
 Outpouring and in tears dissolv'd. The dead  
 They first remov'd, and in the corridor  
 Of the well-fencèd court-yard plac'd each corpse ;  
 Against each other jostling, as the task 715  
 They struggled to complete ;—for, quick dispatch  
 Ulysses' self, in stern command, enforc'd,  
 And by constraint were all the slaughter'd dead  
 Thus borne along. Then all those beauteous thrones  
 And tables were with sponge and water cleans'd. 720



The pavement of that vast and strong-built house  
 Telemachus, Eumæus, and the herd  
 With hoe and shovel into cleanness smooth'd ;  
 The handmaids all its gross defiling dirt  
 Removing, till without the palace gates 72  
 All was cast forth. And when, in each recess,  
 The building through, completest order reign'd,  
 Between the vestibule and the fair court  
 Of that palatial hall Telemachus,  
 Eumæus, and the herd the women led, 73  
 And in a space confin'd, from whence escape  
 Was all cut off, they shut them in, and then  
 Telemachus these words pronounc'd :—" In death  
 That any slightest show of honour wears  
 I would not that these women's lives should end ; 73  
 Females who on my head disgrace have heap'd,  
 And on my mother's, too ; and with the crowd  
 Of all her suitors shameless commerce held."

He spake ;—and to a lofty pillar's shaft  
 The hawser binding of a dark-ribb'd ship, 74  
 Around the vaulted roof the rope he cast  
 And from on high a running noose drew down,  
 Whence none the pavement with her feet could touch :  
 And as when thrushes, with their outspread wings,  
 Or doves, against a net, which in some copse 74  
 Extended hangs have on a sudden dash'd,  
 (As they their nests were nearing), and a bed,  
 Which hath their foe become, includes them all—  
 So did this female group their heads in line  
 One with the other hold, and round their necks 75  
 Were slip-knots run, that by the direst death

They all might perish. For a space, indeed,  
 They with their feet in grasping spasm strove,  
 But, all was over soon. Melantius  
 Was through the corridor and hall led out. 755  
 The armèd men his nostrils and his ears  
 With pitiless blade excis'd : his very groin  
 Was to the rav'nous maw of hounds laid bare ;  
 And both his hands and feet,—so hotly raged  
 Avenging wrath !—were from his body hewn. 760

Telemachus, at length, and both the herds  
 When they their hands and feet by blood defil'd  
 Had in ablution cleans'd, the house regain'd  
 And there Ulysses join'd. The work had now  
 Its full completion reach'd. But, Euryclea 765  
 Ulysses now address'd :—"Thou agèd one !  
 Some sulphur hither bring, which may the taint  
 Of all this evil remedy. Bring fire :—  
 That I throughout the palace may a fume  
 Of purifying vapours raise ; and then 770  
 Do thou the presence of Penelope  
 With her attendant female train request,  
 And bid all handmaids, in this house, appear !"

Whereto the well-lov'd nurse :—"What now, my child !  
 Thou hast enjoin'd beseems thee well : but, come ! 775  
 Fit raiment will I bring thee ; both a cloak  
 And tunic. But, upon this palace floor  
 Thy station in such plight no more maintain,—  
 Those ample shoulders thus in tatters cloth'd !  
 This were enough, indeed, to make one wrath !" 780

Ulysses, ever ready, thus rejoin'd :—

" Before all else let me that cleansing fire  
 In this my palace see." No more spoke he ;  
 For, not regardless did the matron hear,  
 But, fire produced and sulphur ; and herewith 785  
 Ulysses all the palace purified,  
 The house and its great hall. The agèd dame  
 Her way then through her prince's mansion took,  
 The female train to summon, and the speed  
 Of all to hasten : and forthwith they came 790  
 Each with a torch in hand,—and then, indeed,  
 Did they around Ulysses throng ! All rush'd  
 To welcome and with fond embrace to load—  
 His head they kiss'd and shoulders, and fast hold  
 Took they of both his hands, until his heart 795  
 An impulse soft began to feel which tears  
 And sighs of sadness prompted,—for, right well  
 Ulysses, as he ponder'd, knew them all ! 798

END OF THE TWENTY-SECOND BOOK.

## BOOK XXIII.

**A**GED Euryclea with rejoicing heart  
 The upper chambers of the palace sought,  
 The tidings in her mistress' ear to pour  
 That in his home at length her husband stood.  
 The ancient nurse new vigour in her knees,                     5  
 As on she hasten'd, felt; and with strange speed  
 Her feet upon that message mov'd, till now  
 O'er the couch bending she thus eager spake:—  
 "Wake from this sleep! Penelope! dear child!  
 And with those eyes of thine the fond desire                     10  
 Of thy life's days behold:—He is arriv'd!  
 Ulysses—tardy as his coming was—  
 This house, his home hath reach'd! The suitors, all,  
 That proud presumptuous crew,—he hath destroy'd;  
 The men who fill'd this home with cares,—whose greed 15  
 His fortune wasted,—who with harsh control  
 His son o'erpower'd."

But, Penelope

Thus in her turn rejoin'd:—"Dear nurse! the gods  
 Thy reason have derang'd! Their pow'r avails  
 To make the shrewdest mad, and turn the mind                     20

Of folly into wisdom. Thus have they  
 Thy senses injur'd, who, in days bygone,  
 Hadst intellect unerring. Wherefore thus,  
 Amid my many sorrows, with such words—  
 The utterance of merest foolishness— 25  
 Would'st thou thy mistress mock? Why from sweet sleep  
 Which, like some veil my eyelids closing round,  
 Had held me fast, hast thou awaken'd me?  
 For, never since to that ill-omen'd Troy,  
 (The very name of which I fain would shun,) 30  
 Ulysses sail'd, have I in such deep sleep  
 Reposing lain. But, listen, now: descend,  
 And to the palace wend from hence thy way;  
 For, from among the women of my court,  
 Had any other come,—the messenger 35  
 Of tidings such as thine, and from my sleep  
 Thus rous'd me, with rebuke of no light wrath  
 Should I have bid her hence her steps retrace  
 And in the palace bide: but, length of life  
 Is now a good turn serving thee!"

Hereto 40

The well-lov'd Euryclea urged reply:—  
 "I mock thee not, dear child! In all good truth  
 Ulysses is here come: His home,—again  
 I say it—he has reach'd; that wanderer  
 Whom ev'ry one within these palace walls 45  
 With contumely had spurn'd. Of this return  
 And of his presence here, Telemachus  
 For some time past was 'ware; but—(rightly judg'd)  
 This consciousness of his returning sire  
 He had to none reveal'd; that all the wrongs 50

By these presumptuous suitors perpetrate  
That parent might avenge."

Thus spake the nurse,

And,—all delight,—Penelope, as now  
She from her couch upsprang, that agèd one  
In her embraces folded, while her eyes 55  
A tear let fall, and thus in haste she spoke :—  
" Come, then, dear nurse ! If, of a certain truth,  
He, as thou say'st, his home hath reach'd,—say, next,  
How did he, all alone, upon this crowd  
Of shameless suitors fall, while they the house 60  
As constant inmates held ?"

Hereto the nurse

Replying :—" Nought saw I,—and question none  
I ask'd : The dying moans alone I heard  
Of those who in that slaughter fell. We all  
In panic fear were crouching in each nook 65  
Of th' upper-chamber story, where the doors,  
So well compacted, all protection gave ;  
For that thy son Telemachus as yet  
No summons from that spot to move had brought :  
His father, later in the day, the youth 70  
To call me sent. Ulysses then I found  
'Mid the dead bodies standing which all round  
Were each on th' other lying ;—the whole space  
Of the stone pavement cov'ring. Joy, indeed,  
Would all thy heart have fill'd, hadst thou but then 75  
Thy consort seen, so like a lion smear'd  
With blood and gore ! The corpses of the slain  
Are all in the court-entry stow'd ; but, he

With sulph'rous exhalations, from a fire  
 On the hall-pavement kindled, hath thine house 80  
 All beauteous purified, and now at length  
 Hath bade me call thee to him : Follow me,—  
 That, after countless miseries endur'd,  
 Your hearts the transports of this joy may feel !  
 This hope, at last,—This hope, so long deferr'd, 85  
 Is now fulfill'd ! On his domestic hearth  
 He, even he, the living man himself,  
 Hath placed his foot ; and thee and his dear son  
 Hath he in this palatial mansion found ; and here,  
 Its walls within, hath he on all that crew 90  
 That wooed thee for thy hand, but on himself  
 Base wrongs had heap'd, an ample vengeance ta'en."

Still, in reply, Penelope these words  
 To Euryclea spake :—" Oh ! my lov'd nurse !  
 Boast not so proudly ! laughing there so loud ! 95  
 Full well thou know'st the greetings of delight  
 He would from all within these walls receive—  
 From me, how far beyond them all ! From him  
 Our son, too ; who to us existence owes.  
 But, these are no true tidings,—as thy lips 100  
 Have just declar'd them : Some one of the gods  
 Those princely suitors hath in death laid low,  
 The outrage thus resenting of a pride  
 Which griev'd all hearts, and of their many acts  
 Of sin most foul : for, to no living man 105  
 Of mortals born, the righteous or the vile,  
 Appear who might, paid they regard. The fate  
 They now have met, their arrogance provok'd.  
 But—, for Ulysses ! From Achaia's shores

Far distant, in all efforts to gain home 110  
 He utterly hath fail'd; and he himself  
 Hath to death's doom succumb'd."

But, Euryclea

Her speech resum'd:—"My child! What words are these  
 That from thy lips have pass'd? What! did thy thoughts  
 Forbid thee to believe that he who now 115  
 Upon his hearth is standing,—thine own lord—  
 Would e'er his home regain? But, slow indeed  
 Of all belief hast thou long been. Now, list!  
 Proof yet more sure will I before thee bring—  
 The selfsame scar which, with its ivory tusk 120  
 A boar once on him left, I with these eyes  
 While I his feet was laving, recognis'd:  
 And much I long'd, that moment, to thyself  
 My knowledge to impart: but, he my lips  
 With both hands closing (so discreetly wise 125  
 In that discernment was he) interdict  
 Upon me laid against my telling thee.  
 Oh! do but follow me! and I this gage  
 Will for myself lay down: If I deceit  
 Should herein use, thou by the worst of deaths 130  
 Shalt take my life."

Hereto Penelope

In answer spake:—"Dear nurse! Too hard for thee  
 To fathom are the counsels of the gods—  
 (Those beings that in life eternal live—)  
 Though thou indeed be shrewd: But, go we hence 135  
 My son to seek,—that I upon the heaps  
 Of those slain suitors may my glance, too, bend—  
 And look on him who kill'd them!"



With these words,

The upper chamber leaving, her descent  
 She now began to make ; and many a thought      140  
 Was in her inmost heart revolving then,  
 Whether of that dear husband from a spot  
 Somewhat remote she first should question ask,  
 Or, all at once into close presence brought,  
 Her kisses on his head impress,—his hands      145  
 Within her own enclose : but, when at length  
 The hall she reach'd and the stone threshold cross'd,  
 A seat she took from whence Ulysses' form  
 By the bright fire illumin'd she beheld,  
 As by the wall right opposite he sate.      150  
 'Gainst a high column leaning was he seen—  
 His eyes upon the pavement fixt, as though  
 In expectation musing whether first  
 That noble wife at sight of him would speak :  
 But, long time sate she mute, as o'er her sense      155  
 Amazement fell : At one time with a gaze  
 Intently fixt she eyed him : then, on view  
 Of that vile garb which on his body hung  
 All recognition fail'd. Telemachus,  
 At length, in tone reproachful spake, and thus      160  
 The queen rebuk'd :—

“ O mother mine ! and, yet,  
 Misnam'd 'a mother' now ! who thus so hard  
 In feeling sittest there,—why thus apart  
 Remainest thou, nor at my father's side  
 Thy place hast taken, or a question ask'd,      165  
 Or with intensely curious searching words  
 Thy scrutiny begun ? No wife that lives

Would in a spirit so unkind have thus  
 From her own husband kept aloof,—a man  
 Who, after twenty miserable years  
 Of suff'ring, had his native land regain'd !  
 But, harder than a rock must be thy heart."

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To him, in turn, Penelope :—" My child !  
 My mind is in profound amazement wrapt :  
 Nor accents can I utter,—nor of him,  
 The man who sits before me, question ask—  
 Nor gaze intent upon his features fix :  
 But, if of very truth Ulysses 'tis—  
 If he indeed his home hath here regain'd—  
 Far better than hereby shall we ourselves  
 Discern and recognise ; for tests there are  
 By us well known, to others unreveal'd,  
 Which we shall try." Thus spake Penelope ;  
 But, great Ulysses smil'd, and to his son  
 These hurried words address'd :—" Telemachus !  
 See thou that in our palace this approof  
 Thy mother make ; and with assurance strong  
 Will she far better know me. On this scene,  
 For that I filthy seem, and in this garb  
 So vilely am array'd, the present slight  
 She puts upon me ; and not yet admits  
 That I am he, her own ! But, take we thought  
 For what most prudent now may seem. The man  
 Who may a single citizen have kill'd  
 (One who but few behind him leaves, his death  
 Thereafter to avenge) to flight would take  
 And all his kindred leave and native soil ;  
 But, we a city's garrison ; as 't were,

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Have just destroy'd ;—the prime, by far, of all  
 Whom Ithaca among her youth enroll'd : 200  
 Wherefore, on this, I pray thee, well reflect."

Telemachus thus answer'd :—"Thou thyself  
 Alone, dear father! this can handle best ;  
 For that the public voice thy counsels deem  
 The soundest ever ; nor, 'mid living men 205  
 Would one be found that could with thee compete :  
 But, we with readiest zeal will in thy steps  
 Be followers found, and, to our pow'rs' extent,  
 I deem we shall no failing nerves betray !"

Whereto the shrewd Ulysses thus replied :— 210  
 "This, then, as most expedient, I advise :  
 When ye, yourselves, ablution shall have made,  
 And tunics put upon you, this command  
 To all the handmaids in our palace give,  
 That they, too, quickly in array appear, 215  
 And let the gifted minstrel with his harp  
 Melodious wake the sport-exciting dance ;  
 That they who on the wayside path that sound  
 As casual passers-by may hear, or who  
 In homes contiguous dwell, may mention make 220  
 Of some gay marriage feast ;—lest, (ere we hence  
 To our well-timber'd land excursion make,)  
 Wide rumour'd news of that most bloody death  
 Which all the suitors hath but now destroy'd,  
 Should through the city spread ; and hereupon 225  
 We will with due reflection meditate,  
 And all the good perpend which in our hands  
 Great Jove may deign to place."

Ulysses thus

His counsel gave ; they heard him, and complied :  
 And each of them, ablutions having made, 230  
 His tunic donn'd : The women, in their turn  
 Array'd, stepp'd forth ; and the inspirèd bard  
 His hollow harp began to sound, the love  
 Of dulcet song inspiring and of dance  
 That all might join reproachless : till the house, 235  
 In deep full tones that rose and fell around,  
 Its echoes sent from bounding feet of men  
 With fair-zon'd women jubilant, till a voice  
 From one, without that mansion, on whose ear  
 The sound was falling, thus exclaim'd : "'Tis true ! 240  
 Some one, at length, hath this long courted queen  
 In marriage taken to himself ! Poor fool !  
 She held not out till he should come whom first  
 She in her maiden prime her consort made ;  
 Nor charge of his vast mansion hath she kept." 245  
 Thus casual comment made they—; of events  
 Just past, or how transpiring, ignorant.

Euronyme, the while, in his own house,  
 (Where oversight of all she held,) the feet  
 Of great Ulysses wash'd, and o'er his skin 250  
 The fluid unguents pour'd ; a splendid robe  
 And tunic, too, around his form she drew.  
 And beauty, in large measure, from his brow  
 Minerva downward shed ;—increase of height,  
 Increase of bulk bestowing. From his head 255  
 The hair like hyacinthine flow'rs in locks  
 That clust'ring curl'd she scatter'd. And, as when  
 Some cunning craftsman whom in various art

Both Vulcan and Minerva have endow'd,  
 The silver with rich gold surmounts, and work 260  
 Ornate therewith completes,—so, round his head  
 And shoulders did the goddess grace diffuse ;  
 And, all the semblance bearing of some god,  
 Forth stepp'd he from the bath ; and on that seat,  
 From whence he recent rose, again enthron'd, 265  
 He to the queen sate opposite, and thus  
 Appealing spake :—" O great and rev'rend dame !  
 The deities that on Olympus' heights  
 Eternal dwell a heart have given thee  
 'Bove all thy sex most obdurate : No wife, 270  
 Thyself except, would thus with stubborn heart  
 Have from her husband shrunk,—a man in grief  
 So long immers'd, and who his native soil  
 Had only in the twentieth year regain'd !  
 But, come thou, Euryclea ! Nurse !—a couch 275  
 Prepare for me, that I in lonely rest  
 May on that bed recline : for, 't is a heart  
 Of iron which beneath that bosom lies !"

But, to these words Penelope, in turn,  
 Rejoinder made :—" O great and noble sir ! 280  
 'Tis in no haughty spirit that I thus  
 Myself comport ; nor with delib'rate slight  
 Or with intense astonishment these eyes  
 Upon thee bend : No :—well can I recall  
 What my Ulysses was when from this isle 285  
 Of Ithaca he in that galley sail'd  
 By long-oar'd rowers mann'd. But, come thou, Nurse !  
 See that in that same chamber which, in strength  
 So durable, he (in the days long past)

Himself constructed,—thou a thick bed lay : 290  
 Throw coverlets and wool thereon, with cloaks  
 And rugs of tissue elegant."

She ceas'd ;

Her lord hereby intent to test,—who thus  
 The wife who well her duty conjugal  
 Knew how to fill, in mournful tone address'd :— 295  
 " Lady ! heart-grieving and most sad is this  
 Which thou hast just commanded ! Who is it  
 That hath my bed to any spot remote  
 From where it stood, remov'd ? An arduous task  
 Were it for any one, however skill'd, 300  
 That couch to shift ;—except some god, indeed,  
 Who might with ease, if so he will'd, anew  
 Its station fix. But, not a man that lives,—  
 Though with the strength of youthful prime endow'd,  
 Could without toil extreme that couch displace. 305  
 A feature of great note is in its frame  
 (So curiously wrought) work'd up,—whereon my hand  
 Alone, and no one's else, was occupied :—  
 Within our palace-court a leafy shrub  
 Of olive once uprose which in full growth 310  
 Was thriving on a stem which semblance bore  
 In thickness to some pillar : About this,  
 As round a centre, I a chamber built  
 Until with close compacted stones its height  
 Complete was crown'd, and a fit roof above 315  
 Was carried over : Here, too, were there doors  
 Close shutting and with well-join'd panels fram'd.  
 That olive then of all its leaves I stripp'd,  
 And having from the stem all branches clear'd,

I with sharp metal, deftly and with skill 320  
 The tools applying, to a polish bright  
 This pillar brought and by a standard's gage  
 I work'd it straight: and when the gouge's edge  
 The flutings had incis'd, this of my bed  
 The staunch support became: and from this stem 325  
 The work of polishing I plied till all  
 In brightness stood. With gold and silver then  
 And ivory designs was it inlaid,  
 And then did I a thong outstretch from hide  
 Of heifer cut, which in rich purple dyed 330  
 Shone brightly beautiful. This is the test!  
 The signal proof I here to thee uphold!  
 Not that I knowledge any yet have gain'd,  
 O Lady! whether still that bed stands firm,  
 Or whether some strange hand the olive's root 335  
 Excising have my rest set up elsewhere."

He ended: but her knees beneath her sank—  
 Her heart within her fainted, as the proofs  
 She now so well discern'd,—(which with such truth  
 Ulysses had detail'd)—and with a burst 340  
 Of tears she forward rush'd; and as around  
 His neck she threw her hands, his head she kiss'd  
 And thus exclaim'd:—"Bend not one angry look  
 On me, Ulysses! thou who hast a mind  
 That better far than all men can discern! 345  
 The gods a painful struggling life on thee  
 Impos'd, who, in their envy, grudg'd that we,  
 In union close abiding, should the bliss  
 Enjoy of our youth's prime, and stand at last  
 Upon the threshold of a good old age. 350

Let me not now thine anger feel, nor sense  
Of indignation wake in thee for that  
In these embraces fond I held thee not  
When first mine eyes upon thee fell : for, doubt  
Hath, day by day, with shuddering distrust 355  
My bosom fill'd, lest some one with forg'd tale  
Should hither come deluding me : so great  
Their number is who, for mere lucre's sake,  
The basest arts will use ! That Argive wife,  
Helen, great Jove's own progeny, had ne'er 360  
Her love and self to a mere alien giv'n,  
Had she but known that the brave sons of Greece  
Would to that land restore her which at heart  
She held most dear. Some deity it was  
That to an act so vile her spirit mov'd ! 365  
No forethought took she for that dread event,  
That dire first cause which whelm'd us, too, in woe.  
But, now,—Since thou hast proofs so dear adduced,  
(All in our chamber manifest) which none  
Of mortal born save thou and I have seen, 370  
The handmaid Actoris except, whom erst  
My father gave me when I hither came,  
And who our guarded chamber door hath kept,—  
Thou hast conviction on me forc'd,—though hard,  
Most hard, I felt it,—such belief to yield." 375

Thus spake Penelope,—in her lord's breast  
Distressful passion 'wak'ning : He, all tears,  
To that sweet consort clung who all the claims  
Of duty so well knew— : And, as when land  
A sight most precious to the swimmer's eyes 380  
At length begins to loom, when in the deep



Some goodly bark by Neptune has been merg'd,  
 'Mid sweeping hurricanes and billows dark ;  
 And small their number is who in that wreck  
 By swimming on to shore the hoary waves 385  
 Of ocean have evaded, and with limbs  
 In spume saline encas'd, have on the beach  
 At length set foot, from dread destruction freed—  
 Thus, in her sight delightful to regard  
 Seem'd great Ulysses, from around whose neck 390  
 Her fair white arms not yet had she releas'd :  
 And o'er their tearful joy had orient morn  
 All roseate shone, but for Minerva's thought—  
 On their behalf benignly provident—  
 Who the prolong'd night-hours, as to their close 395  
 They 'gan to wane, still further stay'd ; and Morn  
 'Neath Ocean waves detain'd from her gold throne ;  
 And those swift steeds forbade her yet to yoke—  
 Lampus and Phaeton—, coursers that the day  
 Draw on apace, and light convey to Man. 400

But, thus, at length, Ulysses spoke :—" As yet,  
 Dear consort ! from the close are we remote  
 Of trouble that must try us : Toil extreme  
 And measureless remains : before us lie  
 Tasks heavy and most arduous—, but, still, 405  
 By me, of urgent need, to be perform'd :  
 For, this was by Tiresias' shade premis'd  
 When I to Pluto's mansions my descent  
 As an enquirer made,—the means to learn  
 How I and my companions might our homes 410  
 In safety reach. But, come ! dear consort mine !  
 To bedward speed us—, that, ev'n now, our rest

In slumber seeking, we the boon may gain  
Of gentle soothing sleep."

To whom, again,

Penelope :—" Whenever thy desire 415  
Such rest demands—(for that th' immortal gods  
Have to this noble home and to the land  
Of thy forefathers brought thee—) a fit couch  
Shall surely be at hand :—but, since of toil  
Thou hast just spoken,—and, maybe, 'tis God 420  
That to thy mem'ry brings it—, come! these tasks  
Detail to me : At later date, methinks,  
I should this knowledge gain,—but, harm there's none  
If now at once I learn it."

To these words

Ulysses, in so many counsels vers'd, 425  
This answer made :—" O unreflecting one!  
Why thus, so earnest pleading, would'st thou still  
Such narrative prolong? But, of the past,  
The story of my life, will I yet speak  
And nought withhold, and, yet, thine heart herein 430  
No joy will feel, nor mine; for that the Seer  
To many a peopled city shap'd my course  
Enjoining me in these my hands an oar  
To bear along till I the realm should reach  
Of men who of the sea are ignorant 435  
And who of aliments with salt combin'd  
Were never known to eat : who never saw  
A dark-prow'd ship, nor those smooth-bladed oars  
Which ships propel as pinions. But, this sign—  
A plain one, too!—he gave me (nor to thee 440

Shall it rest unreveal'd)—when in my path  
 Another, on his travels, should appear  
 And tell me that, across my shoulder thrown,  
 A winnowing-fan I carried, I thereat  
 (For, so Tiresias charg'd me) was this oar 445  
 To set upright in earth ; and having then  
 To Neptune faultless sacrifices burnt,—  
 A ram, a bull, and boar,—the mate of swine—  
 My journey homeward take, and hecatombs  
 To those immortal deities who th' expanse 450  
 Of Heaven inhabit, duly offer up :  
 This, too, he added, that from off the Sea  
 Death would hereafter light on me,—a close  
 Of life most calm ; such as my days would end  
 By blest old age alone subdued, while all 455  
 That round me might be dwelling would the lot  
 Of thriving nations share. All this, he said,  
 Would in the issue happen."

In reply

Penelope :—" If the immortal gods  
 Shall with the years of thine advancing age 460  
 A lot more prosp'rous blend, good hope remains,  
 Should ill befall, thou shalt uninjur'd flee."

Such commune held they, while Eurynome  
 And th' agèd Nurse, by radiant torches' light  
 Illumin'd, plied their task : A couch they spread 465  
 Of fitting thickness and of cov'rings soft ;  
 And then, this done, in her own place of rest  
 The ancient matron hasten'd to recline,  
 And to the household's stations took her way.

But, she who o'er the chambers oversight 470  
 Continual held, Eurynome, a torch  
 In her hands bearing, led them to their couch,  
 And thence,—her guidance ended,—to her own  
 Forthwith repair'd, as they that ancient bed  
 And rest therein, all happiness, resum'd. 475  
 Meantime, Telemachus, the herd, and he  
 Who of the swine had charge, from further dance  
 Their feet withdrew, and bade the handmaids cease ;  
 And in the shady palace shelter'd slept.

And now Ulysses and Penelope, 480  
 Their fill of gladness taking, new delight  
 In converse free and long recitals felt :  
 She, best of women, joying to relate  
 What outrages within her palace walls  
 She had to brook, as that pernicious throng 485  
 Of suitors she beheld who, in her name,  
 Such herds of oxen and such flocks of sheep,  
 The fatlings, kill'd ; and from the stores of wine  
 Such lavish draughts had drawn. He, in his turn,  
 (The Chief, of Jove's own lineage sprung) the plagues 490  
 He, in his day, on fellow men had brought,  
 Now to his queen narrated, and the pangs  
 Of anguish he himself in many a toil  
 Had borne and struggled through : And she a charm  
 Ecstatic felt in list'ning ; nor did sleep, 495  
 Until that tale was told, her eyelids close :—

His conquest, first in order, he rehears'd  
 Of the Ciconian tribe, and how the coast  
 And fertile fields of the Lotophagi

He lighted on ; and, next, the many wrongs                    500  
 By Polyphemus done, and how the death  
 Of his brave comrades, whom the Cyclops seiz'd  
 And pitiless devour'd, he had aveng'd :  
 And how to Æolus at length he came,  
 Who genial welcome gave him, and from thence                    505  
 Upon his voyage sped him, though the fates  
 Ordain'd that not as yet he home should reach—  
 The hurricanoe from his sea-track'd course  
 Back driving him, in sorrow most profound,  
 Across the teeming main : and how he next                    510  
 To Læstrigonia came, whose city's gates  
 So widely sep'rate stood, and where his fleet  
 Was broken up, and all that with him sail'd,  
 His well-greav'd crews, their doom incur'd ;—himself  
 Alone life saving in a dark-ribb'd ship :                    515  
 The guile, too, he describ'd, and divers arts  
 Of Circe, and the passage, in a bark  
 Of many rowers made, to the vast realms  
 Of Pluto, that he conference might hold  
 And counsel from Tiresias of Thebes                    520  
 (A shadowy soul) obtain : and here did he  
 His comrades, all, behold : the mother, too,  
 Who gave him birth and when an infant babe  
 Had cherish'd him. In narrative he told  
 How he the Sirens' blended voices heard,                    525  
 And reach'd those rocks "The Wand'ers" call'd, and then  
 The dread Charybdis and that Scylla, ne'er  
 By men, yet, scathless shunn'd ; and how his crew  
 The oxen slaughter'd of the Sun ; and Jove  
 From on high fulminant the flying bark                    530  
 With fumid bolt had stricken, and the whole

Of his dear comrades in the waters sunk,  
 Though he, himself, from that dread doom was sav'd.  
 The story, too, Ulysses now detail'd  
 How to the isle Ogygia he was borne 535  
 And to the nymph Calypso came, who there  
 The inmate made him of her cavernous grot,  
 Eager to make him evermore her own ;  
 How there she fed him, and assurance gave  
 That she would an immortal make him,—freed 540  
 Through all existence from old age ; but, how  
 By no persuasion could she bend his will :  
 How, also, after suffering extreme,  
 The land of the Phæacian race he reach'd,  
 Who in their hearts had homage to him paid 545  
 As though 'twere to some god ; and with a ship  
 Convey'd him to the land, to him so dear,  
 That gave him birth ; and brass and gold in gifts  
 Most bountiful, and raiments, too, bestow'd.  
 This was the theme he last had touch'd, when sleep 550  
 Of gentlest slumber, which his frame entire  
 To ease was yielding up, upon him fell,  
 And of all burd'ning cares that mind reliev'd.

But, now, to thoughts herefrom diverse her mind  
 Minerva giving, (as belief arose 555  
 That both his couch and sleep to full content  
 Ulysses had enjoy'd—) from Ocean's depths  
 The golden-thronèd mother of the dawn  
 In zealous haste arous'd, that she her light  
 To mortals might dispense ; and from his bed 560  
 Of softness rose the Chief, and on his wife  
 This charge enjoin'd :—" Dear wife of mine ! we both,

After so many trials, have of grief  
 A surfeit felt : thyself—when 'twas thy wont  
 To fret and weep, in doubt of my return 565  
 Which could but load me with o'erwhelming toil ;—  
 And Jupiter, and every other god  
 In bonds had fetter'd me, whose ev'ry thought  
 In carking care dwelt on my native land.  
 Now,—since we both upon that couch have lain 570  
 So long, so dearly wish'd for ! let thy care  
 To such of all my substance be address'd  
 As here in this our palace is preserv'd.  
 But, as to all my sheep which that proud crew  
 Of suitors have devour'd, I will, myself, 575  
 From flocks around reprisals largely make,  
 And others shall the Greeks make good, till thus  
 Shall all my folds be stock'd therewith. My steps  
 To our well-timber'd land I now must bend,  
 My admirable father there to see, 580  
 Who day by day has o'er my absence mourn'd :  
 Now, upon thee, although with mind discreet  
 Thou be endow'd,—this further charge I lay ;  
 For, at the sunrise will report be rife  
 About the suitors whom within these walls 585  
 I have destroy'd :—With all thy female train  
 Go thou to th' upper chamber, and thy seat  
 Therein select : look not abroad therefrom,  
 Nor questions ask of any."

Thus spake he,  
 And round his shoulders his bright armour braced : 590  
 Telemachus from slumber he awak'd,  
 The herdsman, and Eumæus ;—of each one

Desiring that with martial arms equipp'd  
They would go forth. And they, in brazen mail  
Accoutred, went compliant : and the doors 595  
Wide op'ning, sallied forth,—Ulysses' self  
The way before them leading. Day, indeed,  
Was on the Earth in light ; but, with all haste  
In gloom enshrouding them, Minerva's will  
Made Night,—and from the city led them forth. 600



## BOOK XXIV.

**M**ERCURY, worshipp'd at Cyllene's fane,  
 His summons to the slaughter'd suitors' shades  
 Proclaiming stood ; the beauteous golden rod  
 On high upholding at whose touch the eyes  
 Of men he charms at will, or out of sleep 5  
 (Their lids uprais'd) can wake them ; and herewith  
 The shadowy throng he urged to move,—in front  
 On-leading ; and with short sharp wailing cries  
 Most inarticulate, they follow'd close :  
 And as when in the inmost cavernous depths 10  
 Of some mysterious cave the flitting bats  
 Twitter in air, when, off the string where each  
 From the rock pendant to the other clings,  
 A single one hath fallen,—even thus  
 The shades of the defunct in huddled mass 15  
 With murmurs shrill but voiceless mov'd along,  
 As through the dank and dusky passages  
 The gracious Mercury led the way. The tides  
 Of Ocean and Epirus' whit'ning cliff  
 They first approach'd : the portals of the Sun 20  
 They next gain'd sight of, and the land of dreams ;  
 And quickly on the meads of asphodel

Their entry made, where disembodied roam  
 The spirits of the dead. The soul they found  
 Of Peleus' son, Achilles : th' image, too,      25  
 Saw they of brave Patroclus, and withal  
 Antilochus the irreproachable,  
 And Ajax, who in mien and stature (next  
 To Peleus' noble son) of all Greeks else  
 Stood chief. But, all, around their leader group'd,      30  
 In gath'ring multitude began to throng ;  
 When Agamemnon's soul, king Atreus' son,  
 With mournful plaint drew nigh, and at his side  
 Stood, hovering, as many as with him  
 Had in the palace of Ægisthus fall'n      35  
 And their own doom provok'd : To him forthwith  
 The soul of Peleus' son these words address'd :—

“ O son of Atreus ! 'bove all heroes else  
 We deem'd thee best of Jove belov'd,—of him  
 Who 'mid the thunder-bolts his pastime takes—      40  
 For that o'er numberless and noble men  
 In the wide population of that Troy,  
 Where we the Grecians such sharp trials bore,  
 Thou rul'dst supreme : but, fate most murderous  
 Was, of a truth, to prove thy doom : on thee      45  
 That destiny untimely fell which none  
 Of mortals born can shun. Oh ! would that thou  
 In full enjoyment of that glorious fame  
 In which thou reign'dst hadst in the battle-field  
 Of Troy thy death-stroke met ! Achaia then      50  
 United would thy monument have rais'd,  
 And great had been the heirship of renown  
 To thy lov'd son descending : but, behold !

Thy fate it was of death most piteous  
To feel the stern arrest !”

Hereto, in turn, 55

The soul of Atreus' son replying spoke :—  
“ Godlike Achilles ! Peleus' envied son !  
Thou who from Argos distant to thy doom  
Before Troy's wall didst yield, while in dense throng  
The noblest heroes of the rival hosts 60  
Of Troy and Greece on thy behalf met fate  
And fell beside thee ! On that great death-scene  
At length lay'st thou in greatness, while the dust  
In whirlwind swept around thee, now no more  
For the war-horse or chariot to take thought. 65  
All through that day we fought, nor interval  
Had the grim war's encounter any known,  
Had not great Jove with darkling clouds and blast  
Of raging hurricane a truce compell'd.  
And when from off that battle-field thy corse 70  
Was to the moorings of our galleys borne,  
Upon a couch we laid thee,—thy fair skin  
With tepid water laving, and with oil  
Anointing thee, while, all around, the Greeks  
In bitter grief look'd on, and scalding tears 75  
In floods were shedding ; and each man his hair  
To tonsure close submitted. And when now  
Thy mother's ear the tidings reach'd, the deep  
With the immortal sea-nymphs in her train  
She instant left ; and from the ocean-waves 80  
Came forth a hollow and mysterious groan  
At sound whereof a panic of great fear  
On all the Grecians fell, and with a rush

Had they on board the fleet a refuge sought  
But for the interpos'd restraint of one 85  
In ancient lore and gen'ral knowledge vers'd,  
Nestor, who long before had counsel giv'n  
Which wisest seem'd, and who, with judgment sound  
And exhortation, timely hearing gain'd:—  
'Stay! Argives! stay—flee not, ye youths of Greece! 90  
For this the coming of his mother is  
From the great depths of Ocean, with her train  
Of nymphs marine, immortal; to take thought  
For her now lifeless son.' Such were his words,  
And all the terror of those high-soul'd Greeks 95  
At once was sooth'd: and round thy body stood  
The daughters of the Old Man of the Sea  
With shrill lament deploring thee, and folds  
Of raiment by no hand of mortals wrought  
About thee casting. There, too, plunged in grief, 100  
As each with her sweet voice the plaint of woe  
To th' other's mournful wail responsive rais'd,  
All the nine Muses stood: nor one dry eye  
'Mid all the thronging multitude of Greeks  
Would any one have noted; to such height 105  
Of sorrow did the clear-voiced Muses' dirge  
All hearts awaken. Sev'nteens nights and days  
Th' immortal gods and we, mere mortal men,  
Thy loss bewail'd; but, on the eighteenth day  
Upon the flaming pile thy form we placed, 110  
And many a fatten'd sheep and crook-horn'd ox  
Around it slew; and, (in such raiment swath'd  
As any one of the immortal gods  
Might fitly have invested,—) to the fire  
Wast thou consign'd, and in abundance rich 115

Of unguents and of honey didst thou lie.  
 Around that flaming pile where thy remains  
 Consuming lay, a countless warrior-band,—  
 Heroes of Greece that in her legion'd hosts  
 On horse contended and on foot,—in arms 120  
 Came rushing on, and round thy body ran  
 Till all the air the din perturbing felt.  
 But, when the flame of Vulcan had at length  
 Thy frame consum'd, we, in the matin light,  
 Thy white bones, O Achilles! gather'd up; 125  
 With purest wine and unguents laving them;—  
 And then a golden vessel in our hands  
 Thy mother placed;—the gift, she said, it was  
 Of Bacchus, and renownèd Vulcan's work.  
 In this, O great Achilles! treasur'd up 130  
 Were thy blanch'd bones, and with them blended lay  
 The bones of dead Patroclus, son renown'd  
 Of brave Menœtius: all apart from these  
 Were those of lov'd Antilochus, whom first  
 Of all thy brother warriors in regard 135  
 After Patroclus we in honour held.  
 Then we, the hallow'd legions of that host  
 Which Greece had arm'd for war, a tomb immense  
 And glorious to behold around thee rear'd  
 High on a headland of broad Hellespont, 140  
 Where, from the far horizon of the main,  
 It well might be discern'd by men that still  
 Upon this Earth are dwelling, and by those  
 Thereon to live hereafter. And, this done,  
 Thy mother, upon pray'r to heav'n uplift, 145  
 To all the chiefs of Greece suggestions made  
 For contests most superb, the central space

Of a vast ring to occupy. These eyes  
 In times bygone the burial have beheld  
 Of many a hero, when, upon th' event 150  
 Of some great sovereign's decease, young men  
 Their loins have girded up, and for the test  
 Of prowess made them ready; but, at sight  
 Of these, with wond'ring admiration struck,  
 I paus'd to think how noble in display 155  
 These contests were which, for thy mem'ry's sake,  
 The silver-footed goddess had ordain'd :  
 But, by th' immortals wast thou held most dear.  
 Thus, ev'n in death, thy name ceas'd not to live,  
 Achilles! No! Wherever men shall breathe, 160  
 With glory shall they ever honour thee!  
 Yet, when the strife of war I had compos'd,  
 How did that triumph for my peace avail?  
 When Jove a doom so wretched had design'd  
 At base Ægysthus' hand, and my fell wife's, 165  
 To end my day of life!" Such interchange  
 Of speech they held: but great Jove's messenger,  
 (Who Argus slew) approach'd, the souls with him  
 Of all those suitors leading whom the arm  
 Of great Ulysses master'd: at which sight 170  
 Amaz'd, the heroes, as each sev'ral shade  
 They recogniz'd, as though to greet, approach'd.  
 Atrides Agamemnon's soul at once  
 Amphimedon, Melantius' son, descried,  
 Whom, in his mansion on th' Ithacian soil 175  
 Once occupied, he had as host receiv'd;  
 And first Atrides spake:—

“ Amphimedon!

What doom hath thus upon ye fall'n, that all  
 The choicest of your peoples,—All in years  
 Co-equal as ye are, ye thus have reach'd 180  
 This darkness of the nether Earth? Ill fate  
 Alone could thus the State's most noble sons  
 Have singled out. Did Neptune in your fleet  
 This fell destruction work,—the adverse winds  
 And long waves rousing, or have ruthless foes 185  
 Upon the main land haply laid you low,  
 In gen'ral fight contending for their bulls  
 And the best fleec'd of all their sheep? or war  
 Have ye for citadels or damsels waged?  
 Now, speak to me in answer; for, I claim 190  
 To be thy guest. Say—canst thou not recall  
 How, at thine house arriving, urgent suit  
 I with the noble Menelaus made  
 Ulysses to gain o'er, that in our fleet  
 He should our expedition join to Troy? 195  
 A month entire on the broad out-spread main  
 We in that voyage spent, yet, hardly then  
 Had that Ulysses won, whose conqu'ring might  
 So many cities had in ruin laid."

The shade of young Amphimedon in speech 200  
 Responsive thus began:—"O noble son  
 Of Atreus, Agamemnon, king of men,  
 Well can I these events at length recall,  
 And with recital full and most exact  
 The fearful tale will tell of what a death 205  
 We all were doom'd to die. The wife we sought  
 In marriage of Ulysses,—from her home  
 So long estranged: and to those nuptial ties

(However in her sight detestable)  
 Denial gave she none ; but, of our suit 210  
 An end refus'd to make,—her sole design  
 Being in deadly doom to whelm us all.  
 But, this device, too, had she well contriv'd—  
 When in her palace a large web (whose threads  
 Were of the finest and exceeding wide) 215  
 She had erected, she began to weave,  
 And presently these words to us address'd :—

' Young men, who seek my hand—since that great chief  
 So like a god, Ulysses, is no more,—  
 Forbear to press my nuptials till this veil 220  
 I shall have finish'd, that the threads I use  
 May not with purpose unfulfill'd be spoilt.  
 A shroud is it for that heroic chief  
 Laertes, when that fearful doom is nigh  
 Which shall arrest and lay him out at length : 225  
 Lest any one among the dames of Greece  
 Upbraidings should upon me heap, if he,  
 Who liv'd in affluence, should lie entomb'd  
 Without such covering.' These were her words,  
 And we, right-minded men, at once gave way. 230  
 But, hereupon, throughout the day she plied  
 Her work of weaving upon that vast web,  
 And when the night drew on, (with torches placed  
 Beside her,) she unloosen'd all the threads !  
 Thus through three years did she by stratagem 235  
 Evade us, and upon the Greeks prevail'd.  
 But, as the hours sped on, and this fourth year  
 At length was come, a handmaid (one of those  
 Well 'ware of it) the fact to us reveal'd—



Aye, and we came upon her picking out 240  
 That glorious web : so that, against her will,  
 She only by constraint completed it.  
 But, when, at length that vast web having wov'n,  
 The robe she brought to view, and all her work  
 In cleansing streams had purified till bright 245  
 As Sun or Moon it shone,—some hostile god  
 Ulysses homeward, from some spot on Earth  
 To us unknown,—to the most distant point  
 Of Ithaca was leading, where the herd  
 Who kept his swine in his own homestall dwelt. 250  
 At this same hut arriv'd the well-lov'd son  
 Of great Ulysses, having from a ship  
 (From sandy Pylos freighted) disembark'd.  
 And these, when they their plot had perfected  
 By death most dire the suitors to take off, 255  
 The noble city enter'd. Foremost came  
 Telemachus : His father last arriv'd,  
 Led by the swineherd, and a garb most vile  
 Upon his body wearing, as the guise,  
 In fact, of a low mendicant he bore 260  
 And of an agèd man, who on his staff  
 Decrepit lean'd : and none of us who there  
 Were at that moment sitting, when he thus  
 All sudden came upon us—(not ev'n they  
 Who oldest were of all our company) 265  
 The man could recognize : nay, in harsh terms  
 And ev'n with blows we flouted him :—all which  
 He,—thus in his own palace rudely struck,  
 And with gross speech revil'd,—most patient bore,  
 Till, by great ægis-bearing Jove arous'd, 270  
 And his young son Telemachus the arms

(So splendid) of his father bearing off  
In th' armoury to stow them and with bolts  
To make that chamber fast,—he, all his wit  
Inventive using, to his wife gave charge 275  
The bow and white steel-pointed darts to fetch,  
And bid the suitors herewith try their skill  
And in a contest vie which should our doom  
Most miserable seal, and death itself  
Initiate. Not one of us the string 280  
Of that stout bow could draw ; for, far too weak  
We all were prov'd : but when Ulysses' turn  
To handle that stupendous weapon came,  
We with one voice against the swineherd rail'd  
And bade him not deliver it, though much 285  
Telemachus insisted : but, alone  
The youth prevail'd and his command enforced.  
Then did the great Ulysses with his hands  
That weapon grasp : with ease the bow he bent,  
And through the rings of steel the arrow shot. 290  
Then, to the threshold springing, up he stood  
And, with terrific glances, dart on dart  
Among our band sent flying, and the prince  
Antinoüs kill'd : aye—, and with truest aim,  
Those deadly shafts upon the rest he pour'd, 295  
And suitor upon suitor fell around !  
Most manifest it was that in that hour  
Some one of the immortals was his aid  
Immediate granting : for, with swift pursuit,  
The palace through, upon our band they press'd, 300  
On ev'ry side down hewing us, till moans  
Most piteous and a bellow most uncouth  
From smitten men arose, upon whose skulls

The death-stroke fell ; and all the pavement round  
 Was with the carnage reeking. By such doom, 305  
 O royal Agamemnon, died we all,  
 Whose corses, at this hour, within the walls  
 Of prince Ulysses' palace lie ; of rites  
 Funereal depriv'd ;—for, not as yet  
 Have those who lov'd us in their sev'ral homes 310  
 Of this our fatal ending heard ; the friends  
 Who, having from our wounds the clotted blood  
 Lav'd and remov'd, would on the bier their slain  
 Have duly laid, and their bereavement wail'd :  
 The last of honour which the dead can know." 315

To whom Atrides thus :—" O favour'd son  
 Of aged Laertes ! with what gallant soul  
 Didst thou thy wife regain ! What noble thoughts  
 That irreproachable Penelope,  
 Daughter of Icarus, must have maintain'd ! 320  
 How true to that Ulysses whom in youth  
 She as her consort wedded, and whose worth  
 Shall in renown imperishable live  
 While the immortals will in beauteous song  
 The name of wise Penelope preserve. 325  
 Not thus did Tyndarus' base daughter shine,  
 Who with designs iniquitous the prince  
 Her consort slew,—him whom in maiden prime  
 She had in marriage wedded : scorn alone  
 Her mem'ry among men must ever mark, 330  
 For, she above all women vers'd in bane  
 Of deadly ill hath ignominy cast  
 Not on herself alone, but on the race  
 Of female kind in ages yet unborn,

Aye, ev'n on women active in all good." 335  
 Such interchange of speech did shade with shade  
 In Pluto's home, the depths of Earth, enjoy :  
 Meanwhile, Ulysses and Telemachus  
 And th' herds that with them companied, their way  
 From out the city taking, on the tract 340  
 Soon lighted of Laertes' well-till'd fields,  
 All which the ancient chief with heavy toil  
 Had gotten to himself. There stood his house,  
 And there its court with the out-buildings round,  
 Wherein his mancipated servants fed, 345  
 And lodgment found and rest, such works among  
 As best his fancies humour'd. There, too, dwelt  
 An aged Sicilian woman who with care  
 Assiduous in that rural homestead (far  
 From the great city) o'er the vet'ran watch'd. 350  
 At length Ulysses on his son and those  
 Who in their train were waiting this command,  
 As he dismiss'd them, laid :—" Proceed you, now,  
 And on this mansion's pleasant seat at once  
 Your entry make, and from the choicest swine 355  
 Make ready a repast : but, I, meanwhile,  
 Will proof of my dear father's memory make,  
 Whether he will with quick discerning eye  
 My face recall, or, after such long years  
 Of absence, fail to know me for his own." 360

Thus speaking, he his weapons in the hands  
 Of his attendants placed, who with all haste  
 The dwelling enter'd ; but, upon the test  
 Intent by which his father he might try,  
 Ulysses to the fertile vineyard sped.

Dolius, indeed, he found not, as his steps  
 He bent to the great orchard, nor of those  
 Who serv'd him, any ; nor of sons that there  
 Were to Laertes born. These from the spot  
 Were at that moment absent, mounds of stones 370  
 Collecting for the vineyard's rising wall :  
 And Dolius their way had led. Thus, lone  
 Upon that thriving vineyard's pleasant site  
 His agèd sire he found,—around a plant  
 The earth upturning. In a filthy garb 375  
 With stitches marr'd and altogether vile  
 The old man was apparell'd : Round his legs  
 Some pads of ox-hide made and coarsely sewn,  
 To fend off thorns, he had secur'd ; and gloves  
 Upon his hands he wore, the wounds to shun 380  
 By prickly briars threaten'd. On his head  
 A cap was set of goat-skin : In his heart  
 Regret and sorrow was he cherishing.

When the high-soul'd Ulysses, (who, himself,  
 So long with griefs had struggled) saw his sire 385  
 Thus by old age worn down, thus deeply griev'd,—  
 And near a pear-tree standing—, he shed tears,  
 And ponder'd musing, whether in his arms  
 At once t' enfold his father and a kiss  
 Impress and tell him all, how he at last 390  
 His native soil and home had reach'd ;—or, first,  
 Of the aged man ask questions, and a test  
 On ev'ry point apply ; and, best it seem'd,  
 When in his thoughts each counsel he had weigh'd,  
 With some few stinging taunts essay to make, 395  
 And with this bent a station face to face

Ulysses near his father took, who still  
 As round about the plant he dug, his head  
 Was downward bending; and when close the two  
 Together stood, the noble son thus spake:—      400  
 “ Old man! with no unknowing husbandry  
 Canst thou an orchard cultivate: thy care  
 In order duly tends it, nor a plant  
 Here meets the eye, of fig-tree or of vine,  
 Olive or pear, nor plot of earth which seems      405  
 Unheeded and forlorn: But, on one point  
 Will I now speak to thee; and let thy heart  
 No indignation feel thereat—, Regard,  
 Such as is due, provides not for *thyself*;  
 For, thine old age is wretchedness, indeed;      410  
 And, beside this, thou art most vilely clad,  
 And all thy garb is shameful: In such plight  
 Can no employer leave thee, for that thou  
 An idler art: thy features and thine height  
 No serving man’s presentment bear, for, thou      415  
 The likeness, rather, of a sov’ reign prince  
 Displayest, and as one might be esteem’d  
 Who, when ablution he had made and food  
 Thereafter taken, should in slumbers soft  
 His rest enjoy: for, this the priv’lege is      420  
 Of men far gone in years: but, come, thus much  
 Recount to me, and say, in all good faith,  
 Whom servest thou? Whose orchard dost thou keep  
 And of this truth assurance give to me  
 That from thy words I may more certain feel      425  
 Of entrance into Ithaca, which one  
 But now appriz’d me I had re  
 Not over wise, who, as I hith

My path was crossing, niggard of his speech  
 And of my own impatient when request 430  
 I made of him for tidings of my host,  
 Whether he yet be living and 'mong men,  
 Or dead, and in the realms of gloomy Dis :  
 For, this, in truth, my simple story is—  
 Give it thy heed, awhile, and hear me speak : 435  
 I once in my own well-lov'd fatherland  
 A man receiv'd who to my house had come,  
 Than whom not one, 'mid all the guests that since  
 From foreign shores my home have visited,  
 More welcome hath been deem'd. His race, he said, 440  
 In Ithaca took rise, and his sire's name  
 Laertes was, son of Arcesias.  
 A genial host I prov'd: I took him home,  
 And, ev'n while many in that home were lodg'd,  
 Hearty reception gave him, and such gifts 445  
 As well becometh it a host should make,  
 Bestow'd on him; sev'n talents of fine gold  
 I gave him, and a cup with flowers chas'd  
 And all in silver wrought;—twelve single cloaks,  
 As many works of wool-embroidery;— 450  
 Of beauteous vests and tunics, like supplies :  
 Wherewith went four fair women, all expert  
 In handiwork of faultless taste,—a group  
 He fain would make his own, and with him took.”

Hereto, as from his eyelids dropp'd a tear, 455  
 His father made reply :—“ Most certain 't is,  
 O stranger! that the country thou hast reach'd,  
 Of which thou question askest;—But, a throng  
 Of bold licentious men who all controul

Defy have here possession claim'd. In vain      460  
 Hast thou thy bounty's largess made, and gifts  
 Innumerable heap'd ; for, would that thou  
 Among these citizens of Ithaca  
 Thy guest hadst living found ! He then, in turn,  
 Thy parting hence had speeded, and with proofs      465  
 Most gen'rous of kind welcome striven thus  
 Requital full to make :—the privilege  
 Of him who in such bounty takes the lead.  
 But, tell me—and precisely say—what space  
 Hath laps'd since thou didst thine ill-fated guest,      470  
 My son, thus kindly greet ?—If son it was,  
 Unhappy one ! whom either in the deep  
 From friends and from his native land remote  
 The fishes have devour'd ; or, among beasts  
 And birds on the mainland a prey he lies !      475  
 No mother (as his body she laid out)  
 Her sad lament rais'd over him, nor I,—  
 That father who with her had giv'n him life.  
 No,—nor did that discreet Penelope  
 His wife so richly dow'rd, for her lov'd lord      480  
 All sorrowing grieve, and, as had well become,  
 His eyes beside the death-bed close : the due  
 Of homage to the dead. But, tell me this—  
 And, nought withholding, freely speak to me—  
 Who art thou ? and from whence 'mid living men      485  
 Art thou arriv'd ? Thy city's name ? and those  
 Who gave thee birth ? Where is that fleet bark moor'd  
 Which thee and thy good comrades hither brought ?  
 Or, didst thou in some stranger's ship embark'd  
 Thy passage make o'er sea, and having t  
 To this our shore convey'd thee, are the



Ulysses thus :—" To all that thou hast ask'd  
 Full answer can I render. I, myself,  
 From Alybas am come, where an abode  
 I dwell in which enjoys no mean repute : 495  
 For parentage—, I am Apheidas' son,  
 Who royal Polypemon's offspring was ;  
 And I am nam'd Epheritus : but, fate  
 So order'd that, amid my wand'rings wide,  
 I from Sicania, most unwillingly, 500  
 Should here have landed : but, right opposite  
 To certain pastures from the town remote  
 My ship is moor'd. More than four years have pass'd  
 Since Alybas Ulysses left, and thus,  
 Ill fated man ! my country saw no more : 505  
 Yet, on his right, as he was setting sail,  
 Birds most propitious in their omens flew,  
 Whereat elate I sped him on his way,  
 And he like joy at that departure felt ;  
 Our hearts the hope still nursing that as host 510  
 And guest we yet might meet, and splendid gifts  
 Thus again interchange."

He ended here,  
 And round that agèd parent a dark gloom  
 Of sorrow 'gan to gather, as the dust  
 Of ashes gath'ring into both his hands 515  
 He held it up, and on his hoary hairs  
 With long deep sighs and moanings let it fall :  
 Whereat Ulysses' heart was wrung,—the gush  
 Of feelings that could no repression know  
 Ev'n in his nostrils throbbing, as his glance 520  
 On his lov'd father rested, and, as now

A spring he forward made,—in close embrace  
 He folded,—fell upon—him ; and a kiss  
 Impressing thus exclaim'd :—“ That man himself  
 Am I, O Father ! even he of whom      525  
 Thou fain would'st tidings learn : and here at length,  
 Ev'n in the twentieth year, have I set foot  
 Upon my native soil ! But, cease to weep—  
 Cease from this flooding sorrow ;—for, with truth  
 I say it—and I well may haste to speak—      530  
 Those suitors have I in my palace slain,  
 And all their tyrant arrogance and acts  
 Of cruel outrage in their deaths aveng'd.”

Laertes thus in answer : “ If thou be  
 My very son Ulysses,—If thou here      535  
 At length be come, some signal mark produce  
 That I may yield belief.”    Whereto, in turn,  
 Ulysses :—“ Let thine eyes, then, first this scar  
 Behold which, in Parnassus, when I there  
 My visit paid, a boar with its white tusk      540  
 Upon me left.    That expedition thou  
 And my most honour'd mother had design'd,  
 That from Autolycus, her sire, the gifts  
 I might receive which, when in this thy home  
 A guest he liv'd, he promis'd should be mine,      545  
 And should by him be given :—but, again,—  
 I will the number of those trees detail  
 Which, when I yet was but a child, thy steps  
 Close following through the vineyard, and request  
 For each of them was making, thou, thyself,      550  
 Here in this orchard didst bestow on me.  
 We had just reach'd them, and their sev'ral names

Thou wast recounting, and I learn'd them all.  
 Thou gav'st me thirteen pear-trees;—half-a-score  
 Of apple-trees, and forty which their crop  
 Of figs were bearing: Fifty rows of vines  
 Were, also, to be mine; each alley set  
 With plant of corn;—not but that grapes of kind,  
 Abundant in varieties, were there,  
 When at Jove's will the clusters heavy grew  
 And in due season ripen'd.”

Thus spake he,  
 And now Laertes' knees beneath him sank,  
 And ev'ry nerve gave way, as he the proofs  
 So absolute, so certain all, discern'd—  
 And round his well-lov'd son his arms he threw  
 As to his breast Ulysses the aged sire,  
 Whose heart had fainted, press'd. But when his pow'rs  
 Reviving seem'd, and once again in life  
 His spirit rose, thus instantly he spake:—

“O Jupiter! of a most certain truth  
 Do ye immortal gods still reign sublime  
 In high Olympus thron'd. if true it be  
 That all these suitors have the penalty  
 Of their blind folly paid: still, no light dread  
 I cannot but yet feel, lest the whole mass  
 Of our Ithacian citizens should here  
 Appearance quickly make, and far and near  
 The Cephallenian states by summons rouse.”  
 To whom Ulysses:—“Courage take! nor thought  
 For all this, anxious, cherish; but our steps  
 To that fair mansion bend which nigh at hand

Upon this orchard borders : for, thereto,  
 As in advance, sent I Telemachus,  
 The herdsman and Eumæus, that with speed  
 They might prepare our supper." Thus much said, 585  
 The twain into that goodly dwelling pass'd,  
 And, there arriv'd, Telemachus, the herd  
 And swineherd found, provision large of meat  
 In portions sev'ring, as, in turn, the draughts  
 Of darkling wine they mix'd. In his own home, 590  
 Meantime, his aged Sicilian slave the feet  
 Of great Laertes wash'd, and with rich oil  
 Anointed him, and o'er his form a cloak  
 Of beauteous tissue threw ; and (drawing nigh)  
 Minerva's self the People's Pastor's limbs 595  
 With ampler bulk augmented, and in strength  
 And stature nobler than before to view  
 The man entire endow'd. And from the bath  
 He issued forth,—Ulysses with surprise  
 His sire beholding as the semblance clear 600  
 He show'd of some immortal ; and these words  
 In rapid speech he utter'd :—" Father mine !  
 Surely some god this grandeur to thy mien  
 And stature hath imparted !" Whereunto,  
 In turn, Laertes thus :—" O Father Jove ! 605  
 Minerva ! and Apollo ! Would that I  
 Might but have yesterday's encounter join'd  
 With warrior's harness on my back,—that troop  
 Of suitors to do battle with ! as when,  
 The sov'reign rule o'er Cephallenia's state 610  
 At that time swaying, Nericus' proud fort  
 On the main land I levell'd : Many a knee  
 Of that presumptuous crew beneath my might

Should there have bow'd in death :—and thou, my son !  
Should'st have with joy exulted."

Such discourse 615

Held they awhile : and now, as each his work  
Of preparation for the feast had done,  
On couch or throne all took their seats, and hands  
Upon the viands laid : and Dolius  
The veteran and both the old man's sons 620  
(From works of husbandry awhile withdrawn)  
In company drew nigh them ; for, the crone  
Their mother, the Sicilian, who from birth  
Had brought them up, their presence in the house  
Had but now summon'd, and with watchful zeal 625  
That agèd man she tended,—by great length  
Of years well nigh subdued. But, these, at sight  
Of great Ulysses, as their wond'ring minds  
To recognise him strove, upon that spot  
In all amazement stood, till in the words 630  
Of mild rebuke addressing them, the Chief  
At length thus spake :—" Old man ! at our repast  
Sit thou and eat, and this intense surprise  
Indulge no more ; for, we long time within  
Have here been ling'ring, on the meal intent 635  
To lay our hands ; and 't is for thee we wait."

He ended thus :—and Dolius with step  
Direct towards him hasted,—both his arms  
In air extending, and, Ulysses' hand  
Within his own compressing, on the wrist 640  
A kiss impress'd, and thus excited spake :—  
" O thou belov'd ! Since, then, thou art return'd,

And to our eyes restor'd who long'd for thee,  
 But hope had cast aside,—the gods themselves  
 Have hither led thee! Hail thou! and in joy 645  
 Of no light gladness triumph! May the gods  
 All happiness confer on thee! but, say—  
 That I may full assurance feel,—Doth yet  
 Penelope of this thy coming know?  
 Or, shall we, instantly, with all dispatch, 650  
 From hence informants send?"

Ulysses thus :—

"Old man! already is my queen aware:  
 Wherefore for this should'st thou take thought?" He  
 ceas'd,

And Dolius upon the shining seat  
 His place resum'd; and with like words his sons 655  
 Ulysses gladly greeted, and his hands  
 Grasp'd in their own, and to their father's side  
 In order then return'd: and this repast  
 Was in Laertes' mansion thus enjoy'd.

And now was rumour, like some messenger, 660  
 Throughout the city spreading, the dire death  
 And final doom proclaiming of that throng  
 Which had Penelope in marriage sought.  
 And they to whom the tidings came, from homes  
 In ev'ry quarter rush'd, and at the gates 665  
 Of prince Ulysses' house with wail and moan  
 Began to gather round, and from the court  
 The corses of the slain remov'd, and each  
 To burial carried. Those among the dead  
 Who from the cities of far distant lands 670

Had living come they to the barks consign'd  
 Of fishermen which each to his own home  
 Might o'er the waters bear. And then in groups,  
 With heavy hearts, the men of Ithaca  
 In their own Forum muster'd. There arriv'd 675  
 And in full number met, Eupheithes rose  
 And speech began : for, on his mind a load  
 Of grief was lying, which oblivion none  
 Could ever know,—his son Antinoüs  
 Deploring, whom, of all the suitors first, 680  
 Ulysses slew, and on whose loss, as tears  
 Of sorrow he shed freely, he thus spake :—  
 “ My friends ! This man a deed of dreadful note  
 'Gainst Grecia's sons hath wrought : On board his fleet  
 So many of our host,—so gallant, all,— 685  
 He took with him ! The ships were wholly lost,—  
 Our people in them, too : And others, now,  
 The very prime of Cephallenia's youth,  
 Hath he just slaughter'd. Come, then,—ere this man  
 Shall either in all haste on Pylos land 690  
 Or holy Elis, where th' Epeians sway,  
 Let us set forward ; or, in years to come  
 We with disgrace shall all the past recall,  
 And all who shall survive us will with shame  
 The tale thereof receive. If on the heads 695  
 Of those who have our sons and brothers slain  
 We shall no vengeance wreak, no joy will life  
 My heart afford : No—by a speedy death  
 May I 'mid those that are no more be found !  
 But, let us hence depart, lest they their course 700  
 Forthwith pursuing should before us cross,  
 And our designs, thus passing, overtake.

He finished speaking, as the tears of grief  
 Anew he shed, and pity at that sight  
 Each Grecian heart was soft'ning. But 'twas now 705  
 That Medon and the heav'n-inspired bard,  
 From sleep arisen, left the palace-gates,  
 And to the crowd drew nigh. Their place at once  
 They in the centre took: and with the gaze  
 Of wonder all beheld them. Medon, first, 710  
 A man of thoughts discreet, thus earnest spake:—  
 “Hear me, awhile, ye men of Ithaca!  
 Not without sanction of the heav'nly will  
 Did prince Ulysses this great deed design:  
 I with these eyes did an immortal god 715  
 Beside him see,—in ev'ry single point  
 To Mentor liken'd: and this deity,  
 Before Ulysses at one moment stood  
 All confidence inspiring; then, in turn,  
 The suitors goaded on, till, in defeat 720  
 They fled on ev'ry side, and man by man  
 Lay low in death.”

He spoke, and pallid dread  
 On all that heard him fell. Then, Mastor's son,  
 The agèd Alitherses, who of all  
 That there assembled stood alone could ken 725  
 The past and future, with judicious mind  
 His thoughts revolv'd, and thus began to speak:—  
 “Give ear, you Ithacans! to what my lips  
 Are now about to utter: The past deed  
 Was through your own sin perpetrated. No heed 730  
 Paid ye to me or Mentor, ('shepherd' nam'd  
 Of all his people) when we warning gave



Your sons' insensate arrogance to check,  
 Who in their own blind folly had a wrong  
 Atrocious wrought when they the treasur'd wealth 735  
 Conspir'd to squander, and the wife to shame  
 Of a right noble man, who never more,  
 As they conceiv'd, would to his own return.  
 Let this, then, be our course: As I suggest,  
 So yield ye your compliance; and no steps 740  
 Aggressive take we, lest some man of you  
 Should a disastrous fate upon his head  
 By his own act draw down."

Thus argued he ;

But, with loud clamours forth they rush'd,—a mass  
 Of more than half the multitude: the rest 745  
 Were in the Forum left: for, favour none  
 Found Medon's words with those whose ready mind  
 Eupeithes' counsel follow'd. These in haste  
 To arm themselves rush'd forth, and when in mail  
 Of shining brass their limbs they had array'd, 750  
 A crowd before the spacious city's wall  
 Their numbers form'd; Eupeithes, at their head,  
 Leading them in their madness: he, himself,  
 Proclaiming that the murder of his son  
 Was now to be aveng'd; though to the spot 755  
 Whence this advance he made, he never more  
 Was fated to return, but, on his head  
 His doom invok'd.

To Jupiter, meanwhile,  
 The son of Saturn, Pallas thus appeal'd:—  
 "O father mine! Thou son of Saturn! King 760

Of kings supreme ! reveal to me who ask,  
 What counsels art thou in thy secret mind  
 Perpending ? Would'st thou horrid war provoke  
 And conflicts fearful ? or, to friendly pact  
 Hast thou the mind of either foe inclin'd ?" 765

To whom the cloud-compelling Jove :—" My child !  
 Why hast thou question ask'd hereon of me ?  
 Say,—hast thou not thyself this counsel plann'd,  
 That, to his home restor'd, Ulysses thus  
 Should on his foes wreak vengeance ? As thy will 770  
 Would have it, act ! But, how it best beseems  
 I here announce to thee : Since on this band  
 Of suitors great Ulysses is aveng'd,  
 Let him, henceforth, when oaths of fealty  
 Shall have been duly sworn, his sway resume : 775  
 But, of slain sons and brothers be 't our care  
 Oblivion to induce, that, as of old,  
 Each man may love his fellow ; and let wealth  
 And peace, henceforth, in plenteousness abound !"

Thus speaking, he the mind, already prompt, 780  
 Of Pallas mov'd ; and from th' Olympian heights  
 Down rushing went she forth.

BUT, now, all wish  
 O'er their repast to linger having ceas'd,  
 Ulysses thus advis'd :—" Let one of you  
 Step forth without, and with observance mark 785  
 Who may approach be making."

Thus spake he ;

And, with his words compliant, forth there went

A son of Dolius, who, as foot he placed

Upon the threshold, saw the hostile crowd

In close approach advancing, and with speed 790

He hail'd Ulysses—"They are nigh at hand!

Without delay our weapons let us seize!"

Uprose they all;—and in their armour stood:

Four at Ulysses' side, and the six sons

Of Dolius, and with these Laertes, too, 795

And Dolius, themselves, their arms took up,

Grey-hair'd with age, albeit, and, of need,

As fighting men accoutred; but, when brass

That brilliant shone around them they had girt,

The gates they open'd wide, and sallied forth,— 800

Ulysses leading on: and now again

Minerva, child of Jove, as Mentor's form

And voice she took upon her, at their side

In presence stood; at sight of whom the heart

Of great Ulysses joy'd, and with these words, 805

In the same instant, his lov'd son he hail'd:—

"Telemachus! now wilt thou full proof make

Of what thou art.—Advancing to attack—

Where battle rages, and the bravest hearts

Are soon discern'd—thou wilt upon the race 810

Of thy forefathers no dishonour cast,

Who, ev'ry man of us the wide world through,

In might and manly prowess have surpass'd."

But, hereto, young Telemachus, in turn:

"Dear father! If, indeed, thy wish it be— 815

Thou shalt bear witness that (the word was thine)

No *shame* will I upon thy race entail."

Thus spake he, and Laertes, overjoy'd,  
 Exclaim'd aloud :—" O my lov'd friends ! what day  
 Is now arriv'd ! Great happiness is this ! 820  
 My son, aye, and my grandson, too, would vie  
 In claims to merit !"

BUT, Minerva, now,

As to the agèd Chieftain she drew close,  
 In exhortation spake :—" Arcesias' son !  
 Of all my comrades best belov'd !—with pray'r 825  
 Unto the virgin with the gleaming eye  
 And to great Jove uplift, poise thou with speed  
 That spear of thine which such long shadow casts,  
 And hurl it forth !" She spake :—and with vast might  
 His frame at once endow'd ; and, when the pray'r 830  
 To great Jove's daughter he had offer'd up,  
 He pois'd, and then drew back, and then in air  
 Hurl'd onward that long shafted spear whose point  
 Right through Eupeithes' brass-cheek'd helmet drove  
 Which nought could that dire weapon's wound avert, 835  
 Through all entirely penetrant. With the crash  
 That mark'd his heavy fall, the clang of arms  
 Resounding rung. And on the foremost ranks  
 Of combatants Ulysses and his son  
 (That youth in fame uprising) onset made 840  
 With swords assailant and with two-edg'd spears ;  
 And now would they have all of them laid low  
 And from all hope of voyage home cut off,  
 Had not the child of ægis-bearing Jove,  
 Minerva, with a voice sublime exclaim'd, 845  
 And that fierce multitude to silence hush'd,

As thus she spake :—" From this revolting strife  
 Cease ye! O men of Ithaca! From hence  
 Your forces each withdraw, that with all speed,  
 But, without further bloodshed, ye may part." 850

Thus spake the goddess, and a panic dread  
 Its paleness cast o'er all. From ev'ry hand  
 Of that affrighted multitude the arms  
 Immediate flew, and, at the voice on high  
 Divinely speaking, prostrate all fell down, 855  
 Ere to the city, trembling for their lives,  
 The host of them retreated. Then with shout  
 Terrific did Ulysses onward rush,  
 As, like some lofty soaring eagle rous'd,  
 He all his might collected,—when, behold! 860  
 The son of Saturn from on high a bolt  
 Of thunder hurl'd which at the goddess' feet  
 (His blue-eyed daughter's) smould'ring fell; and then  
 Minerva thus to great Ulysses spake :—

" O thou, who in resources infinite 865  
 Aboundest! Aged Laertes' glorious son!  
 Ulysses! hold thy hand, and cease this strife!  
 Which, else, a war would wage on either foe  
 The selfsame bañe entailing—; lest that son  
 Of Saturn, Jove himself, who from afar 870  
 In thund'rings loud is heard, his wrath condign  
 May haply make thee feel."

Thus Pallas spake,  
 And he, submissive hearing, at his heart

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A joy exultant felt ; as Pallas, now,  
The daughter of the ægis-bearing Jove, 875  
Again in Mentor's likeness,—both in form  
And in his voice's tone—resemblance nice  
Maintaining, seal'd the mutual pledge of Peace. 878

THE END.

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