





T H E

I L I A D

O F

H O M E R.

T R A N S L A T E D B Y

*ALEXANDER POPE, Esq.*

Te sequor, O Graiæ gentis decus ! inque tuis nunc  
Fixa pedum pono pressis vestigia signis :  
Non ita certandi cupidus, quam propter amorem,  
Quod te imitari aveo ——— L U C R E T.

L O N D O N,

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# T H E

# P R E F A C E.

**H**OMER is universally allowed to have had the greatest invention of any writer whatever. The praise of judgment Virgil has justly contested with him, and others may have their pretensions as to particular excellencies ; but his invention remains yet unrivalled. Nor is it a wonder if he has ever been acknowledged the greatest of poets, who most excelled in that which is the very foundation of poetry. It is the invention that in different degrees distinguishes all great geniuses : the utmost stretch of human study, learning, and industry, which master every thing besides, can never attain to this. It furnishes art with all her materials, and without it, judgment itself can at best but steal wisely : for art is only like a prudent steward that lives on managing the riches of nature. Whatever praises may be given to works of judgment, there is not even a single beauty in them to which the invention must not contribute. As in the most regular gardens, art can only reduce the beauties of nature to more regularity, and such a figure, which the common eye may better take in, and is therefore more entertained with. And perhaps the reason why common critics are inclined to prefer a judicious and methodical genius to a great and fruitful one, is, because they find it easier for themselves to pursue their observations through an uniform and bounded work of art, than to comprehend the vast and various extent of nature.

Our author's work is a wild paradise, where if we cannot see all the beauties so distinctly as in an ordered garden, it is only because the number of them is infinitely greater. It is like a copious nursery which contains the seeds and first productions of every kind, out of which

those who followed him have but selected some particular plants, each according to his fancy, to cultivate and beautify. If some things are too luxuriant, it is owing to the richness of the soil; and if others are not arrived to perfection or maturity, it is only because they are over-run and oppressed by those of a stronger nature.

It is to the strength of this amazing invention we are to attribute that unequalled fire and rapture, which is so forcible in Homer, that no man of a true poetical spirit is master of himself while he reads him. What he writes is of the most animated nature imaginable; every thing moves, every thing lives, and is put in action. If a council be called, or a battle fought, you are not coldly informed of what was said or done as from a third person; the reader is hurried out of himself by the force of the poet's imagination, and turns in one place to a hearer, in another to a spectator. The course of his verses resembles that of the army he describes,

Οἱ δ' αὖ ἴσαν, ὥς τε πρὶ χθρῶν πᾶτα νέμοιτο

*They pour along like a fire that sweeps the whole earth before it.* It is however remarkable that his fancy, which is every where vigorous, is not discovered immediately at the beginning of his poem in its fullest splendor: it grows in the progress both upon himself and others, and becomes on fire like a chariot-wheel, by its own rapidity. Exact disposition, just thought, correct elocution, polished numbers, may have been found in a thousand; but this poetical fire, this *vivida vis animi*, in a very few. Even in works where all those are imperfect or neglected, this can over-power criticism, and make us admire even while we disapprove. Nay, where this appears, though attended with absurdities, it brightens all the rubbish about it, till we see nothing but its own splendor. This fire is discerned in Virgil, but discerned as through a glass reflected from Homer, more shining than fierce, but every where equal and constant: in Lucan and Statius, it bursts out in sudden, short, and interrupted flash-

es : in Milton it glows like a furnace kept up to an uncommon ardor by the force of art : in Shakespear, it strikes before we are aware, like an accidental fire from heaven : but in Homer, and in him only, it burns every where clearly, and every where irresistibly.

I shall here endeavour to show, how this vast invention exerts itself in a manner superior to that of any poet, through all the main constituent parts of his work, as it is the great and peculiar characteristic which distinguishes him from all other authors.

This strong and ruling faculty was like a powerful star, which, in the violence of its course, drew all things within its vortex. It seemed not enough to have taken in the whole circle of arts, and the whole compass of nature, to supply his maxims and reflexions ; all the inward passions and affections of mankind, to furnish his characters ; and all the outward forms and images of things for his descriptions ; but wanting yet an ampler sphere to expatiate in, he opened a new and boundless walk for his imagination, and created a world for himself in the invention of fable. That, which Aristotle calls the soul of poetry, was first breathed into it by Homer. I shall begin with considering him in this part as it is naturally the first, and I speak of it both as it means the design of a poem, and as it is taken for fiction.

Fable may be divided into the *probable*, the *allegorical*, and the *marvellous*. The probable fable is the recital of such actions as though they did not happen, yet might, in the common course of nature : or of such as though they did, become fables by the additional episodes and manner of telling them. Of this sort is the main story of an epic poem, *the return of Ulysses, the settlement of the Trojans in Italy*, or the like. That of the Iliad is *the anger of Achilles*, the most short and single subject that ever was chosen by any poet. Yet this he has supplied with a vaster variety of incidents and events, and crowded with a greater number of councils, speeches, battles, and episodes of all kinds, than are to be found even in those po-

ems whose schemes are of the utmost latitude and irregularity. The action is hurried on with the most vehement spirit, and its whole duration employs not so much as fifty days. Virgil, for want of so warm a genius, aided himself by taking in a more extensive subject as well as a greater length of time, and contracting the design of both Homer's poems into one, which is yet but a fourth part as large as his. The other epic poets have used the same practice, but generally carried it so far as to superinduce a multiplicity of fables, destroy the unity of action, and lose their readers in an unreasonable length of time. Nor is it only in the main design that they have been unable to add to his invention, but they have followed him in every episode and part of story. If he has given a regular catalogue of an army, they all draw up their forces in the same order. If he has funeral games for Patroclus, Virgil has the same for Anchises, and Statius, rather than omit them, destroys the unity of his action for those of Archemoras. If Ulysses visits the shades, Æneas of Virgil, and Scipio of Silius, are sent after him. If he be detained from his return by the allurements of Calypso, so is Æneas by Dido, and Rinaldo by Armida. If Achilles be absent from the army on the score of a quarrel through half the poem, Rinaldo must absent himself just as long on the like account. If he gives his hero a suit of celestial armour, Virgil and Tasso make the same present to theirs. Virgil has not only observed this close imitation of Homer, but where he had not led the way, supplied the want from other Greek authors. Thus the story of Sinon and the taking of Troy was copied, says Macrobius, almost word for word from Pisander, as the loves of Dido and Æneas are taken from those of Medea and Jason in Appollonius, and several others in the same manner.

To proceed to the allegorical fable: if we reflect upon those innumerable knowledges, those secrets of nature and physical philosophy, which Homer is generally supposed to havewrapped up in his allegories, what a new

and ample scene of wonder may this consideration afford us ! How fertile will that imagination appear which was able to clothe all the properties of elements, the qualifications of the mind, the virtues and vices, in forms and persons ; and to introduce them into actions agreeable to the nature of the things they shadowed ! This is a field in which no succeeding poets could dispute with Homer ; and whatever commendations have been allowed them on this head, are by no means for their invention in having enlarged his circle, but for their judgment in having contracted it. For when the mode of learning changed in following ages, and science was delivered in a plainer manner ; it then became as reasonable in the more modern poets to lay it aside, as it was in Homer to make use of it. And perhaps it was no unhappy circumstance for Virgil, that there was not in his time that demand upon him of so great an invention, as might be capable of furnishing all those allegorical parts of a poem.

The marvellous fable includes whatever is supernatural, and especially the machines of the gods. He seems the first who brought them into a system of machinery for poetry, and such a one as makes its greatest importance and dignity. For we find those authors who have been offended at the literal notion of the gods, constantly laying their accusation against Homer as the chief support of it. But whatever cause there might be to blame his machines in a philosophical or religious view, they are so perfect in the poetic, that mankind have been ever since contented to follow them : none have been able to enlarge the sphere of poetry beyond the limits he has set : every attempt of this nature has proved unsuccessful ; and after all the various changes of times and religions, his gods continue to this day the gods of poetry.

We come now to the characters of his persons ; and here we shall find no author has ever drawn so many, with so visible and surprizing a variety, or given us such lively and affecting impressions of them. Every one has something so singularly his own, that no painter could



have distinguished them more by their features, than the poet has by their manners. Nothing can be more exact than the distinctions he has observed in the different degrees of virtues and vices. The single quality of courage is wonderfully diversified in the several characters of the Iliad. That of Achilles is furious and intractable; that of Diomed forward, yet listening to advice and subject to command: that of Ajax is heavy, and self-confiding: of Hector, active and vigilant: the courage of Agamemnon is inspirited by love of empire and ambition; that of Menelaus mixed with softness and tenderness for his people: we find in Idomeneus a plain direct soldier, in Sarpedon a gallant and generous one. Nor is this judicious and astonishing diversity to be found only in the principal quality which constitutes the main of each character, but even in the under parts of it, to which he takes care to give a tincture of that principal one. For example, the main characters of Ulysses and Nestor consist in wisdom; and they are distinct in this, that the wisdom of one is artificial and various, of the other natural, open, and regular. But they have, besides, characters of courage; and this quality also takes a different turn in each from the difference of his prudence; for one in the war depends still upon caution, the other upon experience. It would be endless to produce instances of these kinds. The characters of Virgil are far from striking us in this open manner; they lie in a great degree hidden and undistinguished, and where they are marked most evidently, affect us not in proportion to those of Homer. His characters of valour are much alike; even that of Turnus seems no way peculiar but as it is in a superior degree; we see nothing that differences the courage of Menestheus from that of Sergesthus, Cloanthus, or the rest. In like manner it may be remarked of Statius's heroes, that an air of impetuosity runs through them all: the same horrid and savage courage appears in his Capaneus, Tydeus, Hippomedon, &c. They have a parity of character, which makes them seem brothers of one family. I

believe when the reader is led into this tract of reflexion, if he will pursue it through the epic and tragic writers, he will be convinced how infinitely superior in this point the invention of Homer was to that of all others.

The speeches are to be considered as they flow from the characters, being perfect or defective as they agree or disagree with the manners of those who utter them. As there is more variety of characters in the *Iliad*, so there is of speeches, than in any other poem. *Every thing in it has manners*, as Aristotle expresses it, that is, every thing is acted or spoken. It is hardly credible in a work of such length, how small a number of lines are employed in narration. In Virgil the dramatic part is less in proportion to the narrative; and the speeches often consist of general reflexions or thoughts, which might be equally just in any person's mouth upon the same occasion. As many of his persons have no apparent characters, so many of his speeches escape being applied and judged by the rule of propriety. We oftner think of the author himself when we read Virgil, than when we are engaged in Homer: all which are the effects of a colder invention, that interests us less in the action described. Homer makes us hearers, and Virgil leaves us readers.

If in the next place we take a view of the sentiments, the same presiding faculty is eminent in the sublimity and spirit of his thoughts. Longinus has given his opinion that it was in this part Homer principally excelled. What were alone sufficient to prove the grandeur and excellence of his sentiments in general, is, that they have so remarkable a parity with those of the scripture: Duport in his *Gnomologia Homerica*, has collected innumerable instances of this sort. And it is with justice an excellent modern writer allows, that if Virgil has not so many thoughts that are low and vulgar, he has not so many that are sublime and noble; and that the Roman author seldom rises into very astonishing sentiments where he is not fired by the *Iliad*.

If we observe his descriptions, images and similes, we

shall find the invention still predominant. To what else can we ascribe that vast comprehension of images of every sort, where we see each circumstance of art, and individual of nature, summoned together, by the extent and fecundity of his imagination; to which all things, in their various views, presented themselves in an instant, and had their impressions taken off to perfection, at a heat? Nay, he not only gives us the full prospects of things, but several unexpected peculiarities and side-views, unobserved by any painter but Homer. Nothing is so surprizing as the descriptions of his battles, which takes up no less than half the Iliad, and are supplied with so vast a variety of incidents, that no one bears a likeness to another; such different kinds of deaths, that no two heroes are wounded in the same manner; and such a profusion of noble ideas, that every battle rises above the last in greatness, horror, and confusion. It is certain there is not near that number of images and descriptions in any epic poet: though every one has assisted himself with a great quantity out of him; and it is evident of Virgil especially, that he has scarce any comparisons which are not drawn from his master.

If we descend from hence to the expression, we see the bright imagination of Homer shining out in the most enlivened forms of it. We acknowledge him the father of poetical diction, the first who taught that language of the gods to men. His expression is like the colouring of some great masters, which discovers itself to be laid on boldly, and executed with rapidity. It is indeed the strongest and most glowing imaginable, and touched with the greatest spirit. Aristotle had reason to say, he was the only poet who had found out living words; there are in him more daring figures and metaphors than in any good author whatever. An arrow is impatient to be on the wing, a weapon thirsts to drink the blood of an enemy, and the like. Yet his expression is never too big for the sense, but justly great in proportion to it. It is the sentiment that swells and fills out the diction, which



rises with it, and forms itself about it : and in the same degree that a thought is warmer, an expression will be brighter ; as that is more strong, this will become more perspicuous : like glass in the furnace, which grows to a greater magnitude and refines to a greater clearness, only as the breath within is more powerful, and the heat more intense.

To throw his language more out of prose, Homer seems to have affected the compound-epithets. This was a sort of composition peculiarly proper to poetry, not only as it heightened the diction, but as it assisted and filled the numbers with greater sound and pomp, and likewise conduced in some measure to thicken the images. On this last consideration I cannot but attribute these also to the fruitfulness of his invention, since as he has managed them, they are a sort of supernumerary pictures of the persons or things to which they are joined. We see the motion of Hector's plumes in the epithet *Κορυθαίλος*, the landscape of mount Neritus in that of *Εἰνοσίφυλλος*, and so of others ; which particular image could not have been insisted upon so long as to express them in a description, though but of a single line, without diverting the reader too much from the principal action or figure. As a metaphor is a short simile, one of these epithets is a short description.

Lastly, if we consider his versification, we shall be sensible what a share of praise is due to his invention in that. He was not satisfied with his language as he found it settled in any one part of Greece, but searched through its differing dialects with this particular view, to beautify and perfect his numbers : he considered these as they had a greater mixture of vowels or consonants, and accordingly employed them as the verse required either a greater smoothness or strength. What he most affected was the Ionic, which has a peculiar sweetness from its never using contractions, and from its custom of resolving the diphthongs into two syllables ; so as to make the words open themselves with a more spreading and sonorous flu-

ency. With this he mingled the Attic contractions, the broader Doric, and the feebler Aeolic, which often rejects its aspirate, or takes off its accent; and completed this variety by altering some letters with the licence of poetry. Thus his measures, instead of being fetters to his sense, were always in readiness to run along with the warmth of his rapture, and even to give a farther representation of his notions, in the correspondence of their sounds to what they signified. Out of all these he has derived that harmony, which makes us confess he had not only the richest head, but the finest ear in the world. This is so great a truth, that whoever will but consult the tune of his verses, even without understanding them, with the same sort of diligence as we daily see practised in the case of Italian operas, will find more sweetness, variety, and majesty of sound, than in any other language or poetry. The beauty of his numbers is allowed by the critics to be copied but faintly by Virgil himself, though they are so just as to ascribe it to the nature of the Latin tongue: indeed the Greek has some advantages both from the natural sound of its words, and the turn and cadence of its verse, which agree with the genius of no other language. Virgil was very sensible of this, and used the utmost diligence in working up a more intractable language to whatsoever graces it was capable of; and in particular never failed to bring the sound of his line to a beautiful agreement with its sense. If the Grecian poet has not been so frequently celebrated on this account as the Roman, the only reason is, that fewer critics have understood one language than the other. Dionysius of Halicarnassus has pointed out many of our author's beauties in this kind, in his treatise of the Composition of Words, and others will be taken notice of in the course of my notes. It suffices at present to observe of his numbers, that they flow with so much ease, as to make one imagine Homer had no other care than to transcribe as fast as the Muses dictated: and at the same time with so much force and inspiring vigour, that they awaken and raise us like  
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the found of a trumpet. They roll along as a plentiful river, always in motion, and always full ; while we are borne away by a tide of verse, the most rapid, and yet the most smooth imaginable.

Thus on whatever side we contemplate Homer, what principally strikes us is his invention. It is that which forms the character of each part of his work ; and accordingly we find it to have made his fable more extensive and copious than any other, his manners more lively and strongly marked, his speeches more affecting and transported, his sentiments more warm and sublime, his images and descriptions more full and animated, his expression more raised and daring, and his numbers more rapid and various. I hope, in what has been said of Virgil, with regard to any of these heads, I have no way derogated from his character. Nothing is more absurd or endless, than the common method of comparing eminent writers by an opposition of particular passages in them, and forming a judgment from thence of their merit upon the whole. We ought to have a certain knowledge of the principal character and distinguishing excellence of each : it is in that we are to consider him, and in proportion to his degree in that we are to admire him. No author or man ever excelled all the world in more than one faculty, and as Homer has done this in invention, Virgil has in judgment. Not that we are to think Homer wanted judgment, because Virgil had it in a more eminent degree ; or that Virgil wanted invention, because Homer possessed a larger share of it : each of these great authors had more of both than perhaps any man besides, and are only said to have less in comparison with one another. Homer was the greater genius, Virgil the better artist. In one we most admire the man, in the other the work. Homer hurries and transports us with a commanding impetuosity ; Virgil leads us with an attractive majesty ; Homer scatters with a generous profusion ; Virgil bestows with a careful magnificence : Homer, like the Nile, pours out his riches with a boundless overflow ; Virgil, like a river in

in which we sometimes see the heroes of Homer engaged. There is a pleasure in taking a view of that simplicity in opposition to the luxury of succeeding ages, in beholding monarchs without their guards, princes tending their flocks, and princeſſes drawing water from the ſprings. When we read Homer, we ought to reflect that we are reading the moſt ancient author in the heathen world; and thoſe who conſider him in this light, will double their pleaſure in the peruſal of him. Let them think they are growing acquainted with nations and people that are now no more; that they are ſtepping almoſt three thouſand years back into the remoteſt antiquity, and entertaining themſelves with a clear and ſurpriſing viſion of things no where elſe to be found, the only true mirror of that ancient world. By this means alone their greateſt obſtacles will vaniſh; and what uſually creates their diſlike, will become a ſatiſfaction.

This conſideration may farther ſerve to answer for the conſtant uſe of the ſame epithets to his gods and heroes, ſuch as the far-darting Phœbus, the blue-eyed Pallas, the ſwift-footed Achilles, &c. which ſome have cenſured as impertinent and tediouſly repeated. Thoſe of the gods depended upon the powers and offices then believed to belong to them, and had contracted a weight and veneration from the rites and ſolemn devotions in which they are uſed: they were a ſort of attributes with which it was a matter of religion to ſalute them on all occaſions, and which it was an irreverence to omit. As for the epithets of great men, monſ. Boileau is of opinion, that they were in the nature of ſurnames, and repeated as ſuch; for the Greeks having no names derived from their fathers, were obliged to add ſome other diſtinction of each perſon; either naming his parents expreſſly, or his place of birth, profeſſion, or the like: as Alexander the ſon of Philip, Herodotus of Halicarnaſſus, Diogenes the Cynic, &c. Homer, therefore, complying with the cuſtom of his country, uſed ſuch diſtinctive additions as better agreed with poetry. And indeed we have ſome-

thing parallel to these in modern times, such as the names of Harold Hare-foot, Edmund Ironside, Edward Longshanks, Edward the black Prince, &c. If yet this be thought to account better for the propriety than for the repetition, I shall add a farther conjecture. Hesiod, dividing the world into its different ages, has placed a fourth age between the brazen and the iron one, of heroes *distinct from other men, a divine race, who fought at Thebes and Troy, are called demi-gods, and live by the care of Jupiter in the islands of the blessed*†. Now among the divine honours which were paid them, they might have this also in common with the gods, not to be mentioned without the solemnity of an epithet, and such as might be acceptable to them by its celebrating their families, actions or qualities.

What other cavils have been raised against Homer, are such as hardly deserve a reply, but will yet be taken notice of as they occur in the course of the work. Many have been occasioned by an injudicious endeavour to exalt Virgil; which is much the same, as if one should think to raise the superstructure by undermining the foundation: one would imagine by the whole course of their parallels, that these critics never so much as heard of Homer's having written first: a consideration which whoever compares these two poets, ought to have always in his eye. Some accuse him for the same things which they overlook or praise in the other; as when they prefer the fable and moral of the *Æneis* to those of the *Iliad*, for the same reasons which might set the *Odysses* above the *Æneis*: as that the hero is a wiser man; and the action of the one more beneficial to his country than that of the other: or else they blame him for not doing what he never designed; as because Achilles is not as good and perfect a prince as *Æneas*, when the very moral of his poem required a contrary character; it is thus that Rapin judges in his comparison of Homer and Virgil. Others select those particular passages of Ho-



mer, which are not so laboured as some that Virgil drew out of them: this is the whole management of Scaliger in his Poetices. Others quarrel with what they take for low and mean expressions, sometimes through a false delicacy and refinement, oftner from an ignorance of the graces of the original; and then triumph in the awkwardness of their own translations: this is the conduct of Perault in his Parallels. Lastly, there are others, who, pretending to a fairer proceeding, distinguish between the personal merit of Homer, and that of his work; but when they come to assign the causes of the great reputation of the Iliad, they found it upon the ignorance of his times, and the prejudice of those that followed: and in pursuance of this principle, they make those accidents, such as the contention of the cities, &c. to be the causes of his fame, which were in reality the consequences of his merit. The same might as well be said of Virgil; or any great author, whose general character will infallibly raise many casual additions to their reputation. This is the method of mons. de la Motte; who yet confesses upon the whole, that in whatever age Homer had lived, he must have been the greatest poet of his nation, and that he may be said in this sense to be the master even of those who surpassed him.

In all these objections we see nothing that contradicts his title to the honour of the chief invention; and as long as this, which is indeed the characteristic of poetry itself, remains unequalled by his followers, he still continues superior to them. A cooler judgment may commit fewer faults, and be more approved in the eyes of one sort of critics: but that warmth of fancy will carry the loudest and most universal applauses, which holds the heart of a reader under the strongest enchantment. Homer not only appears the inventor of poetry, but excels all the inventors of other arts in this, that he has swallowed up the honour of those who succeeded him. What he has done admitted no increase, it only left room for contraction or regulation. He shewed all the stretch of fancy at once; and if he has failed in some of his flights,

it was but because he attempted every thing. A work of this kind seems like a mighty tree which rises from the most vigorous seed, is improved with industry, flourishes, and produces the finest fruit ; nature and art conspire to raise it ; pleasure and profit join to make it valuable : and they who find the justest faults, have only said, that a few branches, which run luxuriant through a richness of nature, might be lopped into form to give it a more regular appearance.

Having now spoken of the beauties and defects of the original, it remains to treat of the translation, with the same view to the chief characteristic. As far as that is seen in the main parts of the poem, such as the fable, manners, and sentiments, no translator can prejudice it but by wilful omissions or contractions. As it also breaks out in every particular image, description and simile ; whoever lessens or too much softens thoses takes off from this chief character. It is the first grand duty of an interpreter to give his author intire and unmaimed ; and for the rest, the diction and versification only are his proper province ; since these must be his own, but the others he is to take as he finds them.

It should than be considered what methods may afford some equivalent in our language for the graces of these in the Greek. It is certain no literal translation can be just to an excellent original in a superior language ; but it is a great mistake to imagine, as many have done, that a rash paraphrase can make amends for this general defect ; which is no less in danger to lose the spirit of an ancient, by deviating into the modern manners of expression. If there be sometimes a darkness, there is often a light in antiquity, which nothing better preserves than a version almost literal. I know no liberties one ought to take, but those which are necessary for transfusing the spirit of the original, and supporting the poetical stile of the translation : and I will venture to say, there have not been more men misled in former times by a servile dull adherence to

the letter, than have been deluded in ours by a chimerical insolent hope of raising and improving their author. It is not to be doubted that the fire of the poem is what a translator should principally regard, as it is most likely to expire in his managing: however, it is his safest way to be content with preserving this to his utmost in the whole, without endeavouring to be more than he finds his author is, in any particular place. It is a great secret in writing to know when to be plain, and when poetical and figurative; and it is what Homer will teach us, if we will but follow modestly in his footsteps. Where his diction is bold and lofty, let us raise ours as high as we can; but where his is plain and humble, we ought not to be deterred from imitating him by the fear of incurring the censure of a mere English critic. Nothing that belongs to Homer seems to have been more commonly mistaken than the just pitch of his stile: some of his translators having swelled into sustian in a proud confidence of the sublime; others sunk into flatness in a cold and timorous notion of simplicity. Methinks I see these different followers of Homer, some sweating and straining after him by violent leaps and bounds, the certain signs of false mettle; others slowly and servilely creeping in his train, while the poet himself is all the time proceeding with an unaffected and equal majesty before them. However, of the two extremes one could sooner pardon frenzy than frigidity: no author is to be envied for such commendations as he may gain by that character of stile, which his friends must agree together to call simplicity, and the rest of the world will call dulness. There is a graceful and dignified simplicity, as well as a bald and fordid one, which differ as much from each other as the air of a plain man from that of a sloven: it is one thing to be tricked up, and another not to be dressed at all. Simplicity is the mean between ostentation and rusticity.

This pure and noble simplicity is no where in such perfection as in the scripture and our author. One may affirm, with all respect to the inspired writings, that the divi-



Spirit made use of no other words but what were intelligible and common to men at that time, and in that part of the world; and as Homer is the author nearest to those, his stile must of course bear a greater resemblance to the sacred books than that of any other writer. This consideration, together with what has been observed of the parity of some of his thoughts, may, methinks, induce a translator on the one hand to give into several of those general phrases and manners of expression, which have attained a veneration even in our language from being used in the Old Testament; as on the other, to avoid those which have been appropriated to the divinity, and in a manner consigned to mystery and religion.

For a further preservation of this air of simplicity, a particular care should be taken to express with all plainness those moral sentences and proverbial speeches which are so numerous in this poet. They have something venerable, and as I may say oracular, in that unadorned gravity and shortness with which they are delivered: a grace which would be utterly lost by endeavouring to give them what we call a more ingenious, that is, a more modern, turn in the paraphrase.

Perhaps the mixture of some Græcisms and old words after the manner of Milton, if done without too much affectation, might not have an ill effect in a version of this particular work, which most of any other seems to require a venerable antique cast. But certainly the use of modern terms of war and government, such as a platoon, campagne, junto, or the like, into which some of his translators have fallen, cannot be allowable; those only excepted, without which it is impossible to treat the subjects in any living language.

There are two peculiarities in Homer's diction which are a sort of marks or moles, by which every common eye distinguishes him at first sight: those who are not his greatest admirers look upon them as defects, and those who are, seem pleased with them as beauties. I speak of his compound epithets, and of his repetitions. Many of

the former cannot be done literally into English without destroying the purity of our language. I believe such should be retained as slide easily of themselves into an English compound, without violence to the ear or to the received rules of composition; as well as those which have received a sanction from the authority of our best poets, and are become familiar through their use of them; such as the cloud-compelling Jove, &c. As for the rest, whenever any can be as fully and significantly expressed in a single word as in a compounded one, the course to be taken is obvious.

Some that cannot be so turned as to preserve their full image by one or two words, may have justice done them by circumlocution; as the epithet εἰνοσίφυλλος, to a mountain, would appear little or ridiculous translated literally leaf-shaking, but affords a majestic idea in the periphrasis: *The lofty mountain shakes his waving woods.* Others that admit of differing significations, may receive an advantage by a judicious variation according to the occasions on which they are introduced. For example the epithet of Apollo, ἐκχέολος, or far-shooting, is capable of two explications; one literal in respect of the darts and bow, the ensigns of that god; and another allegorical with regard to the rays of the sun: therefore in such places where Apollo is represented as a god in person, I would use the former interpretation, and where the effects of the sun are described, I would make choice of the latter. Upon the whole, it will be necessary to avoid that perpetual repetition of the same epithets which we find in Homer, and which, though it might be accommodated, as has been already shewn, to the ear of those times, is by no means so to ours: but one may wait for opportunities of placing them, where they derive an additional beauty from the occasions on which they are employed; and in doing this properly, a translator may at once shew his fancy and his judgment.

As for Homer's repetitions, we may divide them into three sorts; of whole narrations and speeches, of single

sentences, and of one verse or hemistich. I hope it is not impossible to have such a regard to these, as neither to lose so known a mark of the author on the one hand, nor to offend the reader too much on the other. The repetition is not ungraceful in those speeches where the dignity of the speaker renders it a sort of insolence to alter his words; as in the messages from gods to men, or from higher powers to inferiors in concerns of state, or where the ceremonial of religion seems to require it, in the solemn forms of prayers, oaths, or the like. In other cases, I believe the best rule is to be guided by the nearness, or distance, at which the repetitions are placed in the original: when they follow too close, one may vary the expression, but it is a question whether a professed translator be authorized to omit any: if they be tedious, the author is to answer for it.

It only remains to speak of the versification. Homer, as has been said, is perpetually applying the sound to the sense, and varying it on every new subject. This is indeed one of the most exquisite beauties of poetry, and attainable by very few: I know only of Homer eminent for it in the Greek, and Virgil in Latin. I am sensible it is what may sometimes happen by chance, when a writer is warm, and fully possessed of his image: however it may be reasonably believed they designed this, in whose verse it so manifestly appears in a superior degree to all others. Few readers have the ear to be judges of it; but those who have, will see I have endeavoured at this beauty.

Upon the whole, I must confess myself utterly incapable of doing justice to Homer. I attempt him in no other hope, but that which one may entertain without much vanity, of giving a more tolerable copy of him than any intire translation in verse has yet done. We have only those of Chapman, Hobbes, and Ogilby. Chapman has taken the advantage of an immeasurable length of verse, notwithstanding which, there is scarce any paraphrase more loose and rambling than his. He has frequent interpolations of four or six lines, and I remember one in

the thirteenth book of the *Odysses*, v. 312. where he has spun twenty verses out of two. He is often mistaken in so bold a manner, that one might think he deviated on purpose, if he did not in other places of his notes insist so much upon verbal trifles. He appears to have had a strong affectation of extracting new meanings out of his author, insomuch as to promise in his rhyming preface, a poem of the mysteries he had revealed in Homer: and perhaps he endeavoured to strain the obvious sense to this end. His expression is involved in fustian, a fault for which he was remarkable in his original writings, as in the tragedy of *Buffy d'Amboise, etc.* In a word, the nature of the man may account for his whole performance; for he appears from his preface and remarks to have been of an arrogant turn, and an enthusiast in poetry. His own boast of having finished half the *Iliad* in less than fifteen weeks, shews with what negligence his version was performed. But that which is to be allowed him, and which very much contributed to cover his defects, is a daring fiery spirit that animates his translation, which is something like what one might imagine Homer himself would have writ before he arrived at years of discretion.

Hobbes has given us a correct explanation of the sense in general, but for particulars and circumstances he continually lopps them, and often omits the most beautiful. As for its being esteemed a close translation, I doubt not many have been led into that error by the shortness of it, which proceeds not from his following the original line by line, but from the contractions above mentioned. He sometimes omits whole similes and sentences, and is now and then guilty of mistakes, into which no writer of his learning could have fallen, but thro' carelessness. His poetry, as well as *Ogilby's*, is too mean for criticism.

It is a great loss to the poetical world that Mr. Dryden did not live to translate the *Iliad*. He has left us only the first book, and a small part of the sixth; in which if he has in some places not truly interpreted the sense, or preserved the antiquities, it ought to be excused on ac-

count of the haste he was obliged to write in. He seems to have had too much regard to Chapman, whose words he sometimes copies, and has unhappily followed him in passages where he wanders from the original. However, had he translated the whole work, I would no more have attempted Homer after him than Virgil, his version of whom, notwithstanding some human errors, is the most noble and spirited translation I know in any language. But the fate of great geniuses is like that of great ministers, though they are confessedly the first in the commonwealth of letters, they must be envied and calumniated only for being at the head of it.

That which in my opinion ought to be the endeavour of any one who translates Homer, is above all things to keep alive that spirit and fire which makes his chief character: in particular places, where the sense can bear any doubt, to follow the strongest and most poetical, as most agreeing with that character; to copy him in all the variations of his stile, and the different modulations of his numbers; to preserve, in the more active or descriptive parts, a warmth and elevation; in the more sedate or narrative, a plainness and solemnity; in the speeches, a fullness and perspicuity; in the sentences, a shortness and gravity; not to neglect even the little figures and turns on the words, nor sometimes the very cast of the periods; neither to omit or confound any rites or customs of antiquity: perhaps too he ought to include the whole in a shorter compass, than has hitherto been done by any translator, who has tolerably preserved either the sense or poetry. What I would farther recommend to him, is to study his author rather from his own text, than from any commentaries, how learned soever, or whatever figure they may make in the estimation of the world, to consider him attentively in comparison with Virgil above all the ancients, and with Milton above all the moderns. Next these, the archbishop of Cambray's *Telemachus* may give him the truest idea of the spirit and turn of our author, and Bossu's admirable treatise of the epic poem the just-



est notion of his design and conduct. But after all, with whatever judgment and study a man may proceed, or with whatever happiness he may perform such a work, he must hope to please but a few; those only who have at once a taste of poetry, and competent learning. For to satisfy such as want either, is not in the nature of this undertaking; since a mere modern wit can like nothing that is not modern, and a pedant nothing that is not Greek.

What I have done is submitted to the public, from whose opinions I am prepared to learn; though I fear no judges so little as our best poets, who are most sensible of the weight of this task. As for the worst, whatever they shall please to say, they may give me some concern as they are unhappy men, but none as they are malignant writers. I was guided in this translation by judgments very different from theirs, and by persons for whom they can have no kindness, if an old observation be true, that the strongest antipathy in the world is that of fools to men of wit. Mr. Addison was the first whose advice determined me to undertake this task, who was pleased to write to me upon that occasion in such terms, as I cannot repeat without vanity. I was obliged to Sir Richard Steele for a very early recommendation of my undertaking to the public. Dr. Swift promoted my interest with that warmth with which he always serves his friend. The humanity and frankness of Sir Samuel Garth are what I never knew wanting on any occasion. I must also acknowledge, with infinite pleasure, the many friendly offices, as well as sincere criticisms of Mr. Congreve, who had led me the way in translating some parts of Homer. I must add the names of Mr. Rowe and Dr. Parnell, though I shall take a farther opportunity of doing justice to the last, whose good-nature, to give it a great panegyric, is no less extensive than his learning. The favour of these gentlemen is not entirely undeserved by one who bears them so true an affection. But what can I say of the honour so many of the *great* have done me, while the first names of the age

appear as my subscribers, and the most distinguished patrons and ornaments of learning as my chief encouragers? Among those it is a particular pleasure to me to find, that my highest obligations are to such who have done most honour to the name of poet: that his grace the duke of Buckingham was not displeased I should undertake the author to whom he has given, in his excellent essay, so compleat a praise.

*Read Homer once, and you can read no more.  
For all books else appear so mean, so poor,  
Verse will seem prose: but still persist to read,  
And Homer will be all the books you need.*

That the earl of Hallifax was one of the first to favour me, of whom it is hard to say whether the advancement of the polite arts is more owing to his generosity or his example. That such a genius as my lord Bolingbroke, not more distinguished in the great scenes of business, than in all the useful and entertaining parts of learning, has not refused to be the critic of these sheets, and the patron of their writer. And that the noble author of the tragedy of Heroic Love, has continued his partiality to me, from my writing pastorals, to my attempting the Iliad. I cannot deny myself the pride of confessing, that I have had the advantage not only of their advice for the conduct in general, but their correction of several particulars of this translation.

I could say a great deal of the pleasure of being distinguished by the earl of Carnarvon, but it is almost absurd to particularize any one generous action in a person whose whole life is a continued series of them. Mr. Stanhope, the present secretary of state, will pardon my desire of having it known that he was pleased to promote this affair. The particular zeal of Mr. Harcourt, the son of the late lord chancellor, gave me a proof how much I am honoured in a share of his friendship. I must attribute to the same motive that of several others of my friends, to whom all acknowledgments are rendered unnecessary

by the priviledges of a familiar correspondence ; and I am satisfied I can no way better oblige men of their turn, than by my silence.

In short, I have found more patrons than ever Homer wanted. He would have thought himself happy to have met the same favour at Athens, that has been shewn me by its learned rival the university of Oxford. And I can hardly envy him those pompous honours he received after death, when I reflect on the enjoyment of so many agreeable obligations and easy friendships, which make the satisfaction of life. This distinction is the more to be acknowledged, as it is shewn to one, whose pen has never gratified the prejudices of particular parties, or the vanities of particular men. Whatever the success may prove, I shall never repent of an undertaking in which I have experienced the candour and friendship of so many persons of merit ; and in which I hope to pass some of those years of youth that are generally lost in a circle of follies, after a manner neither wholly unuseful to others, nor disagreeable to myself.



A N

E S S A Y

O N T H E

LIFE, WRITINGS AND LEARNING

O F

H O M E R.

**T**H**E**R**E** is something in the mind of man, which goes beyond bare curiosity, and even carries us on to a shadow of friendship with those great geniuses whom we have known to excel in former ages. Nor will it appear less to any one, who considers how much it partakes of the nature of friendship; how it compounds itself of an admiration raised by what we meet with concerning them; a tendency to be farther acquainted with them, by gathering every circumstance of their lives; a kind of complacency in their company, when we retire to enjoy what they have left; an union with them in those sentiments they approve; and an endeavour to defend them, when we think they are injuriously attacked, or even sometimes with too partial an affection.

There is also in mankind a spirit of envy or opposition, which makes them uneasy to see others of the same species seated far above them in a sort of perfection. And this, at least so far as regards the fame of writers, has not always been known to die with a man, but to pursue his remains with idle traditions, and weak conjectures; so that his name, which is not to be forgotten, shall be preserved only to be stained and blotted. The controversy, which was carried on between the author and his enemies,

while he was living, shall still be kept on foot; not entirely upon his own account, but on theirs who live after him; some being fond to praise extravagantly, and others as rashly eager to contradict his admirers. This proceeding, on both sides, gives us an image of the first descriptions of war, such as the *Iliad* affords; where a hero disputes the field with an army till it is his time to die, and then the battle which we expected to fall of course, is renewed about the body; his friends contending that they may embalm and honour it, his enemies that they may cast it to the dogs and vultures.

There are yet others of a low kind of taste, who, without any malignity to the character of a great author, lessen the dignity of their subject by insisting too meanly upon little particularities. They imagine it the part of an historian to omit nothing they meet with, concerning him; and gather every thing without any distinction, to the prejudice or neglect of the more noble parts of his character; like those trifling painters, or sculptors, who bestow infinite pains and patience upon the most insignificant parts of a figure, till they sink the grandeur of the whole, by finishing every thing with the neatest want of judgment.

Besides these, there is a fourth sort of men, who pretend to divest themselves of partiality on both sides, and to get above that imperfect idea of their subject, which little writers fall into; who propose to themselves a calm search after truth, and a rational adherence to probability in their historical collections: who neither wish to be led into the fables of superstition, nor are willing to support the injustice of a malignant criticism; but, endeavouring to steer in a middle way, have obtained a character of failing least in the choice of materials for history, though drawn from the darkest ages.

Being therefore to write something concerning a life, which there is little prospect of our knowing, after it has been the fruitless enquiry of so many ages, and which has however been thus differently treated by historians,

I shall endeavour to speak of it not as a certainty, but as the tradition, opinion, or collection of authors, who have been supposed to write of Homer in these four preceding methods; to which we also shall add some farther conjectures of our own. After his life has been thus rather invented than written, I shall consider him historically as an author, with regard to those works which he has left behind him: in doing which, we may trace the degrees of esteem they have obtained in different periods of time, and regulate our present opinion of them by a view of that age in which they were writ.

I. If we take a view of Homer in I.  
those fabulous traditions which the ad- *Stories of Homer,*  
miration of the ancient heathens has *which are the ef-*  
occasioned, we find them running to *fects of extrava-*  
superstition, and multiplied, and con- *gant admiration.*  
tradictory to one another, in the dif-  
ferent accounts which are given with respect to Egypt  
and Greece, the two native countries of fable. We have  
one in \* Eustathius most strangely framed, which Ale-  
xander Paphius has reported concerning Homer's birth  
and infancy. That "he was born in Egypt of Damasa-  
"goras and Ethra, and brought up by a daughter of O-  
"rus, the priest of Isis, who was herself a prophetess,  
"and from whose breasts drops of honey would frequent-  
"ly distil into the mouth of the infant. In the night-time  
"the first sounds he uttered were the notes of nine several  
"birds; in the morning he was found playing with nine  
"doves in the bed: the Sibyl, who attended him, used  
"to be seized with a poetical fury, and utter verses, in  
"which she commanded Damagoras to build a temple  
"to the Muses: this he performed in obedience to her  
"inspiration, and related all these things to the child  
"when he was grown up; who, in memory of the doves  
"which played with him during his infancy, has in his  
"works preferred this bird to the honour of bringing Am-  
"brosia to Jupiter."

\* Eustathius in Od. 12

One would think a story of this nature so fit for age to talk of, and infancy to hear, were incapable of being handed down to us. But we find the tradition again taken up to be heightened in one part, and carried forward in another. \* Heliodorus, who had heard of this claim which Egypt put in for Homer, endeavours to strengthen it by naming Thebes for the particular place of his birth. He allows too, that a priest was his reputed father, but that his real father, according to the opinion of Egypt, was Mercury: he says, “That when the priest was celebrating the rites of his country, and therefore slept with his wife in the temple, the god had knowledge of her, and begot Homer: that he was born with tufts of hair in his † thigh, as a sign of unlawful generation, from whence he was called Homer by the nations through which he wandered: that he himself was the occasion why this story of his divine extraction is unknown; because he neither told his name, race, nor country, being ashamed of his exile, to which his reputed father drove him from among the consecrated youths, on account of that mark which their priests esteemed a testimony of an incestuous birth.”

These are the extravagant stories by which men, who have not been able to express how much they admire him, transcend the bounds of probability to say something extraordinary. The mind, that becomes dazzled with the sight of his performances, loses the common idea of a man in the fancied splendor of perfection: it sees nothing less than a god worthy to be his father, nothing less than a prophetess deserving to be his nurse; and, growing unwilling that he should be spoken of in a language beneath its imaginations, delivers fables in the place of history.

But whatever has thus been offered to support the claim of Egypt, they who plead for Greece are not to be accused for coming short of it. Their fancy rose with a

\* Heliod. Ethiop. l. 3.

† *Ὠμῆρος* Femur.

refinement as much above that of their masters, as the Greek imagination was superior to that of the Egyptians : their fiction was but a veil, and frequently wrought fine enough to be seen through, so that it hardly hides the meaning it is made to cover, from the first glance of the imagination. For a proof of this, we may mention that poetical genealogy which is delivered for Homer's, in the † Greek treatise of the contention between him and Hesiod, and but little varied by the relation of it in Suidas.

“ The poet Linus, say they, was born of Apollo, and  
 “ Thoose the daughter of Neptune. Pierus of Linus :  
 “ Oeagrus of king Pierus and the nymph Methone : Or-  
 “ pheus of Oeagrus and the muse Calliope. From Or-  
 “ pheus came Othrys : from him Harmonides ; from him  
 “ Philoterpus ; from him Euphemus ; from him Epiphra-  
 “ des, who begot Menalops, the father of Dius ; Dius had  
 “ Hesiod the poet and Perfes by Pucamede, the daughter  
 “ of Apollo ; then Perfes had Mæon, on whose daughter  
 “ Crytheis, the river Meles begot Homer.”

Here we behold a wonderful genealogy, contrived industriously to raise our idea to the highest, where gods, goddesses, muses, kings and poets link in a descent ; nay, where poets are made to depend, as it were, in clusters upon the same stalk beneath one another. If we consider too that Harmonides is derived from harmony, Philoterpus from love of delight, Euphemus from beautiful diction, Epiphrades from intelligence, and Pucamede from prudence ; it may not be improbable, but the inventors meant, by a fiction of this nature, to turn such qualifications into persons, as were agreeable to his character for whom the line was drawn : so that every thing divine or great, will thus come together by the extravagant indulgence of fancy, while admiration turns itself in some to bare fable, in others to allegory.

After this fabulous tree of his pedigree, we may regularly view him in one passage concerning his birth, which,

† Ἀγὰν Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόδου.



though it differs in a circumstance, from what has been here delivered, yet carries on the same air, and regards the same traditions. There is a short life of Homer attributed to Plutarch, wherein a third part of Aristotle on poetry, which is now lost, is quoted for an account of his uncommon birth in this manner. “ At the time when  
 “ Neleus, the son of Codrus, led the colony which was  
 “ sent into Ionia, there was in the island of Io a young  
 “ girl, commpressed by a genius, who delighted to affoci-  
 “ ate with the muses, and share in their comforts. She,  
 “ finding herself with child, and being touched with the  
 “ the shame of what had happened to her, removed from  
 “ thence to a place called Egina. There she was taken  
 “ in an excursion made by robbers, and being brought to  
 “ Smyrna, which was then under the Lydians, they give  
 “ her to Mæon the king, who married her upon account  
 “ of her beauty. But while she walked on the bank of  
 “ the river Meles, she brought forth Homer, and expired.  
 “ The infant was taken by Mæon, and bred up as his son,  
 “ till the death of that prince.” And from this point of the story the poet is let down into his traditional poverty. Here we see, though he be taken out of the lineage of Meles, where we met him before, he has still as wonderful a rise invented for him; he is still to spring from a demi-god, one who was of a poetical disposition, from whom he might inherit a soul turned to poetry, and received an assistance of heavenly inspiration.

In this life the most general tradition concerning him is his blindness; yet there are some who will not allow even this to have happened after the manner in which it falls upon other men: chance and sickness are excluded; nothing less than gods and heroes must be visibly concerned about him. Thus we find among the different accounts which † Hermias has collected concerning his blindness, that when Homer resolved to write of Achilles, he had an exceeding desire to fill his mind with a just idea

† Hermias in Phæd. Plat. Leo Allat. de Patr. Hom. c. 10.

of so glorious a hero: wherefore, having paid all due honours at his tomb, he intreats that he may obtain a fight of him. The hero grants his poet's petition, and rises in a glorious suit of armour, which cast so unsufferable a splendor, that Homer lost his eyes, while he gazed for the enlargement of his notions.

If this be any thing more than a mere fable, one would be apt to imagine it insinuated his contracting a blindness by too intense an application while he wrote his Iliad. But it is a very pompous way of letting us into the knowledge of so short a truth: it looks as if men imagined the lives of poets should be poetically written: that to speak plainly of them, were to speak contemptibly; or that we debase them, when they are placed in less glorious company than those exalted spirits which they themselves have been fond to celebrate. We may however in some measure be reconciled to this last idle fable, for having occasioned so beautiful an episode in the Ambra of Politian. That which does not inform us in a history, may please us in its proper sphere of poetry.

II. Such stores as these have been the II.  
effects of a superstitious fondness, and of *Stories of Ho-*  
the astonishment of men at what they con- *mer proceeding*  
sider in a view of perfection. But neither *from envy.*  
have all the same taste, nor do they equal-  
ly submit to the superiority of others, nor bear that human nature, which they know to be imperfect, should be praised in an extreme without opposition. From some principles of this kind have arisen a second sort of stories, which glance at Homer with malignant suppositions, and endeavour to throw a diminishing air over his life, as a kind of answer to those who sought to aggrandize him injudiciously.

Under this head we may reckon those ungrounded conjectures with which his adversaries asperse the very design and prosecution of his travels, when they insinuate, that they were one continued search after authors who had written before him, and particularly upon the same

subject, in order to destroy them, or to rob them of their inventions.

Thus we read in † Diodorus Siculus, “ That there  
 “ was one Daphne the daughter of Tiresias, who from  
 “ her inspirations obtained the title of a Sibyl. She had  
 “ a very extraordinary genius, and being made priestess  
 “ at Delphos, wrote oracles with wonderful elegance,  
 “ which Homer sought for, and adorned his poems with  
 “ several of her verses.” But she is placed so far in the  
 fabulous age of the world, that nothing can be averred of  
 her: and as for the verses now ascribed to the Sibyls,  
 they are more modern than to be able to confirm the  
 story; which, as it is universally assented to, discovers  
 that whatever there is in them in common with Homer,  
 the compilers have rather taken from him; perhaps to  
 strengthen the authority of their work by the protection  
 of this tradition.

The next insinuation we hear, is from Suidas, that Palamedes, who fought at Troy, was famous for poetry, and wrote concerning that war in the Doric letter which he invented, probably much against Agamemnon and Ulysses, his mortal enemies. Upon this account some have fancied his works were suppressed by Agamemnon's posterity, or that their entire destruction was contrived and effected by Homer when he undertook the same subject. But surely the works of so considerable a man, when they had been able to bear up so long a time as that which passed between the siege of Troy, and the flourishing of Homer, must have been too much dispersed, for one of so mean a condition as he is represented, to have destroyed in every place, though he had been never so much assisted by the vigilant temper of envy. And we may say too, that what might have been capable of raising this principle in him, must be capable of being in some measure esteemed by others, and of having and at least one line of it preserved to us as his.

After him, in order of time, we meet, with a whole  
 set



set of names, to whom the maligners of Homer would have him obliged, without being able to prove their assertion. Suidas mentions Corinnus Iliensis, the secretary of Palamedes, who writ a poem upon the same subject, but no one is produced as having seen it. \* Tzetzes mentions (and from Johannes Melala only) Sisyphus the Coan, secretary of Teucer but it is not so much as known if he writ verse or prose. Besides these, are Dictys the Cretan, secretary to Idomeneus, and Dares the Phrygian, at attendant of Hector, who have spurious treatises passing under their names. From each of these is Homer said to have borrowed his whole argument; so inconsistent are these stories with one another!

The next names we find, are Demodocus, whom Homer might have met at Corcyra, and Phemius, whom he might have met at Ithaca: the one (as † Plutarch says) having according to tradition written the war of Troy, the other the *return* of the Grecian captain. But these are only two names of friends, which he is pleased to honour with eternity in his poem, or two different pictures of himself, as author of the Iliad and Odyssees, or entirely the children of his imagination, without any particular allusion. So that his usage here puts me in mind of his own Vulcan in the § Iliad: The God had cast two statues, which he endued with the power of motion; and it is said presently after, that he is scarce able to go unless they support him.

It is reported by some, says \* Ptolemaeus Ephæstio, “ That there was before Homer a woman of Memphis, “ called Phantasia, who writ of the wars of Troy, and “ the wanderings of Ulysses. Now Homer arriving at “ Memphis where she had laid up her works, and getting acquainted with Phanitas, whose business it was “ to copy the sacred writings, he obtained a sight of “ these and followed entirely the scheme she had drawn.”

\* Tzetzes Chil. 5. Hist. 29.

† Plutarch on Music.

§ Iliad. 18.

\* Ptol. Ep. Excerpt, apud Photium, l. 5.

But this is a wild story, which speaks of an Ægyptian woman with a Greek name, and who never was heard of but upon this account. It appears indeed from his knowledge of the Ægyptian learning, that he was initiated into their mysteries, and for aught we know by one Phanitas. But if we consider what the name of the woman signifies, it seems only as if from being used in a figurative expression, it had been mistaken afterwards for a proper name. And then the meaning will be, that having gathered as much information concerning the Grecian and Trojan story, as he could be furnished with from the accounts of Ægypt, which were generally mixed with fancy and fable, he wrought out his plans of the *Iliad* and the *Odysses*.

We pass all these stories, together with the little *Iliad* of Siagrus, mentioned by † Ælian. But one cannot leave this subject without reflecting on the depreciating humour, and odd industry of man, which shews itself in raising such a number of insinuations that clash with each other, and in spiriting up such a croud of unwarranted names to support them. Nor can we but admire at the contradictory nature of this proceeding; that names of works, which either never were in being, or never worthy to live, should be produced only to persuade us that the most lasting and beautiful poem of the ancients was taken out of them. A beggar might be content to patch up a garment with such shreds as the world throws away, but it is never to be imagined an emperor would make his robes of them.

After Homer had spent a considerable time in travel, we find him towards his age introduced to such an action as tends to his disparagement. It is not enough to accuse him for spoiling the dead, they raise a living author, by whom he must be baffled in that qualification on which his fame is founded.

There is in \* Hesioid an account of an antient poetical contention at the funeral of Amphidamus, in which, he says, he obtained the prize, but does not mention from whom he carried it. There is also among the † Hymns ascribed to Homer, a prayer to Venus for success in a poetical dispute, but it neither mentions where, nor against whom. But though they have neglected to name their antagonists, others having since taken care to fill up the stories by putting them together. The making two such considerable names in poetry engage, carries an amusing pomp in it, like making two heroes of the first rank enter the lists of combat. And if Homer and Hesioid had their parties among the Grammarians, here was an excellent opportunity for Hesioid's favourers to make a sacrifice of Homer. Hence a bare conjecture might spread into a *tradition*, then the tradition give occasion to an *epigram*, which is yet extant, and again the *epigram* (for want of knowing the time it was writ in) be alledged as a *proof* of that conjecture from whence it sprung. After this a § whole treatise was written upon it, which appears not very ancient, because it mentions Adrian: the story agrees in the main with the short account we find in ¶ Plutarch, “ That Ganietor, the son  
“ of Amphidamus, king of Eubœa, being used to celebrate his father's funeral games, invited from all parts  
“ men famous for strength and wisdom. Among these  
“ Homer and Hesioid arrived at Chalcis. The king Pannidas presided over the contest, which being finished,  
“ he decreed the Tripod to Hesioid, with this sentence,  
“ That the poet of peace and husbandry better deserved  
“ to be crowned, than the poet of war and contention,  
“ Whereupon Hesioid dedicated the prize to the muses,  
“ with this inscription,

\* Hesioid Op. et dierum, l. 2. v. 272, etc. † Hom. Hymn. 2. ad Venerem. § Ἀγὼν Ὀμήρου καὶ Ἡσιόиду. ¶ Plut. Banquet of the seven wise men,

“ Ἡσιόδοϛ Μῦσαις Ἐλικωνίσι τὸν δ’ ἀνέθηκεν,  
 “ Ὑμνῷ νικήσας ἐν Καλκιδὶ θεῖον Ὀμηρον.

Which are two lines taken from that place in Hesiod where he mentions no antagonist, and altered, that the two names might be brought in, as is evident by comparing them with these,

Ὑμνῷ νικήσαντα φέρειν τρίποδ’ ἀτῶντα  
 “ Τὸν μὲν Ἐγὼ Μύσης Ἐλικωνιάδεσσι ἀνέθηκα.

To answer this story, we may take notice that Hesiod is generally placed after Homer. Grævius, his own commentator, sets him a hundred years lower: and whether he were so or no, yet † Plutarch has slightly passed the whole account as a fable. Nay, we may draw an argument against it from Hesiod himself: He had a love of Fame, which caused him to engage at the funeral games, and which went so far as to make him record his conquest in his own works; had he defeated Homer, the same principle would have made him mention a name that could have secured his own to immortality. A poet, who records his glory, would not omit the noblest circumstance, and Homer, like a captive prince, had certainly graced the triumph of his adversary.

Towards the latter end of his life, there is another story invented, which makes him conclude it in a manner altogether beneath the greatness of a genius. We find in the life, said to be written by Plutarch, a tradition “ That he was warned by an oracle to beware of the *young mens riddle*. This remained long obscure to him, till “ he arrived at the island Io. There, as he sat to behold the fishermen, they proposed to him a riddle in “ verse, which he being unable to answer, died for grief.” This story refutes itself, by carrying superstition at one end, and folly at the other. It seems conceived with an air of derision, to lay a great man in the dust after a

† Plut. Symp. l. 5. §. 2.

foolish manner. The same sort of hand might have framed that tale of Aristotle's drowning himself because he could not account for the Euripus: the design is the same, the turn the same; and all the difference, that the great men are each to suffer in his character, the one by a *poetical riddle*, the other by a *philosophical problem*. But these are accidents which can only arise from the meanness of pride, or extravagance of madness: a soul enlarged with knowledge (so vastly as that of Homer) better knows the proper stress which is to be laid upon every incident, and the proportion of concern, or carelessness with which it ought to be affected. But it is the fate of narrow capacities to measure mankind by a false standard, and imagine the great, like themselves, capable of being disconcerted by little occasions; to frame their malignant fables according to this imagination, and to stand detected by it as by an evident mark of ignorance.

III. The third manner in which the life of Homer has been written, is but an amassing of all the traditions and hints which the writers could meet with, great or little, in order to tell a story of him to the world. Perhaps the want of choice materials might put them upon the necessity: or perhaps an injudicious desire of saying all they could, occasioned the fault. However it be, a life composed of trivial circumstances, which (though it give a true account of several passages) shews a man but little in that light in which he was most famous, and has hardly any thing correspondent to the idea we entertain of him; such a life, I say, will never answer rightly the demand the world has upon an historian. Yet the most formal account we have of Homer is of this nature, I mean that which is said to be collected by Herodotus. It is, in short, an unsupported minute treatise, composed of events which lie within the compass of probability, and belong to the lowest sphere of life. It seems to be intirely conducted by the spirit of a Grammarian; ever abounding with *extem-*

III.

*Stories of Homer proceeding from trifling curiosity.*



*pore verses*, as if it were to prove a thing so unquestionable as our author's title to rapture ; and at the same time the occasions are so poorly invented, that they misbecome the warmth of a poetical imagination. There is nothing in it above the life which a Grammarian might lead himself ; nay, it is but such a one as they commonly do lead, the highest stage of which is to be *master of a school*. But because this is a treatise to which writers have had recourse for want of a better, I shall give the following abstract of it.

Homer was born at Smyrna, about one hundred sixty eight years after the siege of Troy, and six hundred twenty two years before the expedition of Xerxes. His mother's name was Crytheis, who proving unlawfully with child, was sent away from Cumæ by her uncle, with Ismenias, one of those who led the colony of Smyrna, then building. A while after, as she was celebrating a festival with other women on the banks of the river Meles, she was delivered of Homer, whom she therefore named Melesigenes. Upon this she left Ismenias, and supported herself by her labour, till Phemius (who taught a school in Smyrna) fell in love with her, and married her. But both dying in process of time, the school fell to Homer, who managed it with such wisdom, that he was universally admired both by natives and strangers. Amongst these latter was Mentès, a master of a ship from Leucadia, by whose persuasions and promises he gave up his school and went to travel : with him he visited Spain and Italy, but was left behind at Ithaca upon account of a defluxion in his eyes. During his stay he was entertained by one Mentor, a man of fortune, justice and hospitality, and learned the principal incidents of Ulysses's life. But at the return of Mentès, he went from thence to Colophon, where, his defluxion renewing, he fell entirely blind. Upon this he could think of no better expedient than to go back to Smyrna, where perhaps he might be supported by those who knew him, and have the leisure to addict himself to poetry. But there he

found his poverty increase, and his hopes of encouragement fail; so that he removed to Cumæ, and by the way was entertained for some time at the house of one Tychius a leather-dresser. At Cumæ his poems were wonderfully admired, but when he proposed to eternize their town if they would allow him a salary, he was answered, that there would be no end of maintaining all the Ὀμῆγοι, or *blind men*, and hence he got the name of Homer. From Cumæ he went to Phocæa, where one Thestorides (a school-master also) offered to maintain him if he would suffer him to transcribe his verse; this Homer complying with through mere necessity, the other had no sooner gotten them but he removed to Chios; there the poems gained him wealth and honour, while the author himself hardly earned his bread by repeating them. At last, some who came from Chios having told the people that the same verses were published there by a school-master, Homer resolved to find him out. Having therefore landed near that place, he was received by one Glaucus a shepherd, (at whose door he had like to have been worried by dogs) and carried by him to his master at Bollissus, who admiring his knowledge, intrusted him with the education of his children. Here his praise began to spread, and Thestorides, who heard of his neighbourhood, fled before him. He removed however sometime afterwards to Chios, where he set up a school of poetry, gained a competent fortune, married a wife, and had two daughters, the one of which died young, the other was married to his patron at Bollissus. Here he inserted in his poems the names of those to whom he had been most obliged, as Mentès, Phemius, Mentor, and Tychius; and resolving for Athens, he made honourable mention of that city, to prepare the Athenians for a kind reception. But as he went, the ship put in at Samos, where he continued the whole winter, singing at the houses of great men, with a train of boys after him. In spring he went on board again in order to prosecute his journey to Athens, but

landing by the way at Ios, he fell sick, died and was buried on the sea-shore.

This is the life of Homer ascribed to Herodotus though it is wonderful it should be so, since it evidently contradicts his own history, by placing Homer six hundred twenty-two years before the expedition of Xerxes ; whereas Herodotus himself, who was alive at the time of that expedition, says Homer was only \* four hundred years before him. However, if we can imagine that there may be any thing of truth in the main parts of this treatise, we may gather these general observations from it : That he shewed a great thirst after knowledge, by undertaking such long and numerous travels : That he manifested an unexampled vigour of mind, by being able to write with more fire under the disadvantages of blindness, and the utmost poverty, than any poet after him in better circumstances ; and that he had an unlimited sense of fame, (the attendant of noble spirits) which prompted him to engage in new travels, both under these disadvantages, and the additional burden of old age.

But it will not perhaps be either improper or difficult to make some conjectures, which seem to lay open the foundation from whence the traditions which frame the low lives of Homer have risen. We may consider, that there are no historians of his time, (or none handed down to us) who have mentioned him : and that he has never spoken plainly of himself, in those works which have been ascribed to him without controversy. However, an eager desire to know something concerning him has occasioned mankind to labour the point under these disadvantages, and turn on all hands to see if there were any thing left which might have the least appearance of information. Upon the search, they find no remains but his *name* and *works*, and resolve to torture these upon the rack of invention, in order to give some account of the person they belong to.

\* Herod. l. 2.

The first thing therefore they settle is, That what passed for his *name* must be his *name* no longer, but an *additional title* used instead of it. The reason why it was given, must be some accident of his life. They then proceed to consider every thing that the word may imply by its derivation. One finds that 'Ομηρὸς signifies a *thigh*; whence arises the tradition in \* Heliodorus, that he was banished Ægypt for the mark on that part, which shewed a spurious birth; and this they imagine ground enough to give him the life of a wanderer. A second finds, that 'Ομηρος signifies an *hostage*, and then he must be delivered as such in a war (according to † Proclus) between Smyrna and Chios. A third can derive the name 'Ομὴ ὀφθαλμῶν, *non videns*, from whence he must be a *blind man* (as in the piece ascribed to ¶ Herodotus) A fourth brings it from 'Ομῶς ἐειπὼν, *speaking in council*; and then (as it is in Suidas) he must, by a divine inspiration, declare to the Smyrnæans, that they should war against Colophon. A fifth finds the word may be brought to signify *following others*, or *joining himself* to them, and then he must be called Homer for saying, (as it is quoted from § Aristotle in the life ascribed to Plutarch) that he would 'Ομηρεῖν, or *follow* the Lydians from Smyrna. Thus has the name been turned and winded, enough at least to give a suspicion, that he who got a *new etymology*, got either a *new life* of him, or something which he added to the old one.

However, the *name* itself not affording enough to furnish out a whole life, his *works* must be brought in for assistance, and it is taken for granted, that where he has not spoken of himself, he lies veiled beneath the persons or actions of those whom he describes. Because he calls a poet by the name of Phemius in his *Odyssey*, they conclude this † Phemius was his master. Because he speaks of Demodocus as another poet who was blind, and fre-

\* Hel. l. 3.

† Proc. vit. Hom.

¶ Herod. vit.

Hom.

§ Plut. vit. Hom.

† Herod. vit. Hom.

quented palaces; he must be sent about \* blind, to sing at the doors of rich men. If Ulysses be set upon by dogs at his shepherd's cottage, because this is a low adventure, it is thought to be his own at Bollissus †. And if he calls the leather-dresser, who made Ajax's shield, by the name of Tychius, he must have been supported by such an one in his wants: Nay, some have been so violently carried into this way of conjecturing, that the bare †† *simile* of a woman who works hard for her livelihood, is said to have been borrowed from his mother's condition, and brought as a proof of it. Thus he is still imagined to intend himself; and the fictions of poetry, converted into real facts, are delivered for his life, who has assigned them to others. All those stories in his works which suit with a mean condition are supposed to have happened to him; though the same way of inference might as well prove him to have acted in a higher sphere, from the many passages that shew his skill in government, and his knowledge of the great parts of life.

There are some other scattered stories of Homer which fall not under these heads, but are however of as trifling a nature; as much unfit for the materials of history, still more ungrounded, if possible, and arising merely from chance, or the humours of men: Such is the report we meet with from § Heraclides, that "Homer was fined at Athens for a madman;" which seems invented by the disciples of Socrates, to cast an odium upon the Athenians for their consenting to the death of their master, and carries in it something like a declaiming revenge of the schools, as if the world should imagine the one could be esteemed *mad*, where the other was put to death for being *wicked*. Such another report is that in \*\* Ælian, "that Homer portioned his daughter with some of his works for want of money;" which looks but like a

\* Ibid.  
mer.

† Ibid.

†† Vid. M. Dacier's life of Homer.

§ Diogenes Laertius ex Heracl. in vita Socratis.

\*\* Ælian. l. 9: cap. 15.



jest upon a poor wit, which at first might have had an Epigrammatist for its father, and been afterwards gravely understood by some painful collector. In short, mankind have laboured heartily about him to no purpose; they have caught up every thing greedily, with that busy minute curiosity and unsatisfactory inquisitiveness which Seneca calls the *Disease of the Greeks*; they have puzzled the case by their attempts to find it out; and like travellers destitute of a road, yet resolved to make one over unpassible deserts, they superinduce error, instead of removing ignorance.

IV. Whenever any authors have attempted to write the life of Homer,

IV.

*Probable conjectures concerning Homer.*

clear from superstition, envy, and trifling, they have grown ashamed of all these traditions. This, however, has not occasioned them to desist from the undertaking; but still the difficulty which could not make them desist, has necessitated them, either to deliver the old story with excuses, or else, instead of a life, to compose a treatise partly of *criticism*, and partly of *character* rather descriptive, than supported by action, and the air of history.

They begin with acquainting us, that the *Time* in which he lived has never been fixed beyond dispute, and that the opinions of authors are various concerning it; but the controversy, in its several conjectures, includes a space of years between the earliest and latest, from twenty-four to about five hundred, after the siege of Troy. Whenever the time was, it seems not to have been near that siege, from his own  
\* *Invocation of the Muses* to recount the catalogue of the ships: “For we, says he, have only heard a rumour, and know nothing particular.” It is remarked by † Velleius Paterculus, That it must have been con-

*His Time.*

\* Ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούμεν ἔδδ’ ἐπ’ ἴδμεν. Iliad 2. v. 487.

† Hic longæ a temporibus belli quod composuit, Troici,

siderably later, from his own confession, that “ mankind “ was but half as strong in his age, as in that he writ “ of;” which, as it is founded upon a notion of a gradual degeneracy in our nature, discovers the interval to have been long between Homer and his subject. But not to trouble ourselves with entering into all the dry dispute, we may take notice, that the world is inclined to stand by the \* Arundelian *marble*, as the most certain computation of those early times; and this, by placing him at the time when Diogenetus ruled in Athens, makes him flourish a little before the Olympiads were established; about three hundred years after the taking of Troy, and near a thousand before the Christian Æra. For a farther confirmation of this, we have some great names of antiquity who give him a cotemporary agreeing with the computation: † Cicero says, There was a tradition that Homer lived about the time of Lycurgus. \* Strabo tells us, It was reported that Lycurgus went to Chios for an interview with him. And even † Plutarch, when he says, Lycurgus received Homer’s works from the grandson of that Creophilus with whom he had lived, does not put him so far backward, but that possibly they might have been alive at the same time.

The next dispute regards his *country*, concerning *His Country*. which †† Adrian enquired of the Gods as a question not to be settled by men; And Appion (according to \*\* Pliny) raised a spirit for his information. That which has increased the difficulty, is the number of contesting places, of which Suidas

quam quidam rentur, abfuit. Nam ferme ante annos 950 floruit, intra mille natus est: quo nomine non est mirandum quod sæpe illud usurpat, *οἷος ὦν βεβαῖος εἶσι*. Hoc enim ut hominum ita *seculorum* notatur differentia. Vell. Paterc. lib. 1.

\* Vide Dacier, Du Pin, etc. concerning the Arundelian marble.

† Cicero Qu. Tuscul. l. 5.

\* Strobo l. 10

† Plut.

vita Lycurgi.

†† Ἀγὼν Ὁμηρὸς καὶ Ἡσιόδου, of Adrian’s

Oracle.

\*\* Plin. l. 30. cap. 2.

has reckoned up nineteen in one breath. But his ancient commentator, \* Didymus, found the subject so fertile, as to employ a great part of his four thousand volumes upon it. There is a prophecy of the Sibyls, that he should be born at Salamis in Cyprus; and then to play an argument of the same nature against it, there is the *oracle* given to Adrian afterwards, that says he was born in Ithaca. There are *customs* of Æolia and Ægypt cited from his works, to make out by turns and with the same probability, that he belonged to each of them. There was a school shewed for his at Colophon, and a tomb at Io, both of equal strength to prove he had his birth in either. As for the Athenians, they challenged him as born where they had a colony; or else in behalf of Greece in general, and as the *metropolis* of its learning, they made his name free of their city (*qu. Licina et Mutia lege*, says † Politian) after the manner of that law by which all Italy became free of Rome. All these have their authors to record their titles, but still the weight of the question seems to lie between Smyrna and Chios, which we must therefore take a little more notice of. That Homer was born at Smyrna, is endeavoured to be proved by an † Epigram, recorded to have been under the statue of Pisistratus at Athens; by the reports mentioned in Cicero, Strabo and A. Gellius; and by the Greek lives, which pass under the names of Herodotus, Plutarch and Proclus; as also the two that are anonymous. The \*\* Smyrnæans built a temple to him, cast medals of him, and grew so possess'd of his having been theirs, that it is said they burned Zoilus for affronting them in the person of Homer. On the other hand, the Chians plead the ancient authorities of †† Simonides

\* Seneca. Ep. 88. concerning Didymus.

† Politian.

Præf. in Homerum.

§ Epigram on Pisistratus in the anonymous life before Homer.

\*\* Vitruvius Proæm. l. 7

†† Simonides Frag. de brevitate vitæ, quoting a verse of Homer.

Ἐν δὲ τῷ καλλίστῳ Χίος ἐείπεν ἀνὴρ.

des and \* Theocritus for his being born among them. They mention a race they had, called the Homeridæ, whom they reckoned his posterity; they cast medals of him; they shew to this day an Homæriuin, or temple of Homer, near Bollissus; and close their arguments with a quotation from the Hymn to Apollo (which is acknowledged for Homer's by † Thucydides) where he calls himself "The blind man that inhabits Chios." The reader has here the sum of the large treatise of Leo Allatius, written particularly on this subject ||, in which, after having separately weighed the pretensions of all, he concludes for Chios. For my part, I determine nothing in a point of so much uncertainty; neither which of these was honoured with his birth, nor whether any of them was, nor whether each may not have produced his own Homer; since \* Xenophon says, there were many of the name. But one cannot avoid being surprized at the prodigious veneration for his character, which could engage mankind with such eagerness in a point so little essential; that kings should send to oracles for the inquiry of his birth-place; that cities should be in strife about it, that whole lives of learned men should be employed upon it; that some should write treatises; that others should call up spirits about it; that thus, in short, heaven, earth and hell should be sought to, for the decision of a question which terminates in curiosity only.

*His Parents.* If we endeavour to find the *parents* of Homer, the search is as fruitless. \*\* Ephorus had made Mæon to be his father, by a niece whom he deflowered; and this has so far obtained as to give him

\* Theocritus in Dioscuris, ad fin.

————— Χῖος αἰοιδῆς,

Ἰωνήσας Περίαμοιο πόλιν καὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν,

Ἰλιάδας τε μῆχας.

† Thucyd. lib. 3.

|| Leo Allatius de patria Homeri,

\* Xenophon de Æquivocis.

\*\* Plut. vita Hom. ex E-

phoro,

the derivative name of Mæonides. His mother (if we allow the story of Mæon) is called Crytheis : but we are lost again in uncertainty, if we search farther ; for Suidas has mentioned Eumetis or Polycaste ; and \* Pausanias, Clymene or Themisto ; which happens, because the contesting countries find out mothers of their own for him. Tradition has in this case afforded us no more light, than what may serve to shew its shadows in confusion ; they strike the sight with so equal a probability, that we are in doubt which to chuse, and must pass the question undecided.

If we enquire concerning his own *His Name.*  
*name*, even that is doubted of. He has been called Melesigenes from the river where he was born. Homer has been reckoned an ascription name, from some accident in his life : The Certamen Homericum calls his him once Auletes, perhaps from his musical genius ; and † Lucian, Tigranes ; it may be from a confusion with that Tigranes or ¶ Tigretes, who was brother of queen Artemisia, and whose name has been so far mingled with his, as to make him be esteemed author of some of the lesser works which are ascribed to Homer. It may not be amiss to close these criticisms with that agreeable derision wherewith Lucian treats the humour of grammarians in their search after minute and impossible inquiries, when he feigns, that he had talked over the point with Homer, in the Island of the Blest.  
 “ I asked him, says he, of what country he was ? A question hard to be resolved with us ; to which he answered, He could not certainly tell, because some had informed him, that he was of Chios, some of Smyrna, and others of Colophon ; but he took himself for a Babylonian, and said he was called Tigranes while he lived among his country-men ; and Homer while he was a hostage among the Grecians.”

\* Pausanias, l. 10.  
 ¶ Suidas de Tigrete,

† Lucian's true history, l. 2,



*His Blindness.*

At his birth he appears not to have been *blind*, whatever he might be afterwards. The \* Chian medal of him (which is of great antiquity, according to Leo Allatius) seats him with a volume open, and reading intently. But there is no need of proofs from antiquity for that which every line of his works will demonstrate. With what an exactness, agreeable to the natural appearance of things, do his cities stand, his mountains rise, his rivers wind, and his regions lie extended ! How beautifully are the views of all things drawn in their figures, and adorned with their paintings ! What address in action, what visible characters of the passions inspire his heroes ! It is not to be imagined, that a man could have been always blind, who thus inimitably copies nature, and gives every where the proper proportion, figure, colour and life : “ *Quem si quis cæcum genitum putat* (says § Paterculus) *omnibus sensibus orbis est :*” He must certainly have beheld the creation, considered it with a long attention, and enriched his fancy by the most sensible knowledge of those ideas which he makes the reader see while he but describes them.

*His Education and Master.*

As he grew forward in years, he was trained up to learning (if we credit ¶ Diodorus) under one “Pronapides, a man of excellent natural endowments, who taught the Pelasgic letter invented by Linus.”

*His Travels.*

When he was of riper years, for his farther accomplishment and the gratification of his thirst of knowledge, he spent a considerable part of his time in travelling. Upon which account, † Proclus has taken notice that he must have been rich : “ For long travels, says he, occasion high expences and especially at those times when men could neither fail

\* The medal is exhibited at the beginning of this essay.

§ Paterculus, l. 1.  
vita Hom.

¶ Diod. Sic. l. 3.

† Procl.

“ without imminent danger and inconveniences, nor had  
 “ a regulated manner of commerce with one another.”  
 This way of reasoning appears very probable; and if it  
 does not prove him to have been rich, it shews him, at  
 least, to have had patrons of a generous spirit; who ob-  
 serving the vastness of his capacity, believed themselves  
 beneficent to mankind, while they supported one who  
 seemed born for something extraordinary.

Ægypt being at that time the seat of learning, the  
 greatest wits and geniuses of Greece used to travel thi-  
 ther. Among these † Diodorus reckons Homer, and to  
 strengthen his opinion alledges that multitude of their  
 notions which he has received into his poetry, and of  
 their customs, to which he alludes in his fictions: Such  
 as his Gods, which are named from the first Ægyptian  
 kings; the number of the Muses taken from the *nine*  
*Minstrels* which attended Osiris; the Feast wherein they  
 used to send their statues of the deities into Æthiopia, and  
 to return after twelve days; and the carrying their dead  
 bodies over the lake to a pleasant place called Acherusia  
 near Memphis, from whence arose the stories of Charon,  
 Styx, and Elysium. These are notions which so abound  
 in him, as to make \* Herodotus say, He had introduced  
 from thence the religion of Greece. And if others have  
 believed he was an Ægyptian, from his knowledge of  
 their rites and traditions, which were revealed but to  
 few, and of the arts and customs which were practised a-  
 mong them in general; it may prove at least thus much.  
 that he must have travelled there.

As Greece was in all probability his native country,  
 and had then began to make an effort in learning, we

† Diod. Sic. l. 1.

\* ‘Ὁσίον γὰρ καὶ Ὀμηρον ἡλικίαν τετρακοσίοισι ἔτεσι  
 δοκίῳ μὲν πρεσβυτέρῳ γενέσθαι, καὶ ἔπλεοσι· ἔτοι δὲ εἰσι  
 οἱ ποιήσαντες θεογονίην Ἕλλησι, καὶ τοῖσι θεοῖσι τὰς ἐπω-  
 νυμίας δόντες, καὶ τιμὰς τε καὶ τέχνας διελόντες, καὶ εἶδεα  
 αὐτῶν σημενάντες. Herodot. l. 2.

cannot doubt but he travelled there also, with a particular observation. He uses the different *dialects* which are spoken in its different parts, as one who had been conversant with them all. But the argument which appears most irrefragable, is to be taken from his *catalogue* of the *ships*: He has there given us an exact Geography of Greece, where its cities, mountains, and plains, are particularly mentioned, where the courses of its rivers are traced out, where the countries are laid in order, their bounds assigned, and the uses of their soils specified. This the ancients, who compared it with the original, have allowed to be so true in all points, that it could never have been owing to a loose and casual information: even Strabo's account of Greece is but a kind of commentary upon Homer's.

We may carry this argument farther, to suppose his having been round Asia Minor, from his exact division of the *Regnum Priami vetes* (as Horace calls it) into its separate Dynasties, and the account he gives of the bordering nations in alliance with it. Perhaps too, in the wandrings of Ulysses about Sicily, whose ports and neighbouring islands are mentioned, he might contrive to send his hero where he had made his own voyage before. Nor will the fables he has intermingled be any objection to his having travelled in those parts, since they are not related as the history of the present time, but the tradition of the former. His mention of Thrace, his description of the beasts of Lybia, and of the climate in the Fortunate Islands, may seem also to give us a view of him in the extremes of the earth, where it was not barbarous or uninhabited. It is hard to set limits to the travels of a man, who has set none to that desire of knowledge which made him undertake them. Who can say what people he has not seen, who appears to be versed in the customs of all? He takes the globe for the scene on which he introduces his subjects; he launches forward intrepidly, like one to whom no place is new, and appears a citizen of the world in general.

When he returned from his travels, he seems to have applied himself to the finishing of his poems, however he might have either designed, begun, or pursued them before. In these he treasured up his various acquisitions of knowledge, where they have been preserved through many ages, to be as well the proofs of his own industry as the instructions of posterity. He could then describe his sacrifices after the Æolian manner; or \* his leagues with a mixture of Trojan and Spartan ceremonies: § He could then compare the confusion of a multitude to that tumult he had observed in the Icarian sea, dashing and breaking among its croud of islands: He could represent the numbers of an army, by those flocks of ¶ swans he had seen on the banks of the Cayster; or being to describe that heat of battle with which Achilles drove the Trojans into the river, \* § he could illustrate it with an allusion from Cyrene or Cyprus, where, when the inhabitants burned their fields, the grass-hoppers fled before the fire to perish in the ocean. His fancy being fully replenished, might supply him with every proper occasional image; and his soul after having enlarged itself, and taken in an extensive variety of the creation, might be equal to the task of an Iliad and an Odyssey.

In his *old age*, he fell blind, and settled *His old Age*  
at Chios, as he says in the Hymn to Apollo *and Death.*  
lo, (which as is before observed, is acknowledged for his by Thucydides, and might occasion both Simonides and Theocritus to call him a Chian) §§ Strabo relates, That Lycurgus, the great legislator of Sparta, was reported to have gone to Chios to have a conference with Homer, after he had studied the laws of Crete and Ægypt, in order to form his constitutions. If this be true, how much a nobler representation does it give of him, and indeed more agreeable to what we conceive of this mighty genius, than those spurious ac-

\* Iliad, 3,

§ Iliad, 2, v. 145,

¶ Iliad, 2,

v. 461.

\*§ Iliad, 21, v. 12.

§§ Strabo, l. 10.

counts which keep him down amongst the meanest of mankind ! What an idea could we frame to ourselves, of a conversation held between two persons so considerable ; a philosopher conscious of the force of poetry, and a poet knowing in the depths of philosophy ; both their souls improved with learning, both eminently raised above little designs or the meaner kind of interest, and meeting together to consult the good of mankind ! But in this I have only indulged a thought which is not to be insisted upon ; the evidence of history rather tends to prove that Lycurgus brought his works from Asia after his death : which ¶ Proclus imagines to have happened at a great old age, on account of his vast extent of learning, for which a short life could never suffice.

If we would now make a conjecture concerning the genius and temper of this great *His character and manners.* man ; perhaps his works which would not furnish us with facts for his life, will be more reasonably made use of to give us a picture of his mind : To this end therefore, we may suffer the very name and notion of a book to vanish for a while, and look upon what is left us as a conversation, in order to gain an acquaintance with Homer. Perhaps the general air of his works will become the general character of his genius ; and the particular observations give some light to the particular turns of his temper. His comprehensive knowledge shews that his soul was not formed like a narrow channel for a single stream, but as an expanse which might receive an ocean into its bosom ; that he had the strongest desire of improvement, and an unbounded curiosity, which made its advantage of every transient circumstance, or obvious accident. His solid and sententious manner may make us admire him for a man of judgment : one who, in the darkest ages, could enter far into a disquisition of human nature ; who, notwithstanding all the changes which governments, manners, rites, and even



the notions of virtue, have undergone, and notwithstanding the improvements since made in arts, could still abound with so many maxims correspondent to truth, and notions applicable to so many sciences. The fire, which is so observable in his poem, may make us naturally conjecture him to have been of a warm temper, and lively behaviour; and the pleasurable air which every where over-spreads it, may give us reason to think, that fire of imagination was tempered with sweetness and affability. If we farther observe the particulars he treats of, and imagine that he laid a stress upon the sentiments he delivers, pursuant to his real opinions; we shall take him to be of a religious spirit, by his inculcating in almost in every page the worship of the Gods. We shall imagine him to be a generous lover of his country, from his care to extol it every where; - which is carried to such a height, as to make † Plutarch observe, That though many of the Barbarians are made prisoners or suppliants, yet neither of these disgraceful accidents (which are common to all nations in war) ever happens to one Greek throughout his works. We shall take him to be a compassionate lover of mankind, from his numberless praises of hospitality and charity; (if indeed we are not to account for them, as the common writers of his life imagine, from his owing his support to these virtues.) It might seem from his love of stories, with his manner of telling them sometimes, that he gave his own picture when he painted his Nestor, and, as wise as he was, was no enemy to talking. One would think from his praises of wine, his copious goblets, and pleasing descriptions of banquets, that he was addicted to a cheerful, sociable life, which Horace takes notice of as a kind of tradition;

*“Laudibus arguitur vini vinosus Homerus.”*

Ep. 19. l. 1.

† Plutarch, de Aud. Poetis,

And that he was not (as may be guessed of Virgil from his works) averſe to the *female ſex*, will appear from his care to paint them amiably upon all occaſions: His Andromache and Penelope are in each of his poems moſt ſhining characters of conjugal affection; even his Helena herſelf is drawn with all the ſofternings imaginable; his ſoldiers are exhorted to combat with the hopes of *women*; his commanders are furniſhed with *fair ſlaves* in their tents, nor is the venerable Neſtor without a *miſtreſs*.

It is true, that in this way of turning a *book* into a *man*, this reaſoning from his works to himſelf, we can at beſt but hit off a few out-lines of a character: wherefore I ſhall carry it no farther, but conclude with one *diſcovery* which we may make from his *ſilence*; a diſcovery extremely proper to be made in this manner, which is, That he was of a very modeſt temper. There is in all other poets a cuſtom of ſpeaking of themſelves, and a vanity of promiſing eternity to their writings: in both which Homer, who has the beſt title to ſpeak out, is altogether ſilent. As to the laſt of them, the world has made him ample recompence; it has given him that eternity he would not promiſe himſelf: but whatever endeavours have been offered in reſpect of the former, we find ourſelves ſtill under an irreparable loſs. That which others have ſaid of him has mounted to no more than conjecture; that which I have ſaid is no farther to be inſiſted on: I have uſed the liberty which may be indulged me by precedent, to give my own opinions among the accounts of others, and the world may be pleaſed to receive them as ſo many willing endeavours to gratify its curioſity.

*Catalogue of his works.* The only incontestible works which Homer has left behind him are the Iliad and Odyſſey: The Batrachomyomachia or Battle of the frogs and mice, has been diſputed, but is however allowed for his by many authors; amongſt

whom \* Statius has reckoned it like the Culex of Virgil, a trial of force before his greater performances. It is indeed a beautiful piece of raillery, in which a great writer might delight to unbend himself; an instance of that agreeable trifling, which has been at some time or other indulged by the finest geniuses, and the offspring of that amusing and chearful humour, which generally accompanies the character of a rich imagination, like a vein of Mercury running mingled with a mine of gold.

The Hymns have been doubted also, and attributed by the scholiasts to Cynæthus the Rhapsodist: but neither † Thucydides, ¶ Lucian, nor § Pausanias, have scrupled to cite them as genuine. We have the authority of the two former for that to Apollo, though it be observed that the word Νόμος is found in it, which the book de Poesi Homerica (ascribed to Plutarch) tells us, was not in use in Homer's time. We have also an authority of the last for a ¶¶ Hymn to Ceres, of which he has given us a fragment. That to Mars is objected against for mentioning Τύραννος, and that which is the first to Minerva, for using Τυχὴ both of them being (according to the author of the treatise beforementioned) words of a later invention. The Hymn to Venus has many of its lines copied by Virgil, in the interview between Æneas and that Goddess in the first Æneid. But whether these hymns are Homer's, or not, they are always judged to be near as ancient, if not of the same age with him.

The Epigrams are extracted out of the life, said to be written by Herodotus, and we leave them as such to stand or fall with it; except the epitaph on Midas, which is very ancient, quoted without its author both by || Pla-

\* Silius Præf. ad Silv. 1.

† Thucyd. l. 3.

¶ Lucian Phalarid. 2.

§ Pausan. Bæotic.

¶¶ Paus. Messen.

|| Plat. in Phæd.

to and \* Longinus, and (according to † Laertius) ascribed by Simonides to Cleobulus the wise man; who living after Homer, answers better to the age of Midas the son of Gordias.

The Margites, which is lost, is said by ‡ Aristotle to have been a poem of a comic nature, wherein Homer made use of iambic verses as proper for raillery. It was a jest upon the fair sex, and had its name from one Margites, a weak man, who was the subject of it. The story is something loose, as may be seen by the account of it still preserved in § Eustathius's Comment on the Odyssey.

The Cercopes was a satirical work, which is also lost; we may however imagine it was levelled against the vices of men, if our conjecture be right that it was founded upon the || old fable of Cercopes, a nation who were turned into *monkies* for their frauds and impostures.

The Destruction of Oechalia, was a poem of which (according to Eustathius) Hercules was the hero; and the subject, his ravaging that country; because Eurystus the king had denied him his daughter Iole.

The Ilias Minor was a piece which included both the taking of Troy, and the return of the Grecians: In this was the story of Sinon, which Virgil has made use of. \*\* Aristotle has judged it not to belong to Homer.

The Cypriacs, if it was upon them that Nævius founded his Ilias Cypria, (as †† Mr. Dacier conjectures) were the *love adventures* of the ladies at the siege: these are rejected by §§ Herodotus, for saying that Paris brought Helen to Troy in three days; whereas Homer asserts they were long driven from place to place.

There are other things ascribed to him, such as the Heptapedion goat, the Arachnomachia, *etc.* in the ludi-

\* Longin. §. 36. Edit. Tollii.

† Laert. in vita Cleobuli.

‡ Arist. Poet. chap. 4.

§ Eustath. in Odyss. 10.

|| Ovid. Metam. l. 14. de Cercop.

\*\* Arist. poet. cap. 24.

†† Dac. on Arist. poet cap. 24.

§§ Herod. l. 2.

crous manner ; and the Thebais, Epigoni, or second siege of Thebes, the Phocais, Amazonia, *etc.* in the serious ; which, if they were his, are to be reputed a real loss to the learned world. Time, in some things, may have prevailed over Homer himself, and left only the names of these works, as memorials that such were in being ; but while the Iliad and Odyssæy remain, he seems like a leader who, though in his attempt of universal conquest he may have lost his advanced guards, or some few stragglers in the rear, yet with his main body ever victorious, passed in triumph through all ages.

The remains we have, at present, of those monuments antiquity had framed for him, are but few. *Monuments, Coins, Marbles, remaining of him.*

It could not be thought that they who knew so little of the life of Homer, could have a right knowledge of his *person* : yet they had statues of him as of their Gods, whose forms they had never seen. “ *Quinimo quæ non sunt, finguntur* (says \* Pliny) *patiturque desideria non traditi vultus, sicut in Homero evenit.*” But though the ancient portraits of him seem purely notional, yet they agree (as I think † Fabretti has observed) in representing him with a short curled beard, and distinct marks of age in his forehead. That which is prefixed to this book is taken from an ancient marble bust, in the palace of Farnese at Rome.

In Bolissus near Chios there is a ruin, which was shewn for the house of Homer, which § Leo Allatius went on pilgrimage to visit, and (as he tells us) found nothing but a few stones crumbling away with age, over which he and his companions wept for satisfaction.

They erected temples to Homer in Smyrna, as appears from || Cicero ; one of these is supposed to be yet extant, and the same which they shew for the temple of

\* Pliny. l. 35. c. 2.

† Raph. Falret. *Explicatio Vetteris Tabellæ Anaglyphæ, Hom. Iliad.*

§ Leo. Allat. de patria Hom. cap. 13.

|| Cicero pro Archia.



Janus. It agrees with † Strabo's description, a square building of stone, near a river, thought to be the Meles, with two doors opposite to each other, north and south, and a large niche within the east wall, where the image stood: but M. Spon denies this to be the true Homerium.

Of the medals struck for him, there are some both of Chios and Smyrna still in being, and exhibited at the beginning of this Essay. The most valuable with respect to the largeness of the head, is that of Amastris, which is carefully copied from an original belonging to the present earl of Pembroke, and is the same which Gronovius, Cuperus and Dacier have copies of, but very incorrectly performed.

But that which of all the remains has been of late the chief amusement of the learned, is the marble called his Apotheosis, the work of Archelaus of Priene, and now in the palace of Colonna. We see there a temple hung with its veil, where Homer is placed on a seat with a footstool to it, as he has described the seats of his Gods; supported on each side with figures representing the Iliad and the Odyssey, the one by a sword, the other by the ornament of a ship, which denotes the voyage of Ulysses. On each side of his footstool are *mice*, in allusion to the Batrachomyomachia. Behind is Time waiting upon him, and a figure with turrets on his head which signifies the World, crowning him with the laurel. Before him is an altar, at which all the Arts are sacrificing to him as to their deity. On one side of the altar stands a boy, representing Mythology; on the other a woman, representing History; after her is Poetry bringing the *sacred fire*; and in a long following train, Tragedy, Comedy, Nature, Virtue, Memory, Rhetoric, and Wisdom, in all their proper attitudes.

† Strabo, l. 14. Τὸ 'Ομήγειον εἰς τρεῖς ἄγαντες ἔχουσιν αἱ τρεῖς Ὀφείας καὶ Ζοάνες, etc. de Smyrna.

## S E C T. II.

HAVING now finished what was proposed concerning the history of Homer's life, I shall proceed to that of his works; and considering him no longer as a *man*, but as an *author*, prosecute the thread of his story in this his second life, through the different degrees of esteem which those writings have obtained in different periods of time.

It has been the fortune of several great geniuses not to be known while they lived, either for want of historians, the meanness of fortune, or the love of retirement, to which a poetical temper is peculiarly addicted. Yet after death their works give themselves a life in Fame, without the help of an historian; and, notwithstanding the meanness of their author, or his love of retreat, they go forth among mankind, the glories of that age which produced them, and the delight of those which follow it. This is a fate particularly verified in Homer, than whom no considerable author is less known as to himself, or more highly valued as to his productions.

The earliest account of these is said by || Plutarch to be some time after his death, when Lycurgus sailed to Asia: "There he had the first sight

*The first publication of his works by Lycurgus*

" of Homer's works, which were probably preserved by  
 " the grand children of Creophilus; and having observ-  
 " ed that their pleasurable air of fiction did not hinder  
 " the poet's abounding in maxims of state, and rules of  
 " morality, he transcribed and carried with him that en-  
 " tire collection we have now among us: for at that time  
 (continues this author) " there was only an obscure ru-  
 " mour in Greece to the reputation of these poems, and  
 " but a few scattered fragments handed about, till Ly-

|| Plut. vit. Lycurgi.

“curgus published them entire.” Thus they were in danger of being lost as soon as they were produced, by the misfortune of the age, a want of taste for learning, or the manner in which they were left to posterity, when they fell into the hands of Lycurgus. He was a man of great learning, a law-giver to a people divided and untractable, and one who had a notion that poetry influenced and civilized the minds of men; which made him smoothe the way to his constitution by the songs of Thales the Cretan, whom he engaged to write upon obedience and concord. As he proposed to himself, that the constitution he would raise upon this their union should be of a martial nature, these poems were of an extraordinary value to him; for they came with a full force into his scheme; the moral they inspired was unity; the air they breathed was martial; and their story had this particular engagement for the Lacedæmonians, that it shewed Greece in war, and Asia subdued under the conduct of one of their own monarchs, who commanded all the Grecian princes. Thus the poet both pleased the law-giver, and the people; from whence he had a double influence when the laws were settled. For his poem then became a panegyric on their constitution, as well as a register of their glory; and confirmed them in the love of it by a gallant description of those qualities and actions for which it was adapted. This made \* Cleomenes call him *The poet of the Lacedæmonians*: and therefore when we remember that Homer owed the publication of his works to Lycurgus, we should grant too, that Lycurgus owed in some degree the enforcement of his laws to the works of Homer.

*Their reception* At their first appearance in Greece,  
*in Greece.* they were not reduced into a regular body, but remained as they were brought over, in several separate pieces, called (according to † Alian) from the subject on which they treated; as the

\* Plutarch, Apophtheg.

† Alian, l. 13. cap. 14.

*battle at the ships, the death of Dolon, the valour of Agamemnon, the Patroclea, the grot of Calypso, slaughter of the wooers, and the like.* Nor were these entitled *books*, but *rhapsodies*; from whence they who sung them had the title of *rhapsodists*. It was in this manner they began to be dispersed, while their poetry, their history, the glory they ascribed to Greece in general, the particular description they gave of it, and the complement thy paid to every little state by an honourable mention, so influenced all, that they were transcribed and sung with general approbation. But what seems to have most recommended them was, that Greece which could not be great in its divided condition, looked upon the fable of them as a likely plan of future grandeur. They seem from thenceforward to have had an eye upon the conquest of Asia, as a proper undertaking, which by its importance might occasion union enough to give a diversion from civil wars, and by its prosecution bring in an acquisition of honour and empire. This is the meaning of †Isocrates, when he tells us, “ That Homer’s poetry was in the greater esteem, because it gave exceeding praise to those who fought against the Barbarians. Our ancestors (continues he) honoured it with a place in education and musical contests, that by often hearing it we should have a notion of an original enmity between us and those nations; and that admiring the virtue of those who fought at Troy, we should be induced to emulate their glory.” And indeed they never quitted this thought, till they had successfully carried their arms wherever Homer might thus excite them.

† Οἴμαι δὲ καὶ τὴν Ὅμηρον ποιήσιν μείζω λαβεῖν δοξεν, ὅτκαλῶς τῆς πολεμικῆς τοῖς βαρβάροις ἐνεκωμιάσῃ καὶ διὰ τῆς βελιθῆναι τῆς Προγόνους ἡμῶν ἐνέμιον αὐτῆ ποιῆσαι τὴν τέχνην, ἐν τε τοῖς τῆς μεσικῆς ἀθλοῖς, καὶ τῇ παιδεύσει τῶν νέων, ἵνα πολλάκις ἀκύνοντες τῶν ἐπῶν, ἐκμανθάνωμεν τὴν ἐχθρὰν τὴν πρὸς αὐτὰς ὑπάρχουσαν, καὶ ζηλῶντες τὰς ἀρετὰς τῶν ἐξαλειψαμένων ἐπὶ Τροίαν τῶν αὐτῶν ἔργων ἐκείνοις ἐπιθυμῶμεν. Isocrat. Paneg.

*Digested into order at Athens.* But while his works were suffered to lie in a distracted manner, the chain of story was not always perceived, so that they lost much of their force and beauty by being read disorderly. Wherefore as Lacedæmon had the first honour of their publication by Lycurgus, that of their regulation fell to the share of Athens in the time of ¶ Solon, who himself made a law for their recital. It was then that Pisistratus, the tyrant of Athens, who was a man of great learning and eloquence, (as § Cicero has it) first put together the confused parts of Homer, according to that regularity in which they are now handed down to us. He divided them into the two different works, entitled the Iliad and Odyssey; he digested each according to the author's design, to make their plans become evident; and distinguished each again into twenty-four books, to which were afterwards prefixed the twenty-four letters. There is a passage indeed in \* Plato, which takes this work from Pisistratus, by giving it to his son Hipparchus; with this addition, that he commanded them to be sung at the feast called Panathenæa. Perhaps it may be, as † Leo Allatius has imagined, because the son published the copy more correctly: This he offers, to reconcile so great a testimony as Plato's to the cloud of witnesses which are against him in it: but be that as it will, Athens still claims its proper honour of rescuing the father of learning from the injuries of time, of having restored Homer to himself, and given the world a view of him in his perfection. So that if his verses were before admired for their *use* and *beauty*, as the stars were

¶ Diog. Laert. vit. Sol.

§ Quis doctior iisdem illis temporibus, aut cujus eloquentia literis instructior quam Pisistrati? Qui primus Homeri libros, confusos antea, sic disposuisse dicitur ut nunc habemus. Cic. de Orat. 3. Vide etiam Æl. l. 13. cap. 14. Liban. Panegy. in Jul. Anonymam Homeri vitam. *Fusus vero in Commentatoribus* Dyon. Thracis. \* Plato in Hipparch. † Leo Allatius de patria Hom. cap. 5.



before they were considered scientifically as a system, they were now admired much more for their graceful harmony, and that sphere of order in which they appear to move. They became thenceforward more the pleasure of the wits of Greece, more the subject of their studies, and the employment of their pens.

About the time that this new edition of Homer was published in Athens, there was one Cynæthus, a learned Rhapsodist, who (as the § Scholiast of Pindar informs us) settled at first at Syracuse in that employment; and if (as Leo Allatius believes) he had been before an assistant in the edition, he may be supposed to have first carried it abroad. But it was not long preserved correct among his followers; they committed mistakes in their transcriptions and repetitions, and had even the presumption to alter some lines, and interpolate others. Thus the works of Homer run the danger of being utterly defaced; which made it become the concern of kings and philosophers, that they should be restored to their primitive beauty.

In the front of these is Alexander *The Edition in the Great, for whom they will appear Macedon under peculiarly calculated, if we consider Alexander.* that no books more enliven or flatter

personal valour, which was great in him to what we call romantic: Neither has any books more places applicable to his designs on Asia, (or as it happened) to his actions there. It was then no ill compliment in ¶ Aristotle to purge the Iliad, upon his account, from those errors and additions which had crept into it. And so far was Alexander himself from esteeming it a matter of small importance, that he afterwards † assisted in a strict review

§ Schol. Pind. in Nem. Od. 2.

¶ Plut. in vit. Alexandri.

† Φέρεται γὰρ τις διόρθωσις τῆς Ὀμήρου ποιήσεως ἡ ἐκ τῆς Νάρθηκος λεγομένη τῷ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ μετὰ τῷ περὶ Καλλιόπην καὶ Ἀνάξαρχον ἐπελθόντος, καὶ σημειῶ σαμένους ἔπειτα καταθέντος εἰς Ναρθηκα ὃν εὗρεν ἐν Περσικῇ γάζῃ πολυτελεῶς κατεσκευασμένον. Strabo, l. 13.

of it with Anaxarchus and Callisthenes : whether it was merely because he esteemed it a treasury of military virtue and knowledge ; or that (according to a late ingenious conjecture) he had a farther aim in promoting the propagation of it, when he was ambitious to be esteemed a son of Jupiter ; as a book which treating of the sons of the Gods, might make the intercourse between them and mortals become a familiar notion. The review being finished, he laid it up in a casket, which was found among the spoils of Darius, as what best deserved so inestimable a case ; and from this circumstance it was named, The Edition of the Casket.

The place where the works of Homer  
*Editions in* were next found in the greatest regard, is  
*Ægypt.* Ægypt, under the reign of the Ptolomies.

These kings being descended from Greece, retained always a passion for their original country. The men, the books, the qualifications of it, were in esteem in their court ; they preserved the language in their family ; they encouraged a concourse of learned men : erected the greatest library in the world ; and trained up their princes under Græcian tutors ; amongst whom the most considerable were appointed for revisers of Homer. The first of these was † Zenodotus, library-keeper to the first Ptolomy, and qualified for this undertaking by being both a poet and a grammarian : but neither his copy, nor that which his disciple Aristophanes had made, satisfying Aristarchus, (whom Ptolomy Philometor had appointed over his son Euergetes) he set himself to another correction with all the wit and learning he was master of. He restored some verses to their former readings, rejected others which he marked with *obelisks* as spurious, and proceeded with such industrious accuracy, that, notwithstanding there were some who wrote against his performance, antiquity has generally acquiesced in it. Nay, so far have they carried

† Suidas.

their opinion in his favour, as to call a man an \* Aristarchus, when they meant to say a candid, judicious critic; in the same manner as they call the contrary a Zoilus, from that Zoilus who about this time wrote an envious criticism against Homer. And now we mention these two together, I fancy it will be no small pleasure to the benevolent part of mankind, to see how their fortunes and characters stand in contrast to each other, for examples to future ages, at the head of the two contrary sorts of criticism, which proceed from good-nature or from ill-will. The one was honoured with the offices and countenance of the court; the other, † when he applied to the same place for an encouragement amongst the men of learning, had his petition rejected with contempt. The one had his fame continued to posterity; the other is only remembered with infamy. If the one had antagonists, they were obliged to pay him the deference of a formal answer; the other was never answered but in general, with those opprobrious names of *Thracian slave* and *rhetorical dog*. The one is supposed to have his copy still remaining; while the other's remarks are perished, as things that men were ashamed to preserve, the just desert of whatever arises from the miserable principles of ill-will or envy.

It was not the ambition of Ægypt only to have a correct edition of Homer. We find in the life of ¶ the poet Aratus, that he having finished a copy of the *Odyssey*, was sent for by Antiochus king of Syria, and entertained by him while he finished one of the *Iliads*. We read too of others which were published with the names of countries; such as the § *Messaliotic* and *Synopic*; as if the world were agreed to make his

*In Syria and other parts of Asia.*

\* Arguet ambigue dictum; mutanda notabit;

† Fiet Aristarchus---Horat, *Ars Poetica*.

‡ Vitruv. l. 7. in *Proœm*.

¶ Autor vitæ Arati, et

Suidas in *Arato*.

§ Eustathius initio *Iliados*.

works in their survival undergo the same fate with himself; and that as different cities contended for his birth, so they might again contend for his true edition. But though these reviews were not confined to Ægypt, the greatest honour was theirs, in that universal approbation which the performance of Aristarchus received; and if it be not his edition which we have at present, we know not to whom to ascribe it.

*In India and Persia.*

But the world was not contented barely to have settled an edition of his works.

There were innumerable comments, in which they were opened like a treasury of learning; and translations, whereby other languages became enriched by an infusion of his spirit of poetry. § Ælian tells us, that even the Indians had them in their tongue, and the Persian kings sung them in theirs. ¶ Persius mentions a version into Latin by Labeo; and in general the passages and imitations which are taken from him, are so numerous, that he may be said to have been translated by piece-meal into that, and all other languages: which affords us this remark, that there is hardly any thing in him, which has not been pitched upon by some author or other as a particular beauty.

*The extent and height of their reputation in the heathen world.*

It is almost incredible to what an height the idea of that veneration the ancients paid to Homer will arise, to one who reads particularly with this view, through all those periods. He was no sooner come from his obscurity, but Greece received him with delight and profit: there were then but few books to divide their attention, and none which had a better title to engross it all. They made some daily discoveries of his beauties, which were still promoted in their different channels by the favourite qualities of different nations. Sparta and Macedon considered him most in respect of his *warlike spirit*; Athens and Ægypt with

regard to his *poetry* and *learning*; and all their endeavours united under the hands of the learned, to make him blaze forth into an universal character. His works, which from the beginning passed for excellent *poetry*, grew to be *history* and *geography*; they rose to a *magazine* of *sciences*; were exalted into a *scheme* of *religion*; gave a sanction to whatever rites they mentioned, were quoted in all cases for the conduct of private life, and the decision of all questions of the law of nations; nay, learned by heart as the very book of belief and practice. From him the *poets* drew their inspirations, the *critics* their rulers, and the *philosophers* a defence of their opinions. Every author was fond to use his name, and every profession writ books upon him, until they swelled to libraries. The warriors formed themselves by his heroes, and the oracles delivered his verses for answers. Nor was mankind satisfied to have seated his character at the top of human wisdom, but being overborn with an imagination that he transcended their species, they admitted him to share in those honours they gave the deities. They instituted games for him, dedicated statues, erected temples, as at Smyrna, Chios and Alexandria; and ¶ Ælian tells us, that when the Argives sacrificed with their guests, they used to invoke the presence of Apollo and Homer together.

Thus he was settled on a foot of adoration, and continued highly venerated in the Roman empire, when Christianity began. Heathenism was then to be destroyed, and Homer appeared the father of it; whose fictions, were at once the belief of the Pagan religion, and the objections of Christianity against it. He became therefore very deeply involved in the question; and not with that honour which hitherto attended him, but as a criminal who had drawn the world into folly. He was on one hand accused for

*The decline of  
their character  
in the beginning  
of Christianity.*



having framed \* fables upon the works of Moses ; as the rebellion of the giants from the building of Babel, and the casting Ate or Strife out of heaven from the fall of Lucifer. He was exposed on the other hand for those which he is said to invent, as when † Arnobius cries out, “ This is the man who wounded your Venus, imprison-  
 “ ed your Mars, who freed even your Jupiter by Bri-  
 “ reus, and who finds authorites for all your vices,” *etc.* Mankind was †† derided for whatever he had hitherto made them believe ; and || Plato, who expelled him his common-wealth, has, of all the philosophers, found the best quarter from the fathers, for passing that sentence. His finest beauties began to take a new appearance of pernicious qualities ; and because they might be considered as allurements to fancy, or supports to those errors with which they were mingled, they were to be depreciated while the contest of faith was in being. It was hence, that the reading of them was discouraged, that we hear Rufinus accusing St. Jerome for it, and that ¶ St. Austin rejects him as the grand master of fable ; though indeed the *dulcissime vanus* which he applies to Homer, looks but like a fondling manner of parting with them.

This strong attack against our author, as the great bulwark of Paganism, obliged the philosophers who could have acquiesced as his admirers, to appear as his defenders ; who because they saw the fables could not be literally supported, endeavoured to find a hidden sense, and to carry on every where that vein of *allegory*, which was already broken open with success in some places. But how miserably were they forced to shifts, when they made \*\* Juno’s dressing in the Cestus for Jupiter, to signify the purging of the *air* as it approached the *fire* ? Or

\* Justin. Martyr, Admonit. ad gentes.  
 adversus gentes. l. 7.

† Arnobius

†† Vid. Tertull. Apol. cap. 14.

|| Arnobius, ibid. Eusebius præp. Evang. l. 14. cap. 10.

¶ St. August. Confess. l. 1 cap. 14.

\*\* Plutarch on

reading the Poets.

the story of Mars and Venus, that inclination they have to incontinency who are born when these planets are in conjunction? Wit and learning had here a large field to display themselves, and to disagree in; for sometimes Jupiter, and sometimes Vulcan was made to signify the fire; or Mars and Venus were allowed to give us a lecture of *morality* at one time, and a problem of *astronomy* at another. And these strange discoveries, which \* Porphyry and the rest would have to pass for the genuine *theology* of the Greeks, prove but (as † Eusebius terms it) the perverting of fables into a mystic sense. They did indeed often defend Homer, but then they allegorized away their Gods by doing so. What the world took for substantial objects of adoration, dissolved into a figurative meaning, a moral truth, or a piece of learning, which might equally correspond to any religion; and the learned at last had left themselves nothing to worship, when they came to find an object in Christianity.

The dispute of faith being over, ancient learning reassumed its dignity, and Homer obtained his proper place in the esteem of mankind. His books are now no longer the scheme of a living religion, but become the register of one of former times. They are not now received for a rule of life, but valued for those just observations which are dispersed through them. They are no longer pronounced from oracles, but quoted still by authors for their learning. Those remarks which the philosophers made upon them have their weight with us; those beauties which the poets dwelt upon, their admiration: and even after the abatement of what was extravagant in his run of praise, he remains confessedly a mighty genius, not transcended by any which have since arisen; a prince, as well as a father of poetry.

*Restoration of  
Homer's works  
to their just cha-  
racter.*

\* Porphyrius de Antro Nymp. etc.

† Eusebii Præpar.

Evangel. l. 3. cap. 1.

## S E C T. III.

*A view of the  
learning of Ho-  
mer's time.*

IT remains in this historical essay, to regulate our present opinion of Homer by a view of his learning, compared with that of his age. For this end he may first be considered as a poet, that character which was his professedly ; and secondly as one endowed with other sciences, which must be spoken of, not as in themselves, but as in subserviency to his main design. Thus he will be seen on his right foot of perfection in one view and with the just allowances which should be made on the other : While we pass through the several heads of science, the state of those times in which he writ will show us both the impediments he rose under, and the reasons why several things in him which have been objected to, either could not, or should not be otherwise than they are.

*In Poetry.*

As for the state of *poetry*, it was at a low pitch until the age of Homer. There is mention of Orpheus, Linus, and Musæus, venerable names in antiquity, and eminently celebrated in fable for the wonderful power of their songs and music. The learned Fabricius, in his *Bibliotheca Græca*, has reckoned about seventy who are said to have written before Homer ; but their works were not preserved, and that is a sort of proof they were not excellent. What sort of poets Homer saw in his own time, may be gathered from his description of \* Demodocus and Phemius, whom he has introduced to celebrate his profession. The imperfect risings of the art lay then among the *extempore* singers of stories at banquets, who were half singers, half musicians. Nor was the name of poet then in being, or once used throughout Homer's works. From this poor

\* Od. 1. st. and Od. 8th.

state of poetry, he has taken a handle to usher it into the world with the boldest stroke of praise which has ever been given it. It is in the eighth *Odyssëy*, where Ulysses puts Demodocus upon a trial of skill. Demodocus having diverted the guests with some actions of the Trojan war; “\* All this (says Ulysses) you have sung very elegantly, as if you had either been present, or heard it reported; but pass now to a subject I shall give you, sing the management of Ulysses in the wooden horse, just as it happened, and I will acknowledge the Gods have taught you your songs.” This the singer being inspired from heaven begins immediately, and Ulysses by weeping at the recital confesses the truth of it. We see here a narration which could only pass upon an age extremely ignorant in the nature of poetry, where that claim of inspiration is given to it which it has never since laid down, and (which is more) a power of prophesying at pleasure ascribed to it. Thus much therefore we gather from himself, concerning the most ancient state of poetry in Greece; that no one was honoured with the name of poet, before him whom it has especially belonged to ever after. And if we farther appeal to the consent of authors, we find he has other titles for being called the first. † Josephus observes, That the Greeks have not contested, but he was the most ancient, whose books they had. \* Aristotle says, he was the “first who brought all the parts of a poem into one piece,” to which he adds, “and with true judgment,” to give him a praise including both the invention and perfection. Whatever was serious or magnificent made a part of his subject: War and peace were the comprehensive division in which he considered the world; and the plans of his poems were founded on the most active scenes of each, the adventures of a siege, and the accidents of a voyage. For these, his spirit was equally active and various, lof-

\* *Odyss.* l. 8. v. 487, etc      † Joseph. contra Appion. l. 1.

\* *Arist. Poet.* cap. 25.

ty in expression, clear in narration, natural in description, rapid in action, abundant in figures. If ever he appears less than himself, it is from the time he writ in; and if he runs into errors, it is from an excess, rather than a defect of genius. Thus he rose over the poetical world, shining out like a sun all at once; which if it sometimes make too *faint* an appearance, it is to be ascribed only to the unkindness of the season that clouds and obscures it, and if he is sometimes too *violent*, we confess at the same time that we owe all things to his heat.

*Theology.* As for his *theology*, we see the heathen system entirely followed. This was all he could then have to work upon, and where he fails of truth for want of revelation, he at least shews his knowledge in his own religion by the traditions he delivers. But we are now upon a point to be farther handled, because the greatest controversy concerning the merit of Homer depends upon it. Let us consider then, that there was an age in Greece, when natural reason only discovered in general, that there must be something superior to us, and corrupt tradition had affixed the notion to a number of deities. At this time Homer rose with the finest turn imaginable for poetry, who designing to instruct mankind in the manner for which he was most adapted, made use of the ministry of the Gods to give the highest air of veneration to his writings. He found the religion of mankind consisting of fables; and their morality and political instruction delivered in allegories. Nor was it his business when he undertook the province of a poet, (not of a mere philosopher) to be the first who should discard that which furnishes poetry with its most beautiful appearance: and especially, since the age he lived in, by discovering its taste, had not only given him authority, but even put him under the necessity of preserving it. Whatever therefore he might think of his Gods, he took them as he found them: he brought them into action according to the notions that were then entertained,



and in such stories as were then believed; unless we imagine so great an absurdity, as that he invented every thing he delivers. Yet there are several rays of truth streaming through all this darkness, in those sentiments he entertains concerning providence of the Gods, delivered in several allegories lightly veiled over, from whence the learned afterwards pretended to draw new knowledges, each according to his power of penetration and fancy. But that we may the better comprehend him in all the parts of this general view, let us extract from him a scheme of his religion.

He has a Jupiter, a *father of Gods and men*, to whom he applies several attributes, as wisdom, justice, knowledge, power, *etc.* which are essentially inherent to the idea of a God. \* He has given him two *vessels*, out of which he distributes natural *good* or *evil* for the life of man: he places the Gods in council round him; he makes † *prayers* pass to and fro before him; and mankind adore him with sacrifice. But all this grand appearance wherein poetry paid a deference to reason, is dashed and mingled with the imperfection of our nature; not only with the applying our passions to the supreme being (for men have always been treated with this compliance to their notions) but that he is not even exempted from our common appetites and frailties: for he is made to eat, drink and sleep: but this his admirers would imagine only to be a grosser way of representing a general notion of happiness, because he says in one place, \* that the food of the Gods was not of the same nature with ours. But upon the whole, while he endeavoured to speak of a deity without a right information, he was forced to take him from that image he discovered in *man*; and (like one who being dazzled with the sun in the heavens, would view him as he is reflected in a river) he has taken off the impression not only ruffled with the

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\* Iliad. 24. v. 527. † Il. 9. v. 498. \* Il. 5. v. 340.

emotion of our passions, but obscured with the earthy mixture of our natures.

The other Gods have all their provinces assigned them; “ Every thing has its peculiar deity, says \* Maximus Tyrius, by which Homer would insinuate that “ the Godhead was present to all things.” When they are considered farther, we find he has turned the virtues and endowments of our minds into *persons*, to make the springs of action become visible; and because they are given by the Gods, he represents them as Gods themselves descending from heaven. In the same strong light he shews our vices, when they occasion misfortunes, like extraordinary powers which inflict them upon us; and even our natural punishments are represented as punishers themselves. But when we come to see the manner they are introduced in, they are found feasting, fighting, wounded by men, and shedding a sort of blood, in which his machines play a little too grossly: the fable which was admitted to procure the pleasure of surprize, violently oppresses the moral, and it may be lost labour to search for it in every minute circumstance, if indeed it was intended to be there. The general strokes are however philosophical, the dress the poet’s, which was used for convenience, and allowed to be ornamental. And something still may be offered in his defence, if he has both preserved the grand moral from being obscured, and adorned the parts of his works with such sentiments of the Gods as belonged to the age he lived in; which that he did, appears from his having then had that success for which allegory was contrived. “ It is the “ madness of men, says † Maximus Tyrius, to esteem what is plain, and admire what is hidden; this “ the poets discovering, invented the fable for a remedy, when they treated of holy matters; which being “ more obscure than conversation, and more clear than “ the riddle, is a mean between knowledge and igno-

\* Maxim. Tyrius, Diss. 16.

† Maxim. Tyr. Diss. 29.

“ rance ; believed partly for being agreeable, and partly  
 “ for being wonderful. Thus as poets in name, and  
 “ philosophers in effect, they drew mankind gradually  
 “ to a search after truth, when the name of philosopher  
 “ would have been harsh and displeasing.”

When Homer proceeds to tell us our duty to those superior beings, we find prayer, sacrifice, lustration, and all the rites which were esteemed religious, constantly recommended under fear of their displeasure. We find too a notion of the soul's subsisting after this life, but for want of revelation he knows not what to reckon the happiness of a future state, to any one who was not deified : which is plain from the speech of \* Achilles to Ulysses in the region of the dead ; where he tells him, that “ he would rather serve the poorest creature upon earth, “ than rule over all the departed.” It was chiefly for this reason that Plato excluded him his commonwealth ; he thought Homer spoke indecently of the Gods, and dreadfully of a future state : but if he cannot be defended in every thing as a theologist, yet we may say in respect of his poetry, that he has enriched it from theology with true sentiments for profit ; adorned it with allegories for pleasure ; and by using some machines which have no farther significancy, or are so refined as to make it doubted if they have any, he has however produced that character in poetry which we call the *marvellous*, and from which the *agreeable* (according to Aristotle) is always inseparable.

If we take the state of Greece at his time *Politics.* in a political view, we find it a † disunited country, made up of small states ; and whatever was managed in war amounted to no more than intestine skirmishes, or piracies abroad, which were easily revenged on account of their disunion. Thus one people stole Europa, and another Io ; the Grecians took Hesioue from Troy, and the Trojans took Helena from Greece in re-

\* Odyss. 11. v. 488. † See Thucydides, lib. 1.

venge. But this last having greater friends and alliances than any upon whom the rapes had hitherto fallen, the ruin of Troy was the consequence; and the force of the Asiatic coasts was so broken, that this accident put a stop to the age of piracies. Then the intestine broils of Greece (which had been discontinued during the league) were renewed upon its dissolution. War and sedition moved people from place to place, during its want of inhabitants; exiles from one country where received for kings in another: and leaders took tracts of ground to bestow them upon their followers. Commerce was neglected, living at home unsafe, and nothing of moment transacted by any but against their neighbours. Athens only, where the people were undisturbed because it was a barren soil which no body coveted, had begun to send colonies abroad, being over-stocked with inhabitants.

Now a poem coming out at such a time, with a moral capable of healing these disorders by promoting *union*, we may reasonably think it was designed for that end to which it is so peculiarly adapted. If we imagine therefore that Homer was a politician in this affair, we may suppose him to have looked back into the ages past, to see if at any time these disorders had been less; and to have pitched upon that story, wherein they found a temporary cure; that by celebrating it with all possible honour he might instil a desire of the same sort of union into the hearts of his countrymen. This indeed was a work which could belong to none but a poet, when governors had power only over small territories, and the numerous governments were every way independent. It was then that all the charms of poetry were called forth, to insinuate the important glory of an alliance; and the *Iliad* delivered as an oracle from the muses, with all the pomp of words and artificial influence. Union among themselves was recommended, peace at home, and glory abroad: and lest general precepts should be rendered useless by misapplications, he gives minute and particular lessons concerning it: How when his kings quarrel,

their subjects suffer; when they act in conjunction, victory attends them: Therefore when they meet in council, plans are drawn, and provisions made for future action; and when in the field, the arts of war are described with the greatest exactness. These were lectures of general concern to mankind, proper for the poet to deliver, and kings to attend to; such as made Porphyry write of the profit that princes might receive from Homer; and Stratocles, Hermias, and Frontinus extract military discipline out of him. Thus though Plato has banished him from one imaginary common-wealth, he has still been serviceable to many real kingdoms.

The morality of Greece could not be perfect while there was a natural weakness in its government; faults in politics are occasioned by faults in ethics, and occasion them in their turn. The division into so many states was the rise of frequent quarrels, whereby men were bred up in a rough untractable disposition. Bodily strength met with the greatest honours, because it was daily necessary to the subsistence of little governments, and that headlong courage which throws itself forward to enterprize and plunder, was universally carested, because it carried all things before it. It is no wonder in an age of such education and customs, that, as \* Thucydides says, "Robbing was honoured, provided it were done with gallantry, and that the ancient poets made people question one another as they failed by, *if they were thieves?* as a thing for which no one ought either to be scorned or upbraided." These were the sort of actions which the singers then recorded, and it was out of such an age that Homer was to take his subjects. For this reason (not a want of morality in him) we see a boasting temper and unmanaged roughness in the spirit of his heroes, which ran out in pride, anger, or cruelty. It is not in him as in our modern romances, where men are drawn in perfect

\* Thucyd. lib. 1.



tion, and we but read with a tender weakness what we can neither apply nor emulate. Homer writ for men, and therefore he writ of them; if the world had been better, he would have shewn it so; as the matter now stands, we see his people with the turn of his age, insatiably thirsting after glory and plunder; for which however he has found them a lawful cause, and taken care to retard their success by the intemperance of those very appetites.

In the prosecution of the story, every part of it has its lessons of morality: There is brotherly love in Agamemnon and Menelaus, friendship in Achilles and Patroclus, and the love of his country in Hector. But since we have spoken of the Iliad as more particular for its politics, we may consider the Odyssey, as its moral is more directly framed for ethics. It carries the hero through a world of trials both of the dangerous and pleasurable nature. It shews him first under most surprising weights of adversity, among shipwrecks and savages; all these he is made to pass through, in the methods by which it becomes a man to conquer; a patience in suffering, and a presence of mind in every accident. It shews him again in another view, tempted with the baits of idle or unlawful pleasures; and then points out the methods of being safe from them. But if in general we consider the care our author has taken to fix his lessons of morality by the proverbs and precepts he delivers, we shall not wonder if Greece, which afterwards gave the appellation of *wise* to men who settled *single sentences of truth*, should give him the title of the *father of virtue*, for introducing such a number. To be brief, if we take the opinion of † Horace, he has proposed him to us as a master of morality; he lays down the common philosophical division of *good* into *pleasant, profitable, and honest*;

† Qui quid sit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non, Plenius et melius Chrysippo et Crantore dicit.

Hor. Ep. 2. l. 1.

and then asserts that Homer has more fully and clearly instructed us in each of them, than the most rigid philosophers.

Some indeed have thought, notwithstanding all this, that Homer had only a design to please in his inventions; and that others have since extracted morals out of his stories (as indeed all stories are capable of being used so.) But this is an opinion concerning poetry, which the world has rather degenerated into, than begun with. The traditions of Orpheus's civilizing mankind by moral poems, with others of the like nature, may shew there was a better use of the art both known and practised. There is also a remarkable passage of this kind in the third book of the *Odyssy*, that Agamemnon left one of the † poets of those times in his court when he sailed for Troy; and that his queen was preserved virtuous by songs until Ægythus was forced to expel him in order to debauch her. Here he has hinted what a true poetical spirit can do, when applied to the promotion of virtue; and from this one may judge he could not but design *that* himself, which he recommends as the duty and merit of his profession. Others since his time may have seduced the art to worse intentions; but they who are offended at the liberties of some poets, should not condemn all in the gross for trifling or corruption; especially when the evidence runs so strongly for any one, to the contrary.

We may in general go on to observe, that at the time when Homer was born, Greece did not abound in learning. For wherever politics and morality are weak, learning wants its peaceable air to thrive in. He has however introduced as much of their learning, and even of what he learned from Ægypt as the nature and compass of his work would admit. But that we may not mistake the eulogies of those ancients who call him the *father of arts and sciences*, and be surpris'd to find so little of them

† *Odyss.* 3. v. 267.

(as they are now in perfection) in his works; we should know that this character is not to be understood at large, as if he had included the full and regular systems of every thing: He is to be considered professedly only in quality of a poet: this was his business, to which as what ever he knew was to be subservient, so he has not failed to introduce those strokes of knowledge from the whole circle of arts and sciences, which the subject demanded, either for necessity or ornament. And secondly, it should be observed, that many of those notions, which his great genius drew only from nature and the truth of things, have been imagined to proceed from his acquaintance with arts and sciences, invented long after; to which that they were applicable, was no wonder, since both his notions and those sciences were equally founded in truth and nature,

*History.* Before his time there were no historians in Greece: he treated historically of past transactions, according as he could be informed by tradition, song, or whatever method there was of preserving their memory. For this we have the consent of antiquity; they have generally more appealed to his authority, and more insisted on it, than on the testimony of any other writer, when they treat of the rites, customs and manners of the first times. They have generally believed that the acts of Tydeus at Thebes, the second siege of that city, the settlement of Rhodes, the battle between the Curetes and the Ætolians, the succession of the kings of Mycenæ by the sceptre of Agamemnon, the acts of the Greeks at Troy, and many other such accounts, are some of them wholly preserved by him, and the rest as faithfully related as by any historian, Nor perhaps was all of his invention which seems to be feigned, but rather frequently the obscure traces and remains of real persons and actions: which as † Strabo observes, when history was transmitted by oral tradition, might be mixed

† Strabo, l. 1.

with fable before it came into the hands of the poet. "This happened (says he) to Herodotus, the first professed historian, who is as fabulous as Homer when he defers to the common reports of countries; and it is not to be imputed to either as a fault, but as a necessity of the times." Nay the very passages which cause us to tax them at this distance with being fabulous, might be occasioned by their diligence, and a fear of erring, if they too hastily rejected those reports which had passed current in the nations they described.

Before his time there was no such thing as *geography* in Greece. For this we have the suffrage of \* Strabo, the best of geographers, who approves the opinion of Hipparchus and other ancients, that Homer was the very author of it; and upon this account begins his treatise on the science itself, with an *encomium* on him. As to the general part of it, we find he had a knowledge of the earth's being surrounded with the ocean, because he makes the sun and stars both to rise and set in it; and that he knew the use of the stars is plain from his making † Ulysses sail by the observation of them. But the instance oftenest alledged upon this point is the \* shield of Achilles; where he places the earth encompassed with the sea, and gives the stars the names they are yet known by, as the Hyades, Pleiades, the Bear, and Orion. By the three first of these he represents the constellations of the northern region; and in the last he gives a single representative of the southern, to which (as it were for a counter-balance) he adds a title of greatness, σείνος Ὀριωνος. Then he tells us that the Bear, or stars of the arctic circle, never disappear; as an observation which agrees with no other. And if to this we add (what Eratosthenes thought he meant) that the five plates which were fastned on the shield, divided it by the lines where they met, into the five zones,

\* Strabo, *ibid.* initio. † Odyss. l. 5. v. 272.

\* Iliad 18. v. 482, etc.

it will appear an original design of globes and spheres. In the particular parts of *geography* his knowledge is entirely incontestable. Strabo refers to him upon all occasions, allowing that he knew the extremes of the earth, some of which he names, and others he describes by signs, as the fortunate Islands. The same \* author takes notice of his accounts concerning the several soils, plants, animals, and customs; as Ægypt's being fertile of medicinal herbs; Lybia's fruitfulness, where the ewes have horns, and yean thrice a year, *etc.* which are knowledges that make *geography* more various and profitable. But what all have agreed to celebrate is his description of Greece, which had laws made for its preservation, and contests between governments decided by its authority: which † Strabo acknowledges to have no epithet, or ornamental expression for any place, that is not drawn from its nature, quality, or circumstances; and professes (after so long an interval) to deviate from it only where the country had undergone alterations, that cast the description into obscurity.

*Rhetoric.* In his time *rhetoric* was not known: that art took its rise out of poetry, which was not till then established. "The oratorical elocution (says \* Strabo) is but an imitation of the poetical; this appeared first and was approved: they who imitated it, took off the measures, but still preserved all the other parts of poetry in their writings: such were Cadmus the Milesian, Pherecydes, and Hecataeus. Then their followers took something more from what was left, and at last elocution descended into the prose which is now among us." But if *rhetoric* is owing to poetry, the obligation is still more due to Homer. He (as † Quintilian tells us) gave both the pattern and rise to all the parts of it. "*Hic omnibus eloquentiæ partibus exemplum et ortum dedit: Hunc nemo in magnis rebus*

\* Strabo, l. 1.

† Strabo, l. 8.

\* Strabo, l. 1.

† Quintil. l. 10, cap. 1.



“*sublimitate, in parvis proprietate, superavit. Idem*  
 “*letus et pressus, jucundus et gravis, tum copia tum*  
 “*brevitate admirabilis, nec poetica modo sed oratoria*  
 “*virtute eminentissimus.*” From him therefore they who  
 settled the art found it proper to deduce the rules, which  
 was easily done, when they had divided their observations  
 into the kinds and the ornaments of elocution. For the  
 kinds, the “ancients (says \* A. Gell.) settled them accord-  
 “ing to the three which they observe in his principal speak-  
 “ers; his Ulysses, who is magnificent and flowing; his  
 “Menelaus, who is short and close; and his Nestor,  
 “who is moderate and dispassioned, and has a kind of  
 “middle eloquence participating of both the former.”  
 And for the ornaments, † Aristotle, the great master of  
 the rhetoricians, shews what deference is due to Homer,  
 when he orders the orator to lay down his heads, and  
 express both the manners and affections of his work, with  
 an imitation of that diction, and those figures, which the  
*divine Homer* excelled in. This is the constant language  
 of those who succeeded him, and the opinion so far pre-  
 vailed as to make \* Quintilian observe, that they who  
 have written concerning the art of speaking, take from  
 Homer most of the instances of their similitudes, ampli-  
 fication, examples, digressions, and arguments.

As to *natural philosophy*, the age was  
 not arrived when the Greeks cultivated *Natural phi-*  
 and reduced into system the principles of *losophy.*  
 it which they learned from Ægypt: yet we see many of  
 these principles delivered up and down in his work. But  
 as this is a branch of learning which does not lie much  
 in the way of a poet who speaks of heroes and wars; the  
 desire to prove his knowledge this way, has only run † Po-  
 litian and others into trifling inferences; as when they  
 would have it that he understood the secrets of philoso-  
 phy, because he mentions sun, rain, wind and thunder.

\* Aulus Gell. l. 7. cap. 14.

† Arist. Topic.

\* Quintil. l. 10.

† Politian. Præfatio in Hom.

The most plausible way of making out his knowledge in this kind, is by supposing he couched it in allegories; and that he sometimes used the *names of the Gods* as his *terms* for the *elements*, as the *chymists* now use them for *metals*. But in applying this to him we must tread very carefully; not searching for allegory too industriously, where the passage may instruct by example; and endeavouring rather to find the fable an ornament to plain truths, than to make it a cover to curious and unknown problems.

*Physic.* As for *medicine*, something of it must have been understood in that age; though in Greece it was so far from perfection, that what concerned *diet* was invented long after by Hippocrates. The accidents of life make the search after remedies too indispensable a duty to be neglected at any time. Accordingly he \* tells us, that the Ægyptians, who had many medicinal plants in their country, were all physicians; and perhaps he might have learnt his own skill from his acquaintance with that nation. The state of war which Greece had lived in, required a knowledge in the healing of wounds; and this might make him breed his princes, Achilles, Patroclus, Podalirius, and Machaon, to the science. What Homer thus attributes to others, he knew himself, and he has given us reason to believe, not slightly. For if we consider his insight into the structure of the human body it is so nice, that he has been judged by some to have wounded his heroes which too much science: or if we observe his cure of wounds, which are the accidents proper to an epic poem, we find him directing the chîrurgical operation, sometimes infusing † lenitives, and at other times bitter powders, when the effusion of blood required astringent qualities.

*Statuary.* For *statuary*, it appears by the accounts of Ægypt and the Palladium, that there was enough of it very early in the world for those images

\* Odyss. l. 4. v. 231. † Il. 4. v. 218. add Il. 11. in fine.

which were required in the worship of their Gods; but there are none mentioned as valuable in Greece so early, nor was the art established on its rules before Homer. He found it agreeable to the worship in use, and necessary for his machinery, that his Gods should be clothed in bodies: wherefore he took care to give them such as carried the utmost perfection of the human form; and distinguished them from each other even in this superior beauty, with such marks as were agreeable to each of the deities. “ This, says \* Strabo, awakened the conceptions of the most eminent statuaries, while they strove to keep up the grandeur of that idea, which Homer had impressed upon the imagination, as we read of Phidias concerning their statue of Jupiter.” And because they copied their Gods from him in their best performances, his descriptions became the *characters* which were afterwards pursued in all works of good taste. Hence came the common saying of the ancients, “ That either Homer was the only man who had seen the forms of the Gods, or the only one who had shewn them to men;” a passage which † madam Dacier wrests to prove the truth of his theology, different from Strabo’s acceptance of it.

There are, besides what we have spoken of, other sciences pretended to be found in him. Thus Macrobius discovers that the *chain* with which ¶ Jupiter says he could lift the world, is a *metaphysical notion*, that means a connexion of all things from the supreme being to the meanest part of the creation. Others, to prove him skilful in *judicial astrology*, bring a quotation concerning the births of \* Hector and Polydamas on the same night; who were nevertheless of different qualifications, one excelling in war, and the other in eloquence: others again will have him to be versed in *magic*, from his sto-

## H 3

\* Strabo, l. 8. † Dacier, Preface to Homer. ¶ ll. 8. v. 19. Vid. Macrobi. de somn. Scip. l. 1. c. 14. \* ll. 18. v. 252.

ries concerning Circe. These and many of the like nature are interpretations strained or trifling, such as are not wanted for a proof of Homer's learning, and by which we contribute nothing to raise his character, while we sacrifice our judgment in the eyes of others.

It is sufficient to have gone thus far, in shewing he was the father of learning, a soul capable of ranging over the whole creation with an intellectual view, shining alone in an age of obscurity, and shining beyond those who have had the advantage of more learned ages; leaving behind him a work not only adorned with all the knowledge of his own time, but in which he has beforehand broken up the fountains of several sciences which were brought nearer to perfection by posterity: A work which shall always stand at the top of the sublime character, to be gazed at by readers with an admiration of its perfection, and by writers with a despair that it should ever be emulated with success.

T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K I.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The contention of Achilles and Agamemnon.

*IN the war of Troy, the Greeks having sacked some of the neighbouring towns, and taken from thence two beautiful captives, Chryseis and Briseis, allotted the first to Agamemnon, and the last to Achilles. Chryses, the father of Chryseis, and priest of Apollo, comes to the Grecian camp to ransom her; with which the action of the poem opens, in the tenth year of the siege. The priest being refused and insolently dismissed by Agamemnon, intreats for vengeance from his God, who inflicts a pestilence on the Greeks. Achilles calls a council, and encourages Chalcas to declare the cause of it, who attributes it to the refusal of Chryseis. The king being obliged to send back his captive, enters into a furious contest with Achilles, which Nestor pacifies; however, as he had the absolute command of the army, he seizes on Briseis in revenge. Achilles in discontent withdraws himself and his forces from the rest of the Greeks; and complaining to Thetis, she supplicates Jupiter to render them sensible of the wrong done to her son, by giving victory to the Trojans. Jupiter granting her suit incenses Juno, between whom the debate runs high, till they are reconciled by the address of Vulcan.*



*The time of two and twenty days is taken up in this book; nine during the plague, one in the council and quarrel of the princes, and twelve for Jupiter's stay with the Æthiopians, at whose return Thetis prefers her petition. The scene lies in the Grecian camp, then changes to Chrysa, and lastly to Olympus.*

**A**CHILLES' wrath, to Greece the direful spring  
 Of woes unnumber'd, heav'nly Goddess sing!  
 That wrath which hurl'd to Pluto's gloomy reign  
 The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain;

### N O T E S.

IT is something strange, that of all the commentators upon Homer, there is hardly one whose principal design is to illustrate the poetical beauties of the author. They are voluminous in explaining those sciences which he made but subservient to his poetry, and sparing only upon that art which constitutes his character. This has been occasioned by the ostentation of men who had more reading than taste, and were fonder of shewing their variety of learning in all kinds, than their single understanding in poetry. Hence it comes to pass, that their remarks are rather philosophical, historical, geographical, allegorical, or in short rather any thing than critical and poetical. Even the grammarians, though their whole business and use be only to render the words of an author intelligible, are strangely touched with the pride of doing something more than they ought. The grand ambition of one sort of scholars is to increase the number of *various lections*; which they have done to such a degree of obscure diligence, that (as Sir H. Savil observed) we now begin to value the first editions of books as most correct, because they have been least corrected. The prevailing passion of others is to discover *new meanings* in the author, whom they will cause to appear my-

Book I.                    H O M E R's I L I A D.                    3  
Whose limbs unbury'd on the naked shore,                    5  
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore :

sterious purely for the vanity of being thought to unravel him. These account it a disgrace to be of the opinion of those that preceded them ; and it is generally the fate of such people who will never say what was said before, to say what will never be said after them. If they can but find a word, that has once been strained by some dark writer, to signify any thing different from its usual acceptation ; it is frequent with them to apply it constantly to that uncommon meaning, whenever they meet it in a clear writer : For reading is so much dearer to them than sense, that they will discard it at any time to make way for a criticism. In other places where they cannot contest the truth of the common interpretation, they get themselves room for dissertation by imaginary *amphibologies*, which they will have to be designed by the author. This disposition of finding out different significations in one thing, may be the effect of either too much, or too little wit : For men of a right understanding generally see at once all that an author can reasonably mean, but others are apt to fancy two meanings for want of knowing one. Not to add, that there is a vast deal of difference between the learning of a critic, and the puzzling of a grammarian.

It is no easy task to make something out of a hundred pedants that is not pedantical ; yet this he must do, who would give a tolerable abstract of the former expositors of Homer. The commentaries of Eustathius are indeed an immense treasury of the Greek learning ; but as he seems to have amassed the substance of whatever others had written upon the author, so he is not free from some of the foregoing censures. There are those who have said, that a judicious abstract of him alone, might furnish out sufficient illustrations upon Homer. It was resolved to take the trouble of reading through that voluminous work, and the reader may be assured, those remarks

Since great Achilles and Atrides strove,  
Such was the sov'reign doom, and such the will of Jove !

that any way concern the poetry, or art of the poet, are much fewer than is imagined. The greater part of these is already plundered by succeeding commentators, who have very little but what they owe to him : and I am obliged to say even of madam Dacier, that she is either more beholden to him than she has confessed, or has read him less than she is willing to own. She has made a farther attempt than her predecessors to discover the beauties of the poet ; though we have often only her general praise, and exclamations instead of reasons. But her remarks all together are the most judicious collection extant of the scattered observations of the ancients and moderns, as her preface is excellent, and her translation equally careful and elegant.

The chief design of the following notes is to comment upon Homer as a poet ; whatever in them is extracted from others is constantly owned ; the remarks of the ancients are generally set at length, and the places cited ; all those of Eustathius are collected which fall under this scheme : many, which were not acknowledged by other commentators, are restored to the true owner ; and the same justice is shewn to those who refused it to others.

THE plan of this poem is formed upon anger and its ill effects, the plan of Virgil's upon pious resignation and its rewards ; and thus every passion or virtue may be the foundation of the scheme of an epic poem. This distinction between two authors who have been so successful, seemed necessary to be taken notice of, that they who would imitate either may not stumble at the very entrance, or so curb their imaginations, as to deprive us of noble morals told in a new variety of accidents. Imitation does not hinder invention : We may observe the rules of nature, and write in the spirit of those who

Declare, O muse ! in what ill-fated hour  
Sprung the fierce strife, from what offended pow'r ? 10

have best hit upon them ; without taking the same track, beginning in the same manner, and following the main of their story almost step by step ; as most of the modern writers of epic poetry have done after one of these great poets.

v. 1.] Quintilian has told us, that from the beginning of Homer's two poems the rules of all *exordiums* were derived "*In paucissimis versibus, utriusque operis ingressu, legem Præmiorum non dico servavit, sed constituit.*" Yet Rapin has been very free with this invocation, in his *Comparison between Homer and Virgil* ; which is by no means the most judicious of his works. He cavils first at the poet's insisting so much upon the effects of Achilles's anger, That it was " the cause of " the woes of the Greeks," that it " sent so many heroes to the shades," that " their bodies were left a prey " to birds and beasts," the first of which he thinks had been sufficient. One may answer, that the woes of Greece might consist in several other things than in the death of her heroes, which was therefore needful to be specified : As to the bodies, he might have reflected how great a curse the want of burial was accounted by the ancients, and how prejudicial it was esteemed even to the souls of the deceased : We have a most particular example of the strength of this opinion from the conduct of Sophocles in his *Ajax* ; who thought this very point sufficient to make the distress of the last act of that tragedy after the death of his hero, purely to satisfy the audience that he obtained the rites of sepulture. Next he objects it as preposterous in Homer to desire the muse to tell him the whole story, and at the same time to inform her solemnly in his own person that it was the *will of Jove* which brought it about. But is a poet then to be imagined intirely ignorant of his subject, though he invokes the muse to relate the particulars ? May not Homer be allowed

Latona's son, a dire contagion spread,  
And heap'd the camp with mountains of the dead.

the knowledge of so plain a truth, as that the will of God is fulfilled in all things? Nor does his manner of saying this infer that he *informs* the muse of it, but only corresponds with the usual way of desiring information from another concerning any thing, and at the same time mentioning that little we know of it in general. What is there more in this passage? "Sing, O Goddess, that wrath of Achilles, which proved so pernicious to the Greeks: we only know the effects of it, that it sent innumerable brave men to the shades, and that it was Jove's will it should be so. But tell me, O muse, what was the source of this destructive anger?" I cannot comprehend what Rapin means by saying, it is hard to know where this *invocation* ends, and that it is confounded with the *narration*, which so manifestly begins at *Ἀητῆσ' καὶ Διὸς υἱὸς*. But upon the whole, methinks the French critics play double with us, when they sometimes represent the rules of poetry to be formed upon the practice of Homer, and at other times arraign their master, as if he transgressed them. Horace has said the *exordium* of an epic poem ought to be plain and modest, and instances Homer's as such; and Rapin from this very rule will be trying Homer, and judging it otherwise (for he criticises also upon the beginning of the *Odyssey*.) But for a full answer we may bring the words of Quintilian (whom Rapin himself allows to be the best of critics) concerning these propositions and invocations of our author. "*Benevolum auditorem invocatione dearum quas præsidere vaticibus creditum est, intentum proposita rerum magnitudine, et docilem summa celeriter comprehensa, facit.*"

v. I.] Μῆνιν ἄειδ' ὅτε Πηληϊΐδῳ Ἀχιλλεύς.

Plutarch observes there is a defect in the measure of this first line (I suppose he means in the Eta's of the patronymic.) This he thinks, the fiery vain of Homer making haste to his subject, past over with a bold neglect,

being



The king of men his rev'rend priest defy'd,  
And for the king's offence the people dy'd.

being conscious of his own power and perfection in the greater parts; as some (says he) who make virtue their sole aim, pass by censure in smaller matters. But perhaps we may find no occasion to suppose this a neglect in him, if we consider that the word *Pelides*, had he made use of it without so many alterations as he has put it to in Πηληϊάδεω would still have been true to the rules of measure. Make but a diphthong of the second Eta and the Iota, instead of their being two syllables (perhaps by the fault of transcribers) and the objection is gone. Or perhaps it might be designed, that the verse in which he professes to sing of violent anger should run off in the rapidity of dactyls. This art he is allowed to have used in other places, and Virgil has been particularly celebrated for it.

v. 8. *Will of Jove.*] Plutarch, in his treatise of reading poets, interprets Διὸς in this place to signify *Fate*, not imagining it consistent with the goodness of the supreme being, or Jupiter, to contrive or practise any evil against men. Eustathius makes *Will* here to refer to the promise which Jupiter gave to Thetis, that he would honour her son by siding with Troy while he should be absent. But to reconcile these two opinions, perhaps the meaning may be, that when Fate had decreed the destruction of Troy, Jupiter having the power of incidents to bring it to pass, fulfilled that decree by providing means for it. So that the words may thus specify the time of action, from the beginning of the poem, in which those incidents worked, till the promise to Thetis was fulfilled and the destruction of Troy ascertained to the Greeks by the death of Hector. However it is certain that this poet was not an absolute *fatalist*, but still supposed the power of Jove superior: for in the sixteenth Iliad we see him designing to save Sarpedon, though the Fates had decreed his death, if Juno had not inter-

For Chryses fought with costly gifts to gain 15  
His captive daughter from the victor's chain.

posed. Neither does he exclude *free-will* in men; for as he attributes the destruction of the heroes to the *will* of Jove in the beginning of the Iliad, so he attributes the destruction of Ulysses's friends to their *own folly* in the beginning of the Odysses.

Αὐτῶν γὰρ σφετέρησιν ἀτασθαλίησιν ὄλοντο.

v. 9. *Declare, O muse.*] It may be questioned whether the first period ends at Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βελή, and the interrogation to the muse begins with 'Εξ ἧ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα— Or whether the period does not end till the words, δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς, with only a single interrogation at Τίς τ' ἄρ' σφῶς θεῶν——? I should be inclined to favour the former, and think it a double interrogative, as Milton seems to have done in his imitation of this place at the beginning of Paradise Lost.

———— Say first what cause

Mov'd our grand parents, etc. And just after,  
Who first seduc'd them to that foul revolt?

Besides that I think the proposition concludes more nobly with the sentence, *Such was the will of Jove*. But the latter being followed by most editions and by all the translations I have seen in any language, the general acceptance is here complied with, only transposing the line to keep the sentence last: and the next verses are so turned as to include the double interrogation, and at the same time do justice to another interpretation of the words 'Εξ ἧ δὴ τὰ, *Ex quo tempore*; which makes the *date* of the quarrel from whence the poem takes its rise. Chapman would have *Ex quo* understood of Jupiter, *from whom* the debate was suggested; but this clashes with the line immediately following, where he asks, What God inspired the contention? and answers, It was Apollo.

Suppliant the venerable father stands,  
 Apollo's awful ensigns grace his hands :  
 By these he begs : and lowly bending down,  
 Extends the sceptre and the laurel crown. 20  
 He su'd to all, but chief implor'd for grace  
 The brother-kings, of Atreus' royal race.

Ye kings and warriors ! may your vows be crown'd,  
 And Troy's proud walls lie level with the ground.

v. 11. *Latona's son.*] Here the author, who first invoked the muse as the Goddess of Memory, vanishes from the reader's view, and leaves her to relate the whole affair through the poem, whose presence from this time diffuses an air of majesty over the relation. And lest this should be lost to our thoughts in the continuation of the story, he sometimes refreshes them with a new invocation at proper intervals. Eustathius.

v. 20. *The sceptre and the laurel crown.*] There is something exceeding venerable in the appearance of the priest. He comes with the ensigns of the God he belonged to ; the laurel crown, now carried in his hand, to shew he was a suppliant ; and a golden sceptre, which the ancients gave in particular to Apollo, as they did a silver one to the moon, and other sorts to the planets. Eustathius.

v. 23. *Ye kings and warriors.*] The art and speech is remarkable. Chryses considers the constitution of the Greeks before Troy, as made up of troops partly from kingdoms and partly from democracies : wherefore he begins with a distinction which comprehends all. After this, as Apollo's priest, he prays that they may obtain the two blessings they had most in view, the conquest of Troy, and a safe return. Then as he names his petition, he offers an extraordinary ransom ; and concludes with bidding them fear the God if they refuse it ; like

May Jove restore you, when your toils are o'er, 25  
Safe to the pleasures of your native shore.

But oh ! relieve a wretched parent's pain,  
And give Chryseis to these arms again ;  
If mercy fail, yet let my presents move,  
And dread avenging Phœbus, son of Jove. 30

The Greeks in shouts their joint assent declare,  
The priest to rev'rence, and release the fair.  
Not so Atrides : He, with kingly pride,  
Repuls'd the sacred fire, and thus reply'd.

Hence on thy life, and fly these hostile plains, 35  
Nor ask, presumptuous, what the king detains ;  
Hence, with thy laurel crown, and golden rod,  
Nor trust too far those ensigns of thy God.

one who from his office seems to foresee their misery, and exhorts them to shun it. Thus he endeavours to work by the art of a general application, by religion, by interest, and the insinuation of danger. This is the substance of what Eustathius remarks on this place ; and in pursuance to his last observation, the epithet *avenging* is added to this version, that it may appear the priest foretells the anger of his God.

v. 33. *He with pride repuls'd.*] It has been remarked in honour of Homer's judgment, and the care he took of his reader's morals, that where he speaks of evil actions committed, or hard words given, he generally characterises them as such by a previous expression. This passage is given as one instance of it, where he says the repulse of Chryses was a proud injurious action in Agamemnon : and it may be remarked, that before his heroes treat one another with hard language in this book, he still takes care to let us know they were under a distraction of anger. Plutarch, of reading Poets.

Mine is thy daughter, priest, and shall remain;  
 And pray'rs, and tears, and bribes shall plead in vain; 40  
 Till time shall rife ev'ry youthful grace,  
 And age dismiss her from my cold embrace,

v. 41. *Till time shall rife ev'ry youthful grace,  
 And age dismiss her from my cold embrace,  
 In daily labours of the loom employ'd,  
 Or doom'd to deck the bed she once enjoy'd.]*

The Greek is ἀντιδωσαν, which signifies either *making* the bed, or *partaking* it. Eustathius and madam Dacier insist very much upon its being taken in the former sense only, for fear of presenting a loose idea to the reader, and of offending against the modesty of the muse, who is supposed to relate the poem. This observation may very well become a bishop and a lady: but that Agamemnon was not studying here for civility of expression, appears from the whole tenor of his speech; and that he designed Chryseis for more than a servant maid, may be seen from some other things he says of her, as that he preferred her to his queen Clytæmnestra, *etc.* the imprudence of which confession, madam Dacier herself has elsewhere animadverted upon. Mr. Dryden, in his translation of this book, has been juster to the royal passion of Agamemnon, though he has carried the point so much on the other side, as to make him promise a greater fondness for her in her old age than in her youth, which indeed is hardly credible.

*Mine she shall be, till creeping age and time  
 Her bloom have wither'd, and destroy'd her prime:  
 Till then my nuptial bed she shall attend,  
 And having first adorn'd it, late ascend.  
 This for the night; by day the web and loom,  
 And homely household-tasks shall be her doom.*

Nothing could have made Mr. Dryden capable of this



In daily labours of the loom employ'd,  
 Or doom'd to deck the bed she once enjoy'd.  
 Hence then; to Argos shall the maid retire, 45  
 Far from her native foil, and weeping fire.

The trembling priest along the shore return'd,  
 And in the anguish of a father mourn'd.  
 Disconsolate, nor daring to complain,  
 Silent he wander'd by the sounding main: 50  
 Till, safe at distance, to his God he prays,  
 The God who darts around the world his rays.

O Smintheus ! sprung from fair Latona's line,  
 Thou guardian pow'r of Cilla the divine,  
 Thou source of light ! whom Tenedos adores, 55  
 And whose bright presence gilds thy Chrysa's shores :  
 If e'er with wreaths I hung thy sacred fane,  
 Or fed the flames with fat of oxen slain ;  
 God of the silver bow ! thy shafts employ,  
 Avenge thy servant, and the Greeks destroy. 60

mistake, but extreme haste in writing ; which never ought to be imputed as a fault to him, but to those who suffered so noble a genius to lie under the necessity of it.

v. 47. *The trembling priest.*] We may take notice here, once for all, that Homer is frequently eloquent in his very silence. Chryses says not a word in answer to the insults of Agamemnon, but walks pensively along the shore : and the melancholy flowing of the verse admirably expresses the condition of the mournful and deserted father.

Βῆ δ' ἀκίῳν παρὰ θίνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θάλασσης.

Thus Chryses pray'd ; the fav'ring pow'r attends,  
 And from Olympus' lofty tops descends.  
 Bent was his bow, the Grecian hearts to wound ;  
 Fierce as he mov'd, his silver shafts resound.  
 Breathing revenge, a sudden night he spread, 65  
 And gloomy darkness roll'd around his head.  
 The fleet in view, he twang'd his deadly bow,  
 And hissing fly the feather'd fates below.  
 On mules and dogs th' infection first began ;  
 And last, the vengeful arrows fix'd in man. 70

v. 61. *The fav'ring pow'r attends.*] Upon this first prayer in the poem, Eustathius takes occasion to observe, that the poet is careful throughout his whole work to let no prayer ever fall intirely which has justice on its side ; but he who prays either kills his enemy, or has signs given him that he has been heard, or his friends return, or his undertaking succeeds, or some other visible good happens. So far instructive and useful to life has Homer made his fable.

v. 67. *He bent his deadly bow.*] In the tenth year of the siege of Troy, a plague happened in the Grecian camp, occasioned perhaps by immoderate heats and gross exhalations. At the introduction of this accident Homer begins his poem, and takes occasion from it to open the scene of action with a most beautiful allegory. He supposes that such afflictions are sent from heaven for the punishment of our evil actions ; and because the sun was a principal instrument of it, he says it was sent to punish Agamemnon for despising that God, and injuring his priest. Eustathius.

v. 69. *Mules and dogs.*] Hippocrates observes two things of plagues ; that their cause is in the air, and that different animals are differently touched by them, according to their nature or nourishment. This philoso-

For nine long nights, thro' all the dusky air  
 The Pyres thick-flaming shot a dismal glare.  
 But ere the tenth revolving day was run,  
 Inspir'd by Juno, Thetis' god-like son

phy Spondanus refers to the plague here mentioned. First, the cause is in the air, by reason of the darts or beams of Apollo. Secondly, the mules and dogs are said to die sooner than the men; partly because they have by nature a quickness of smell, which makes the infection sooner perceivable; and partly by the nourishment they take, their feeding on the earth with prone heads making the exhalation more easy to be sucked in with it. Thus has Hippocrates, so long after Homer writ, subscribed to his knowledge in the rise and progress of this distemper. There have been some who have referred this passage to a religious sense, making the death of the mules and dogs before the men to point out a kind of method of providence in punishing, whereby it sends some previous afflictions to warn mankind, so as to make them shun the greater evils by repentance. This monsieur Dacier in his notes on Aristotle's art of poetry, calls a remark perfectly fine and agreeable to God's method of sending plagues on the Ægyptians, where first horses, asses, *etc.* were smitten, and afterwards the men themselves.

v. 74. *Thetis' god-like son convcens a council.*] On the tenth day a council is held to inquire why the Gods were angry. Plutarch observes, how justly he applies the characters of his persons to the incidents; not making Agamemnon but Achilles call this council, who of all the kings was most capable of making observations upon the plague, and of foreseeing its duration, as having been bred by Chiron to the study of physic. One may mention also a remark of Eustathius in pursuance to this, that Juno's advising him in this case might al-

Conveen'd to council all the Grecian train; 75

For much the Goddeſs mourn'd her heroes ſlain.

Th' aſſembly ſeated, riſing o'er the reſt,

Achilles thus the king of men addreſt.

Why leave we not the fatal Trojan ſhore,

And meaſure back the ſeas we croſt before? 80

The plague deſtroying whom the ſword would ſpare,

'Tis time to ſave the few remains of war.

But let ſome prophet, or ſome ſacred ſage,

Explore the cauſe of great Apollo's rage;

Or learn the waſteful vengeance to remove, 85

By myſtic dreams, for dreams deſcend from Jove.

lude to his knowledge of an evil temperament in the air, of which ſhe was Goddeſs.

v. 79. *Why leave we not the fatal Trojan ſhore, etc.*]

The artifice of this ſpeech (according to Dionyſius of Halicarnaffus, in his ſecond diſcourſe, *περὶ ἐσχηματισμένων*) is admirably carried on to open an accusation againſt Agamemnon, whom Achilles ſuſpects to be the cauſe all their miſeries. He directs himſelf not to the aſſembly, but to Agamemnon; he names not only the plague but the war too, as having exhausted them all, which was evidently due to his family. He leads the Augurs he would conſult, by pointing at ſomething lately done with reſpect to Apollo. And while he continues within the guard of civil expreſſion, ſcattering his inſinuations, he encourages thoſe who may have more knowledge to ſpeak out boldly, by letting them ſee there is a party made for their ſafety, which has its effect immediately in the following ſpeech of Chalcas, whoſe demand of protection ſhows upon whom the offence is to be placed.

v. 86. *By myſtic dreams.*] It does not ſeem that, by the word *ὄνειρόπολος*, an interpreter of dreams is meant, for we have no hint of any preceeding dream which wants

If broken vows this heavy curse have laid,  
Let altars smoke, and hecatombs be paid.  
So heav'n aton'd shall dying Greece restore,  
And Phœbus dart his burning shafts no more. 90

He said, and fate : when Chalcas thus reply'd :  
Chalcas the wise, the Grecian priest and guide,  
That sacred seer, whose comprehensive view  
The past, the present, and the future knew :  
Uprising slow, the venerable sage 95  
Thus spoke the prudence and the fears of age.

to be interpreted. We may therefore more probably refer it to such who used (after performing proper rites) to lie down at some sacred place, and expect a dream from the Gods upon any particular subject which they desired. That this was a practice among them appears from the temples of Amphiaraus in Bœotia, and Podalirius in Apulia, where the inquirer was obliged to sleep at the altar upon the skin of the beast he had sacrificed, in order to obtain an answer. It is in this manner that Latinus in Virgil's seventh book goes to dream in the temple of Faunus, where we have a particular description of the whole custom. Strabo, lib. 16. has spoken concerning the temple of Jerusalem as a place of this nature ; " where (says he) the people either dreamed for themselves, or procured some good dreamer to " do it." By which it should seem he had read something concerning the visions of their prophets, as that which Samuel had when he was ordered to sleep a third time before the ark, and upon doing so had an account of the destruction of Eli's house ; or that which happened to Solomon, after having sacrificed before the ark at Gibeon. The same author has also mentioned the temple of Serapis, in his seventeenth book, as a place for receiving oracles by dreams.



Belov'd of Jove, Achilles ! would'st thou know  
 Why angry Phœbus bends his fatal bow ?  
 First give thy faith, and plight a prince's word  
 Of sure protection, by thy pow'r and sword. 100  
 For I must speak what wisdom would conceal,  
 And truths, invidious to the great, reveal.  
 Bold is the task, when subjects grown too wise,  
 Instruct a monarch where his error lies ;  
 For tho' we deem the short-liv'd fury past, 105  
 'Tis sure, the mighty will revenge at last.

To whom Pelides. From thy inmost soul  
 Speak what thou know'st, and speak without controul.  
 Ev'n by that God I swear, who rules the day,  
 To whom thy hands the vows of Greece convey, 110  
 And whose blest oracles thy lips declare ;  
 Long as Achilles breathes this vital air,  
 No daring Greek of all the num'rous band,  
 Against his priest shall lift an impious hand :

v. 97. *Belov'd of Jove, Achilles!*] These appellations of praise and honour, with which the heroes in Homer so frequently salute each other, were agreeable to the style of the ancient times, as appears from several of the like nature in the scripture. Milton has not been wanting to give his poem this cast of antiquity, throughout which our first parents almost always accost each other with some title, that expresses a respect to the dignity of human nature.

*Daughter of God and man, immortal Eve——*

*Adam, earth's hallowed mould of God inspir'd.—*

*Offspring of heaven and earth, and all earth's Lord, etc.*

Not ev'n the chief by whom our hosts are led, 115

The king of king's shall touch that sacred head.

Encourag'd thus, the blameless man replies ;

Nor vows unpaid, nor slighted sacrifice,

But he, our chief, provok'd the raging pest,

Apollo's vengeance for his injur'd priest. 120

Nor will the God's awaken'd fury cease,

But plagues shall spread, and fun'ral fires increase,

'Till the great king, without a ransom paid,

To her own Chrysa send the black-ey'd maid.

v. 115. *Not ev'n the chief.*] After Achilles had brought in Chalcas by his dark doubts concerning Agamemnon, Chalcas who perceived them, and was unwilling to be the first that named the king, artfully demands a protection in such a manner, as confirms those doubts, and extorts from Achilles this warm and particular expression : " That he would protect him even against Agamemnon," (who, as he says, is *now* the greatest man of Greece, to hint that at the expiration of the war he should be again reduced to be barely king of Mycenæ.) This place Plutarch takes notice of as the first in which Achilles shews his contempt of sovereign authority.

v. 117. *The blameless.*] The epithet ἀνύμων, or *blameless*, is frequent in Homer, but not always used with so much propriety as here. The reader may observe that care has not been wanting through this translation, to preserve those epithets which are peculiar to the author, whenever they receive any beauty from the circumstances about them ; as this of *blameless* manifestly does in the present passage. It is not only applied to a priest, but to one who being conscious of the truth, prepares with an honest boldness to discover it.

Perhaps,

Book I.      H O M E R ' s   I L I A D.      19  
 Perhaps, with added sacrifice and pray'r,      125  
 The priest may pardon, and the God may spare.  
 The prophet spoke ; when with a gloomy frown  
 The monarch started from his shining throne ;  
 Black choler fill'd his breast that boil'd with ire,  
 And from his eye-balls flash'd the living fire.      130  
 Augur accurst ! denouncing mischief still,  
 Prophet of plagues, for ever boding ill !  
 Still must that tongue some wounding message bring,  
 And still thy priestly pride provoke thy king ?  
 For this are Phœbus' oracles explor'd,      135  
 To teach the Greeks to murmur at their lord ?  
 For this with falsehoods is my honour stain'd ;  
 Is heav'n offended, and a priest profan'd,

v. 131. *Augur accurst.*] This expression is not merely thrown out by chance, but proves what Chalcas said of the king when he asked protection, " That he harbour-  
 " ed anger in his heart." For it aims at the prediction Chalcas had given at Aulis nine years before, for the sacrificing his daughter Iphigenia. Spondanus.

This, and the two following lines, are in a manner repetitions of the same thing thrice over. It is left to the reader to consider how far it may be allowed, or rather praised for a beauty, when we consider with Eustathius that it is a most natural effect of anger to be full of words and insisting on that which galls us. We may add, that these reiterated expressions might be supposed to be thrown out one after another, as Agamemnon is struck in the confusion of his passion, first by the remembrance of one prophecy, and then of another, which the same man had uttered against him.

Because my prize, my beauteous maid I hold,  
 And heav'nly charms prefer to proffer'd gold? 140  
 A maid, unmatched in manners as in face,  
 Skill'd in each art, and crown'd with ev'ry grace.  
 Not half so dear were Clytæmnestra's charms,  
 When first her blooming beauties blest my arms.  
 Yet if the Gods demand her, let her sail; 145  
 Our cares are only for the public weal;  
 Let me be deem'd the hateful cause of all,  
 And suffer, rather than my people fall.  
 The prize, the beauteous prize I will resign,  
 So dearly valu'd, and so justly mine. 150  
 But since for common good I yield the fair,  
 My private loss let grateful Greece repair;  
 Nor unrewarded let your prince complain,  
 That he alone has fought and bled in vain.  
 Infatiate king (Achilles thus replies) 155  
 Fond of the pow'r, but fonder of the prize!

v. 143. *Not half so dear were Clytæmnestra's charms.*] Agamemnon having heard the charge which Chalcas drew up against him in two particulars, that he had affronted the priest, and refused to restore his daughter; he offers one answer which gives softening colours to both, that he loved her as well as his queen Clytæmnestra, for her perfections. Thus he would seem to satisfy the father by kindness to his daughter, to excuse himself before the Greeks for what is past, and to make a merit of yielding her, and sacrificing his passion for their safety.

v. 155. *Infatiate king.*] Here, where this passion of anger grows loud, it seems proper to prepare the reader,

Would'it thou the Greeks their lawful prey should yield,  
The due reward of many a well fought field ?

and prevent his mistake in the character of Achilles, which might shock him in several particulars following. We should know that the poet rather studied nature than perfection, in the laying down his characters. He resolved to sing the consequences of anger ; he considered what virtues and vices would conduce most to bring his moral out of the fable ; and artfully disposed them in his chief persons after the manner in which we generally find them ; making the fault which most peculiarly attends any good quality, to reside with it. Thus he has placed pride with magnanimity in Agamemnon, and craft with prudence in Ulysses. And thus we must take his Achilles, not as a mere heroic dispassioned character, but as compounded of courage and anger ; one who finds himself almost invincible, and assumes an uncontrouled carriage upon the self-consciousness of his worth ; whose high strain of honour will not suffer him to betray his friends, or fight against them, even when he thinks they have affronted him ; but whose inexorable resentment will not let him hearken to any terms of accommodation. These are the lights and shades of his character, which Homer has heightened and darkened in extremes ; because on the one side valour is the darling quality of epic poetry ; and on the other, anger the particular subject of this poem. When characters thus mixed are well conducted, though they be not morally beautiful quite through, they conduce more to the end, and are still poetically perfect.

Plutarch takes occasion from the observation of this conduct in Homer, to applaud his just imitation of nature and truth, in representing virtues and vices intermixed in his heroes ; contrary to the paradoxes and strange positions of the Stoics, who held that no vice could consist with virtue, nor the least virtue with vice. Plut. de aud. Poetis.



'The spoils of cities raz'd, and warriors slain,  
 We share with justice, as with toil we gain: 160  
 But to resume whate'er thy av'rice craves,  
 (That trick of tyrants) may be borne by slaves.  
 Yet if our chief for plunder only fight,  
 The spoils of Ilion shall thy loss requite,  
 Whene'er, by Jove's decree, our conqu'ring pow'rs 165  
 Shall humble to the dust her lofty tow'rs.

Then thus the king. Shall I my prize resign  
 With tame content, and thou possessest of thine?  
 Great as thou art, and like a God in fight,  
 'Think not to rob me of a soldier's right. 170  
 At thy demand shall I restore the maid?  
 First let the just equivalent be paid;  
 Such as a king might ask; and let it be  
 A treasure worthy her, and worthy me.

v. 169. *Great as thou art, and like a God in fight.*]  
 The words in the original are θεοειξελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ. Ulysses  
 is soon after called Δῖος, and others in other places.  
 The phrase of *divine* or *god-like* is not used by the poet  
 to signify perfection in men, but applied to considerable  
 persons upon account of some particular qualification  
 or advantage, which they were possessed of far above the  
 common standard of mankind. Thus it is ascribed to  
 Achilles on account of his great valour, to Ulysses for  
 his pre-eminence in wisdom; even to Paris for his ex-  
 ceeding beauty, and to Clytæmnestra for several fair en-  
 dowments.

v. 172. *First let the just equivalent.*]  
 The reasoning  
 in point of right between Achilles and Agamemnon seems  
 to be this. Achilles pleads that Agamemnon could not  
 seize upon any other man's captive without a new distri-

Or grant me this, or with a monarch's claim 175

This hand shall seize some other captive dame.

The mighty Ajax shall his prize resign,

Ulysses' spoils, or ev'n thy own be mine.

The man who suffers, loudly may complain;

And rage he may, but he shall rage in vain. 180

But this when time requires——It now remains

We launch a bark to plow the watry plains,

And waft the sacrifice to Chrysa's shores,

With chosen pilots, and with lab'ring oars,

Soon shall the fair the sable ship ascend, 185

And some deputed prince the charge attend;

This Creta's king, or Ajax shall fulfill,

Or wise Ulysses see perform'd our will;

Or, if our royal pleasure shall ordain,

Achilles' self conduct her o'er the main; 190

Let fierce Achilles, dreadful in his rage,

The God propitiate, and the pest assuage.

At this, Pelides frowning stern, reply'd :

O tyrant, arm'd with insolence and pride !

bution, it being an invasion of private property. On the other hand, as Agamemnon's power was limited, how came it that all the Grecian captains would submit to an illegal and arbitrary action ? I think the legal pretence for seizing Briseis must have been founded upon that law, whereby the commander in chief had the power of taking what part of the prey he pleased for his own use : and he being obliged to restore what he had taken, it seemed but just that he should have a second choice.

Inglorious slave to int'rest, ever join'd

195

With fraud, unworthy of a royal mind !

What gen'rous Greek, obedient to thy word,

Shall form an ambush, or shall lift the sword ?

What cause have I to war at thy decree ?

The distant Trojans never injur'd me :

200

To Phthia's realms no hostile troops they led,

Safe in her vales my warlike courfers fed ;

Far hence remov'd, the hoarse-responding main,

And walls of rocks, secure my native reign,

Whose fruitful soil luxuriant harvests grace,

205

Rich in her fruits, and in her martial race.

Hither we sail'd, a voluntary throng,

T' avenge a private, not a public wrong :

What else to Troy, th' assembled nations draws,

But thine, ungrateful, and thy brother's cause ?

210

+ Is this the pay our blood and toils deserve,

+ Disgrac'd and injur'd by the man we serve ?

And dar'st thou threat to snatch my prize away,

Due to the deeds of many a dreadful day ?

v. 213. *And dar'st thou threat to snatch my prize away,*

*Due to the deeds of many a dreadful day ?]*

The anger of these two princes was equally upon the account of women, but yet it is observable that they are conducted with a different air. Agamemnon appears as a lover, Achilles as a warrior: the one speaks of Chryseis as a beauty whom he valued equal to his wife, and whose merit was too considerable to be easily resigned; the other treats Briseis as a slave, whom he is concerned to preserve in point of honour, and as a testimony of his glory. Hence it is, that we never hear him mention

A prize as small, O tyrant ! match'd with thine, 215  
 As thy own actions if compar'd to mine.  
 Thine in each conquest is the wealthy prey.  
 Tho' mine the sweat and danger of the day.  
 Some trivial present to my ships I bear,  
 Or barren praises pay the wounds of war. 220  
 But know, proud monarch, I'm thy slave no more ;  
 My fleet shall waft me to Theſſalia's ſhore.  
 Left by Achilles on the Trojan plain,  
 What ſpoils, what conquests ſhall Atrides gain ?  
 To this the king : Fly, mighty warrior ! fly, 225  
 Thy aid we need not, and thy threats deſy.

her but as his *ſpoil*, the *reward of war*, the *gift the Grecians gave him*, or the like expreſſions : and accordingly he yields her up, not in grief for a miſtreſs whom he loſes, but in fullenneſs for an injury that is done him. This obſervation is madam Dacier's, and will often appear juſt as we proceed farther. Nothing is finer than the moral ſhown us in this quarrel, of the blindneſs and partiality of mankind to their own faults : the Grecians make a war to recover a woman that was raviſhed, and are in danger to fail in the attempt by a diſpute about another. Agamemnon while he is revenging a rape, commits one ; and Achilles while he is in the utmoſt fury himſelf, reproaches Agamemnon for his paſſionate temper.

v. 225. *Fly, mighty warrior.*] Achilles having threatened to leave them in the former ſpeech, and ſpoken of his warlike actions ; the poet here puts an artful piece of ſpite in the mouth of Agamemnon, making him opprobriouſly brand his retreat as a flight, and leſſen the appearance of his courage, by calling it the love of contention and ſlaughter.

There want not chiefs in such a cause to fight,  
 And Jove himself shall guard a monarch's right.  
 Of all the kings (the Gods distinguish'd care)  
 To pow'r superior none such hatred bear: 230  
 Strife and debate thy restless soul employ,  
 And wars and horrors are thy savage joy.  
 If thou hast strength, 'twas heav'n that strength bestow'd,  
 For know, vain man! thy valour is from God.  
 Haste, launch thy vessels, fly with speed away, 235  
 Rule thy own realms with arbitrary sway:  
 I heed thee not, but prize at equal rate  
 Thy short-liv'd friendship, and thy groundless hate.  
 Go, threat thy earth-born Myrmidons; but here  
 'Tis mine to threaten, prince, and thine to fear. 240  
 Know, if the God the beauteous dame demand,  
 My bark shall waft her to her native land;  
 But then prepare, imperious prince! prepare,  
 Fierce as thou art, to yield thy captive fair:  
 Ev'n in thy tent I'll seize the blooming prize, 245  
 Thy lov'd Briseis with the radiant eyes.

v. 229. *Kings the Gods distinguish'd care.*] In the original it is *Διογενεῖς*, or *nurst by Jove*. Homer often uses to call his kings by such epithets as *Διογενεῖς*, *born of the Gods*, or *Διογενεῖς*, *bred by the Gods*; by which he points out to themselves, the offices they were ordained for; and to their people, the reverence that should be paid them. These expressions are perfectly in the exalted style of the eastern nations, and correspondent to those places of holy scripture where they are called *Gods*, and *the sons of the most High*.



Hence shalt thou prove my might, and curse the hour,  
Thou stood'st a rival of imperial pow'r;  
And hence to all our host it shall be known,  
That kings are subject to the Gods alone. 250

Achilles heard, with grief and rage oppress'd,  
His heart swell'd high, and labour'd in his breast.  
Distracting thoughts by turns his bosom rul'd,  
Now fir'd by wrath, and now by reason cool'd:  
That prompts his hand to draw the deadly sword, 255  
Force thro' the Greeks, and pierce their haughty lord;  
This whispers soft, his vengeance to controul,  
And calm the rising tempest of his soul.  
Just as in anguish of suspense he stay'd,  
While half unsheath'd appear'd the glitt'ring blade, 260  
Minerva swift descended from above,  
Sent by the \* sister and the wife of Jove;

\* Juno.

v. 261. *Minerva swift descended from above.*] Homer having by degrees raised Achilles to such a pitch of fury, as to make him capable of attempting Agamemnon's life in the council, Pallas the goddess of wisdom descends, and being seen only by him, pulls him back in the very instant of execution. He parleys with her a while, as imagining she would advise him to proceed, but upon the promise of such a time wherein there should be a full reparation of his honour, he sheathes his sword in obedience to her. She ascends to heaven, and he being left to himself falls again upon his general with bitter expressions. The *allegory* here may be allowed by every reader to be unforced: the prudence of Achilles checks him in the rashest moment of his anger, it works upon him unseen to others, but does not entirely prevail up-

(For both the princes claim'd her equal care)

Behind she stood, and by the golden hair

Achilles seiz'd; to him alone confess;

265

A fable cloud conceal'd her from the rest.

He sees, and sudden to the Goddess cries,

Known by the flames that sparkle from her eyes.

on him to desist till he remembers his own importance, and depends upon it that there will be a necessity of their courting him at any expence into the alliance again. Having persuaded himself by such reflections, he forbears to attack his general, but thinking that he sacrifices enough to prudence by his forbearance, lets the thought of it vanish from him; and no sooner is wisdom gone, but he falls into more violent reproaches for the gratification of his passion. All this is a most beautiful passage, whose moral is evident, and generally agreed on by the commentators.

v. 268. *Known by the flames that sparkle from her eyes.*]

They who carry on this allegory after the most minute manner, refer this to the eyes of Achilles, as indeed we must, if we intirely destroy the bodily appearance of Minerva. But what poet, designing to have his moral so open, would take pains to form it into a fable? In the proper mythological sense, this passage should be referred to Minerva; according to an opinion of the ancients, who supposed that the Gods had a peculiar light in their eyes. That Homer was not ignorant of this opinion, appears from his use of it in other places, as when in the third Iliad Helena by this means discovers Venus: and that he meant it here, is particularly asserted by Heliodorus, in the third book of his *Æthiopic history*. "The Gods says he, are known in their apparitions to men by the fixed glare of their eyes, or their gliding passage through the air without moving their feet; these marks Homer has used from his

Descends Minerva, in her guardian care,  
 A heav'nly witness of the wrongs I bear 270  
 From Atreus' son? Then let those eyes that view  
 The daring crime behold the vengeance too.

Forbear! (the progeny of Jove replies)  
 To calm thy fury I forsake the skies:  
 Let great Achilles, to the Gods resign'd, 275  
 To reason yield the empire o'er his mind.  
 By awful Juno this command is giv'n;  
 The king and you are both the care of heav'n.  
 The force of keen reproaches let him feel,  
 But sheathe, obedient, thy revenging steel. 280  
 For I pronounce (and trust a heav'nly pow'r)  
 Thy injur'd honour has its fated hour,  
 When the proud monarch shall thy arms implore,  
 And bribe thy friendship with a boundless store.  
 Then let revenge no longer bear the sway, 285  
 Command thy passions, and the Gods obey.

To her Pelides. With regardful ear  
 'Tis just, O Goddess! I thy dictates hear.  
 Hard as it is, my vengeance I suppress:  
 Those who revere the Gods, the Gods will bless. 290

“knowledge of the Ægyptian learning, applying one to  
 “Pallas, and the other to Neptune.” Madam Dacier  
 has gone into the contrary opinion, and blames Eustathius  
 and others without overthrowing these authorities,  
 or assigning any other reason but that it was not proper  
 for Minerva's eyes to *sparkle*, when her speech was  
*mild*.

He said, observant of the blue-ey'd maid ;  
 Then in the sheath return'd the shining blade.  
 The goddess swift to high Olympus flies,  
 And joins the sacred senate of the skies.

Nor yet the rage his boiling breast forsook, 295  
 Which thus redoubling on Atrides broke.  
 O monster ! mix'd of insolence and fear,  
 Thou dog in forehead, but in heart a deer !

v. 298. *Thou dog in forehead.*] It has been one of the objections against the manners of Homer's heroes, that they are abusive. Monf. de la Motte affirms in his discourse upon the Iliad, that great men differ from the vulgar in their manner of expressing their passion; but certainly in violent passions (such as those of Achilles and Agamemnon) the great are as subject as any others to these fallies; of which we have frequent examples both from history and experience. Plutarch, taking notice of this line, gives it as a particular commendation of Homer, that " he constantly affords us a fine  
 " lecture of morality in his reprehensions and praises,  
 " by referring them not to the goods of fortune or the  
 " body, but those of the mind, which are in our power,  
 " and for which we are blameable or praise-worthy.  
 " Thus, says he, Agamemnon is reproached for impu-  
 " dence and fear, Ajax for vain bragging, Idomeneus for  
 " the love of contention, and Ulysses does not reprove  
 " even Therfites but as a babbler, though he had so  
 " many personal deformities to object to him. In like  
 " manner also the appellations and epithets with which  
 " they accost one another, are generally founded on some  
 " distinguishing qualification of merit, as *Wise Ulysses*,  
 " *Hector equal to Jove in wisdom*, *Achilles chief glory of*  
 " *the Greeks*," and the like. Plutarch of reading Poets.  
 When

When wert thou known in ambush'd fights to dare,  
 Or nobly face the horrid front of war? 300  
 'Tis ours, the chance of fighting fields to try,  
 Thine to look on, and bid the valiant die.  
 So much 'tis safer through the camp to go,  
 And rob a subject, than despoil a foe.  
 Scourge of thy people, violent and base! 305  
 Sent in Jove's anger on a slavish race,  
 Who, lost to sense of gen'rous freedom past,  
 Are tam'd to wrongs, or this had been thy last,  
 Now by this sacred sceptre, hear me swear,  
 Which never more shall leaves or blossoms bear, 310

v. 299. *In ambush'd fights to dare.*] Homer has magnified the *ambush* as the boldest manner of fight. They went upon those parties with a few men only, and generally the most daring of the army, on occasions of the greatest hazard, where they were therefore more exposed than in a regular battle. Thus Idomeneus, in the thirteenth book, expressly tells Meriones, that the greatest courage appears in this way of service, each man being in a manner singled out to the proof of it. Eustathius.

v. 309. *Now by this sacred sceptre.*] Spondanus in this place blames Eustathius, for saying that Homer makes Achilles in his passion swear by the first thing he meets with: and then assigns (as from himself) two causes, which the other had mentioned so plainly before, that it is a wonder they could be overlooked. The substance of the whole passage in Eustathius, is, that if we consider the sceptre simply as wood, Achilles after the manner of the ancients takes in his transport the first thing to swear by; but that Homer himself has in the process of the description assigned reasons why it is pro-



Which sever'd from the trunk (as I from thee)  
On the bare mountains left its parent tree ;

[per for the occasion, which may be seen by considering it symbolically. First, That as the wood being cut from the tree will never reunite and flourish, so neither should their amity ever flourish again after they were divided by this contention. Secondly, That a sceptre being the mark of power, and symbol of justice, to swear by it might in effect be construed swearing by the God of power, and by justice itself, and accordingly it is spoken of by Aristotle, 3. 1. Polit. as a usual solemn oath of kings.

I cannot leave this passage without shewing, in opposition to some moderns who have criticised upon it as tedious, that it has been esteemed a beauty by the antients, and engaged them in its imitation. Virgil has almost transcribed it in his 12 Æn. for the sceptre of Latinus.

*Ut sceptrum hoc (sceptrum dextra nam forte gerebat)  
Nunquam fronde levi fundet virgulta nec umbras;  
Cum semel in sylvis imo de stirpe recisum,  
Matre caret, posuitque comas et brachia ferro :  
Olim arbos, nunc artificis manus ære decoro  
Inclussit, patribusque dedit gestare Latinis.*

But I cannot think this comes up to the spirit or propriety of Homer, notwithstanding the judgment of Scaliger, who decides for Virgil, upon a trivial comparison of the wording in each, 1. 5. cap. 3. Poet. It fails in a greater point than any he has mentioned, which is, that being there used on occasion of a peace, it has no emblematical reference to division, and yet describes the cutting of the wood and its incapacity to bloom and branch again, in as many words as Homer. It is borrowed by Valerius Flaccus in his third book, where he makes Jason swear as a warrior by his spear,

This sceptre, form'd by temper'd steel to prove  
 An ensign of the delegates of Jove,  
 From whom the pow'r of laws and justice springs: 315  
 (Tremendous oath! inviolate to kings)  
 By this I swear, when bleeding Greece again  
 Shall call Achilles, she shall call in vain.  
 When flush'd with slaughter, Hector comes to spread  
 The purpled shore with mountains of the dead, 320  
 Then shalt thou mourn th'affront thy madness gave,  
 Forc'd to deplore, when impotent to save:  
 Then rage in bitterness of soul, to know  
 This act has made the bravest Greek thy foe.

*Hanc ego magnanimi spoliū Didymaonis hastam,  
 Ut semel est avulsa jugis a matre precepta,  
 Quæ neque jam frondes virides neque proferet umbras,  
 Fida ministeria et duras obit horrida pugnas,  
 Testor.*

And indeed, however he may here borrow some expressions from Virgil, or fall below him in others, he has neverthe less kept to Homer in the emblem, by introducing the oath upon Jason's grief for failing to Colchis without Hercules, when he had separated him from the body of the Argonauts to search after Hylas. To render the beauty of this passage more manifest, the allusion is inserted (but with the fewest words possible) in this translation.

v. 323. *Thy rashness made the bravest Greek thy foe.*] If self-praise had not been agreeable to the haughty nature of Achilles, yet Plutarch has mentioned a case, and with respect to him, wherein it is allowable. He says that Achilles has at other times ascribed his success to Jupiter, but it is permitted to a man of merit and figure

He spoke ; and furious hurl'd against the ground 325  
 His sceptre starr'd with golden studs around.  
 Then sternly silent fate. With like disdain,  
 The raging king return'd his frowns again.

To calm their passion with the words of age,  
 slow from his seat arose the Pylian sage, 330  
 Experienc'd Nestor, in persuasion, skill'd,  
 Words, sweet as honey, from his lips distill'd :  
 Two generations now had past away,  
 Wise by his rules, and happy by his sway ;  
 Two ages o'er his native realm he reign'd, 335  
 And now th' example of the third remain'd.

who is injuriously dealt with, to speak frankly of himself to those who are forgetful and unthankful.

v. 333. *Two generations.*] The commentators make not Nestor to have lived three hundred years (according to Ovid's opinion;) they take the word *γενεά* not to signify a century or age of the world; but a generation, or compass of time in which one set of men flourish, which in the common computation is thirty years; and accordingly it is here translated as much the more probable.

From what Nestor says in this speech, madam Dacier computes the age he was of at the end of the Trojan war. The fight of the Lapithæ and Centaurs fell out fifty-five or fifty-six years before the war of Troy: the quarrel of Agamemnon and Achilles happened in the tenth and last year of that war. It was then sixty-five or sixty-six years since Nestor fought against the Centaurs; he was capable at that time of giving counsel, so that one cannot imagine him to have been under twenty: from whence it will appear that he was now almost arrived to the conclusion of his third age, and about fourscore and five, or fourscore and six years of age.

All view'd with awe the venerable man ;  
Who thus, with mild benevolence, began :

What shame, what woe is this to Greece ! what joy  
To Troy's proud monarch, and the friends of Troy ! 340

v. 339. *What shame.*] The quarrel having risen to its highest extravagance, Nestor the wisest and most aged Greek is raised to quiet the princes, whose speech is therefore framed intirely with an opposite air to all which has been hitherto said, sedate and inoffensive. He begins with a soft affectionate complaint which he opposes to their threats and haughty language ; he reconciles their attention in an awful manner, by putting them in mind that they hear one whom their fathers and the greatest heroes had heard with deference. He sides with neither, that he might not anger any one, while he advises them to the proper methods of reconciliation ; and he appears to side with both while he praises each, that they may be induced by the recollection of one another's worth to return to that amity which would bring success to the cause. It was not however consistent with the plan of the poem, that they should entirely be appeased, for then the anger would be at an end, which was proposed as the subject of the poem. Homer has not therefore made this speech to have its full success ; and yet that the eloquence of his Nestor might not be thrown out of character by its proving unavailable ; he takes care that the violence with which the dispute was managed should abate immediately upon his speaking ; Agamemnon confesses that all he spoke was right, Achilles promises not to fight for Briseis if she should be sent for, and the council dissolves.

It is to be observed that this character of authority and wisdom in Nestor, is every where admirably used by Homer, and made to exert itself through all the great emergencies of the poem. As he quiets the princes here, he proposes that expedient which reduces the army in-

That adverse Gods commit to stern debate  
 The best, the bravest of the Grecian state.  
 Young as ye are, this youthful heat restrain,  
 Nor think your Nestor's years and wisdom vain.  
 A Godlike race of heroes once I knew, ● 345  
 Such, as no more these aged eyes shall view!  
 Lives there a chief to match Pirithous' fame,  
 Dryas the bold, or Ceneus' deathless name;  
 Theseus, endu'd with more than mortal might,  
 Or Polyphemus, like the Gods in fight?  
 With these of old to toils of battle bred, 350  
 In early youth my hardy days I led;  
 Fir'd with the thirst which virtuous envy breeds,  
 And smit with love of honourable deeds.  
 Strongest of men, they pierc'd the mountain boar,  
 Rang'd the wild desarts red with monsters gore, } 355  
 And from the hills their shaggy Centaurs tore.  
 Yet these with soft, persuasive arts I sway'd;  
 When Nestor spoke, they listen'd and obey'd.  
 If in my youth, ev'n these esteem'd me wise,  
 Do you, young warriors, hear my age advise. 360  
 Atrides, seize not on the beauteous slave;  
 That prize the Greeks by common suffrage gave:

to their order after the sedition in the second book. When the Greeks are in the utmost distresses, it is he who advises the building the fortification before the fleet, which is the chief means of preserving them. And it is by his persuasion that Patroclus puts on the armour of Achilles, which occasions the return of that hero, and the conquest of Troy.



Nor thou, Achilles, treat our prince with pride;      372

Let kings be just, and sov'reign pow'r preside.      373

Thee, the first honours of the war adorn,      365

Like Gods in strength, and of a Goddess born;

Him, awful majesty exalts above

The pow'rs of earth, and scepter'd sons of Jove.

Let both unite with well-consenting mind,      367

So shall authority with strength be join'd.      370

Leave me, O king! to calm Achilles' rage;

Rule thou thyself, as more advanc'd in age.

Forbid it, Gods! Achilles should be lost,

The pride of Greece, and bulwark of our host.      375

This said, he ceas'd: The king of men replies:

Thy years are awful, and thy words are wise.

But that imperious, and unconquer'd soul,

No laws can limit, no respect controul.

Before his pride must his superiors fall,      380

His word the law, and he the lord of all?

Him must our hosts, our chiefs, ourself obey?

What king can bear a rival in his sway?

Grant that the Gods his matchless force have giv'n;

Has foul reproach a privilege from heav'n?

Here on the monarch's speech Achilles broke,      385

And furious, thus, and interrupting spoke.

Tyrant, I well deserved thy galling chain,

To live thy slave, and still to serve in vain,

Should I submit to each unjust decree:

Command thy vassals, but command not me.      390

Seize on Briseis, whom the Grecians doom'd  
 My prize of war, yet tamely see resum'd;  
 And seize secure; No more Achilles draws  
 His conqu'ring sword in any woman's cause. 395  
 The Gods command me to forgive the past;  
 But let this first invasion be the last:  
 For know, thy blood, when next thou dar'st invade,  
 Shall stream in vengeance on my reeking blade.]

At this they ceas'd; the stern debate expir'd: 400  
 The chiefs in fullen majesty retir'd.

Achilles with Patroclus took his way,  
 Where near his tents his hollow vessels lay.  
 Mean time Atrides launch'd with num'rous oars  
 A well-rigg'd ship for Chrysa's sacred shores: 405

v. 394. — *No more Achilles draws*

*His conqu'ring sword in any woman's cause.]*

When Achilles promises, not to contest for Briseis, he expresses it in a sharp despising air, *I will not fight for the sake of a woman*: by which he glances at Helena, and casts an oblique reflection upon those commanders whom he is about to leave at the siege for her cause. One may observe how well it is fancied of the poet, to make one woman the ground of a quarrel which breaks an alliance that was only formed upon account of another: and how much the circumstance thus considered contributes to keep up the anger of Achilles, for carrying on the poem beyond this dissolution of the council. For (as he himself argues with Ulysses in the 9th Iliad) it is as reasonable for him to retain his anger upon the account of Briseis, as for the brothers with all Greece to carry on a war upon the score of Helena. I do not know that any commentator has taken notice of this sarcasm of Achilles, which I think a very obvious one.

High on the deck was fair Chryseis plac'd,  
 And sage Ulysses with the conduct grac'd :  
 Safe in her sides the hecatomb they stow'd,  
 Then swiftly sailing, cut the liquid road.

The host to expiate, next the king prepares, 410  
 With pure lustrations, and with solemn pray'rs.  
 Wash'd by the briny wave, the pious train  
 Are cleans'd ; and cast th' ablutions in the main.  
 Along the shore whole hecatombs were laid,  
 And bulls and goats to Phœbus' altars paid. 415  
 The fable fumes in curling spires arise,  
 And waft their grateful odours to the skies.

The army thus in sacred rites engag'd,  
 Atrides still with deep resentment rag'd.  
 To wait his will two sacred heralds stood, 420  
 Talthylus and Eurybates the good.  
 Haste to the fierce Achilles' tent (he cries)  
 Thence bear Briseis as our royal prize :

v. 413. *Th' ablutions.*] All our former English translations seem to have erred in the sense of this line, the word *λύματα* being differently rendered by them, *offals*, or *entrails*, or *purgaments*, or *ordures*, a gross set of ideas, of which Homer is not guilty. The word comes from *λέω, eluo*, the same verb from whence *ἐπιλυμαίνοντο*, which precedes in the line, is derived. So that the sense appears to be as it is rendered here, [*They wash'd, and threw away their washings.*] Perhaps this lustration might be used as a physical remedy in cleansing them from the infection of the place ; as Pausanias tells us it was by the Arcadians, from whence he says the plague was called *λύμη* by the Greeks.

Submit he must ; or if they will not part,  
 Ourselves in arms shall tear her from his heart.

425

Th' unwilling heralds act their lord's commands ;  
 Pensive they walk along the barren sands :  
 Arriv'd, the hero in his tent they find,  
 With gloomy aspect, on his arm reclin'd.  
 At awful distance long they silent stand,  
 Loth to advance, or speak their hard command ;  
 Decent confusion ! This the godlike man  
 Perceiv'd, and thus with accent mild began.

430

With leave and honour enter our abodes,  
 Ye sacred ministers of men and Gods !  
 I know your message ; by constraint you came ;  
 Not you, but your imperious lord I blame.  
 Patroclus haste, the fair Briseis bring ;  
 Conduct my captive to the haughty king.

435

v. 430. *At awful distance silent.*] There was required a very remarkable management to preserve all the characters which are concerned in this nice conjuncture, wherein the heralds were to obey at their peril ; Agamemnon was to be gratified by an insult on Achilles ; and Achilles was to suffer so as might become his pride, and not have his violent temper provoked. From all this the poet has found the secret to extricate himself, by only taking care to make his heralds stand in sight, and silent. Thus they neither make Agamemnon's majesty suffer by uttering their message submissively, nor occasion a rough treatment from Achilles by demanding Briseis in the peremptory air he ordered ; and at the same time Achilles is gratified with the opportunity of giving her up, as if he rather sent her than was forced to relinquish her. The art of this has been taken notice of by Eustathius.

Book I.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      41  
 But witness, heralds, and proclaim my vow,      440  
 Witness to Gods above, and men below !  
 But first, and loudest, to your prince declare,  
 That lawless tyrant whose commands you bear ;  
 Unmov'd as death Achilles shall remain,  
 Tho' prostrate Greece should bleed at ev'ry vein      445  
 The raging chief in frantic passion lost,  
 Blind to himself, and useless to his host,  
 Unskill'd to judge the future by the past,  
 In blood and slaughter shall repent at last.  
     Patroclus now th' unwilling beauty brought ;      450  
 She, in soft sorrows, and in pensive thought,  
 Past silent, as the heralds held her hand,  
 And oft look'd back, slow-moving o'er the strand.  
     Not so his loss the fierce Achilles bore ;  
 But sad retiring to the founding shore,      455  
 O'er the wild margin of the deep he hung,  
 That kindred deep from whence his mother sprung :

v. 451. *She, in soft sorrows.*] The behaviour of Briseis in her departure is no less beautifully imagined than the former. A French or Italian poet had lavished all his wit and passion in two long speeches on this occasion, which the heralds must have wept to hear: instead of which, Homer gives us a fine picture of nature. We see Briseis passing unwillingly along, with a dejected air, melted in tenderness, and not able to utter a word: and in the lines immediately following, we have a *contraste* to this in the gloomy resentment of Achilles, who suddenly retires to the shore and vents his rage aloud to the seas. The variation of the numbers just in this place adds a great beauty to it, which has been endeavoured at in the translation.



There, bath'd in tears of anger and disdain,  
Thus loud lamented to the stormy main.

O parent Goddess! since in early bloom, 460  
u Thy son must fall, by too severe a doom;  
Sure, to so short a race of glory born,  
Great Jove in justice should this span adorn:  
Honour and fame at least the thund'rer ow'd,  
And ill he pays the promise of God; 465

v. 458 *There, bath'd in tears.*] Eustathius observes on this place that it is no weakness in heroes to weep, but the very effect of humanity and proof of a generous temper; for which he offers several instances, and takes notice that if Sophocles would not let Ajax weep, it is because he is drawn rather as a madman than a hero. But this general observation is not all we can offer in excuse for the tears of Achilles; his are tears of anger and disdain (as I have ventured to call them in the translation) of which a great and fiery temper is more susceptible than any other and even in this case Homer has taken care to preserve the high character, by making him retire to vent his tears out of sight. And we may add to these an observation of which madam Dacier is fond, the reason why Agamemnon parts not in tears from Chryseis, as Achilles does from Briseis: the one parts willingly from his mistress; and because he does it for his people's safety it becomes an honour to him: the other is parted unwillingly; and because his general takes her by force, the action reflects a dishonour upon him.

v. 464. *The thund'rer ow'd.*] This alludes to a story which Achilles tells the ambassadors of Agamemnon, Il. 9. That he had the choice of two fates: one less glorious at home, but blessed with a very long life; the other full of glory at Troy, but then he was never to return. The alternative being thus proposed to him (not from Jupiter,

If yon' proud monarch thus thy son defies,  
Obscures my glories, and resumes my prize.

Far in the deep recesses of the main,  
Where aged Ocean holds his wat'ry reign,  
The Goddess-mother heard. The waves divide: 470  
And like a mist she rose above the tide;  
Beheld him mourning on the naked shores,  
And thus the sorrows of his soul explores.  
Why grieves my son? Thy anguish let me share,  
Reveal the cause, and trust a parent's care. 475

He deeply sighing said: To tell my woe,  
Is but to mention what too well you know.  
From Thebe sacred to Apollo's name,  
(Aetion's realm) our conqu'ring army came,

ter, but Thetis who revealed the decree) he chose the latter, which he looks upon as his due, since he gives away length of life for it: and accordingly when he complains to his mother of the disgrace he lies under, it is in this manner he makes a demand of honour.

Monf. de la Motte very judiciously observes, that but for this fore-knowledge of the certainty of his death at Troy, Achilles's character could have drawn but little esteem from the reader. A hero of a vicious mind, blest only with a superiority of strength, and invulnerable into the bargain, was not very proper to excite admiration: but Homer by this exquisite piece of art has made him the greatest of heroes, who is still pursuing glory in contempt of death, and even under that certainty generously devoting himself in every action.

v. 478. *From Thebe.*] Homer, who opened his poem with the action which immediately brought on Achilles's anger, being now to give an account of the same thing again, takes his rise more backward in the story. Thus

With treasure loaded and triumphant spoils, 480  
Whose just division crown'd the soldier's toils ;  
But bright Chryseis, heav'nly prize ! was led,  
By vote selected, to the gen'ral's bed.

the reader is informed in what he should know, without having been delayed from entering upon the promised subject. This is the first attempt which we see made towards the poetical method of narration, which differs from the historical, in that it does not proceed always directly in the line of time, but sometimes relates things which have gone before, when a more proper opportunity demands it, to make the narration more informing or beautiful.

The foregoing remark is in regard only to the first six lines of this speech. What follows is a rehearsal of the preceding action of the poem, almost in the same words he had used in the opening it ; and is one of those faults which has with most justice been objected to our author. It is not to be denied but the account must be tedious, of what the reader had been just before informed ; and especially when we are given to understand it was no way necessary, by what Achilles says at the beginning that *Thetis knew the whole story already*. As to repeating the same lines, a practice usual with Homer, it is not so excusable in this place as in those, where messages are delivered in the words they were received, or the like ; it being unnatural to imagine, that the person whom the poet introduces as actually speaking, should fall into the self same words that are used in the narration by the poet himself. Yet Milton was so great an admirer and imitator of our author, as not to have scrupled even this kind of repetition. The passage is at the end of his tenth book, where Adam having declared he would prostrate himself before God in certain particular acts of humiliation, those acts are immediately after described by the poet in the same words.

The priest of Phœbus fought by gifts to gain  
His beauteous daughter from the victor's chain;      485  
The fleet he reach'd, and lowly bending down,  
Held forth the sceptre and the laurel crown,  
Entreating all: but chief implor'd for grace  
The brother-kings of Atreus' royal race:  
The gen'rous Greeks their joint consent declare,      490  
The priest to rev'rence, and release the fair;  
Not so Atrides: He with wonted pride,  
The fire insulted, and his gifts deny'd:  
Th' insulted fire (his God's peculiar care)  
To Phœbus pray'd, and Phœbus heard the pray'r:      495  
A dreadful plague ensues: Th' avenging darts  
Incessant fly, and pierce the Grecian hearts.  
A prophet then, inspir'd by heav'n arose,  
And points the crime, and thence derives the woes:  
Myself the first the assembled chiefs incline      500  
T' avert the vengeance of the pow'r divine;  
Then rising in his wrath, the monarch storm'd;  
Incens'd he threaten'd, and his threats perform'd:  
The fair Chryseis to her fire was sent,  
With offer'd gifts to make the God relent;      505  
But now he seiz'd Briseis' heav'nly charms,  
And of my valour's prize defrauds my arms,  
Defrauds the votes of all the Grecian train;  
And service, faith, and justice plead in vain.  
But Goddess! thou, thy suppliant son attend,      510  
To high Olympus' shining court ascend,

Urge all the ties to former service ow'd,  
 And sue for vengeance to the thund'ring God.  
 Oft hast thou triumph'd in the glorious boast,  
 That thou stood'st forth, of all th' ætherial host, 515  
 When bold rebellion shook the realms above,  
 Th' undaunted guard of cloud-compelling Jove.

v. 514. *Oft hast thou triumph'd.*] The persuasive which Achilles is here made to put into the mouth of Thetis, is most artfully contrived to suit the present exigency. You, says he, must intreat Jupiter to bring misery on the Greeks, who are protected by Juno, Neptune, and Minerva: put him therefore in mind that those deities were once his enemies, and adjure him by that service you did him when those very powers would have bound him, that he will now in his turn assist you against the endeavours they will oppose to my wishes. Eustathius.

As for the story itself, some have thought (with whom is madam Dacier) that there was some imperfect tradition of the fall of the angels for their rebellion, which the Greeks had received by commerce with Egypt: and thus they account the rebellion of the Gods, the precipitation of Vulcan from heaven, and Jove's threatening the inferior Gods with Tartarus, but as so many hints of scripture faintly imitated. But it seems not improbable that the war of the Gods, described by the poets allude to the confusion of the elements before they were brought into their natural order. It is almost generally agreed that by Jupiter is meant the *æther*, and by Juno the *air*: The ancient philosophers supposed the *æther* to be igneous, and by its kind influence upon the *air* to be the cause of all vegetation: therefore Homer says in the 14th Iliad, That upon Jupiter's embracing his wife, the earth put forth its plants. Perhaps by Thetis's assisting Jupiter, may be meant that the watry element subsiding and taking its natural place, put an end to this combat of the elements.



When the bright partner of his awful reign,  
 The warlike maid, and monarch of the main,  
 The traitor-gods, by mad ambition driv'n, 520  
 Durst threat with chains th' omnipotence of heav'n.  
 Then call'd by thee, the monster Titan came,  
 (Whom Gods Briareus, men Ægeon name)  
 Thro' wond'ring skies enormous stalk'd along;  
 Not \* he that shakes the solid earth so strong: 525  
 With giant-pride at Jove's high throne he stands,  
 And brandish'd round him all his hundred hands;  
 Th' affrighted Gods confess'd their awful lord,  
 They dropt the fetters, trembled and ador'd.  
 This, Goddess, this to his remembrance call, 530  
 Embrace his knees, at his tribunal fall;  
 Conjure him far to drive the Grecian train,  
 To hurl them headlong to their fleet and main,  
 To heap the shores with copious death, and bring  
 The Greeks to know the curse of such a king: 535  
 Let Agamemnon lift his haughty head  
 O'er all his wide dominion of the dead,

v. 523. *Whom Gods Briareus, men Ægeon name.*  
 This manner of making the Gods speak a language different from men (which is frequent in Homer) is a circumstance that as far as it widens the distinction between divine and human natures, so far might tend to heighten the reverence paid the Gods. But besides this, as the difference is thus told in poetry, it is of use to the poets themselves: for it appears like a kind of testimony of their inspiration, or their converse with the Gods, and thereby gives a majesty to their works.

\* Neptune.

And mourn in blood, that e'er he durst disgrace  
The boldest warrior of the Grecian race.

Unhappy son ! (fair Thetis thus replies, 540  
While tears celestial trickle from her eyes)  
Why have I born thee with a mother's throes,  
To fates averse, and nurs'd for future woes ?  
So short a space the light of heav'n to view !  
So short a space ! and fill'd with sorrow too ! 545  
O might a parent's careful wish prevail,  
Far, far from Ilion should thy vessels sail,  
And thou, from camps remote, the danger shun,  
Which now, alas ! too nearly threatens my son.  
Yet (what I can) to move thy suit I'll go, 550  
To great Olympus crown'd with fleecy snow.  
Mean time, secure within thy ships from far  
Behold the field, nor mingle in the war.  
Th' fire of Gods, and all th' ætherial train,  
On the warm limits of the farthest main, 555  
Now mix with mortals, nor disdain to grace  
The feasts of Æthiopia's blameless race ;

v. 557. *The feasts of Æthiopia's blameless race.*] The Æthiopians, says Diodorus, l. 3. are said to be the inventors of pomps, sacrifices, solemn meetings, and other honours paid to the Gods. From hence arose their character of piety, which is here celebrated by Homer. Among these there was an annual feast at Diospolis, which Eustathius mentions, wherein they carried about the statues of Jupiter and the other Gods, for twelve days, according to their number: to which if we add the ancient custom of setting meat before statues, it will appear a rite from which this fable might easily arise. But it

Twelve days the pow'rs indulge the genial rite,  
Returning with the twelfth revolving light.

Then will I mount the brazen dome, and move 560  
The high tribunal of immortal Jove.

The Goddess spoke : The rolling waves uncloſe ;  
Then down the deep ſhe plung'd from whence ſhe roſe,  
And left him ſorrowing on the lonely coaſt,  
In wild reſentment for the fair he loſt. 565

would be a great miſtake to imagine from this place, that Homer repreſents the Gods as eating and drinking upon earth : a groſs notion he was never guilty of, as appears from theſe verſes in the fifth book, v. 340.

Ἰχωρ οἷός περ τε ῥέει μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν ;  
Οὐ γὰρ σῖτον ἔδασ', ἔ πίνεσ' αἰθοπα οἶνον,  
Τ᾽ ἄνεκ' ἀναίμενός ἐστι, καὶ ἀθώναλοι καλέονται.

*(For not the bread of man their life ſuſtains,  
Nor wine's inflaming juice ſupplies their veins.)*

Macrobius would have it, that by Jupiter here is meant the *ſun*, and that the number *twelve* hints at the twelve *ſigns* ; but whatever may be ſaid in a critical defence of this opinion, I believe the reader will be ſatiſfied that Homer, conſidered as a poet, would have his machinery underſtood upon that ſyſtem of the Gods which is properly Grecian.

One may take notice here, that it were to be wiſhed ſome paſſage were found in any authentic author, that might tell us the time of the year when the Æthiopians kept this feſtival at Dioſpolis : for from thence one might determine the precise ſeaſon of the year wherein the actions of the Iliad are repreſented to have happened ; and perhaps by that means farther explain the beauty and propriety of many paſſages in the poem.

In Chrysa's port now sage Ulysses rode ;  
Beneath the deck the destin'd victims stow'd :  
The sails they furl'd, they lash'd the mast aside,  
And dropt their anchors, and the pinnace ty'd.  
Next on the shore their hecatomb they land, 570  
Chryseis last descending on the strand.

Her, thus returning from the furrow'd main,  
Ulysses led to Phœbus' sacred fane ;  
Where at his solemn altar, as the maid  
He gave to Chryses, thus the hero said. 575

Hail rev'rend priest ! to Phœbus' awful dome  
A suppliant I from great Atrides come :  
Unransom'd here receive the spotless fair ;  
Accept the hecatomb the Greeks prepare ;  
And may thy God who scatters darts around, 580  
Aton'd by sacrifice, desist to wound.

At this, the fire embrac'd the maid again,  
So sadly lost, so lately fought in vain.  
Then near the altar of the darting king,  
Dispos'd in rank their hecatomb they bring : 585  
With water purify their hands, and take  
The sacred off'ring of the salted cake ;  
While thus with arms devoutly rais'd in air,  
And solemn voice, the priest directs his pray'r.

God of the silver bow, thy ear incline, 590  
Whose power enriches Cilla the divine ;  
Whose sacred eye thy Tenedos surveys,  
And gilds fair Chrysa with distinguish'd rays !

If fir'd to vengeance at thy priest's request,  
 Thy direful darts inflict the raging pest ; 595  
 Once more attend ! avert the wasteful woe,  
 And smile propitious, and unbend thy bow.

So Chryses pray'd, Apollo heard his pray'r :  
 And now the Greeks their hecatomb prepare ;  
 Between their horns the salted barley threw, 600  
 And with their heads to heav'n the victims slew :

v. 600. *The sacrifice.*] If we consider this passage, it is not made to shine in poetry : all that can be done is to give it numbers, and endeavour to set the particulars in a distinct view. But if we take it in another light, and as a piece of learning it is valuable for being the most exact account of the ancient sacrifices any where left us. There is, first, the purification, by washing of hands : Secondly, the offering up of prayers : Thirdly, the *mola*, or barley-cakes thrown upon the victim : Fourthly, the manner of killing it with the head turned upwards to the celestial Gods (as they turned it downwards when they offered to the infernals :) Fifthly, their selecting the thighs and fat for their Gods as the best of the sacrifice, and the disposing about them pieces cut from every part for a representation of the whole ; (hence the thighs, or *μῆσες*, are frequently used in Homer and the Greek poets for the whole victim :) Sixthly, the libation of wine : Seventhly, consuming the thighs in the fire of the altar : Eighthly, the sacrificers dressing and feasting on the rest, with joy and hymns to the Gods. Thus punctually have the ancient poets, and in particular Homer, written with a care and respect to religion. One may question whether any country, as much a stranger to Christianity as we are to heathenism, might be so well informed by our poets in the worship belonging to any profession of religion at present.

I am obliged to take notice how intirely Mr. Dryden



The limbs they sever from th'inclosing hide ;  
 The thighs, selected to the Gods, divide :  
 On these, in double cauls involv'd with art,  
 The choicest morsels lay from every part. 605  
 The priest himself before his altar stands,  
 And burns the off'ring with his holy hands,  
 Pours the black wine, and sees the flames aspire ;  
 The youth with instruments furround the fire :  
 The thighs thus sacrific'd, and entrails drest, 610  
 Th' assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest :  
 Then spread the tables, the repast prepare,  
 Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.  
 When now the rage of hunger was repress'd,  
 With pure libations they conclude the feast; 615  
 The youths with wine the copious goblets crown'd,  
 And pleas'd dispense the flowing bowls around.  
 With hymns divine the joyous banquet ends,  
 The Pæans lengthen'd 'till the sun descends :  
 The Greeks restor'd, the grateful notes prolong ; 620  
 Apollo listens, and approves the song.

has mistaken the sense of this passage, and the custom of antiquity : for in his translation, the cakes are thrown into the fire instead of being cast on the victim ; the sacrificers are made to eat the thighs and whatever belonged to the Gods ; and no part of the victim is consumed for a burnt offering, so that in effect there is no sacrifice at all. Some of the mistakes (particularly that of *turning the roast meat on the spits*, which was not known in Homer's days) he was led into by Chapman's translation.

'Twas night; the chiefs beside their vessel lie,  
'Till rosy morn had purpled o'er the sky :  
Then launch, and hoist the mast; indulgent gales, †  
Supply'd by Phoebus, fill the swelling sails; 625  
The milk-white canvas bellying as they blow,  
The parted ocean foams and roars below :  
Above the bounding billows swift they flew,  
'Till now the Grecian camp appear'd in view.  
Far on the beach they haul their bark to land, 630  
(The crooked keel divides the yellow sand)  
Then part, where stretch'd along the winding bay,  
The ships and tents in mingled prospect lay.

But raging still amidst his navy fate  
The stern Achilles, stedfast in his hate; 635  
Nor mix'd in combate, nor in council join'd;  
But wasting cares lay heavy on his mind :  
In his black thoughts revenge and slaughter roll,  
And scenes of blood rise dreadful in his soul.

Twelve days were past, and now the dawning light 640  
The Gods had summon'd to the' Olympian height :  
Jove first ascending from the wat'ry bow'rs,  
Leads the long order of æthereal pow'rs.  
When like the morning mist in early day,  
Rose from the flood the daughter of the sea; 645  
And to the seats divine her flight address.  
There, far apart, and high above the rest,  
The thund'rer fate; where old Olympus shrouds  
His hundred heads in heav'n, and props the clouds.

Suppliant the Goddesses stood : One hand she plac'd 650  
Beneath his beard, and one his knees embrac'd.

If e'er, O father of the Gods ! she said,

My words could please thee, or my actions aid ;

Some marks of honour on my son bestow,

And pay in glory what in life you owe. 655

Fame is at least by heav'nly promise due

To life so short, and now dishonour'd too.

Avenge this wrong, oh ever just and wise !

Let Greece be humbled, and the Trojans rise

'Till the proud king, and all th' Achaian race 660

Shall heap with honours him they now disgrace.

Thus Thetis spoke, but Jove in silence held

The sacred councils of his breast conceal'd.

Not so repuls'd, the Goddesses closer press,

Still grasp'd his knees, and urg'd the dear request. 665

O fire of Gods and men ! thy suppliant hear,

Refuse, or grant ; for what has Jove to fear ;

Or oh ! declare, of all the pow'rs above

Is wretched Thetis least the care of Jove ?

She said, and sighing thus the God replies, 670

Who rolls the thunder o'er the vaulted skies.

What hast thou ask'd ? Ah why should Jove engage

In foreign contests, and domestic rage,

The God's complaints, and Juno's fierce alarms,

While I, too partial, aid the Trojan arms ? 675

Go, lest the haughty partner of my sway

With jealous eyes thy close access survey ;

But

But part in peace, secure thy pray'r is sped :

Witness the sacred honours of our head,

The nod that ratifies the will divine,

680

The faithful, fix'd, irrevocable sign ;

This seals thy suit, and this fulfils thy vows——

He spoke, and awful bends his sable brows ;

v. 681. *The faithful, fix'd, irrevocable sign.*] There are among men three things by which the efficacy of a promise may be made void ; the design not to perform it, the want of power to bring it to pass, and the instability of our tempers ; from all which Homer saw that the divinity must be exempted, and therefore he describes the *nod*, or ratification of Jupiter's word, as *faithful*, in opposition to *fraud* ; *sure* of being performed, in opposition to *weakness*, and *irrevocable*, in opposition to our *repenting* of a promise. Eustathius.

v. 683. *He spoke, and awful bends.*] This description of the majesty of Jupiter has something exceedingly grand and venerable. Macrobius reports, that Phidias having made his Olympian Jupiter, which past for one of the greatest miracles of art, was asked from what pattern he framed so divine a figure, and answered, it was from that archetype which he found in these lines of Homer. The same author has also taken notice of Virgil's imitating it, l. 1.

*Dixerat, idque ratum Stygii per flumina fratris,*

*Per pice torrentes atraque voragine ripas ;*

*Annuat, et totum nutu tremefecit Olympum.*

Here indeed he has preserved the *nod* with its stupendous effect, the making the heavens tremble. But he has neglected the description of the eye-brows and the hair, those chief pieces of imagery from whence the artist took the idea of a countenance proper for the king of Gods and men.

Shakes his ambrosial curls, and gives the nod ;  
 The stamp of fate, and sanction of the God : 695  
 High heav'n with trembling the dread signal took,  
 And all Olympus to the centre shook.  
 Swift to the seas profound the Goddess flies,  
 Jove to his starry mansion in the skies.  
 The shining synod of th' immortals wait 690  
 The coming God, and from their thrones of state  
 Arising silent, wrapt in holy fear,  
 Before the majesty of heav'n appear.  
 Trembling they stand, while Jove assumes the throne,  
 All, but the God's imperious queen alone : 695  
 Late had she view'd the silver-footed dame,  
 And all her passions kindled into flame.

Thus far Macrobius, whom Scaliger answers in this manner ; *Aut ludunt Phidiam, aut nos ludit Phidias : Etiam sine Homero puto illum scisse, Jovem non carere superciliis et cæsarie.*

v. 694. *Jove assumes the throne.*] As Homer makes the first council of his men to be one continued scene of anger, whereby the Grecian chiefs became divided, so he makes the first meeting of the Gods to be spent in the same passion ; whereby Jupiter is more fixed to assist the Trojans, and Juno more incensed against them. Thus the design of the poem goes on : The anger which began the book overspreads all existent beings by the latter end of it : Heaven and earth become engaged in the subject, by which it rises to a great importance in the reader's eyes, and is hastened forward into the briskest scenes of action that can be framed upon that violent passion.



Say, artful manager of heav'n (she cries)  
Who now partakes the secrets of the skies ?

v. 698. *Say, artful manager.*] The Gods and Goddesses being described with all the desires and pleasures, the passions and humours of mankind, the commentators have taken a licence from thence to draw not only moral observations, but also satirical reflections out of this part of the poem. These I am sorry to see fall so hard upon womankind, and all by Juno's means. Sometimes she procures them a lesson for their curiosity and unquietness, and at other times for their loud and vexatious tempers: Juno deserves them on the one hand, Jupiter thunders them out on the other, and the learned gentlemen are very particular in enlarging with remarks on both sides. In her first speech they make the poet describe the inquisitive temper of womankind in general, and their restlessness if they are not admitted into every secret. In his answer to this, they trace those methods of grave remonstrance by which it is proper for husbands to clam them. In her reply, they find it is the nature of women to be more obstinate for being yielded to: And in his second return to her, they see the last method to be used with them upon failure of the first, which is the exercise of sovereign authority.

Mr. Dryden has translated all this with the utmost severity upon the ladies, and spirited the whole with satirical additions of his own. But madam Dacier (who has elsewhere animadverted upon the good bishop of Theffalonica, for his sage admonitions against the fair sex) has not taken the least notice of this general defection from complaisance in all the commentators. She seems willing to give the whole passage a more important turn, and incline us to think that Homer designed to represent the folly and danger of prying into the secrets of providence. It is thrown into that air in this translation, not only as it is more noble and instructive in general, but as it is more respectful to the ladies in particular; nor should we

Thy Juno knows not the decrees of fate, 700

In vain the partner of imperial state.

What fav'rite Goddess then those cares divides,  
Which Jove in prudence from his consort hides ?

To this the thund'rer : Seek not thou to find  
The sacred counsels of almighty mind : 705

Involv'd in darkness lies the great decree,  
Nor can the depths of fate be pierc'd by thee.

What fits thy knowledge, thou the first shalt know ;  
The first of Gods above, and men below ; 709

But thou, nor they, shall search the thoughts that roll  
Deep in the close recesses of my soul.

Full on the fire the Goddess of the skies  
Roll'd the large orbs of her majestic eyes,  
And thus return'd. Austere Saturnius, say, 714  
From whence this wrath, or who controuls thy sway ?

(any more than madam Dacier) have mentioned what those old fellows have said, but to desire their protection against some modern critics their disciples, who may arraign this proceeding.

v. 713. *Roll'd the large orbs.*] The Greek is Βοῶπις πότνια Ἥη, which is commonly translated the *venerable ox-eyed Juno*. Madam Dacier very well observes that βῶ is only an augmentative particle, and signifies no more than *valde*. It may be added, that the imagination that oxen have larger eyes than ordinary is ill-grounded, and has no foundation in truth ; their eyes are no larger in proportion than those of men, or of most other animals. But be it as it will, the design of the poet, which is only to express the largeness of her eyes, is answered in the paraphrase.

Thy boundless will, for me, remains in force,  
And all thy counsels take the destin'd course.

But 'tis for Greece I fear: For late was seen,  
In close consult, the silver-footed queen.

Jove to his Thetis nothing could deny, 720  
Nor was the signal vain that shook the sky.

What fatal favour has the Goddess won,  
To grace her fierce, inexorable son?

Perhaps in Grecian blood to drench the plain,  
And glut his vengeance with my people slain. 725

Then thus the God: Oh restless fate of pride, +  
That strives to learn what heav'n resolves to hide +  
Vain is the search, presumptuous and abhorr'd,  
Anxious to thee, and odious to thy lord.

Let this suffice; th'immutable decree. 730  
No force can shake: What *is*, that *ought* to be.

Goddess, submit, nor dare our will withstand,  
But dread the pow'r of this avenging hand;

Th' united strength of all the Gods above  
In vain resists th' omnipotence of Jove. 735

The thund'rer spoke, nor durst the queen reply;  
A rev'rend horror silenc'd all the sky.

The feast disturb'd, with sorrow Vulcan saw,  
His mother menac'd, and the Gods in awe;

Peace at his heart, and pleasure his design, 740  
Thus interpos'd the architect divine.

v. 741. *Thus interpos'd the architect divine.*] This  
quarrel of the Gods being come to its height, the poet  
makes Vulcan interpose, who freely puts them in mind

The wretched quarrels of the mortal state

Are far unworthy, Gods ! of your debate :

Let men their days in senseless strife employ,

We, in eternal peace, and constant joy.

745

Thou, Goddess-mother, with our fire comply,

Nor break the sacred union of the sky :

Lest, rous'd to rage, he shake the blest abodes,

Launch the red lightning, and dethrone the gods.

If you submit, the thund'rer stands pleas'd ;

750

The gracious pow'r is willing to be pleas'd.

Thus Vulcan spoke ; and rising with a bound,

The double bowl with sparkling Nectar crown'd,

Which held to Juno in a chearful way,

Goddess (he cry'd) be patient and obey.

755

Dear as you are, if Jove his arm extend,

I can but grieve unable to defend.

of pleasure, inoffensively advises Juno, illustrates his advice by an example of his own misfortune, turning the jest on himself to enliven the banquet ; and concludes the part he is to support with serving Nectar about. Homer had here his Minerva or Wisdom to interpose again, and every other quality of the mind resided in heaven under the appearance of some deity : So that his introducing Vulcan, proceeded not from a want of choice but an insight into nature. He knew that a friend to mirth often diverts or stops quarrels, especially when he contrives to submit himself to the laugh, and prevails on the angry to part in good humour, or in a disposition to friendship ; when grave representations are sometimes reproaches, sometimes lengthen the debate by occasioning defences, and sometimes introduce new parties into the consequences of it.

What God so daring in your aid to move,  
 Or lift his hand against the force of Jove?  
 Once in your cause I felt his matchless night, 760  
 Hurl'd headlong downward from th' ethereal height;  
 Toft all the day in rapid circles round;  
 Nor till the sun descended, touch'd the ground:  
 Breathless I fell, in giddy motion lost;  
 The Sinthians rais'd me on the Lemnian coast. 765  
 He said and to her hands the goblet heav'd,  
 Which, with a smile, the white-arm'd queen receiv'd.

v. 760. *Once in your cause I felt his matchless night.*]  
 They who search another vein of allegory for hidden knowledge in natural philosophy, have considered Jupiter and Juno as *heaven* and the *air*, whose alliance is interrupted when the air is troubled above, but restored again when it is cleared by heat, or Vulcan the God of heat. Him they call a divine artificer, from the activity or general use of fire in working. They suppose him to be born in heaven, where philosophers says that element has its proper place; and is thence derived to the earth, which is signified by the fall of Vulcan; that he fell in Lemnos, because that island abounds with subterranean fires; and that he contracted a lameness or imperfection by the fall; the fire not being so pure and active below, but mixed and terrestrial. Eustathius.

v. 767. *Which, with a smile, the white-arm'd queen receiv'd.*]  
 The epithet λευκώλενος, or *white-arm'd*, is used by Homer several times before, in this book. This was the first passage where it could be introduced with any ease or grace; because the action she is here described in, of extending her arm to the cup, gives it an occasion of displaying its beauties, and in a manner demands the epithet.



Then to the rest he fill'd ; and, in his turn,  
Each to his lips apply'd the nectar'd urn.

Vulcan with aukward grace his office plies,  
And unextinguish'd laughter shakes the skies.

770

Thus the blest Gods the genial day prolong,  
In feasts ambrosial, and celestial song.

Apollo tun'd the lyre ; the muses round

With voice alternate aid the silver sound,

775

Meantime the radiant sun, to mortal sight

Descending swift, roll'd down the rapid light.

Then to their starry domes the Gods depart,

The shining monuments of Vulcan's art :

v. 771. *Laughter shakes the skies.*] Vulcan designed to move laughter by taking upon him the office of Hebe and Ganymede, with his aukward limping carriage. But though he prevailed, and Homer tells you the Gods did laugh, yet he takes care not to mention a word of his lameness. It would have been cruel in him, and wit out of season, to have enlarged with derision upon an imperfection which is out of one's power to remedy. According to this good-natured opinion of Eustathius, Mr. Dryden has treated Vulcan a little barbarously. He makes his character perfectly comical, he is the jest of the board, and the Gods are very merry upon the imperfections of his figure. Chapman led him into this error in general, as well as into some indecencies of expression in particular, which will be seen upon comparing them.

For what concerns the laughter attributed here to the Gods, see the notes on lib. 5. v. 517.

v. 778. *Then to their starry domes.*] The astrologers assign twelve houses to the planets, wherein they are said to have dominion. Now because Homer tells us Vul-

Jove on his couch reclin'd his awful head, 780  
 And Juno slumber'd on the golden bed.

can built a mansion for every God, the ancients write that he first gave occasion for this doctrine.

v. 780. *Jove on his couch reclin'd his awful head.*] Eustathius makes a distinction between καθεύδειν and ὑπνῆν, the words which are used at the end of this book, and the beginning of the next, with regard to Jupiter's sleeping. He says καθεύδειν only means lying down in a disposition to sleep; which salves the contradiction that else would follow in the next book, where it is said that Jupiter did not sleep. I only mention this to vindicate the translation which differs from Mr. Dryden's.

It has been remarked by the scholasts, that this is the only book of the twenty-four without any *simile*, a figure in which Homer abounds every where else. The like remark is made by madam Dacier upon the first of the *Odyssy*; and because the poet has observed the same conduct in both works, it is concluded he thought a simplicity of style, without the great figures, was proper during the first information of the reader. This observation may be true, and admits of refined reasonings: but for my part I cannot think the book had been the worse, tho' he had thrown in as many *similies* as Virgil has in the first *Æneid*.

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T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K II.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The trial of the army and catalogue of the forces.

*JUPITER, in pursuance of the request of Thetis, sends a deceitful vision to Agamemnon, persuading him to lead the army to battle; in order to make the Greeks sensible of their want of Achilles. The general, who is deluded with the hopes of taking Troy without his assistance, but fears the army was discouraged by his absence and the late plague, as well as by length of time, contrives to make trial of their disposition by a stratagem. He first communicates his design to the princes in council, that he would propose a return to the soldiers, and that they should put a stop to them if the proposal was embraced. Then he assembles the whole host, and upon moving for a return to Greece, they unanimously agree to it, and run to prepare the ships. They are detained by the management of Ulysses, who chastises the insolence of Thersites. The assembly is recalled, several speeches made on the occasion, and at length the advice of Nestor followed, which was to make a general muster of the troops, and to divide them into their several nations, before they proceeded to battle. This gives occasion to the poet to enumerate all the forces of the Greeks and Trojans, in a large catalogue.*

*The time employed in this book consists not entirely of one day. The scene lies in the Grecian camp and upon the sea-shore; toward the end it removes to Troy.*

NOW pleasing sleep had seal'd each mortal eye,  
Stretch'd in the tents the Grecian leaders lie;  
Th' immortals slumber'd on their thrones above,  
All, but the ever-wakeful eyes of Jove.

To honour Thetis' son he bends his care, 5  
And plunge the Greeks in all the woes of war:  
Then bids an empty phantome rise to fight,  
And thus commands the vision of the night.

Fly hence, deluding Dream! and light as air,  
To Agamemnon's ample tent repair. 10

v. 1. *Now pleasing sleep, etc.*] Aristotle tells us in the twenty-sixth chapter of his art of poetry, that this place had been objected to by some critics in those times. They thought it gave a very ill idea of the military discipline of the Greeks, to represent a whole army unguarded, and all the leaders asleep: They also pretended it was ridiculous to describe all the Gods sleeping besides Jupiter. To both these Aristotle answers, that nothing is more usual or allowable than that figure which puts *all* for the *greater part*. One may add with respect to the latter criticism, that nothing could give a better image of the superiority of Jupiter to the other Gods (or of the supreme being to all second causes) than the vigilancy here ascribed to him, over all things divine and human.

v. 9. *Fly hence, deluding dream.*] It appears from Aristotle, Poet. cap. 26. that Homer was accused of impiety, for making Jupiter the author of a lye in this passage. It seems there were antiently these words in his speech to the dream; *Δίδωμεν δὲ οἱ εὐχος ἀγέσθαι. Let us give*



Bid him in arms draw forth th' embattel'd train,

Lead all his Grecians to the dusty plain.

Declare, ev'n now 'tis given him to destroy

The lofty tow'rs of wide extended Troy.

For now no more the Gods with fate contend,

15

At Juno's suit the heav'nly factions end.

Destruction hangs o'er yon' devoted wall,

And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.

*give him great glory.* (Instead of which we have in the present copies, *Τρώεσσι δὲ κηδε' ἐφ' ἵπται.*) But Hippias found a way to bring off Homer, only by placing the accent on the last syllable but one, *Δίδομεν*, for *Διδόμεναι*, the infinitive for the imperative: which amounts to no more than he bade the dream to promise him great glory. But Macrobius de Somnio Scip. l. i. c. 7. takes off this imputation entirely, and will not allow there was any lie in the case. "Agamemnon (says he) was ordered by "the dream to lead out *all* the forces of the Greeks, " (*Πανσυνδῆ* is the word) and promised the victory on "that condition: Now Achilles and his forces not being summoned to the assembly with the rest, that neglect absolved Jupiter from his promise." This remark madam Dacier has inserted without mentioning its author. Mr. Dacier takes notice of a passage in the scripture exactly parallel to this, where God is represented making use of the malignity of his creatures to accomplish his judgments. It is in 2 Chron. ch. 18. v. 19 20, 21. *And the Lord said, Who will persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth Gilead? And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the Lord, and said, I will persuade him. And the Lord said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: Go forth and do so.* Vide Dacier upon Aristotle, cap. 26.

Swift as the word the vain illusion fled,  
 Descends, and hovers o'er Atreides' head; 20  
 Cloth'd in the figure of the Pylian sage,  
 Renown'd for wisdom, and rever'd for age;  
 Around his temples spreads his golden wing,  
 And thus the flattering dream deceives the king.

Can'st thou, with all a monarch's cares oppress, 25  
 Oh Atreus' son ! canst thou indulge thy rest ?

Ill fits a chief who mighty nations guides,  
 Directs in council, and in war presides,  
 To whom its safety a whole people owes,  
 To waste long nights in indolent repose. 30

Monarch, awake ! 'tis Jove's command I bear,  
 Thou, and thy glory, claim his heav'nly care.  
 In just array draw forth th' embattel'd train,  
 Lead all thy Grecians to the dusty plain ;

v. 20. *Descends, and hovers o'er Atreides' head.*] The whole action of the *dream* is beautifully natural, and agreeable to philosophy. It perches on his head, to intimate that part to be the seat of that soul : It is circumsufed about him, to express the total possession of the senses which fancy has during our sleep. It takes the figure of the person who was dearest to Agamemnon ; as whatever we think of most, when awake, is the common object of our dreams. And just at the instant of its vanishing, it leaves such an impression that the voice seems still to sound in his ear. No description can be more exact or lively. Eustathius, Dacier.

v. 33. *Draw forth th' embattel'd train, etc.*] The dream here repeats the message of Jupiter in the same terms that he received it. It is no less than the father of Gods and men who gives the order, and to alter a

Book II.	H O M E R's I L I A D.	69
Ev'n now, O king ! 'tis given thee to destroy		35
The lofty tow'rs of wide-extended Troy.		
For now no more the Gods with fate contend,		
At Juno's suit the heav'nly factions end.		
Destruction hangs o'er yon' devoted wall,		
And nodding Ilion waits th' impending fall.		40
Awake, but waking this advice approve,		
And trust the vision that descends from Jove.		

word were presumption. Homer constantly makes his envoys observe this practice as a mark of decency and respect. Madam Dacier and others have applauded this in general, and asked by what authority an ambassador could alter the terms of his commission, since he is not greater or wiser than the person who gave the charge ? But this is not always the case in our author, who not only makes use of this conduct with respect to the orders of a higher power, but in regard to equals also ; as when one Goddess desires another to represent such an affair, and she immediately takes the words from her mouth and repeats them, of which we have an instance in this book. Some objection too may be raised in this manner, when commissions are given in the utmost haste (in a battle or the like) upon sudden emergencies, where it seems not very natural to suppose a man has time to get so many words by heart as he is made to repeat exactly. In the present instance, the repetition is certainly graceful, though Zenodotus thought it not so the third time, when Agamemnon tells his dream to the council. I do not pretend to decide upon the point : for though the reverence of the repetition seemed less needful in that place, than when it was delivered immediately from Jupiter ; yet (as Eustathius observes) it was necessary for the assembly to know the circumstances of this dream, that the truth of the relation might be unsuspected.

The phantome said ; then vanish'd from his sight,  
Resolves to air, and mixes with the night.  
A thousand schemes the monarch's mind employ ; 45  
Elate in thought, he sacks untaken Troy :  
Vain as he was, and to the future blind ;  
Nor saw what Jove and secret fate design'd,  
What mighty toils to either host remain,  
What scenes of grief, and numbers of the slain !- 50  
Eager he rises and in fancy hears  
The voice celestial murm'ring in his ears.  
First on his limbs a slender vest he drew,  
Around him next the regal mantle threw,  
Th'embroider'd sandals on his feet were ty'd ; 55  
The starry faulchion glitter'd at his side  
And last his arm the massy sceptre loads,  
Unstain'd, immortal, and the gift of Gods.

Now rosy morn ascends the court of Jove,  
Lifts up her light, and opens day above. 60  
The king dispatch'd his heralds with commands  
To range the camp, and summon all the bands :  
The gath'ring hosts the monarch's word obey ;  
While to the fleet Atrides bends his way.  
In his black ship the Pylian prince he found ; 65  
There calls a senate of the peers around :  
Th' assembly plac'd, the king of men express  
The counsels lab'ring in his artful breast.

Friends and confed'rates ! with attentive ear  
Receive my words, and credit what you hear. 70

Late as I slumber'd in the shades of night,  
 A dream divine appear'd before my sight ;  
 Whose visionary form like Nestor came,  
 The same in habit, and in mein the same.  
 The heav'nly phantome hover'd o'er my head, 75  
 And, dost thou sleep, oh Atreus' son ? (he said)  
 Ill fits a chief who mighty nations guides,  
 Directs in council, and in war presides,  
 To whom its safety a whole people owes,  
 To waste long nights in indolent repose. 80  
 Monarch awake ! 'tis Jove's command I bear ;  
 Thou and thy glory claim his heav'nly care.  
 In just array draw forth th' embattel'd train,  
 And lead the Grecians to the dusty plain ;  
 Ev'n now, O king ! 'tis given thee to destroy 85  
 The lofty tow'rs of wide-extended Troy.  
 For now no more the Gods with fate contend,  
 At Juno's suit the heav'nly factions end.  
 Destruction hangs o'er yon' devoted wall,  
 And nodding Ilion waits the impending fall. 90  
 This hear observant, and the Gods obey !  
 The vision spoke, and past in air away.  
 Now, valiant chiefs ! since heav'n itself alarms,  
 Unite, and rouse the sons of Greece to arms.

v. 93. *Now, valiant chiefs, etc.*] The best commentary extant upon the first part of this book is in Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who has given us an admirable explication of this whole conduct of Agamemnon in his second treatise *Περὶ ἑσχηματισμένων*. He says, " This



But first, with caution, try what yet they dare, 95  
Worn with nine years of unsuccessful war?

“ prince had nothing so much at heart as to draw the  
“ Greeks to a battle, yet knew not how to proceed with-  
“ out Achilles, who had just retired from the army; and  
“ was apprehensive that the Greeks who were displeased  
“ at the departure of Achilles, might refuse obedience to  
“ his orders, should he absolutely command it. In this  
“ circumstance he proposes to the princes in council to  
“ make a trial of arming the Grecians, and offers an ex-  
“ pedit himself; which was, that he should sound their  
“ dispositions by exhorting them to set sail for Greece,  
“ but that then the other princes should be ready to dis-  
“ suade and detain them. If any object to this strata-  
“ gem, that Agamemnon's whole scheme would be ruin-  
“ ed if the army should take him at his word (which  
“ was very probable) it is to be answered, that his de-  
“ sign lay deeper than they imagined, nor did he depend  
“ upon his speech only for detaining them. He had some  
“ cause to fear the Greeks had a pique against him which  
“ they had concealed, and whatever it was, he judged it  
“ absolutely necessary to know it before he proceeded  
“ to a battle. He therefore furnishes them with an oc-  
“ casion to manifest it, and at the same time provides a-  
“ gainst any ill effects it might have, by this secret or-  
“ ders to the princes. It succeeds accordingly, and  
“ when the troops are running to embark, they are stop-  
“ ped by Ulysses and Nestor.” — One may farther  
observe that this whole stratagem is concerted in Ne-  
stor's ship, as one whose wisdom and secrecy was most  
confided in. The story of the vision's appearing in his  
shape, could not but engage him in some degree: It  
looked as if Jupiter himself added weight to his coun-  
sels by making use of that venerable appearance, and  
knew this to be the most powerful method of recom-  
mending them to Agamemnon. It was therefore but  
natural for Nestor to second the motion of the king,

To move the troops to measure back the main,  
Be mine; and yours the province to detain.

He spoke, and fate; when Nestor rising said,  
(Nestor, whom Pylos' sandy realms obey'd) 100  
Princes of Greece, your faithful ears incline,  
Nor doubt the vision of the pow'rs divine;  
Sent by great Jove to him who rules the host;  
Forbid it, heav'n! this warning should be lost!  
Then let us haste, obey the God's alarms, 105  
And join to rouse the sons of Greece to arms.

Thus spoke the sage: The kings without delay  
Dissolve the council, and their chief obey:  
The scepter'd rulers lead; the following host  
Pour'd forth by thousands, darkens all the coast 110  
As from some rocky cleft the shepherd sees  
Clust'ring in heaps on heaps the driving bees,

and by the help of his authority it prevailed on the other princes.

v. III. *As from some rocky cleft.*] This is the first simile in Homer, and we may observe in general that he excells all mankind in the number, variety, and beauty of his comparisons. There are scarce any in Virgil which are not translated from him, and therefore when he succeeds best in them, he is to be commended but as an improver. Scaliger seems not to have thought of this, when he compares the families of these two authors (as indeed they are the places most obvious to comparison.) The present passage is an instance of it, to which he opposes the following verses in the first Æneid, v. 434.

Rolling, and black'ning, swarms succeeding swarms,  
With deeper murmurs and more hoarse alarms ;

*Qualis apes æstate nova per florea rura  
Exercet sub sole labor, cum gentis adultos  
Educunt foetus, aut cum liquentia mella  
Stipant, et dulci distendunt nectare cellas ;  
Aut onera accipiunt venientum, aut agmine facto  
Ignavum fucos pecus a præsepibus arcent.  
Fervet opus, redolentque thymo fragrantia mella.*

This he very much prefers to Homer's, and in particular extols the harmony and sweetness of the versification above that of our author ; against which censure we need only appeal to the ears of the reader.

Ἦν τε ἔθνεα εἴσι μελισσῶν ἀδινάων,  
Πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς αἰεὶ νέον ἐρχαμενάων.  
Βοτρυδὸν δὲ πέτονται ἐπ' ἀνθισιν ἐαρινοῖσιν.  
Αἱ μὲν τ' ἔνθα ἄλῃς πιποτήσεται, αἱ δὲ τε ἔνθα, etc.

But Scaliger was unlucky in his choice of this particular comparison : There is a very fine one in the sixth Æneid, v. 707. that better agrees with Homer's : and nothing is more evident than that the design of these two is very different : Homer intended to describe the *multitude* of Greeks pouring out of the ships ; Virgil the *diligence* and *labour* of the builders at Carthage. And Macrobius, who observes this difference, Sat. l. 5. c. 11. should also have found, that therefore the similes ought not to be compared together. The beauty of Homer's is not inferior to Virgil's, if we consider with what exactness it answers to its end. It consists of three particulars ; the vast number of the troops is expressed in the swarms ; their tumultuous manner of issuing out of the ships, and the perpetual egression which seemed without end, are imaged in the bees pouring out of the rock ; and lastly, their dispersion over all the shore, in their descend-

Dusky they spread, a close embody'd croud, 115  
 And o'er the vale descends the living cloud.  
 So, from the tents and ships, a length'ning train  
 Spreads all the beach, and wide o'er shades the plain;  
 Along the region runs a deaf'ning found;  
 Beneath their footsteps groans the trembling ground. 120  
 Fame flies before, the messenger of Jove,  
 And shining soars, and claps her wings above.  
 Nine sacred heralds now proclaiming loud  
 The monarch's will, suspend the list'ning croud.  
 Soon as the throngs in order rang'd appear, 125  
 And fainter murmurs dy'd upon the ear,  
 The king of kings his awful figure rais'd;  
 High in his hand the golden sceptre blaz'd:

ing on the flowers in the vales. Spondanus was therefore mistaken when he thought the whole application of this comparison lay in the single word *ἰλαδὼν*, *catervatim*, as Chapman has justly observed,

v. 121. *Fame flies before.*] This assembling of the army is full of beauties: The lively description of their overspreading the field, the noble boldness of the figure, when Fame is represented in person shining at their head; the universal tumult succeeded by a solemn silence: and lastly the graceful rising of Agamemnon, all contribute to cast a majesty on this part. In the passage of the *sceptre*, Homer has found an artful and poetical manner of acquainting us with the high descent of Agamemnon, and celebrating the hereditary right of his family; as well as finely hinted the original of his power to be derived from heaven, in saying the sceptre was first the gift of Jupiter. It is with reference to this, that in the line, where he first mentions it, he calls it *Ἀφ' ἰσταν αἰεὶ*, and accordingly it is translated in that place.

The golden sceptre, of celestial frame,  
 By Vulcan form'd, from Jove to Hermes came: 130  
 To Pelops he th' immortal gift resign'd;  
 Th' immortal gift great Pelops left behind,  
 In Atreus' hand which not with Atreus ends,  
 To rich Thyestes next the prize descends;  
 And now the mark of Agamemnon's reign, 135  
 Subjects all Argos, and controuls the main.

On this bright sceptre now the king reclin'd,  
 And artful thus pronounc'd the speech design'd,

v. 138. *And artful thus pronounc'd the speech design'd.*] The remarks of Dionysius upon this speech I shall give the reader all together, though they lie scattered in his two discourses *περὶ ἱστορηματισμένων*, the second of which is in a great degree but a repetition of the precepts and examples of the first. This happened, I believe, from his having compos'd them at distinct times and upon different occasions.

“ It is an exquisite piece of art, when you seem to  
 “ aim at persuading one thing, and at the same time in-  
 “ force the contrary. This kind of rhetoric is of great  
 “ use in all occasions of danger, and of this Homer has  
 “ afforded a most powerful example in the oration of  
 “ Agamemnon. It is a method perfectly wonderful, and  
 “ even carries in it an appearance of absurdity; for all  
 “ that we generally esteem the faults of oratory, by this  
 “ means become the virtues of it. Nothing is looked  
 “ upon as a greater error in a rhetorician than to alledge  
 “ such arguments as either are easily answered or may be  
 “ retorted upon himself; the former is a weak part, the  
 “ latter a dangerous one; and Agamemnon here design-  
 “ edly deals in both. For it is plain that if a man must  
 “ not use weak arguments, or such as may make against  
 “ him, when he intends to persuade the thing he says;



Ye sons of Mars ! partake your leader's care,

Heroes of Greece, and brothers of the war !

140

“ then on the other side, when he does not intend it, he  
 “ must observe the contrary proceeding, and make what  
 “ are the faults of oratory in general, the excellencies  
 “ of that oration in particular, or otherwise he will con-  
 “ tradict his own intention, and persuade the contrary  
 “ to what he means. Agamemnon begins with an argu-  
 “ ment easily answered, by telling them that *Jupiter had*  
 “ *promised to crown their arms with victory*. For if Ju-  
 “ piter had promised this, it was a reason for the stay in  
 “ the camp. *But now* (says he) *Jove has deceived us, and*  
 “ *we must return with ignominy*. This is another of the  
 “ same kind, for it shews what a disgrace it is to return.  
 “ What follows is of the second sort, and may be turn-  
 “ ed against him. *Jove will have it so* : for which they  
 “ have only Agamemnon's word, but Jove's own pro-  
 “ mise to the contrary. *That God has overthrown many*  
 “ *cities, and will yet overturn many others*. This was a  
 “ strong reason to stay, and put their confidence in him.  
 “ *It is shameful to have it told to all posterity, that so*  
 “ *many thousand Greeks, after a war of so long continu-*  
 “ *ance, at last returned home baffled and unsuccessful*.  
 “ All this might have been said by a profest adversary to  
 “ the cause he pleads, and indeed is the same thing Ulysses  
 “ says elsewhere in reproach of their flight. The conclu-  
 “ sion evidently shews, the intent of the speaker. *Haste*  
 “ *then ; let us fly ; φεύγωμεν* the word which of all o-  
 “ thers was most likely to prevail upon them to stay ; the  
 “ most open term of disgrace he could possibly have used :  
 “ it is the same which Juno makes use of to Minerva,  
 “ Minerva to Ulysses, and Ulysses again to the troops, to  
 “ dissuade their return ; the same which Agamemnon him-  
 “ self had used to insult Achilles, and which Homer never  
 “ employs but with the mark of cowardice and in-  
 “ famy.”

The same author farther observes, “That this whole

Of partial Jove with justice I complain,  
 And heav'nly oracles believ'd in vain.  
 A safe return was promis'd to our toils,  
 Renown'd, triumphant, and enrich'd with spoils.  
 Now shameful flight alone can save the host, 145  
 Our blood, our treasure, and our glory lost.  
 So Jove decrees, resistless lord of all!  
 At whose command whole empires rise or fall:  
 He shakes the feeble props of human trust,  
 And towns and armies humbles to the dust. 150  
 What shame to Greece a fruitless war to wage,  
 Oh lasting shame in ev'ry future age!  
 Once great in arms, the common scorn we grow,  
 Repuls'd and baffled by a feeble foe.

"oration has the air of being spoken in a passion. It  
 "begins with a stroke of the greatest rashness and impa-  
 "tience. *Jupiter has been unjust, heaven has deceived us.*  
 "This renders all he shall say of the less authority, at  
 "the same time that it conceals his own artifice; for his  
 "anger seems to account for the incongruities he utters."  
 I could not suppress so fine a remark, though it falls out  
 of the order of those which precede it.

Before I leave this article, I must take notice that this  
 speech of Agamemnon is again put into his mouth in the  
 ninth Iliad, and (according to Dionysius) for the same  
 purpose, to detain the army at the siege after a defeat;  
 though it seems unartful to put the same trick twice up-  
 on the Greeks by the same person, and in the same words  
 too. We may indeed suppose the first feint to have re-  
 mained undiscovered, but at best it is a management in  
 the poet not very entertaining to the readers.

Book II. HOMER's I L I A D. 79  
 So small their number, that if wars were ceas'd, 155  
 And Greece triumphant held a gen'ral feast,  
 All rank'd by ten; whole decads when they dine  
 Must want a Trojan slave to pour the wine.  
 But other forces have our hopes o'erthrown,  
 And Troy prevails by armies not her own. 160  
 Now nine long years of mighty Jove are run,  
 Since first the labours of this war begun:

[v. 155. *So small their number*, etc.] This part has a low air in comparison with the rest of the speech. Scaliger calls it *tabernarium orationem*: but it is well observed by madam Dacier, that the image Agamemnon here gives of the Trojans, does not only render their numbers contemptible in comparison of the Greeks, but their persons too; for it makes them appear but as a few vile slaves fit only to serve them with wine. To which we may add, that it affords a prospect to his soldiers of their future state and triumph after the conquest of their enemies.

This passage gives me occasion to animadvert upon a computation of the number of the Trojans, which the learned Angelus Politian has offered at in his Preface to Homer. He thinks they were fifty thousand without the auxiliaries, from the conclusion of the eighth Iliad, where it is said there were a thousand funeral piles of Trojans, and fifty men attending each of them. But that the auxiliaries are to be admitted into that number, appears plainly from this place: Agamemnon expressly distinguishes the native Trojans from the aids, and reckons but one to ten Grecians, at which estimate there could not be above ten thousand Trojans. *See the notes on the catalogue.*

Our cordage torn, decay'd our vessels lie,  
 And scarce ensure the wretched pow'r to fly.  
 Haste then, for ever leave the Trojan wall ! 165  
 Our weeping wives our tender children call :  
 Love, duty, safety, summon us away,  
 'Tis nature's voice, and nature we obey.  
 Our shatter'd barks may yet transport us o'er,  
 Safe and inglorious, to our native shore. 170  
 Fly, Grecians, fly, your sails and oars employ.  
 And dream no more of heav'n-defended Troy.

His deep design unknown, the hosts approve  
 Atrides' speech. The mighty numbers move.  
 So roll the billows to th' Icarian shore, 175  
 From east and south when winds begin to rore,

v. 163. ——— *Decay'd our vessels lie,*

*And scarce ensure the wretched pow'r to fly.]*

This, and some other passages, are here translated correspondent to the general air and sense of this speech, rather than just to the letter. The telling them in this place how much their shipping was decayed, was a hint of their danger in returning, as madam Dacier has remarked.

v. 175. *So roll the billows, etc.]* One may take notice that Homer in these two similitudes has judiciously made choice of the two most wavering and inconstant things in nature, to compare with the multitude; the *waves* and *ears of corn*. The first alludes to the noise and tumult of the people, in the breaking and rolling of the billows; the second to their taking the same course, like corn bending one way; and both to the easiness with which they are moved by every *breath*.

Burst their dark mansions in the clouds, and sweep  
The whitening surface of the ruffled deep.

And as on corn when western gusts descend,

Before the blast the lofty harvests bend : 180

Thus o'er the field the moving host appears,

With nodding plumes and groves of waving spears.

The gath'ring murmur spreads, their trampling feet

Beat the loose sands, and thicken to the fleet.

Whose long-resounding cries they urge the train 185

To fit the ships and launch into the main.

They toil, they sweat, thick clouds of dust arise,

The doubling clamours echo to the skies.

Ev'n then the Greeks had left the hostile plain,

And fate decreed the fall of Troy in vain ; 190

But Jove's imperial queen their flight survey'd,

And sighing thus bespoke the blue-ey'd maid.

Shall then the Grecians fly ? Oh dire disgrace !

And leave unpunish'd this perfidious race ?

Shall Troy, shall Priam, and th' adult'rous spouse, 195

In peace enjoy the fruits of broken vows !

And bravest chiefs, in Helen's quarrel slain,

Lie unreveng'd on yon' detested plain ?

No : let my Greeks, unmov'd by vain alarms,

Once more refulgent shine in brazen arms. 200

Haste, Goddess, haste ! the flying host detain,

Nor let one sail be hoisted on the main.

Pallas obeys, and from Olympus' height

Swift to the ships precipitates her flight ;



Ulysses, first in public cares, she found, 205  
For prudent counsel like the Gods renown'd :  
Oppress'd with gen'rous grief the hero stood,  
Nor drew his sable vessels to the flood.  
And is it thus, divine Laertes' son !  
Thus fly the Greeks (the martial maid begun) 210  
Thus to their country bear their own disgrace,  
And fame eternal leave to Priam's race ?  
Shall beauteous Helen still remain unfreed,  
Still unreveng'd a thousand heroes bleed ?  
Haste, gen'rous Ithacus ! prevent the shame, 215  
Recall your armies, and your chiefs reclaim.  
Your own resistless eloquence employ,  
And to th' immortals trust the fall of Troy.

The voice divine confess the warlike maid,  
Ulysses heard, nor uninspir'd obey'd : 220  
Then meeting first Atrides, from his hand  
Receiv'd th' imperial sceptre of command.  
Thus grac'd, attention and respect to gain,  
He runs, he flies thro' all the Grecian train,  
Each prince of name, or chief in arms approv'd, 225  
He fir'd with praise, or with persuasion mov'd.

Warriors like you, with strength and wisdom blest,  
By brave examples should confirm the rest.  
The monarch's will not yet reveal'd appears ;  
He tries our courage, but resents our fears. 230  
Th' unwary Greeks his fury may provoke ;  
Not thus the king in secret council spoke.

Jove loves our chief, from Jove his honour springs,  
Beware ! for dreadful is the wrath of kings.

But if a clam'rous vile Plebeian rose, 235

Him with reproof he check'd, or tam'd with blows.

Be still, thou slave, and to thy betters yield ;

Unknown alike in council and in field !

Ye Gods, what dastards would our host command !

Swept to the war, the lumber of a land. 240

Be silent, wretch, and think not here allow'd

That worst of tyrants, an usurping croud.

To one sole monarch Jove commits the sway ;

His are the laws, and him let all obey.

v. 243. *To one sole monarch.*] Those persons are under a mistake who would make this sentence a praise of absolute monarchy. Homer speaks it only with regard to a general of an army during the time of his commission. Nor is Agamemnon stiled *king of kings* in any other sense, than as the rest of the princes had given him the supreme authority over them in the siege. Aristotle defines a king, Στρατηγὸς γὰρ ἦν δὴ δικαστὴς ὁ βασιλεύς, καὶ τῶν πρὸς θεῶς Κύριος; *Leader of the war, Judge of controversies, and President of the ceremonies of the Gods.* That he had the principal care of religious rites, appears from many places in Homer; and that his power was no where absolute but in war: for we find Agamemnon insulted in the council, but in the army threatening deserters with death. He was under an obligation to preserve the privileges of his country, pursuant to which kings are called by our author Δικαστὸν, and Θεμιστόν, the dispensers or managers of justice. And Dionysius of Halicarnassus acquaints us, that the old Grecian kings, whether hereditary or elective, had a council of their chief men, as Homer and the most ancient poets

With words like these the troops Ulysses rul'd, 245  
 The loudest silenc'd, and the fiercest cool'd.  
 Back to th' assembly roll the thronging train,  
 Desert the ships, and pour upon the plain.  
 Murm'ring they move, as when old Ocean rores,  
 And heaves huge surges to the trembling shores : 250  
 The groaning banks are burst with bellowing sound,  
 The rocks remurmur, and the deeps rebound.  
 At length the tumult sinks, the noises cease,  
 And a still silence lulls the camp to peace.

Thersites only clamour'd in the throng, 255  
 Loquacious, loud, and turbulent of tongue :

testify ; nor was it (he adds) in those times as in ours,  
 when kings have a full liberty to do whatever they please.  
 Dion. Hal. lib. 2. Hist.

v. 255. *Thersites only.*] The ancients have ascribed  
 to Homer the first sketch of Satiric or Comic poetry, of  
 which sort was his poem called Margites, as Aristotle re-  
 ports. Though that piece be lost, this character of Ther-  
 sites may give us a taste of his vein in that kind. But  
 whether ludicrous descriptions ought to have a place in the  
 Epic poem, has been justly questioned : Neither Virgil  
 nor any of the most approved ancients have thought fit  
 to admit them into their compositions of that nature ;  
 nor any of the best moderns except Milton, whose fond-  
 ness for Homer might be the reason of it. However this  
 is in its kind a very masterly part, and our author has  
 shewn great judgment in the particulars he has chosen to  
 compose the picture of a pernicious creature of wit ; the  
 chief of which are a desire of promoting laughter at any  
 rate, and a contempt of his superiors. And he sums up  
 up the whole very strongly, by saying that Thersites hated  
 Achilles and Ulysses ; in which, as Plutarch has remark-

Aw'd by no shame, by no respect controul'd,  
 In scandal busy, in reproaches bold :  
 With witty malice studious to defame ;  
 Scorn all his joy, and laughter all his aim. 260  
 But chief he glory'd with licentious stile  
 To lash the great, and monarchs to revile.  
 His figure such as might his soul proclaim ;  
 One eye was blinking, and one leg was lame :  
 His mountain-shoulders half his breast o'erspread, 265  
 Thin hairs bestrew'd his long mis-shapen head.  
 Spleen to mankind his envious heart possess'd,  
 And much he hated all, but most the best.  
 Ulysses or Achilles still his theme ;  
 But royal scandal his delight supreme: 270  
 Long had he liv'd the scorn of ev'ry Greek,  
 Vext when he spoke, yet still they heard him speak.  
 Sharp was his voice ; which in the shrillest tone,  
 Thus with injurious taunts attack'd the throne.

ed in his treatise of envy and hatred, he makes it the utmost completion of an ill character to bear a malevolence to the best men. What is further observable is, that Thersites is never heard of after this his first appearance : Such a scandalous character is to be taken no more notice of, than just to shew that it is despised. Homer has observed the same conduct with regard to the most *deformed* and most *beautiful* person of his poem : for Nireus is thus mentioned once and no more throughout the Iliad. He places a worthless *beauty* and an ill-natured *wit* upon the same foot, and shews that the gifts of the body without those of the mind are not more despicable than those of the mind itself without virtue.

Amidst the glories of so bright a reign, 275  
 What moves the great Atrides to complain?  
 'Tis thine whate'er the warrior's breast inflames,  
 The golden spoil, and thine the lovely dames.  
 With all the wealth our wars and blood bestow,  
 Thy tents are crouded, and thy chests o'erflow, 280  
 Thus at full ease in heaps of riches roll'd,  
 What grieves the monarch? Is it thirst of gold?  
 Say, shall we march with our unconquer'd pow'rs,  
 (The Greeks and I) to Ilion's hostile tow'rs,

v. 275. *Amidst the glories.*] It is remarked by Dionysius Halicarnassus in his treatise of the Examination of Writers, that there could not be a better artifice thought on to recall the army to their obedience, than this of our author. When they were offended at their general in favour of Achilles, nothing could more weaken Achilles' interest than to make such a fellow as Thersites appear of his party, whose impertinence would give them a disgust of thinking or acting like him. There is no surer method to reduce generous spirits, than to make them see they are pursuing the same views with people of no merit, and such whom they cannot forbear despising themselves. Otherwise there is nothing in this speech but what might become the mouth of Nestor himself, if you except a word or two. And had Nestor spoken it, the army had certainly set sail for Greece; but because it was uttered by a ridiculous fellow whom they are ashamed to follow, they are reduced, and satisfied to continue the siege.

v. 284. *The Greeks and I.*] These boasts of himself are the few words which Dionysius objects to in the foregoing passage. I cannot but think the grave commentators here very much mistaken, who imagine Thersites in earnest in these vaunts, and seriously reprove his



And bring the race of royal bastards here,      285  
For Troy to ransom at a price too dear ?

But safer plunder thy own host supplies ;  
Say, would'st thou seize some valiant leader's prize ?  
Or, if thy heart to gen'rous love be led,  
Some captive fair, to bless thy kingly bed ?      290

Whate'er our master craves, submit we must,  
Plagu'd with his pride, or punish'd for his lust.  
Oh women of Achaia ! men no more !  
Hence let us fly, and let him waste his store  
In loves and pleasures on the Phrygian shore.      295

We may be wanted on some busy day,  
When Hector comes : So great Achilles may :  
From him he forc'd the prize we jointly gave,  
From him, the fierce, the fearless, and the brave :  
And durst he, as he ought, resent that wrong,      300  
This mighty tyrant were no tyrant long.

Fierce from his seat, at this Ulysses springs,  
In gen'rous vengeance of the king of kings.  
With indignation sparkling in his eyes,  
He views the wretch, and sternly thus replies.      305

Peace, factious monster, born to vex the state,  
With wrangling talents form'd for foul debate :

insolence. They seem to me manifest strokes of irony,  
which had rendered them so much the more improper in  
the mouth of Nestor, who was otherwise none of the least  
boasters himself. And considered as such, they are equal  
to the rest of the speech, which has an infinite deal of  
spirit, humour, and satire.

Curb that impetuous tongue, nor rashly vain  
 And singly mad, asperse the sov'reign reign.  
 Have we not known thee, slave ! of all our host, 310  
 The man who acts the least, upbraids the most ?  
 Think not the Greeks to shameful flight to bring,  
 Nor let those lips prophane the name of king.  
 For our return we trust the heav'nly pow'rs ;  
 Be that their care ; to fight like men be ours. 315  
 But grant the host with wealth the gen'ral load,  
 Except detraction, what hast thou bestow'd ?  
 Suppose some hero, should his spoils resign,  
 Art thou that hero, could those spoils be thine ?  
 Gods ! let me perish on this hateful shore, 320  
 And let these eyes behold my son no more ;  
 If, on thy next offence this hand forbear  
 To strip those arms thou ill deserv'st to wear,  
 Expell the council where our princes meet,  
 And send thee scourg'd, and hollowing thro' the fleet. 325  
 He said, and cowering as the dastard bends,  
 The weighty sceptre on his back descends :  
 On the round bunch the bloody tumours rise ;  
 The tears spring starting from his haggard eyes.

v. 326. *He said, and cowering.*] The vile figure  
 Therites makes here is a good piece of *grotesque* ; the  
 pleasure expressed by the soldiers at this action of Ulysses  
 (notwithstanding they are disappointed by him of their  
 hopes of returning) is agreeable to that generous temper,  
 at once honest and thoughtless, which is commonly found  
 in military men ; to whom nothing is so odious as a dastard,  
 and who have not naturally the greatest kindness  
 for a wit.

Trembling he fate, and shrunk in abject fears, 330  
 From his vile visage wip'd the scalding tears.  
 While to his neighbour each express'd his thought:  
 Ye Gods! what wonders has Ulysses wrought!  
 What fruits his conduct and his courage yield!  
 Great in the council, glorious in the field. 335  
 Gen'rous he rises in the crown's defence,  
 To curb the factious tongue of insolence.  
 Such just examples on offenders shown,  
 Sedition silence, and assert the throne.

'Twas thus the general voice the hero prais'd, 340  
 Who rising, high th' imperial sceptre rais'd:  
 The blue-ey'd Pallas, his celestial friend,  
 (In form a herald) bade the crouds attend.  
 Th' expecting crouds in still attention hung,  
 To hear the wisdom of his heav'nly tongue. 345  
 Then deeply thoughtful, pausing ere he spoke,  
 His silence thus the prudent hero broke.

Unhappy monarch! whom the Grecian race  
 With shame deserting, heap with vile disgrace.

v. 348. *Unhappy monarch, etc.*] Quintilian speaking of the various kinds of oratory which may be learned from Homer, mentions among the greatest instances the speeches in this book. *Nonne vel unus liber quo missa ad Achillem legatio continetur vel in primo inter duces illa contentio, vel dictæ in secundo sententiæ, omnes litium ac consiliorum explicat artes? Affectus quidem vel illos mites, vel hos concitatos, nemo erit tam indoctus, qui non sua in potestate hunc autorem habuisse fateatur.* It is indeed hardly possible to find any where more refined turns of policy, or more artful touches of oratory. We have no soon-

Not such at Argos was their gen'rous vow, 350  
Once all their voice, but ah ! forgotten now :

er seen Agamemnon excel in one sort, but Ulysses is to shine no less in another directly opposite to it. When the stratagem of pretending to set sail, had met with too ready a consent from the people, his eloquence appears in all the forms of art. In his first speech he had persuaded the captains with mildness, telling them the people's glory depended upon them, and readily giving a turn to the first design, which had like to have been so dangerous, by representing it only as a project of Agamemnon to discover the cowardly. In his second, he had commanded the soldiers with bravery, and made them know what part they sustained in the war. In his third, he had rebuked the seditious in the person of Thersites, by reproofs, threats, and actual chastisement. And now in this fourth when all are gathered together, he applies to them in topics which equally affect them all : he raises their hearts by putting them in mind of the promises of heaven, and those prophecies, of which as they had seen the truth in the nine years delay, they might now expect the accomplishment in the tenth year's success : which is a full answer to what Agamemnon had said of Jupiter's deceiving them.

Dionysius observes one singular piece of art, in Ulysses's manner of applying himself to the people when he would insinuate any thing to the princes, and addressing to the princes when he would blame the people. He tells the soldiers, they must not all pretend to be rulers there ; let there be one king, one lord ; which is manifestly a precept designed for the leaders to take to themselves. In the same manner Tiberius Rhetor remarks the beginning of his last oration to be a fine *Ethopoieia*, or oblique representation of the people, upon whom the severity of the reproach is made to fall, while he seems to render the king an object of their pity.

*Unhappy*

Ne'er to return, was then the common cry,  
'Till Troy's proud structures should in ruins lie.  
Behold them weeping for their native shore!  
What could their wives or helpless children more? 355  
What heart but melts to leave the tender train,  
And, one short month, endure the wintry main?  
Few leagues remov'd, we wish our peaceful seat,  
When the ship tosses, and the tempests beat:  
Then well may this long stay provoke their tears, 360  
The tedious length of nine revolving years.  
Not for their grief the Grecian host I blame;  
But vanquish'd! baffled! oh eternal shame!  
Expect the time to Troy's destruction giv'n,  
And try the faith of Chalcas and of heav'n. 365  
What past at Aulis, Greece can witness bear,  
And all who live to breathe this Phrygian air.  
Beside a fountain's sacred brink we rais'd  
Our verdant altars, and the victims blaz'd;  
( 'Twas where the plane-tree spread its shades around ) 370  
The altars heav'd; and from the crumbling ground  
A mighty dragon shot, of dire portent;  
From Jove himself the dreadful sign was sent.  
Strait to the tree his sanguine spires he roll'd,  
And curl'd around in many a winding fold. 375  
The topmost branch a mother-bird possess'd;  
Eight callow infants fill'd the mossy nest;

*Unhappy monarch! whom the Grecian race  
With shame deserting, etc.*



Herself the ninth ; the serpent as he hung,  
 Stretch'd his black jaws, and crush'd the crying young ;  
 While hov'ring near, with miserable moan, 380  
 The drooping mother wail'd her children gone.  
 The mother last, as round the nest she flew,  
 Seiz'd by the beating wing, the monster flew :  
 Nor long surviv'd, to marble turn'd he stands  
 A lasting progeny on Aulis' sands. 385  
 Such was the will of Jove ; and hence we dare  
 Trust in his omen, and support the war.  
 For while around we gaz'd with wond'ring eyes,  
 And trembling fought the pow'rs with sacrifice,  
 Full of his God, the rev'rend Chalcas cry'd, 390  
 Ye Grecian warriors ! lay your fears aside.  
 This wondrous signal Jove himself displays,  
 Of long, long labours, but eternal praise.  
 As many birds as by the snake were slain,  
 So many years the toils of Greece remain : 395  
 But wait the tenth, for Ilion's fall decreed :  
 Thus spoke the prophet, thus the fates succeed.  
 Obey, ye Grecians ! with submission wait,  
 Nor let your flight avert the Trojan fate.

He said : the shores with loud applauses sound, 400  
 The hollow ships each deaf'ning shout rebound.  
 Then Nestor thus——These vain debates forbear,  
 Ye talk like children, not like heroes dare.

v. 402. *Then Nestor thus.*] Nothing is more observable  
 than Homer's conduct of this whole incident ; by what  
 judicious and well-imagined degrees the army is restrain-

Where now are all your high resolves at last?

Your leagues concluded, your engagements past? 405

ed, and wrought up to the desires of the general. We have given the detail of all the methods Ulysses proceeded in: The activity of his character is now to be contrasted with the gravity of Nestor's, who covers and strengthens the other's arguments, and constantly appears through the poem a weighty closer of debates. The Greeks had already seen their general give way to his authority, in the dispute with Achilles in the former book, and could expect no less than that their stay should be concluded on by Agamemnon, as soon as Nestor undertook that cause. For this was all they imagined his discourse aimed at; but we shall find it had a farther design, from Dionysius of Halicarnassus. "There are two things" (says that excellent critic) worthy of admiration in the "speeches of Ulysses and Nestor, which are the different designs they speak with, and the different applauses they receive. Ulysses had the acclamations of the army, and Nestor the praise of Agamemnon. One may inquire the reason, why he extols the latter preferably to the former, when all that Nestor alledges seems only a repetition of the same arguments which Ulysses had given before him? It might be done in encouragement to the old man, in whom it might raise a concern to find his speech not followed with so general an applause as the other's. But we are to refer the speech of Nestor to that part of oratory which seems only to confirm what another has said, and yet superinduces and carries a farther point. Ulysses and Nestor both compare the Greeks to children for their unmanly desire to return home; they both reproach them with the engagements and vows they had past, and were now about to break; they both alledge the prosperous signs and omens received from heaven. Notwithstanding this, the end of their orations is very different. Ulysses's business was to detain the Gre-

Vow'd with libations and with victims then,  
Now vanish'd like their smoke: the faith of men!

“ cians when they were upon the point of flying; Nestor finding that work done to his hands, designed to draw them instantly to battle. This was the utmost Agamemnon had aimed at, which Nestor's artifice brings to pass; for while they imagine, by all he says, that he is only persuading them to stay, they find themselves unawares put into order of battle, and led under their princes to fight.” Dion. Hal. *περὶ ἑσχηματισμένων*, Part 1. and 2.

We may next take notice of some particulars of this speech: where he says they lose their time, in *empty words*, he hints at the dispute between Agamemnon and Achilles: where he speaks of those who *deserted the Grecian cause*, he glances at Achilles in particular. When he represents Helen in affliction and tears, he removes the odium from the person in whose cause they were to fight; and when he moves Agamemnon to advise with his council, artfully prepares for a reception of his own advice by that modest way of proposing it. As for the advice itself, to divide the army into bodies, each of which should be composed entirely of men of the same country; nothing could be better judged both in regard to the present circumstance, and with an eye to the future carrying on of the war. For the first, its immediate effect was to take the whole army out of its tumult, break whatever cabals they might have formed together, by separating them into a new division, and cause every single mutineer to come instantly under the view of his own proper officer for correction. For the second, it was to be thought the army would be much strengthened by this union: Those of different nations who had different aims, interests and friendships, could not assist each other with so much zeal, or so well concur to the same end, as when friends aided friends, kinsmen their kinsmen, *etc.* when each commander had the glory of his own nation

While useleſs words conſume th' unactive hours,  
No wonder Troy ſo long reſiſts our pow'rs.  
Riſe, great Atrides! and with courage ſway; 410  
We march to war if thou direct the way.  
But leave the few that dare reſiſt thy laws,  
The mean deſerters of the Grecian cauſe.  
To grudge the conqueſt mighty Jove prepares,  
And view, with envy, our ſucceſſful wars. 415  
On that great day when firſt the martial train  
Big with the fate of Ilion, plow'd the main;  
Jove, on the right, a proſp'rous ſignal ſent,  
And thunder rolling ſhook the firmament.  
Encourag'd hence, maintain the glorious ſtrife, 420  
'Till ev'ry ſoldier graſp a Phrygian wife,  
'Till Helen's woes at full reveng'd appear,  
And Troy's proud matrons render tear for tear.  
Before that day, if any Greek invite  
His country's troops to baſe, inglorious flight, 425  
Stand forth that Greek! and hoift his ſail to fly;  
And die the daſtard firſt, who dreads to die.  
But now, O monarch! all thy chiefs adviſe:  
Nor what they offer, thou thyſelf deſpiſe.  
Among thoſe counſels, let not mine be vain; 430  
In tribes and nations to divide thy train:

in view, and a greater emulation was excited between  
body and body; as not only warring for the honour of  
Greece in general, but for that of every diſtinct ſtate in  
particular.

His sep'rate troops let ev'ry leader call,  
 Each strengthen each, and all encourage all.  
 What chief, or soldier, of the num'rous band,  
 Or bravely fights, or ill obeys command, 435  
 When thus distinct they war, shall soon be known,  
 And what the cause of Ilion not o'erthrown;  
 If fate resists, or if our arms are slow,  
 If Gods above prevent, or men below.

To him the king: How much thy years excel 440  
 In arts of council, and in speaking well!

v. 440. *How much thy years excel!*] Every one has observed how glorious an elogium of wisdom Homer has here given, where Agamemnon so far prefers it to valour, as to wish not for ten Ajaxes or Achilleſes, but only for ten Neſtors. For the reſt of this ſpeech, Dionyſius has ſummed it up as follows. “ Agamemnon being now convinced the Greeks were offended at him, on account of the departure of Achilles, pacifies them by a generous confeſſion of his fault; but then aſſerts the character of a ſupreme ruler, and with an air of command threatens the diſobedient.” I cannot conclude this part of the ſpeeches without remarking how beautifully they riſe above one another, and how they more and more awaken the ſpirit of war in the Grecians. In this laſt there is a wonderful fire and vivacity, when he prepares them for the glorious toils they were to undergo by a warm and lively deſcription of them. The repetition of the words in that part has a beauty, which (as well as many others of the ſame kind) has been loſt by moſt translators.

Εὖ μὲν τις δόρυ θιζέσθω, εὖ δ' ἀσπίδα θέσθω,  
 Εὖ δὲ τις ἵπποισιν δειπνον δότω ἀνυπόδεσσιν,  
 Εὖ δὲ τις ἄρματος ἀρπὶς ἰδών————



O would the Gods, in love to Greece, decree  
 But ten such fages as they grant in thee;  
 Such wisdom soon should Priam's force destroy,  
 And soon should fall the haughty tow'rs of Troy! 445  
 But Jove forbids, who plunges those he hates  
 In fierce contention and in vain debates.  
 Now great Achilles from our aid withdraws,  
 By me provok'd; a captive maid the cause:  
 If e'er as friends we join, the Trojan wall 450  
 Must shake, and heavy will the vengeance fall!  
 But now, ye warriors, take a short repast;  
 And, well-refresh'd, to bloody conflict haste.  
 His sharpen'd spear let ev'ry Grecian wield,  
 And ev'ry Grecian fix his brazen shield, 455  
 Let all excite the fiery steeds of war,  
 And all for combat fit the ratling car.  
 This day, this dreadful day, let each contend;  
 No rest, no respite, 'till the shades descend;  
 'Till darkness, or till death shall cover all: 460  
 Let the war bleed, and let the mighty fall!  
 'Till bath'd in sweat be ev'ry manly breast,  
 With the huge shield each brawny arm depress'd.  
 Each aking nerve refuse the lance to throw,  
 And each spent courser at the chariot blow. 465

I cannot but believe Milton had this passage in his eye in that of his sixth book.

————— *Let each*

*His adamantine coat gird well; and each*

*Fit well his helm, gripe fast his orb'd shield, etc.*

Who dares, inglorious, in his ships to stay,  
 Who dares to tremble on this signal day,  
 That wretch, too mean to fall by martial pow'r,  
 The birds shall mangle, and the dogs devour.

The monarch spoke; and strait a murmur rose, 470  
 Loud as the furies when the tempest blows,  
 That dash'd on broken rocks tumultuous rore,  
 And foam and thunder on the stony shore.  
 Strait to the tents the troops dispersing bend,  
 The fires are kindled, and the smokes ascend; 475  
 With hasty feasts they sacrifice, and pray  
 T' avert the dangers of the doubtful day.  
 A steer of five years age, large limb'd, and fed,  
 To Jove's high altar Agamemnon led:  
 There bade the noblest of the Grecian peers; 480  
 And Nestor first, 'as most advanc'd in years.  
 Next came Idomeneus and Tydeus' son,  
 Ajax the less, and Ajax Telamon:  
 Then wife Ulysses in his rank was plac'd;  
 And Menelaus came unbid, the last. 485

v. 485. *And Menelaus came unbid.*] The critics have entered into a warm dispute, whether Menelaus was in the right or in the wrong, in coming uninvited: Some maintaining it the part of of an impertinent or fool to intrude upon another man's table; and others insisting upon the privilege a brother or a kinsman may claim in this case. The English reader had not been troubled with the translation of this word *Αυτόματος*, but that Plato and Plutarch have taken notice of the passage. The verse following this, in most editions, "Ἡδὲ γὰρ κατὰ θυμὸν, etc. being rejected as spurious by Demetrius Phalereus, is omitted here upon his authority.

The chiefs furround the destin'd beast, and take  
The sacred off'ring of the salted cake :

When thus the king prefers his solemn pray'r :  
Oh thou ! whose thunder rends the clouded air,  
Who in the heav'n of heav'ns has fix'd thy throne,     490  
Supreme of Gods ! unbounded, and alone !

Hear ! and before the burning sun descends,  
Before the night her gloomy veil extends,  
Low in the dust be laid yon' hostile spires,  
Be Priam's palace sunk in Grecian fires,     495  
In Hector's breast be plung'd this shining sword,  
And slaughter'd heroes groan around their lord !

Thus pray'd the chief : the unavailing pray'r  
Great Jove refus'd, and tost in empty air :  
The God averse, while yet the fumes arose,     500  
Prepar'd new toils, and doubled woes on woes.

Their Pray'rs perform'd, the chiefs the rite pursue,  
The barley sprinkled, and the victim slew.  
The limbs they sever from th'inclosing hyde,  
The thighs, selected to the Gods, divide.     505

On these, in double cauls involv'd with art,  
The choicest morsels lie from ev'ry part.  
From the cleft wood the crackling flames aspire,  
While the fat victim feeds the sacred fire.  
The thighs thus sacrific'd, and entrails drest,     510

Th' assistants part, transfix, and roast the rest ;  
Then spread the tables, the repast prepare,  
Each takes his seat, and each receives his share.

Soon as the rage of hunger was suppress'd,

The gen'rous Nestor thus the prince address'd. 515

Now bid thy heralds sound the loud alarms,  
And call the squadrons sheath'd in brazen arms:  
Now seize th' occasion, now the troops survey,  
And lead to war when heaven directs the way.

He said; the monarch issu'd his commands; 520

Strait the loud heralds call the gath'ring bands.

The chiefs inclose their king; the hosts divide,  
In tribes and nations rank'd on either side.

High in the midst the blue-ey'd virgin flies;

From rank to rank she darts her ardent eyes: 525

The dreadful Ægis, Jove's immortal shield,

Blaz'd on her arm, and lighten'd all the field:

v. 526. *The dreadful Ægis, Jove's immortal shield.*]

Homer does not expressly call it a shield in this place, but it is plain from several other passages that it was so. In the fifth Iliad, this Ægis is described with a sublimity that is inexpressible. The figure of the Gorgon's head upon it is there specified, which will justify the mention of the serpents in the translation here: the verses are remarkably sonorous in the original. The image of the goddess of battles blazing with her immortal shield before the army, inspiring every hero, and assisting to range the troops, is agreeable to the bold painting of our author. And the encouragement of a divine power seem'd no more than was requisite, to change so totally the dispositions of the Grecians, as to make them now more ardent for the combat than they were before desirous of a return. This finishes the conquest of their inclinations, in a manner at once wonderfully poetical, and correspondent to the moral which is every where spread through Homer, that nothing is intirely brought about but by the divine assistance

Round the vast orb an hundred serpents roll'd,  
Form'd the bright fringe, and seem'd to burn in gold.  
With this each Grecian's manly breast she warms, 530  
Swells their bold hearts, and strings their nervous arms,  
No more they sigh, inglorious to return,  
But breathe revenge, and for the combat burn.

As on some mountain, thro' the lofty grove,  
The crackling flames ascend, and blaze above, 535  
The fires expanding as the winds arise,  
Shoot their long beams, and kindle half the skies:  
So from the polish'd arms, and brazen shields,  
A gleamy splendour flash'd along the fields.

v. 534. *As on some mountain, etc.*] The imagination of Homer was so vast and so lively, that whatsoever objects presented themselves before him, impressed their images so forcibly, that he poured them forth in comparisons equally simple and noble; without forgetting any circumstance which could instruct the reader, and make him see those objects in the same strong light wherein he saw them himself. And in this, one of the principal beauties of poetry consists. Homer, on the sight of the march of this numerous army, gives us five similes in a breath, but all intirely different. The first regards the splendour of their armour, as a fire, *etc.* The second the various movements of so many thousands before they can range themselves in battle-array, like the swans, *etc.* The third respects their number, as the leaves or flowers, *etc.* The fourth the ardour with which they run to the combat, like the legions of insects, *etc.* And the fifth the obedience and exact discipline of the troops, ranged without confusion under their leaders, as flocks under their shepherds. The fecundity and variety can never be enough admired. Dacier.



Not less their number than th'embod' d cranes, 540  
Or milk-white swans in Asius' watry plains,

v. 541. *Or milk-white swans in Asius' watry plains.*] Scaliger who is seldom just to our author, yet confesses these verses to be *plenissima nectaris*. But he is greatly mistaken when he accuses this simile of impropriety, on the supposition that a number of birds flying without order are here compared to an army ranged in array of battle. On the contrary, Homer in this expresses the stir and tumult the troops were in before they got into order, running together from the ships and tents: *Νεῶν ἀπὸ, καὶ κλισιάων*. But when they are placed in their ranks, he compares them to the flocks under their shepherds. This distinction will plainly appear from the detail of the five similes in the foregoing note.

Virgil has imitated this with great happiness in his seventh Æneid.

*Ceu quondam nivei liquida inter nubila cycni  
Cum sese e pastu referunt, et longa canoros  
Dant per colla modos, sonat amnis et Asia longe  
Pulsa palus*—————

Like a long team of snowy swans on high,  
Which clap their wings and cleave the liquid sky,  
When homeward from their watry pastures born,  
They sing, and Asia's lakes their notes return.

Mr. Dryden in this place has mistaken Asius for Asia, which Virgil took care to distinguish by making the first syllable of Asius long, as of Asia short. Though (if we believe madam Dacier) he was himself in an error, both here and in the first Georgic.

—————*Quæ Asia circum  
Dulcibus in stagnis rimantur prata Caystri.*

That o'er the windings of Cayster's springs,  
 Stretch their long necks, and clap their rustling wings,  
 Now tow'r aloft, and course in airy rounds ;  
 Now light with noise ; with noise the field resounds. 545  
 Thus num'rous and confus'd, extending wide,  
 The legions croud Scamander's flow'ry side ;  
 With rushing troops the plains are cover'd o'er.  
 And thund'ring footsteps shake the sounding shore :  
 Along the river's level meads they stand, 550  
 Thick as in spring the flow'rs adorn the land,  
 Or leaves the trees ; or thick as insects play,  
 The wandring nation of a summer's day,

For she will not allow that Ἀσίω can be a patronymic adjective, but the genitive of a proper name, Ἀσιε, which being turned into Ionic is Ἀσιέω, and by *syncope* makes Ἀσίω. This puts me in mind of another criticism upon the 290th verse of this book: it is observed that Virgil uses *Inarime* for *Arime*, as if he had read Εἰναρίμοις, instead of Εἰν Ἀρίμοις. Scaliger ridicules this trivial remark, and asks if it can be imagined that Virgil was ignorant of the name of a place so near him as Baiæ? It is indeed unlucky for good writers, that men who have learning, should lay a stress upon such trifles; and that those who have none, should think it learning to do so.

v. 552. *Or thick as insects play.*] This simile translated literally runs thus: *As the numerous troops of flies about a shepherd's cottage in the spring, when the milk moistens the pails; such numbers of Greeks stood in the field against the Trojans, desiring their destruction.* The lowness of this image, in comparison with those which precede it, will naturally shock a modern critic, and would scarce be forgiven in a poet of these times. The utmost a translator can do is to heighten the expression, so as

That drawn by milky steams, at ev'ning hours,  
 In gather'd swarms surround the rural bow'rs : 555  
 From pail to pail with busy murmur run  
 The gilded legions glitt'ring in the sun.  
 So throng'd, so close, the Grecian squadrons stood  
 In radiant arms, and thirst for Trojan blood.  
 Each leader now his scatter'd force conjoins 560  
 In close array, and forms the deep'ning lines.  
 Not with more ease, the skilful shepherd swain  
 Collects his flock from thousands on the plain.

to render the disparity less observable ; which is endeavoured here, and in other places. If this be done successfully, the reader is so far from being offended at a low idea, that it raises his surprise to find it grown great in the poet's hands, of which we have frequent instances in Virgil's Georgics. Here follows another of the same kind, in the simile of Agamemnon to a Bull, just after he has been compared to Jove, Mars, and Neptune. This, Eustathius tells us, was blamed by some critics, and Mr. Hobbes has left it out in his translation. The liberty has been taken here to place the humbler simile first, reserving the noble one as a more magnificent close of the description : the bare turning the sentence removes the objection. Milton, who was a close imitator of our author, has often copied him in these humble comparisons. He has not scrupled to insert one in the midst of that pompous description of the rout of the rebel-angels in the sixth book, where the Son of God in all his dreadful majesty is represented pouring his vengeance upon them :

————— *As a herd*

*Of goats, or tim'rous flocks together throng'd,  
 Drove them before him thunder-struck——*

The king of kings, majestically tall,  
 Tow'rs o'er his armies, and outshines them all : 565  
 Like some proud bull that round the pastures leads  
 His subject-herds, the monarch of the meads.  
 Great as the Gods, th' exalted chief was seen,  
 His strength like Neptune, and like Mars his mien,  
 Jove o'er his eyes celestial, glories spread, 570  
 And dawning conquest play'd around his head.

Say, virgins, seated round the throne divine,  
 All-knowing Goddesses! immortal nine !

v. 568. *Great as the Gods.*] Homer here describes the figure and port of Agamemnon with all imaginable grandeur, in making him appear cloathed with the majesty of the greatest of the Gods ; and when Plutarch (in his second oration of the fortune of Alexander) blamed the comparison of a man to three deities at once, that censure was not pass'd upon Homer as a poet, but by Plutarch as a priest. This character of majesty, in which Agamemnon excels all the other heroes, is preserved in the different views of him throughout the Iliad. It is thus he appears on his ship in the catalogue ; thus he shines in the eyes of Priam in the third book ; thus again in the beginning of the eleventh ; and so in the rest.

v. 572. *Say, virgins.*] It is hard to conceive any address more solemn, any opening to a subject more noble and magnificent, than this invocation of Homer before his catalogue. That omnipresence he gives to the muses, their post in the highest heaven, their comprehensive survey through the whole extent of the creation, are circumstances greatly imagined. Nor is any thing more perfectly fine, or exquisitely moral, than the opposition of the extensive knowledge of the divinities on the one side, to the blindness and ignorance of mankind on the other. The greatness and importance of his subject is.

Since earth's wide regions, heav'n's unmeasur'd height,  
 And hell's abyfs, hide nothing from your fight, 575  
 (We, wretched mortals? loft in doubts below,  
 But guefs by rumour, and but boast we know)  
 Oh fay what heroes, fir'd by thirft of fame,  
 Or urg'd by wrongs, to Troy's deftruction came?  
 To count them all, demands a thoufand tongues, 580  
 A throat of brafs and adamantine lungs.  
 Daughters of Jove, affift! inspir'd by you  
 The mighty labour dauntlefs I purfue:  
 What croudded armies, from what climes they bring,  
 Their names their numbers, and their chiefs I fing. 585

### The CATALOGUE of the SHIPS.

THE hardy warriors whom Bœotia bred,  
 Penelius, Leitus, Prothoenor led:

highly raifed by his exalted manner of declaring the difficulty of it, *Not though my lips were brafs*, etc. and by the air he gives, as if what follows were immediately inspired, and no lefs than the joint labour of all the mufes.

v. 586. *The hardy warriors.*] The catalogue begins in this place, which I forbear to treat of at prefent: only I muft acknowledge here that the tranflation has not been exactly punctual to the order in which Homer places his towns. However it has not trefpaffed againft geography; the tranfpofitions I mention being no other than fuch minute ones, as Strabo confeffes the author himfelf is not free from: 'Ο δὲ Ποιητὴς γένια μὲν χάρας λέγει συνεχῶς, ὥσπερ καὶ κεῖται. Οἱθ' ὕρῃν ἐνέμοντο, καὶ Αὐλῖδα etc. "Αλλὰ τέδ' ἔχ' ὥς ἔστι τῇ τάξει, Σκοῖνον τὲ Σκολον τε, Θέσπειαν Γεραῖάν τε, lib. 8. There is not to my remem-



With these Arcefilaus and Clonius stand,  
 Equal in arms, and equal in command.  
 These head the troops that rocky Aulis yields, 590  
 And Eteon's hills, and Hyrie's watry fields,  
 And Schoenos, Scholos, Græa near the main,  
 And Mycaleſſia's ample piny plain.  
 Thoſe who in Peteon or Ilefion dwell,  
 Or Harma where Apollo's prophet fell; 595  
 Heleon and Hyle, which the ſprings o'erflow;  
 And Medeon lofty, and Ocalea low;  
 Or in the meads of Haliartus ſtray,  
 Or Theſpia ſacred to the God of day.  
 Oncheſtus, Neptune's celebrated groves; 600  
 Copæ, and Thisbe, fam'd for ſilver doves,  
 For flocks Erythræ, Gliffa for the vine;  
 Platea green, and Niſa the divine.  
 And they whom Thebe's well-built walls incloſe,  
 Where Myde, Eutrefis Corone roſe; 605  
 And Arne rich, with purple harveſts crown'd;  
 And Anthedon, Bæotia's utmoſt bound.  
 Full fifty ſhips they ſend, and each conveys  
 Twice ſixty warriors thro' the foaming ſeas.

brance any place throughout this catalogue omitted; a  
 liberty which Mr. Dryden has made no difficulty to take,  
 and to confeſs, in his Virgil. But a more ſcrupulous care  
 was owing to Homer, on account of that wonderful ex-  
 actneſs and unequalled diligence, which he has parti-  
 cularly ſhewn in this part of his work.

To these succeed Aspledon's martial train, 610  
 Who plow the spacious Orchomenian plain.  
 Two valiant brothers rule th' undaunted throng,  
 Ialmen and Ascalaphus the strong:  
 Sons of Aftyoche, the heav'nly fair,  
 Whose virgin charms subdu'd the God of war: 615  
 (In Aëtor's court as she retir'd to rest,  
 The strength of Mars the blushing maid compress)  
 Their troops in thirty fable vessels sweep  
 With equal oars, the hoarse-resounding deep.  
 The Phocians next in forty barks repair, 620  
 Epistrophus and Schedius head the war.  
 From those rich regions where Cephissus leads  
 His silver current thro' the flow'ry meads;  
 From Panopea, Chrysa the divine,  
 Where Anemoria's stately turrets shine, 625  
 Where Pytho, Daulis, Cyparissus stood,  
 And fair Lilea views the rising flood.  
 These rang'd in order on the floating tide,  
 Close, on the left, the bold Bæotians side.  
 Fierce Ajax led the Locrian squadrons on, 630  
 Ajax the less, Oileus' valiant son;  
 Skill'd to direct the flying dart aright;  
 Swift in pursuit, and active in the fight.  
 Him, as their chief, the chosen troops attend,  
 Which Bessa, Thronus, and rich Cynos send: 635  
 Opus, Calliarus, and Scarphe's bands;  
 And those who dwell where pleasing Augia stands,  
 And where Boagrius floats the lowly lands

Or in fair Tarphe's sylvan seats reside ;  
 In forty vessels cut the yielding tide. 640  
Eubœa next her martial sons prepares,  
 And sends the brave Abantes to the wars :  
 Breathing revenge in arms they take their way  
 From Chalcas' walls, and strong Eretria ;  
 Th' Isteian fields for gen'rous vines renown'd, 645  
 The fair Caristos, and the Styrian ground ;  
 Where Dios from her tow'rs o'erlooks the plain,  
 And high Cerintus views the neighb'ring main.  
 Down their broad shoulders falls a length of hair ;  
 Their hands, dismiss not the long lance in air ; 650  
 But with portended spears in fighting fields,  
 Pierce the tough cors'lets and the brazen shields.  
 Twice twenty ships transport the warlike bands,  
 Which bold Elphenor, fierce in arms, commands.

v. 649. *Down their broad shoulders, etc.*] The Greek has it *οπισθεν κομωμετες*, *a tergo comantes*. It was the custom of these people to shave the fore-part of their heads, which they did, that their enemies might not take the advantage of seizing them by the hair : the hinder-part they let grow, as a valiant race that would never turn their backs. Their manner of fighting was hand to hand, without quitting their javelins (in the way of our pike-men.) Plutarch tells us this in the life of Theseus, and cites, to strengthen the authority of Homer, some verses of Archilocus to the same effect. Eobanus Hessus, who translated Homer into Latin verse, was therefore mistaken in his version of this passage.

*Præcipue jaculatores, hastamque periti  
 Vibrare, et longis contingere pectora telis.*

Full fifty more from Athens stem the main, 655  
 Led by Menestheus, thro' the liquid plain,  
 (Athens the fair, where great Erectheus sway'd,  
 That ow'd his nurture to the blue-ey'd maid,  
 But from the teeming furrow took his birth,  
 The mighty offspring of the foodful earth. 660  
 Him Pallas plac'd amidst her wealthy fane,  
 Ador'd with sacrifice and oxen slain;  
 Where as the years revolve, her altars blaze,  
 And all the tribes resound the Goddeſs' praise.)  
 No chief like thee, Menestheus ! Greece could yield, 665  
 To marshal armies in the dusty field,  
 Th' extended wings of battel to display,  
 Or close th' embody'd host in firm array.  
 Nestor alone, improv'd by length of days,  
 For martial conduct bore an equal praise. 670

With these appear the Salamian bands,  
 Whom the gigantic Telamon commands;  
 In twelve black ships to Troy they steer their course,  
 And with the great Athenians join their force.

Next move to war the gen'rous Argive train } 675  
 From high Trœzene, and Mafeta's plain,  
 And fair Ægina circled by the main :  
 Whom strong Tyrinthe's lofty walls surround,  
 And Epidauræ with viny harvests crown'd :  
 And where fair Asinen and Hermion show } 680  
 Their cliffs above, and ample bay below.  
 These by the brave Euryalus were led,  
 Great Sthenelus, and greater Diomed,

But chief Tydides bore the sov'reign sway;

In fourscore barks they plow the watry way.

685

The proud Mycene arms her martial pow'rs,

Cleone, Corinth, with imperial tow'rs,

Fair Aræthyrea, Ornia's fruitful plain,

And Ægion, and Adrastus' ancient reign;

And those who dwell along the sandy shore,

690

And where Pellene yields her fleecy flore,

Where Helice and Hyperefia lie,

And Gonoessa's spires salute the sky.

Great Agamemnon rules the num'rous band

A hundred vessels in long order stand,

} 695

And crouded nations wait his dread command.

High on the deck the king of men appears,

And his refulgent arms in triumph wears;

Proud of his host, unrival'd in his reign,

In silent pomp he moves along the main.

700

His brother follows, and to vengeance warms

The hardy Spartans, exercis'd in arms:

Phares and Bryfia's valiant troops, and those

Whom Lacedæmon's lofty hills inclose:

Or Messe's tow'rs for silver doves renown'd,

705

Amyclæ, Laas, Augia's happy ground,

And those whom Oetylos' low walls contain,

And Helos on the margin of the main:

These, o'er the bending ocean, Helen's cause

In sixty ships with Menelaus draws:

710



Eager and loud from man to man he flies,  
 Revenge and fury flaming in his eyes;  
 While vainly fond, in fancy oft he hears  
 The fair-one's grief, and sees her falling tears.

In ninety sail, from Pylos' sandy coast,  
 Nestor the sage conducts his chosen host;  
 From Amphigenia's ever-fruitful land;  
 Where Æpy high, and little Pteleon stand;

715.

v. 711. *Eager and loud from man to man he flies.*] The figure Menelaus makes in this place is remarkably distinguished from the rest, and sufficient to shew his concern in the war was personal, while the others acted only for interest or glory in general. No leader in all the list is represented thus eager and passionate; he is louder than them all in his exhortations; more active [in running among the troops; and inspirited with the thoughts of revenge, which he still increases with the secret imagination of Helen's repentance. This behaviour is finely imagined.

The epithet *βοὴν ἄγαντος*, which is applied in this and other places to Menelaus, and which literally signifies *loud-voiced*, is made by the commentators to mean *valiant*, and translated *bello strenuus*. The reason given by Eustathius is, that a loud voice is a mark of strength, the usual effect of fear being to cut short the respiration. I own this seems to be forced, and rather believe it was one of those kind of surnames given from some distinguishing quality of the person (as that of a loud voice might belong to Menelaus) which Mons. Boileau mentions in his ninth reflection upon Longinus; in the same manner as some of our kings were called Edward Long-shanks, William Rufus, etc. But however it be, the epithet taken in the literal sense has a beauty in this verse from the circumstance Menelaus is described in, which determined the translator to use it.

Where beauteous Arene her structures shows,  
And Thryon's walls Alpheus' streams inclose :      720

And Dorion, fam'd for Thamyris' disgrace,  
Superior once of all the tuneful race,  
'Till vain of mortals empty praise, he strove  
To match the seed of cloud-compelling Jove!

Too daring bard ! whose unsuccessful pride      725  
Th' immortal Muses in their art defy'd.

Th' avenging Muses of the light of day  
Depriv'd his eyes, and snatch'd his voice away ;  
No more his heav'nly voice was heard to sing,  
His hand no more awak'd the silver string.      730

Where under high Cyllene, crown'd with wood,  
The shaded tomb of old Æpytus stood ;  
From Ripe, Stratie, Tegea's bordering towns,  
The Phenean fields, and Orchomenian downs,  
Where the fat herds in plenteous pasture rove ;      735

And Stymphelus with her surrounding grove,  
Parrhasia, on her snowy cliffs reclin'd,  
And high Enispe shook by wintry wind,  
And fair Mantineia's ever-pleasing site ;  
In sixty sail th' Arcadian bands unite.      740

Bold Agapenor, glorious at their head,  
(Anceus' son) the mighty squadron led.  
Their ships, supply'd by Agamemnon's care,  
Thro' roring seas the wond'ring warriors bear ;

The first to battle on th' appointed plain, 745  
But new to all the dangers of the main.

Those, where fair Elis and Buprasium join;  
Whom Hyrmin, here, and Myrsinus confine,  
And bounded there, where o'er the valleys rose  
Th' Olenian rock; and where Alisium flows; 750  
Beneath four chiefs (a num'rous army) came;  
The strength and glory of th' Epean name.  
In sep'rate squadrons these their train divide,  
Each leads ten vessels thro' the yielding tide.  
One was Amphimachus, and Thalpius one; 755  
(Eurytus' this, and that Teatus' son)  
Diores sprung from Amarynceus' line;  
And great Polyxenus, of force divine.

But those who view fair Elis o'er the seas  
From the blest islands of the Echinades, 760  
In forty vessels under Megas move,  
Begot by Phyleus the belov'd of Jove.  
To strong Dulichium from his fire he fled,  
And thence to Troy his hardy warriors led.

v. 746. *New to all the dangers of the main.*] The Arcadians being an inland people were unskilled in navigation, for which reason Agamemnon furnished them with shipping. From hence, and from the last line of the description of the sceptre, where he is said to preside over many islands, Thucydides takes occasion to observe that the power of Agamemnon was superior to the rest of the princes of Greece, on account of his naval forces, which had rendered him master of the sea. Thucyd. lib. I.

Ulysses follow'd thro' the watry road, 765  
A chief, in wisdom equal to a God.  
With those whom Cephallenia's isle inclos'd,  
Or till their fields along the coast oppos'd;  
Or where fair Ithaca o'erlooks the floods,  
Where high Neritos shakes his waving woods, 770  
Where Ægilipa's rugged sides are seen,  
Crocylia rocky, and Zacynthus green.  
These in twelve galleys with vermilion proes,  
Beneath his conduct fought the Phrygian shores.  
Thoas came next, Andremon's valiant son, 775  
From Pleuron's walls, and chalky Calydon,  
And rough Pylene, and th' Olenian steep,  
And Chalcis beaten by the rolling deep.  
He led the warriors from th' Ætolian shore,  
For now the sons of Oeneus were no more ! 780  
The glories of the mighty race were fled !  
Oeneus himself, and Meleager dead !  
To Thoas' care now trust the martial train,  
His forty vessels follow thro' the main.  
Next eighty barks the Cretan king commands, 785  
Of Gnosſus, Lyctus, and Gortyna's bands,  
And those who dwell where Rhytion's domes arise,  
Or white Lycastus glitters to the skies,  
Or where by Phæstus silver Jordan runs ;  
Crete's hundred cities pour forth all her sons. 790  
These march'd, Idomeneus, beneath thy care,  
And Merion, dreadful as the God of war.

Tlepolemus, the son of Hercules,  
 Led nine swift vessels thro' the foamy seas ;  
 From Rhodes with everlasting sunshine bright, 795  
 Jalyffus, Lindus, and Camirus white.  
 His captive mother fierce Alcides bore  
 From Ephyr's walls and Selle's winding shore,  
 Where mighty towns in ruins spread the plain,  
 And saw their blooming warriors early slain. 800  
 The hero when to manly years he grew,  
 Alcides' uncle, old Licymnius, slew ;  
 For this, constrain'd to quit his native place,  
 And shun the vengeance of th' Herculean race,  
 A fleet he built, and with a num'rous train 805  
 Of willing exiles, wander'd o'er the main ;  
 Where many seas, and many suff'rings past,  
 On happy Rhodes the chief arriv'd at last :  
 There in three tribes divides his native band,  
 And rules them peaceful in a foreign land ; 810  
 Encreas'd and prosper'd in their new abodes,  
 By might Jove, the sire of men and Gods ;  
 With joy they saw the growing empire rise,  
 And show'rs of wealth descending from the skies.

Three ships with Nireus fought the Trojan shore, 815  
 Nireus, whom Aglae to Charopus bore,

v. 815. *Three ships with Nireus.*] This leader is nowhere mentioned but in these lines, and is an exception to the observation of Macrobius, that all the persons of the catalogue make their appearance afterwards in the poem. Homer himself gives us the reason, because Ni-



Nireus, in faultless shape and blooming grace,  
 The loveliest youth of all the Grecian race;  
 Pelides only match'd his early charms;  
 But few his troops, and small his strength in arms. 820

Next thirty galleys cleave the liquid plain,  
 Of those, Calydnæ's sea-girt isles contain;  
 With them the youth of Nisyrus repair,  
 Casus the strong, and Crapathus the fair;  
 Cos, where Eurypylus possesseth the sway, 825  
 'Till great Alcides made the realms obey:  
 These Antiphus and bold Phidippus bring,  
 Sprung from the God by Theffalus the king.

Now, muse, recount Pelasgic Argos' pow'rs,  
 From Alos, Alope, and Trechin's tow'rs; 830  
 From Phthia's spacious vales; and Hella, blest  
 With female beauty far beyond the rest.  
 Full fifty ships beneath Achilles' care,  
 Th'Achaïans, Myrmidons, Hellenians bear;

reus, had but a small share of worth and valour; his quality only gave him a privilege to be named among men. The poet has caused him to be remembered no less than Achilles or Ulysses, but yet in no better manner than he deserved, whose only qualification was his beauty: it is by a bare repetition of his name three times, which just leaves some impression of him on the mind of the reader. Many others, of as trivial memory as Nireus, have been preserved by poets from oblivion; but few poets have ever done this favour to want of merit, with so much judgment. Demetrius Phalereus περί Ἐγεννησίας, sect. 61. takes notice of this beautiful repetition, which in a just deference to so delicate a critic is here preserved in the translation.

Theſſalians all, tho' various in their name, 835  
The ſame their nation, and their chief the ſame.  
But now inglorious, ſtretch'd along the ſhore,  
They hear the brazen voice of war no more ;  
No more the foe they face in dire array ;  
Close in his fleet their angry leader lay ; 840  
Since fair Brifeis from his arms was torn,  
The nobleſt ſpoil from ſack'd Lyrneſſus borne,  
Then, when the chief the Theban walls o'erthrew,  
And the bold ſons of great Evenus flew.  
There mourn'd Achilles, plung'd in depth of care, 845  
But ſoon to riſe in ſlaughter, blood, and war.  
To theſe the youth of Phylace ſucceed,  
Itona, famous for her fleecy breed,  
And graſſy Pteleon deck'd with cheerful greens,  
The bow'rs of Ceres, and the ſylvan ſcenes, 850  
Sweet Pyrrhaſus, with blooming flourets crown'd,  
And Antrons watry dens, and cavern'd ground.  
Theſe own'd as chief Proteſilas the brave,  
Who now lay ſilent in the gloomy grave :  
The firſt who boldly touch'd the Trojan ſhore, 855  
And dy'd a Phrygian lance with Grecian gore ;  
There lies, far diſtant from his native plain ;  
Unfiniſh'd his proud palaces remain,  
And his ſad conſort beats her breaſt in vain,  
His troops in forty ſhips Podarces led, 860  
Iphiclus' ſon, and brother to the dead ;  
Nor he unworthy to command the hoſt ;  
Yet ſtill they mourn'd their ancient leader loſt.

The men who Glaphyra's fair foil partake,  
 Where hills encircle Bœbe's lowly lake, 865  
 Where Phœæ hears the neighb'ring waters fall,  
 Or proud Iolcus lifts her airy wall,  
 In ten black ships embark'd for Ilion's shore,  
 With bold Eumelus, whom Alceste bore :  
 All Pelias' race Alceste far outshin'd, 870  
 The grace and glory of the beauteous kind.

The troops Methone, or Thaumacia yields,  
 Olizen's rocks, or Melibœa's fields,  
 With Philoctetes fail'd, whose matchless art  
 From the tough bow directs the feather'd dart. 875  
 Sev'n were his ships; each vessel fifty row,  
 Skill'd in his science of the dart and bow.  
 But he lay raging on the Lemnian ground,  
 A pois'nous Hydra gave the burning wound;  
 There groan'd the chief in agonizing pain, 880  
 Whom Greece at length shall wish, not wish in vain.  
 His forces Medon led from Lemnos' shore,  
 Oileus' son, whom beauteous Rhena bore.

Th' Oecalian race, in those high tow'rs contain'd,  
 Where once Eurytus in proud triumph reign'd, 885

v. 871. *The grace and glory of the beauteous kind.*]  
 He gives Alcestis this elogy of the glory of her sex, for  
 her conjugal piety, who died to preserve the life of her  
 husband Admetus. Euripides has a tragedy on this sub-  
 ject, which abounds in the most masterly strokes of ten-  
 derness: in particular the first act, which contains the  
 description of her preparation for death, and of her be-  
 haviour in it, can never be enough admired.

Or where her humbler turrets Tricca rears,  
 Or where Ithome, rough with rocks, appears;  
 In thirty sail the sparkling waves divide,  
 Which Podalirius and Machaon guide.

To these his skill their \* parent-god imparts, 890  
 Divine professors of the healing arts.

The bold Ormenian and Aetolian bands  
 In forty barks Eurypylus commands,  
 Where Titan hides his hoary head in snow,  
 And where Hyperia's silver fountains flow. 895

Thy troops, Argissa, Polypœtes leads,  
 And Eleon, shelter'd by Olympus' shades,  
 Gyrtone's warriors; and where Orthe lies,  
 And Oloosson's chalky cliffs arise.  
 Sprung from Pirithous of immortal race, 900  
 The fruit of fair Hippodame's embrace,  
 (That day, when hurl'd from Pelion's cloudy head,  
 To distant dens the shaggy Centaurs fled)  
 With Polypœtes join'd in equal sway  
 Leonteus leads, and forty ships obey. 905

In twenty sail the bold Perrhæbians came  
 From Cyphus, Guneus was their leader's name.

\* Æsculapius.

v. 906. *In twenty ships the bold Perrhæbians came.*]  
 I cannot tell whether it be worth observing that, except  
 Ogilby, I have not met with one translator who has ex-  
 actly preserved the number of the ships. Chapman puts  
 eighteen under Eumelus instead of eleven: Hobbes but  
 twenty under Ascalaphus and Ialmen instead of thirty,  
 and but thirty under Menelaus instead of sixty: Valerius

With these the Enians join'd, and those who freeze  
 Where cold Dodona lifts her holy trees ;  
 Or where the pleasing Titarefius glides, 910  
 And into Peneus rolls his easy tides ;  
 Yet o'er the silver surface pure they flow,  
 The sacred stream unmix'd with streams below,  
 Sacred and awful ! From the dark abodes  
 Styx pours them forth, the dreadful oath of Gods ! 915  
 Last under Prothous the Magnesium stood  
 Protheus the swift, of old Tenthredon's blood ;  
 Who dwell where Pelian, crown'd with piny boughs,  
 Obscures the glade, and nods his shaggy brows :  
 Or where thro' flow'ry Tempe Peneus stray'd, 920  
 (The region stretch'd beneath his mighty shade)  
 In forty fable barks they stem'd the main ;  
 Such were the chiefs, and such the Grecian train.  
 Say next, O muse ! of all Achaia breeds,  
 Who bravest fought, or rein'd the noblest steeds ? 925

(the former French translator) has given Agapenor forty for sixty, and Nestor forty for ninety : madam Dacier gives Nestor but eighty. I must confess this translation not to have been quite so exact as Ogilby's, having cut off one from the number of Eumelus's ships and two from those of Guneus : *eleven and two and twenty* would sound but oddly in English verse, and a poem contracts a little-ness by insisting upon such trivial niceties.

v. 925. *Or rein'd the noblest steeds.*] This coupling together the men and horses seems odd enough, but Homer every where treats these noble animals with remarkable regard. We need not wonder at this inquiry, *which were the best horses ?* from him who makes his horses of heavenly extraction as well as his heroes ; who makes



Eumelus' mares were foremost in the chace,  
 As eagles fleet, and of Pheretian race;  
 Bred where Pieria's fruitful fountains flow,  
 And train'd by him who bears the silver bow.  
 Fierce in the fight, their nostrils breath'd a flame, 930  
 Their height, their colour, and their age the same;  
 O'er fields of death they whirl the rapid car,  
 And break the ranks, and thunder thro' the war.  
 Ajax in arms the first renown acquir'd,  
 While stern Achilles in his wrath retir'd: 935  
 (His was the strength that mortal might exceeds,  
 And his, th' unrival'd race of heavenly steeds)  
 But Thetis' son now shines in arms no more;  
 His troops, neglected on the sandy shore,

his warriors address them with speeches, and excite them by all those motives which affect a human breast; who describes them shedding tears of sorrow, and even capable of voice and prophecy; in most of which points Virgil has not scrupled to imitate him.

v. 929. *His troops*, etc.] The image in these lines of the amusements of the Myrmidons, while Achilles detained them from the fight, has an exquisite propriety in it. Though they are not in action, their very diversions are military, and a kind of exercise of arms. The covered chariots, and feeding horses, make a natural part of the picture; and nothing is finer than the manly concern of the captains, who, as they are supposed more sensible of glory than the soldiers, take no share in their diversions, but wander sorrowfully round the camp, and lament their being kept from the battle. This difference betwixt the soldiers and the leaders (as Dacier observes) is a decorum of the highest beauty. Milton has admirably imitated this in the description he gives in his second book,

In empty air their sportive jav'lines throw, 940

Or whirl the disk, or bend an idle bow :

Unstain'd with blood his cover'd chariots stand ;

Th' immortal courfers graze along the strand :

But the brave chiefs th' inglorious life deplor'd,

And wand'ring o'er the camp, requir'd their lord. 945

Now, like a deluge, cov'ring all around,

The shining armies sweep along the ground ;

Swift as a flood of fire, when storms arise,

Floats the wide field, and blazes to the skies.

Earth groan'd beneath them ; as when angry Jove 950

Hurls down the forky lightning from above.

of the diversions of the angels during the absence of Lucifer.

*Part on the plain, or in the air sublime,*

*Upon the wing, or in swift race contend ;*

*Part curb their fiery steeds, or shun the goal*

*With rapid wheels, or fronted brigades form.*

But how nobly and judiciously has he raised the image, in proportion to the nature of those more exalted beings, in that which follows !

*Others with vast Typhoean rage more fell*

*Rend up both rocks and hills, and ride the air*

*In whirlwind ; hell scarce holds the wild uproar.*

v. 950. *As when angry Jove.*] The comparison preceding this, of a fire which runs through the corn and blazes to heaven, had expressed at once the dazzling of their arms and the swiftness of their march. After which Homer having mentioned the sound of their feet, super-adds another simile, which comprehends both the ideas

On Arime when he the thunder throws,  
 And fires Typhæus with redoubled blows,  
 Where Typhon, prest beneath the burning load,  
 Still feels the fury of th' avenging God.

955

But various Iris, Jove's commands to bear,  
 Speeds on the wings of winds thro' liquid air;  
 In Priam's porch the Trojan chiefs she found,  
 The old consulting, and the youths around.  
 Polites' shape, the monarch's son, she chose,  
 Who from Æetes' tomb observ'd the foes,  
 High on the mound; from whence in prospect lay  
 The fields, the tents, the navy, and the bay.

960

In this dissembled form she hastes to bring  
 Th' unwelcome message to the Phrygian king.

960

Cease to consult, the time for action calls,  
 War, horrid war, approaches to your walls!

of the brightness and the noise: for here (says Eustathius) the earth appears to *burn* and *groan* at the same time. Indeed the first of these similes is so full and so noble, that it scarce seemed possible to be exceeded by any image drawn from nature. But Homer to raise it yet higher, has gone into the *marvellous*, given a prodigious and supernatural prospect, and brought down Jupiter himself, arrayed in all his terrors, to discharge his lightnings and thunders on Typhæus. The poet breaks out into this description with an air of enthusiasm, which greatly heightens the image in general, while it seems to transport him beyond the limits of an exact comparison. And this daring manner is particular to our author above all the ancients, and to Milton above all the moderns.

Assembled armies oft' have I beheld ;  
But ne'er 'till now such numbers charg'd a field.  
Thick as autumnal leaves, or driving sand,      970  
The moving squadrons blacken all the strand.  
Thou, godlike Hector ! all thy force employ,  
Assemble all th' united bands of Troy ;  
In just array let ev'ry leader call  
The foreign troops : this day demands them all.      975

The voice divine the mighty chief alarms ;  
The council breaks, the warriors rush to arms.  
The gates unfolding pour forth all their train,  
Nations on nations fill the dusky plain,      997  
Men, steeds, and chariots shake the trembling ground ;  
The tumult thickens, and the skies resound,  
Amidst the plain in sight of Ilion stands  
A rising mount, the work of human hands ;  
(This for Myrinne's tomb th' immortals know,  
Tho' call'd Bateia in the world below)      985  
Beneath their chiefs in martial order here,  
Th' auxiliar troops and Trojan hosts appear.

The godlike Hector, high above the rest,  
Shakes his huge spear, and nods his plumed crest :  
In throngs around his native bands repair,      990  
And groves of lances glitter in the air.

Divine Æneas brings the Dardan race,  
Anchises' son, by Venus' stol'n embrace,  
Born in the shades of Ida's secret grove,  
(A mortal mixing with the queen of love)      995

Archilochus and Acamas divide

The warrior's toils, and combat by his side.

Who fair Zeleia's wealthy valleys till,

Fast by the foot of Ida's sacred hill;

Or drink, Æsepus, of thy sable flood;

1000

Were led by Pandarus, of royal blood.

To whom his art Apollo deign'd to show,

Grac'd with the present of his shafts and bow.

From rich Apæsus and Adrestia's tow'rs,

High Teree's summits, and Pityea's bow'rs;

1005

From these the congregated troops obey

Young Amphius and Adrastus' equal sway;

Old Merops' sons; whom, skill'd in fates to come,

The fire forewarn'd, and prophesy'd their doom:

Fate urg'd them on! the fire forewarn'd in vain,

1010

They rush'd to war, and perish'd on the plain.

From Præcius' stream, Percote's pasture lands,

And Sestos and Abydos' neighb'ring strands,

From great Arisba's walls and Selle's coast,

Asius Hyrtacides conducts his host:

1015

High on his car he shakes the flowing reins,

His fiery coursfers thunder o'er the plains.

v. 1012. *From Præcius' stream, Percote's pasture lands.*] Homer does not expressly mention Præcius as a river, but Strabo, lib. 13. tells us it is to be understood so in this passage. The appellation of pasture lands to Percote is justified in the 15th Iliad, v. 646. where Melanippus the son of Hicetaon is said to feed his oxen in that place.



The fierce Pelasgi next, in war renown'd,  
 March from Larissa's ever-fertile ground :  
 In equal arms their brother leaders shine, 1020  
 Hippothous bold, and Pyleus the divine.

Next Acamas and Pyrous lead their hosts  
 In dread array, from Thracia's wintry coasts ;  
 Round the black realms where Hellespontus rores,  
 And Boreas beats the hoarse-resounding shores. 1025

With great Euphemus the Ciconians move,  
 Sprung from Træzenian Ceus, lov'd by Jove.  
 Pyræchmes the Præonian troops attend,  
 Skill'd in the fight their crooked bows to bend ;  
 From Axius' ample bed he leads them on, 1030

Axius, that laves the distant Amydon,  
 Axius, that swells with all his neighb'ring rills,  
 And wide around the floated region fills.

The Paphlagonians Pylæmenes rules,  
 Where rich Henetia breeds her savage mules. 1035

v. 1032. *Axius, that swells with all his neighb'ring rills.*] According to the common reading this verse should be translated, *Axius that diffuses his beautiful waters over the land.* But we are assured by Strabo that Axius was a muddy river, and that the ancients understood it thus, *Axius that receives into it several beautiful rivers.* The criticism lies in the last words of the verse, Αἴη, which Strabo reads Αἴης, and interprets of the river Ἄη, whose waters were poured into Axius. However, Homer describes this river agreeable to the vulgar reading in Il. 12. v. 158. Ἀξίς, ὅς καλλιερὸν ὕδωρ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἵησιν. This version takes in both.

Where Erythinus' rising cliffs are seen,  
Thy groves of box, Cyatorus ! ever green ;  
And where Ægyalus and Cromna lie,  
And lofty Sefamus invades the sky ;  
And where Parthenius, roll'd thro' banks of flow'rs, 1040  
Reflects her bord'ring palaces and bow'rs.

Here march'd in arms the Halizonian band,  
Whom Odius and Epistrophus command,  
From those far regions where the sun refines  
The ripening silver in Alybean mines, 1045

There, mighty Chromis led the Mysian train,  
And augur Ennomus, inspir'd in vain,  
For stern Achilles lopt his sacred head,  
Roll'd down Scamander with the vulgar dead.

Phorcys and brave Ascanius here unite 1050  
Th' Ascanian Phrygians, eager for the fight.

Of those who round Mæonia's realms reside,  
Or whom the vales in shade of Tmolus hide,  
Mestles and Antiphus the charge partake ;  
Born on the banks of Gyges' silent lake. 1055

There, from the fields where wild Mæander flows,  
High Mycale, and Latmos' shady brows,  
And proud Miletus, came the Carian throngs,  
With mingled clamours, and with barb'rous tongues.

Amphimachus and Naustes guide the train, 1060  
Naustes the bold, Amphimachus the vain,  
Who trick'd with gold, and glitt'ring on his car,  
Rode like a woman to the field of war,

Fool that he was ! by fierce Achilles slain,  
The river swept him to the briny main ; 1065.  
There whelm'd with waves the gaudy warrior lies ;  
The valiant victor seiz'd the golden prize.

The forces last in fair array succeed,  
Which blameless Glaucus and Sarpedon lead ;  
The warlike bands that distant Lycia yields, 1070.  
Where gulphy Xanthus foams along the fields.

## OBSERVATIONS on the CATALOGUE.

IF we look upon this piece with an eye to ancient learning, it may be observed, that however fabulous the other parts of Homer's poem may be, according to the nature of epic poetry ; this account of the people, princes, and countries, is purely historical, founded on the real transactions of those times, and by far the most valuable pieces of history and geography left us concerning the state of Greece, in that early period. Greece was then divided into several dynasties, which our author has enumerated under their respective princes ; and his division was looked upon so exact, that we are told of many controversies concerning the boundaries of Grecian cities, which have been decided upon the authority of this piece. Eustathius has collected together the following instances. The city of Calydon was adjudged to the Ætolians notwithstanding the pretensions of Æolia, because Homer had ranked it among the towns belonging to the former. Sestos was given to those of Abydōs, upon the plea that he had said the Abydonians were possessors of Sestos, Abydōs and Arisbe. When the Milesians and people of Priene disputed their claim to Mycale, a verse of Homer carried it in favour of the Milesians. And the Athenians were put in possession of Salamis by another which was cited by Solon, or (as some think).

interpolated by him for that purpose. Nay in so high estimation has this catalogue been held, that (as Porphyry has written) there have been laws in some nations for the youth to learn it by heart, and particularly Cerdias (whom Cuperus de Apophth. Honer. takes to be Cerydas, a law-giver of the Megalopolitans) made it one to his countrymen.

But if we consider the catalogue purely as poetical, it will not want its beauties in that light. Rapin, who was none of the most superstitious admirers of our author, reckons it among those parts which had particularly charmed him. We may observe first, what an air of probability is spread over the whole poem by the particularizing of every nation and people concerned in this war. Secondly, what an entertaining scene he presents to us, of so many countries drawn in their liveliest and most natural colours, while we wander along with him amidst a beautiful variety of towns, havens, forests, vineyards, groves, mountains, and rivers; and are perpetually amused with his observations on the different soils, products, situations, or prospects. Thirdly, what a noble review he passes before us of so mighty an army, drawn out in order troop by troop; which, had the number only been told in the gross, had never filled the reader with so great a notion of the importance of the action. Fourthly, the description of the differing arms and manner of fighting of the soldiers, and the various attitudes he has given to the commanders: Of the leaders the greatest part are either the immediate sons of Gods, or the descendants of Gods; and how great an idea must we have of a war, to the waging of which so many demi-gods and heroes are assembled? Fifthly, the several artful complements he paid by this means to his own country in general, and many of his contemporaries in particular, by a celebration of the genealogies, ancient seats, and dominions of the great men of his time. Sixthly, the agreeable mixture of narrations from passages of history or fables, with which he amuses and relieves us at proper

intervals. And lastly, the admirable judgment wherewith he introduces this whole catalogue, just at a time when the posture of affairs in the army rendered such a review of absolute necessity to the Greeks; and in a pause of action, while each was refreshing himself to prepare for the ensuing battles.

Macrobius in his *Saturnalia*, lib. 5. cap. 15. has given us a judicious piece of criticism, in the comparison betwixt the catalogue of Homer and of Virgil, in which he justly allows the preference to our author, for the following reason. Homer (says he) has begun his description from the most noted promontory of Greece, (he means that of Aulis, where was the narrowest passage to Eubœa.) From thence with a regular progress he describes either the maritime or mediterranean towns, as their situations are contiguous: He never passes with sudden leaps from place to place, omitting those which lie between; but proceeding like a traveller in the way he has begun, constantly returns to the place from whence he digressed, till he finishes the whole circle he designed. Virgil, on the contrary, has observed no order in the regions described in his catalogue. l. 10. but is perpetually breaking from the course of the country in a loose and desultory manner. You have Clusium and Cosæ at the beginning, next Populonia and Ilva, then Pisæ, which lie at a vast distance in Etruria; and immediately after Cerete, Pyrgi, and Graviscæ, places adjacent to Rome: from hence he is snatched to Liguria, then to Mantua. The same negligence is observable in his enumeration of the aids that followed Turnus in l. 7. Macrobius next remarks, that all the persons who are named by Homer in his catalogue, are afterwards introduced in his battles, and whenever any others are killed, he mentions only a multitude in general. Whereas Virgil (he continues) has spared himself the labour of that exactness; for not only several whom he mentions in the list, are never heard of in the war, but others make a figure in the war, of whom we had no notice in the list. For example, he



specifies a thousand men under Massicus who came from Clusium, l. 10. v. 167. Turnus soon afterwards is in the ship which had carried king Osinius from the same place, l. 10. v. 655. This Osinius was never named before, nor it is probable a king should serve under Massicus. Nor indeed does either Massicus or Osinius ever make their appearance in the battles—— He proceeds to instance several others, who though celebrated for heroes in the catalogue have no farther notice taken of them throughout the poem. In the third place he animadvert upon the confusion of the same names in Virgil: as where Corinæus in the ninth book is killed by Asylas, v. 571. and Corinæus in the twelfth kills Ebusus, v. 298. Numa is slain by Misus, l. 9. v. 554. and Æneas is afterwards in pursuit of Numa, l. 10. v. 562. Æneas kills Camertes in the tenth book, v. 562. and Juturna assumes his shape in the twelfth, v. 224. He observes the same obscurity in his Patronimics. There is Palinarus Iasides, and Iapix Iasides, Hippocoon Hyrtacides, and Asylas Hyrtacides. On the contrary, the caution of Homer is remarkable, who having two of the name of Ajax, is constantly careful to distinguish them by Oileus or Telamonius, the *lesser* or the *greater Ajax*.

I know nothing to be alledged in defence of Virgil, in answer to this author, but the common excuse that his Æneis was left unfinished. And upon the whole, these are such trivial slips, as great wits may pass over, and little critics rejoice at.

But Macrobius has another remark, which one may accuse of evident partiality on the side of Homer. He blames Virgil for having varied the expression in his catalogue, to avoid the repetition of the same words, and prefers the bare and unadorned reiterations of Homer, who begins almost every article the same way, and ends perpetually, *Μέλαιναι νῆες ἐ'ποντο εἰς*. Perhaps the best reason to be given for this, had been the artless manner of the first times, when such repetitions were not thought

ungraceful. This may appear from several of the like nature in the scripture; as in the twenty sixth chapter of Numbers, where the tribes of Israel are enumerated in the plains of Moab, and each division recounted in the same words. So in the seventh chapter of the Revelations: *Of the tribe of God were sealed twelve thousand, etc.* But the words of Macrobius are, *Has copias fortasse putat aliquis divinæ illi simplicitati præferendas. Sed nescio quo modo Homerum repetitio illa unice decet, et est genio antiqui poetæ digna.* This is exactly in the spirit, and almost in the cant, of a true modern critic. The *Simplicitas*, the *Nescio quo modo*, the *Genio antiqui poetæ digna*, are excellent general phrases for those who have no reasons. *Simplicity* is our word of disguise for a shameful unpoetical neglect of expression: The term of the *Je ne sçay quoy* is the very support of all ignorant pretenders to delicacy; and to lift up our eyes, and talk of the *genius of an ancient*, is at once the cheapest way of shewing our own taste, and the shortest way of the criticizing the wit of others our contemporaries.

One may add to the foregoing comparison of those two authors, some reasons for the length of Homer's and the shortness of Virgil's catalogues. As, that Homer might have a design to settle the geography of his country, there being no description of Greece before his days; which was not the case with Virgil. Homer's concern was to complement Greece at a time when it was divided into many distinct states, each of which might expect a place in his catalogue: but when all Italy was swallowed up in the sole dominion of Rome, Virgil had only Rome to celebrate. Homer had a numerous army, and was to describe an important war with great and various events, whereas Virgil's sphere was much more confined. The ships of the Greeks were computed at about one thousand two hundred, those of Æneas and his aids, but at two and forty; and as the time of the action of both poems is the same, we may suppose the bulk of their ships, and the number of men they con-

tained, to be much alike. So that if the army of Homer amounts to about a hundred thousand men, that of Virgil cannot be above four thousand. If any one be farther curious to know upon what this computation is founded, he may see it in the following passage of Thucydides, lib. I. "Homer's fleet (says he) consisted of  
 "one thousand two hundred vessels: those of the Bœ-  
 "otians carried one hundred and twenty men in each,  
 "and those of Philoctetes fifty. By these I suppose Ho-  
 "mer express the largest and the smallest size of ships,  
 "and therefore mentions no other sort. But he tells us  
 "of those who sailed with Philoctetes, that they served  
 "both as mariners and soldiers, in saying the rowers  
 "were all of them archers. From hence the whole num-  
 "ber will be seen, if we estimate the ships at a medium  
 "between the greatest and the least." That is to say, at eighty-five men to each vessel (which is the mean between fifty and a hundred and twenty) the total comes to a hundred and two thousand men. Plutarch was therefore in a mistake when he computed the men at a hundred and twenty thousand, which proceeded from his supposing a hundred and twenty in every ship; the contrary to which appears from the above-mentioned ships of Philoctetes, as well as from these of Achilles, which are said to carry but fifty men a-piece, in the sixteenth Iliad, v. 207.

Besides Virgil's imitation of this catalogue, there has scarce been any epic writer but has copied after it; which is at least a proof how beautiful this part has been ever esteemed by the finest geniuses in all ages. The catalogues in the ancient poets are generally known, only I must take notice that the Phocian and Bœotian towns in the fourth Thebaid of Statius are translated from hence. Of the moderns, those who most excel, owe their beauty to the imitation of some single particular only of Homer. Thus the chief grace of Tasso's catalogue consists in the description of the heroes, without any thing remarkable on the side of the countries: Of the pieces of

story he has interwoven, that of Tancred's amour to Clorinda is ill placed, and evidently too long for the rest. Spenser's enumeration of the British and Irish rivers in the eleventh canto of his fourth book, is one of the noblest in the world; if we consider his subject was more confined, and can excuse his not observing the order or course of the country: but his variety of description, and fruitfulness of imagination, are no where more admirable than in that part. Milton's list of the fallen angels in his first book is an exact imitation of Homer, as far as regards the digressions of history, and antiquities, and his manner of inserting them: In all else I believe it must be allowed inferior. And indeed what Macrobius has said to cast Virgil below Homer, will fall much more strongly upon all the rest.

I had some cause to fear that this catalogue, which contributed so much to the success of the author, should ruin that of the translator. A mere heap of proper names, though but for a few lines together, could afford little entertainment to an English reader, who probably could not be apprized either of the necessity or beauty of this part of the poem. There were but two things to be done to give it a chance to please him; to render the versification very flowing and musical, and to make the whole appear as much a *landscape* or *piece of painting* as possible. For both of these I had the example of Homer in general: and Virgil, who found the necessity in another age to give more into description, seemed to authorise the latter in particular. Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in his discourse of the *structure and disposition of words*, professes to admire nothing more than that harmonious exactness with which Homer has placed these words, and softened the syllables into each other, so as to derive music from a croud of names, which have in themselves no beauty or dignity. I would flatter myself that I have practised this not unsuccessfully in our language, which is more susceptible of all the variety and power of numbers, than any of the moderns, and second to none but

the Greek and Roman. For the latter point, I have ventured to open the prospect a little, by the addition of a few epithets or short hints of description to some of the places mentioned; though seldom exceeding the compass of half a verse (the space to which my author himself generally confines these pictures in miniature.) But this has never been done without the best authorities from the ancients, which may be seen under the respective names in the geographical table following.

The table itself I thought but necessary to annex to the map, as my warrant for the situations assigned in it to several of the towns. For in whatever maps I have seen to this purpose, many of the places are omitted, or else set down at random. Sophianus and Gerbelius have laboured to settle the geography of old Greece, many of whose mistakes were rectified by Laurenbergius. These however deserved a greater commendation than those who succeeded them; and particularly Sanson's map prefixed to Du Pin's *Bibliothèque Historique*, is miserably defective both in omissions and false placings; which I am obliged to mention, as it pretends to be designed expressly for this catalogue of Homer. I am persuaded the greater part of my readers will have no curiosity this way, however they may allow me the endeavour of gratifying those few who have: The rest are at liberty to pass the two or three following leaves unread.



*A GEOGRAPHICAL TABLE of the towns, etc. in HOMER's Catalogue of Greece, with the authorities for their situation, as placed in this map.*

*BOEOTIA, under five captains, Peneleus, etc. containing,*

**A**ULIS, a haven on the Eubœan sea opposite to Chalcis, where the passage to Eubœa is narrowest. Strabo, lib. 9.

Eteon, Homer describes it a hilly country, and Statius after him—*densamque jugis Eteonen iniquis*. Theb. 7.

Hyræ a town and lake of the same name belonging to the territory of Tanagra or Græa. Strab. l. 9.

Schœnus, it lay in the road between Thebes and Anthedon, 50 stadia from Thebes. Strab. Ibid.

Scholos, a town under mount Cytheron. Ibid.

Thespia, near Haliartus under mount Helicon. Paus. Bœot. near the Corinthian bay. Strab. l. 9.

Græa, the same with Tanagra, 30 stadia from Aulis, on the Eubœan sea; by this

place the river Asopus falls into that sea. Ibid.

Mycaleffus, between Thebes and Chalcis. Paus. Bœot. near Tanagra or Græa. Strab. l. 9. Famous for its pine-tree—*Pinnigeris Mycale agris*. Statius, l. 7.

Harma, by Mycaleffus. Strab. l. 9. This town as well as the former lay near the road from Thebes to Chalcis. Paus. Bœot. It was here that Amphiaræus was swallowed by the earth in his chariot, from whence it received its name. Strab. Ibid.

Ilesion, it was situate in the fens near Heleon and Hyle, not far from Tanagra. These three places took their names from being so seated (*Ἐλος, Palus.*) Strab. l. 9.

Erythræ, in the confines

of Attica near Platea. Thucyd. l. 3.—*dites pecorum comitantur Eyrthrae*. Stat. Theb. 7.

Peteon, in the way from Thebes to Anthedon. Strab. l. 9.

Ocalea, in the mid-way betwixt Haliartus and Alalcomenes. Ibid.

Medeon, near Onchestus. Ibid.

Copæ, a town on the lake Copais, by the river Cephissus, next Orchomenus. Ibid.

Eutresis, a small town of the Thespians near Thisbe. Ibid.

Thisbe, under mount Helicon. Paus. Bœot.

Coronea, seated on the Cephissus, where it falls into the lake Copais. Strab. l. 9.

Haliartus, on the same lake, Strab. Ibid. Bordering on Coronea and Platea. Paus. Bœot.

Platea, between Cithæron and Thebes, divided from the latter by the river Asopus. Strab. l. 9. *Viridescque Plateas*. Stat. Th. 7.

Glissa, in the territory of Thebes, abounding with vines. *Baccho Glisanta colentes*. Stat.

Thebe, situate between the rivers Ismenus and Asopus. Strab. l. 9.

Onchestus, on the lake Copais. The grove consecrated to Neptune in this place, and celebrated by Homer, together with a temple and statue of that God, were shewn in the time of Pausanias. Vide Bœot.

Arne, seated on the same lake, famous for vines. Strab. Hom.

Midea, on the same lake Ibid.

Nissa, or Nyfa (*apud Statium*) or according to Strabo, l. 9. Isa; near Anthedon.

Anthedon, a city on the sea side opposite to Eubœa, the utmost on the shore towards Locris. Strab. l. 9. *Teque ultima tractu Anthedon*. Statius, l. 7.

Aspledon, 20 stadia from Orchomenus. Strab. l. 9.

Orchomenus, and the plains about it, being the most spacious of all in Bœotia. (Plutarch in vit. Syllæ, circa medium.)

Homer distinguishes these two last from the rest of Bœotia. They were commanded by Ascalaphus and Ialmen.

*PHOCIS, under Schedius and Epistrophus, containing,*

Cyparissus, the same with Anticyrrha according to Pausanias, on the bay of Corinth.

Pytho, adjoining to Parnassus: some think it the same with Delphi. Pausan. Phocic.

Crisa, a sea-town on the bay of Corinth near Cyrrha. Strab. l. 9.

Daulis, upon the Cephissus at the foot of Parnassus. Ibid.

Panopea, upon the same

river, adjoining to Orchomenia, just by Hyampolis or Anemoria. Ibid.

Anemoria, { both the  
Hyampolis, { some according to Strabo. Ibid.  
Confining upon Locris. Paus. Phoc.

Lilæa, at the head of the river Cephissus, just on the edge of Phocis. Ib. *propellentemque Lilæam Cephissi glaciale caput.* Stat. l. 7.

*LOCRIS, under Ajax Oileus, containing,*

Cynus, a maritime town towards Eubœa. Strab. l. 9.

Opus, a Locrian city, 15 stadia from the sea, adjacent to Panopea in Phocis. Ib.

Calliarus.

Bessa, so called from being covered with shrubs. Strab. l. 9.

Scarphe, seated between Thronium and Thermopylæ, 10 stadia from the sea. Ibid.

Augiæ.

Tarphæ.

Thronius, on the Melian bay. Strab. l. 9.

Boagrius, a river that passes by Thronius, and runs into the bay of Oeta, between Cynus and Scarphe. Ibid.

All these opposite to the isle of Eubœa.

*EU BOEA, under Elphenor, containing,*

Chalcis, the city nearest to the continent of Greece, just opposite to Aulis in Bæotia. Strab. l. 10.

Eretria, between Chalcis and Gereftus. Ibid.

Hifticea, a town with vineyards over against Thesfaly. Herod l. 7.

Cerinthus, on the sea-shore. Hom. Near the ri-

ver Budorus. Strab. l. 10:

Dios, seated high. Hom.

Near Hifticea. Strab. Ib.

Caryftos, a city at the foot of the mountain Ocha.

Strab. Ibid. Between Eretria and Gereftus. Ptolem.

l. 3.

Styra, a town near Caryftos. Strab. Ibid.

*ATHENS, under Menestheus.**Isle of SALAMIS, under Ajax Telamon.**PELOPONNESUS, the east part divided into Argia and Mycenæ, under Agamemnon, contains,*

Argos, 40 ftadia from the sea. Paus. Corin.

Tyrinthe, between Argos and Epidaurus. Ibid.

Three cities lying in this order on the bay of Hermione. Strab. l. 8. Paus. Corin.

Asmen, Trœzene, Hermion, Trœzene,

Trœzene was seated high, and Asine a rocky coast.—Altaque Trœzene.

Ov. Fast. 2.—

Quos Asine

cautes. Lu. l. 8.

Einoæ was on the sea-side, for Strabo tells us the people of Mycenæ made it a station for their ships, lib. 8.

Epidaurus, a town and little island adjoining, in the inner part of the Saronic bay. Strab. l. 8. It was fruitful in vines in Homer's time.

The isle of Ægina, over-against Epidaurus.

Mafeta belongs to the Argolic shore according to Strabo, who observes that Homer names it not in the exact order, placing it with Ægina. Strab. l. 8.

Mycenæ, between Cleone and Argos. Str. Pausan.

Corinth, near the Isthmus.

Cleone, between Argos and Corinth. Paus. Corinth.

Ornia, on the borders of Sicyonia. Ibid.

Arethyría, the same with Philiafia, at the source of the Achæian Afopus. Strab. l. 8.

Sicyon, (antiently the kingdom of Adraftus) betwixt Corinth and Achaia. Paus. Corinth.

Hyperefia, the same with Ægira, fays Paus. Achaic. Seated betwixt Pellene and Helice. Strab. l. 8. Oppo-

site to Parnassus. Polyb. l. 4.

Gonoessa, Homer describes it situate very high, and Seneca Troas. *Cares nunquam Gonoessia vento.*

Pellene, bordering on Sicyon and Pheneus, 60 stadia from the sea. Paus. Arcad. Celebrated antiently for its wool. Strab. l. 8. Jul. Pol.

Next Sicyon lies Pellene, etc. then Helice, and next to Helice, Ægium. Strab. l. 8. Helice lies on the sea-side, 40 stadia from Ægium. Pausan. Ach.

*The west part of PELOPONNESUS, divided into Laconia, Messenia, Arcadia, and Elis.*

*LACONIA, under Menelaus, containing;*

Sparta, the capital city, on the river Eurotas.

Phares, on the bay of Messenia Strab. l. 8.

Messa, Strabo thinks this a contraction of Messena, and Statius in his imitation of this catalogue, lib. 4. calls it so.

Bryfia, under mount Taygetus. Paus. Iacon.

Augiæ, the same with Ægiæ in the opinion of Pausanias (Laconicis.) 30 stadia from Gythium.

Amyclæ, 20 stadia from Sparta towards the sea. Ptol. l. 4. under the



mountain Taygetus. Strab.

l. 8.

Helos, on the sea-side.

Hom. Upon the river Eur-  
rotas. Strab. Ibid.

Laas.

Oetylos, near the pro-  
montory of Tænarus. Paus.  
Lac.

## *MESSENIA, under Nestor, containing,*

Pylos, the city of Nestor  
on the sea-shore.

Arene, seated near the  
river Minyeius. Hom. Il.  
11. Strab. l. 8.

Thryon, on the river  
Alpheus, the same which  
Homer elsewhere calls  
Thryoessa. Strab. Ibid.

Æpy, the ancient geo-  
graphers differ about the  
situation of this town, but  
agree to place it near the  
sea. Vide Strab. l. 8. —  
*Summis ingestum monti-  
bus Æpy.* Stat. l. 4.

Cyparisie, on the bor-  
ders of Messenia, and up-  
on the bay called from it  
Cyparissæus. Paus. Mes-  
sen.

Amphigenia, — *Fertilis  
Amphigenia*, Stat. Th. 4.  
near the former. So also,  
Pteleon, which was built  
by a colony from Pteleon  
in Thessaly. Strab. l. 8.

Helos, near the river Al-  
pheus. Ibid.

Dorion, a field or moun-  
tain near the sea. Ibid.

## *ARCADIA, under Agapenor, containing,*

The mountain Cellene,  
the highest of Peloponne-  
sus, on the borders of A-  
chaia and Arcadia, near  
Pheneus. Paus. Arcad. Un-  
der this stood the tomb  
of Æpytus. That monu-  
ment (the same author tells  
us) was remaining in his

time, it was only a heap of  
earth inclosed with a wall  
of rough stone.

Pheneus, confining on  
Pellene and Stymphelus.  
Ibid.

Orchomenus, confining  
on Pheneus and Mantinaæ.  
Ibid.

These three, Strabo tells us, are not to be found, nor their situation assigned. Lib. 8. *prope fin.* Enispe stood high as appears from Hom. and Statius l. 4. *Ventosaque donat Enispe.* and Sparta. Polyb. l. 4. Mantinea, bordering upon Tegea, Argia and Orchomenus. Paus. Arcad. Stymphelus, confining on Phlyasia or Arethyria. Strab. l. 8. Parrhasia, adjoining to Laconia. Thucyd. l. 5. —*Parrhasieque nives.* Ovid. Fast. 2.

Tegea, between Argos.

*ELIS, under four leaders, Amphimachus, etc. containing,*

The city Elis, 120 stadia from the sea. Paus. Elia-cis 2.

Buprasium near Elis, Strab. l. 8.

The places bounded by the fields of Hyrmine, in the territory of Elis, between mount Cyllene and the sea.

Myrsinus, on the sea-side, 70 stadia from Elis. Strab. l. 8.

The Olenian Rocks, which stood near the city Olenos, at the mouth of the river Pierus. Paus. Achaic.

And Alysium, the name of a town or river, in the way from Elis to Pisa. Strab. l. 8.

*The ISLES over-against the continent of Elis, Achaia, or Acarnania.*

Echinades and Dulichium, under Meges.

The Cephallenians under Ulysses, being those from Samos (the same with Cephallenia) From Zacynthus,

Grocylia, Ægilipa, Neritus, and Ithaca. This last is generally supposed to be the largest of these islands on the east side of Cephallenia, and next to it; but that is,

according to Wheeler, 20 Italian miles in circumference, whereas Strabo gives Ithaca but 80 stadia about. It was rather one of the lesser islands towards the mouth of the Achelous.

Homer adds to these places under the dominion

of Ulysses, Epirus and the opposite continent, by which (as M. Dacier observes) cannot be meant Epirus properly so called, which was never subject to Ulysses, but only the sea-coast of Acarnania, opposite to the islands.

*The continent of ACARNANIA and AETOLIA, under Thoas.*

Pleuron, seated between Chalcis and Calydon, by the sea-shore, upon the river Evenus, west of Chalcis. Strab. l. 10.

Olenos, lying above Calydon, with the Evenus on the east of it. Ibid.

Pylene, the same with Proschion, not far from

Pleuron, but more in the land. Strab. l. 10.

Chalcis a sea-town. Hom. Situate on the east side of the Evenus. Strab. Ibid. There was another Chalcis at the head of the Evenus, called by Strabo Hypo-Chalcis.

Calydon, on the Evenus also. Ibid.

*The isle of CRETE, under Idomeneus, containing,*

Gnossus, seated in the plain between Lyctus and Gortyna, 120 stad. from Lyctus. Strab. l. 10.

Gortyna, 90 stad. from the African sea. Ibid.

Lyctus, 80 stad. from the same sea. Ibid.

Miletus.

Phæstus, 60 stad. from

Gortyna, 20 from the sea, under Gortyna. Strab. lb. It lay on the river Jardan, as appears by Homer's description of it in the third book of the Odyssæy.

Lycastus.

Rhytium, under Gortyna. Strab.

*The isle of RHODES, under Telemachus  
containing,*

Lindus, on the right  
hand to those who sail from  
the city of Rhodes, south-  
ward. Strab. l. 14.

Jalyssus, between Cami-  
rus and Rhodes. Ibid.  
Camirus.

*The islands, Syma, (under Nireus) Nisy-  
rus, Carpathus, Casus, Cos, Calydnæ,  
under Antiphus and Phidippus.*

*The continent of THESSALY toward the  
Ægean sea, under Achilles.*

Argos Pelasgicum. (the  
same which was since call-  
ed Phthiotis.) Strab. l. 9.  
says that some thought this  
the name of a town, others  
that Homer meant by it this  
part of Thessaly in general,  
(which last seems most prob-  
able.) Steph. Byzant. ob-  
serves, there was a city Ar-  
gos in Thessaly, as well as  
in Peloponnesus; the for-  
mer was called Pelasgic in  
contradistinction to the A-  
chaian: for though the Pe-  
lasgi possessed several parts of  
Epirus, Crete, Peloponne-  
sus, etc. yet they retained  
their principal seat in Thes-  
saly. Steph. Byz. in v.  
Panel.

Alos,  
Alope,

Trechine, under the  
mountain Oeta. Eustath.  
in Il. 2.

Phthia,  
Hellas,

{ Both on the shore  
of Thessaly to-  
wards Locris. Str.  
l. 9. Alos lies in  
the passage of  
mount Othrys. Ib

{ some supposed  
these two to be  
names of the  
same place, as  
Strabo says; tho'  
it is plain Ho-  
mer distinguishes  
them. Whether  
they were cities  
or regions, Stra-  
bo is not deter-  
mined. lib. 9.

The Hellenes. This denomination, afterwards common to all the Greeks, is here to be understood only of those who inhabited Phthiotis. It was not until long after Homer's time, that the people of o-

ther cities of Greece desiring assistance from these, began to have the same name from their communication with them, as Thucydides remarks in the beginning of his first book.

*The following under Protefilaus.*

Phylace, on the coast of Phthiotis, toward the Melian bay. Strab. l. 9.

Pyrhæsus, beyond the mountain Othrys, had the grove of Ceres within 2 stadia of it. Ibid.

Itona, 60 stad. from Alos, it lay higher in the land than Pyrhaesus, above mount Othrys. Ibid.

Antron, on the sea-side. Hom. In the passage to Eubœa. Ibid.

Pteleon, the situation of this town in Strabo seems to be between Antron and

Pyrhaesus: But Pliny describes it with great exactness to lie on the shore towards Bœotia, on the confines of Phthiotis, upon the river Sperchius; according to which particulars, it must have been seated as I have placed it. Livy also seats it on the Sperchius.

All those towns which were under Protefilaus (says Strabo, lib. 9.) being the five last mentioned, lay on the eastern side of the mountain Othrys.

*These under Eumelus.*

Pheræ in the farthest part of Magnesia, confining on mount Pelion. Strab. lib. 9. Near the lake of Bæbe. Ptol. And plentifully watered with the

fountains of Hyperia. Strabo.

Glaphyræ.

Iolcos, a sea-town on the Pegasæan bay. Livy, lib. 4. and Strabo.



*Under Philoctetes.*

Methone, a city of Macedonia, 40 stadia from Pydna in Pieria. Strab.

Thaumacia, { in Phthiotis  
Mœlibea, { near Pharsalus, according to the same author. Ib.

Olyzon. It seems that this place lay near Bæbe, Iolcos, and Ormenium, from Strab. l. 9. where he says, Demetrius caused the inhabitants of these towns remove to Demetrias, on the same coast.

*The Upper THESSALY.*

*The following under Podalirius and Machaon.*

Trice, or Tricce, not far from the mountain Pinus, on the left hand of the Peneus, as it runs from Pinus. Strab. l. 9.

Ithome, near Trica. Ibid.  
Oechalia, the situation not certain, somewhere near the forementioned towns. Strabo. Ibid.

*Under Eurypylus.*

Ormenium, under Pelion, on the Pegaſæan bay, near Bæbe. Ibid.

Asterium, hard by Phœræ and Titanus. Ibid.

*Under Polyphaetes.*

Argiſſa, lying upon the river Peneus. Strab. l. 9.

Gyrtona, a city of Perhæbia, at the foot of Olympus. Ibid.

Orthe, near Peneus and Tempe. Ibid.

Elope, { both lying under Olympus,  
Oloſſon, { near the river Titareſius. Ib.

*Under Guneus and Protheus.*

Cyphus, seated in the mountainous country, towards Olympus. Ibid.

Dodona, among the mountains, towards Olympus. Ibid.

Titaresius, a river rising in the mountain Titarus near Olympus, and running

into Peneus. Ibid. It is also called Eurotas.

The river Peneus rises from mount Pindus, and flows through Tempe into the sea. Strab. l. 7. and 9.

Pellon, near Ossa, in Magnesia. Herod. l. 7.

## *A Table of TROY, and the Auxiliar C O U N T R I E S.*

**T**HE kingdom of Priam divided into eight dynasties.

1. Troas, under Hector, whose capital was Ilion.
2. Dardania, under Æneas, the capital Dardanus.
3. Zéleia, at the foot of Ida, by the Æsopus, under Pandarus.
4. Adrestia, Apæsus, Pityea, mount Tereë, under Adrastus and Amphius.
5. Sestos, Abydos, Arifbe, on the river Selle, Per-

cote, and Præstius, under Asius.

These places lay between Troy and the Propontis.

The other three dynasties were under Mynes, Eetion, and Alteus; the capital of the first was Lyrnessus, of the second Thebe of Cilicia, of the third Pedasus in Lelegia. Homer does not mention these in the catalogue, having been before destroyed and depopulated by the Greeks.

### *The Auxiliar Nations.*

The Pelasgi, under Hippothous and Pyleus, whose capital was Larissa, near the place where Cuma was afterwards built. Strabo, l. 13.

The Thracians, by the side of the Hellespont opposite to Troy, under Acamas and Pyrous, and those of Ciconia, under Euphemus.

The Pœonians from Macedonia and the river Axius, under Pyrechmes.

The Paphlagonians, under Pylæmeneus. The Halizonians, under Odus and Epistrophus. The Mysians, under Cronis and Ennomus. The Phrygians of Ascania, under Phorcys and Ascanius.

The Mæonians, under Mestles and Antiphus, who inhabited under the mountain Tmolus.

The Carians, under Naustes and Anaphimachus, from Miletus, the farther-

most city of Caria towards the south. Herodot. l. i.

Mycale, a mountain and promontory opposite to Samos. Ibid.

Phthiron, the same mountain as Latmos, according to Hecatæus.

The Lycians, under Sar-

pedon and Glaucus, from the banks of the river Xanthus, which runs into the sea between Rhodes and Cyprus. Homer mentions it to distinguish this Lycia from that which lies on the Propontis.

T H E

I L I A D.

B O O K III.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The duel of Menelaus and Paris.

*THE armies being ready to engage, a single combate is agreed upon between Menelaus and Paris (by the intervention of Hector) for the determination of the war. Iris is sent to call Helena to behold the fight. She leads her to the walls of Troy, where Priam sate with his counsellors observing the Grecian leaders on the plain below, to whom Helen gives an account of the chief of them. The kings on either part take the solemn oath for the conditions of the combate. The duel ensues, wherein Paris being overcome, is snatched away in a cloud by Venus, and transported to his apartment. She then calls Helen from the walls, and brings the lovers together. Agamemnon on the part of the Grecians, demands the restoration of Helen, and the performance of the articles.*

*The three and twentieth day still continues throughout this book. The scene is sometimes in the fields before Troy, and sometimes in Troy itself.*

**T**HUS by their leader's care each martial band,  
Moves into ranks, and stretches o'er the land.  
With shouts the Trojans rushing from afar,  
Proclaim their motions, and provoke the war:

Of all the books of the Iliad, there is scarce any more pleasing than the third. It may be divided into five



So when inclement winters vex the plain

5

With piercing frosts, or thick-descending rain,

parts, each of which has a beauty different from the other. The first contains what passed before the two armies, and the proposal of the combat between Paris and Menelaus: The attention and suspense of these mighty hosts, which were just upon the point of joining battle, and the lofty manner of offering and accepting this important and unexpected challenge, have something in them wonderfully pompous, and of an amusing solemnity. The second part, which describes the behaviour of Helena in this juncture, her conference with the old king and his counsellors, with the review of the heroes from the battlements, is an episode intirely of another sort, which excels in the natural and pathetic. The third consists of the ceremonies of the oath on both sides, and the preliminaries to the combat; with the beautiful retreat of Priam, who in the tenderness of a parent withdraws from the sight of the duel: These particulars detain the reader in expectation, and heighten his impatience for the fight itself. The fourth is the description of the duel, an exact piece of painting, where we see every attitude, motion, and action of the combatants particularly and distinctly, and which concludes with a surprizing propriety, in the rescue of Paris by Venus. The machine of that goddess, which makes the fifth part, and whose end is to reconcile Paris and Helena, is admirable in every circumstance; The remonstrance she holds with the goddess, the reluctance with which she obeys her, the reproaches she casts upon Paris, and the flattery and courtship with which he so soon wins her over to him. Helen (the main cause of this war) was not no be made an odious character; she is drawn by this great master with the sincerest strokes, as a frail, but not as an abandoned creature. She has perpetual struggles of virtue on the one side, and softnesses which overcome them, on the

To warmer seas the cranes embody'd fly,  
With noise, and order, thro' the mid-way sky;

other. Our author has been remarkably careful to tell us this; whenever he but slightly names her in the foregoing part of his work, she is represented at the same time as repentant; and it is thus we see her at large at her first appearance in the present book, which is one of the shortest of the whole Iliad, but in recompence has beauties almost in every line, and most of them so obvious, that to acknowledge them we need only to read them.

v. 3. *With shouts the Trojans.*] The book begins with a fine opposition of the noise of the Trojan army to the silence of the Grecians. It was but natural to imagine this, since the former was composed of many different nations, of various languages and strangers to each other; the latter were more united in their neighbourhood, and under leaders of the same country. But as this observation seems particularly insisted upon by our author (for he uses it again in the fourth book. v. 486.) so he had a farther reason for it. Plutarch in his treatise of reading the poets, remarks upon this distinction, as a particular credit to the military discipline of the Greeks. And several ancient authors tell us, it was the manner of the Barbarians to encounter with shouts and outcries; as it continues to this day the custom of the eastern nations. Perhaps these clamours were only to encourage their men, instead of martial instruments. I think Sir Walter Raleigh says, there never was a people but made use of some sort of music in battle: Homer never mentions any in the Greek or Trojan armies and it is scarce to be imagined he would omit a circumstance so poetical without some particular reason. The verb Σαλπίζω, which the modern Greeks have since appropriated to the sound of a trumpet, is used indifferently in our author for other sounds, as for thunder in the 21st

To pigmy nations wounds and death they bring,  
And all the war descends upon the wing.

10

Iliad. v. 388. Ἀμφὶ δὲ σάλπιγγεν μέγας ἔρχνός——. He once names the trumpet Σάλπιγξ in a *simile*, upon which Eustathius and Didymus observe, that the use of it was known in the poet's time, but not in that of the Trojan war. And hence we may infer that Homer was particularly careful not to confound the manners of the times he wrote of, with those of the times he lived in.

v. 7. *The cranes embody'd fly.*] If wit has been truly decribed to be a similitude in ideas, and is more excellent as that similitude is more surprizing; there cannot be a truer kind of wit than what is shewn in apt comparisons, especially when composed of such subjects as having the least relation to each other in general, have yet some particular that agrees exactly. Of this nature is the simile of the *cranes* to the Trojan army, where the fancy of Homer flew to the remotest part of the world for an image which no reader could have expected. But it is no less exact than surprizing. The likeness consists in two points, the *noise* and the *order*; the latter is so observable, as to have given some of the ancients occasion to imagine, the imbatteling of an army was first learned from the close manner of flight of these birds. But this part of the simile not being directly expressed by the author, has been overlooked by some of the commentators. It may be remarked, that Homer has generally a wonderful closeness in all the particulars of his comparisons, notwithstanding he takes a liberty in his expression of them. He seems so secure of the main likenesses, that he makes no scruple to play with the circumstances; sometimes by transposing the order of them, sometimes by superadding them, and sometimes (as in this place) by neglecting them in such a manner, as to leave the reader to supply them himself. For the present comparison, it has been taken by Virgil in the tenth book,

But silent, breathing rage, resolv'd and skill'd  
 By mutual aids to fix a doubtful field,  
 Swift march the Greeks : the rapid dust around  
 Dark'ning arises from the labour'd ground.  
 Thus from his flaggy wings when Notus sheds 15  
 A night of vapours round the mountain-heads,  
 Swift-gliding mists the dusky fields invade,  
 To thieves more grateful than the midnight shade ;  
 While scarce the swains their feeding flocks survey,  
 Lost and confus'd amidst the thicken'd day : 20  
 So wrapt in gath'ring dust, the Grecian train  
 A moving cloud, swept on, and hid the plain.  
 Now front to front the hostile armies stand,  
 Eager of fight, and only wait command ;  
 When, to the van, before the sons of fame 25  
 Whom Troy sent forth, the beauteous Paris came :

and applied to the clamours of soldiers in the same manner,

————— *Quales sub nubibus atris*  
*Strymoniae dant signa grues, atque aethera tranant*  
*Cum sonitu, fugiuntque Notos clamore secundo.*

v. 26. *The beauteous Paris came, in form a God.*] This is meant by the epithet Θεοειδής, as has been said in the notes on the first book, v. 169. The picture here given of Paris' air and dress, is exactly correspondent to his character ; you see him endeavouring to mix the fine gentleman with the warrior ; and this idea of him Homer takes care to keep up, by describing him not without the same regard, when he is arming to encounter Menelaus afterwards in a close fight, as he shews here,

In form a God! the panther's speckled hyde  
 Flow'd o'er his armour with an easy pride,  
 His bended bow across his shoulders flung,  
 His sword beside him negligently hung,  
 Two pointed spears he shook with gallant grace,  
 And dar'd the bravest of the Grecian race.

30

As thus with glorious air and proud disdain,  
 He boldly stalk'd, the foremost on the plain,  
 Him Menelaus, lov'd of Mars, espies,  
 With heart elated, and with joyful eyes:  
 So joys a lion if the branching deer  
 Or mountain goat, his bulky prize, appear;

35

where he is but preluding and flourishing in the gaiety of his heart. And when he tells us, in that place, that he was in danger of being strangled by the strap of his helmet, he takes notice that it was πολύκεσος, *embroidered*.

v. 37. *So joys a lion, if the branching deer, or mountain goat.*] The old scholiasts refining on this simile, will have it, that Paris is compared to a goat on account of his incontinence, and to a stag for his cowardice: To this last they make an addition which is very ludicrous, that he is also likened to a deer for his *skill in music*, and cite Aristotle to prove that animal delights in harmony, which opinion is alluded to by Mr. Waller in these lines:

*Here love takes stand, and while she charms the ear,  
 Empties his quiver on the list'ning deer.*

But upon the whole, it is whimsical to imagine this comparison consists in any thing more, than the joy which Menelaus conceived at the sight of his rival, in the hopes of destroying him. It is equally an injustice to Paris, to abuse him for understanding music, and to represent his



Eager he seizes and devours the slain,  
 Prest by bold youths, and baying dogs in vain. 40  
 Thus fond of vengeance, with a furious bound,  
 In clanging arms he leaps upon the ground  
 From his high chariot : Him, approaching near,  
 The beauteous champion views with marks of fear,  
 Smit with a conscious sense, retires behind, 45  
 And shuns the fate he well-deserv'd to find.  
 As when some shepherd from the rustling trees  
 Shot forth to view, a scaly serpent sees ;

retreat as purely the effect of fear, which proceeded from his sense of guilt with respect to the particular person of Menelaus. He appeared at the head of the army to challenge the boldest of the enemy : Nor is his character elsewhere in the Iliad by any means that of a coward. Hector at the end of the sixth book confesses, that no man could justly reproach him as such. Nor is he represented so by Ovid (who copied Homer very closely) in the end of his epistle to Helen. The moral of Homer is much finer : A brave mind, however blinded with passion, is sensible of remorse as soon as the injured object presents itself ; and Paris never behaves himself ill in war, but when his spirits are depressed by the consciousness of an injustice. This also will account for the seeming incongruity of Homer in this passage, who (as they would have us think) paints him a shameful coward, at the same time that he is perpetually calling him *the divine Paris*, and *Paris like a God*. What he says immediately afterwards in answer to Hector's reproof, will make this yet more clear.

v. 47. *As when a shepherd.*] This comparison of the serpent is finely imitated by Virgil in the second Æneid.

Trembling and pale, he starts with wild affright,  
And all confus'd precipitates his flight.

50

So from the king the shining warrior flies,  
And plung'd amid the thickest Trojans lies.

As godlike Hector sees the prince retreat,  
He thus upbraids him with a gen'rous heat.

*Improvisum aspris veluti qui sentibus anguem  
Pressit humi nitens, trepidusque repente refugit  
Attollentem iras, et coerulea colla tumentem :  
Haud secus Androgeus visu tremefactus abibat.*

But it may be said to the praise of Virgil, that he has applied it upon an occasion where it has an additional beauty. Paris upon the sight of Menelaus' approach, is compared to a traveller who sees a snake shoot on a sudden towards him. But the surprize and danger of Androgeus is more lively, being just in the reach of his enemies before he perceived it; and the circumstance of the serpent's rousing his crest, which brightens with anger, finely images the shining of their arms in the night-time, as they were just lifted up to destroy him. Scaliger criticizes on the needless repetition in the words *παλινωρεος* and *ανεχώρησεν*, which is avoided in the translation. But it must be observed in general, that *little exactnesses* are what we should not look for in Homer; the genius of his age was too incorrect, and his own too fiery, to regard them.

v. 53. *As godlike Hector.*] This is the first place of the poem where Hector makes a figure; and here it seems proper to give an idea of his character, since if he is not the chief hero of the Iliad, he is at least the most amiable. There are several reasons which render Hector a favourite character with every reader, some of which shall here be offered. The chief moral of Homer was to expose the ill effects of discord; the Greeks were to be shewn

Unhappy Paris ! but to women brave !

55

So fairly form'd, and only to deceive !

disunited, and to render that disunion the more probable, he has designedly given them *mixt* characters. The Trojans, on the other hand, were to be represented making all advantages of the others disagreement, which they could not do without a strict union among themselves. Hector therefore, who commanded them, must be endued with all such qualifications as tended to the preservation of it ; as Achilles with such as promoted the contrary. The one stands in contrast to the other, an accomplished character of valour unruffled by rage and anger, and uniting his people by his prudence and example. Hector has also a foil to set him off in his own family ; we are perpetually opposing in our own minds the incontinence of Paris, who exposes his country, to the temperance of Hector, who protects it. And indeed it is this love of his country, which appears his principal passion and the motive of all his actions. He has no other blemish than that he fights in an unjust cause, which Homer has yet been careful to tell us he would not do, if his opinion were followed. But since he cannot prevail, the affection he bears to his parents and kindred, and his desire of defending them, incites him to do his utmost for their safety. We may add, that Homer having so many Greeks to celebrate, makes them shine in their turns, and singly in their several books, one succeeding in the absence of another : whereas Hector appears in every battle the life and soul of his party, and the constant bulwark against every enemy : he stands against Agamemnon's magnanimity, Diomed's bravery, Ajax's strength, and Achilles's fury. There is besides an accidental cause for our liking him, from reading the writers of the Augustan age (especially Virgil) whose favourite he grew more particularly from the time when the Cæsars fancied to derive their pedigree from Troy.

v. 55. *Unhappy Paris, etc.*] It may be observed in

Oh had'st thou dy'd when first thou saw'st the light,  
Or dy'd at least before thy nuptial rite !

A better fate than vainly thus to boast,  
And fly, the scandal of thy Trojan host.

60

Gods ! how the scornful Greeks exult to see  
Their fears of danger undeceiv'd in thee !

honour of Homer's judgment, that the words which Hector is made to speak here, very strongly mark his character. They contain a warm reproach of cowardice, and shew him to be touched with so high a sense of glory, as to think life insupportable without it. His calling to mind the gallant figure which Paris had made in his amours to Helen, and opposing it to the image of his flight from her husband, is a sarcasm of the utmost bitterness and vivacity. After he has named that action of the rape, the cause of so many mischiefs, his insisting upon it in so many broken periods, those disjointed shortnesses of speech,

(Πατρί τε σῶ μέγα πῆμα, πολλή τε, παντί τε δῆμα,  
Δυσμενέσιν μὲν χάριμα, κατηφείην δέ σοι αὐτῶ.)

That hasty manner of expression without the connexion of particles, is (as Eustathius remarks) extremely natural to a man in anger, who thinks he can never vent himself too soon. That contempt of outward shew, of the gracefulness of person, and of the accomplishments of a courtly life, is what corresponds very well with the warlike temper of Hector ; and these verses have therefore a beauty here which they want in Horace, however admirably he has translated them, in the ode of *Nereus's prophecy*.

*Nequicquam Veneris præsidio serox,  
Pectus cæsariem ; grataque sæminis  
Imbelli citbara carmina divides, etc.*

Thy figure promis'd with a martial air,  
 But ill thy soul supplies a form so fair.  
 In former days, in all thy gallant pride, 65  
 When thy tall ships triumphant stem'd the tide,  
 When Greece beheld thy painted canvas flow,  
 And crouds stood wond'ring at the passing show;  
 Say, was it thus, with such a baffled mein,  
 You met th' approaches of the Spartan queen, 70  
 Thus from her realm convey'd the beauteous prize,  
 And \* both her warlike lords outshin'd in Helen's eyes?  
 This deed thy foes delight, thy own disgrace,  
 Thy father's grief, and ruin of thy race;  
 This deed recalls thee to the proffer'd fight; 75  
 Or hast thou injur'd whom thou dar'st not right?  
 Soon to thy cost the field would make thee know,  
 Thou keep'st the consort of a braver foe.  
 Thy graceful form instilling soft desire,  
 Thy curling tresses, and thy silver lyre, 80

\* Theseus and Menelaus.

v. 72. *And both her warlike lords.*] The original is, *Νυον ἀνδρῶν αἰχμητῶν. The spouse of martial men.* I wonder why madam Dacier chose to turn it *Allee a tant de braves guerriers*, since it so naturally refers to Theseus and Menelaus, the former husbands of Helena.

v. 80. *Thy curling tresses, and thy silver lyre.*] It is ingeniously remarked by Dacier, that Homer, who celebrates the Greeks for their long hair [*καρχομῶντας Ἀχαιῆς*] and Achilles for his skill on the harp, makes Hector in this place object them both to Paris. The Greeks nourished their hair to appear more dreadful to the enemy, and Paris to please the eyes of women. A-



\* Beauty and youth, in vain to these you trust,  
 \* When youth and beauty shall be laid in dust :  
 Troy yet may wake, and one avenging blow  
 Crush the dire author of his country's woe.

His silence here, with blushes, Paris breaks ; 85  
 'Tis just, my brother, what your anger speaks :

chilles sung to his harp the acts of heroes, and Paris the amours of lovers. The same reason which makes Hector here displeased at them, made Alexander afterwards refuse to see this lyre of Paris, when offered to be shewn to him, as Plutarch relates the story in his oration of the fortune of Alexander.

v. 83. *One avenging blow.*] It is in the Greek, *You had been clad in a coat of stone.* Giphanius would have it to mean stoned to death on the account of his adultery : but this does not appear to have been the punishment of that crime among the Phrygians. It seems rather to signify, destroyed by the fury of the people, for the war he had brought upon them ; or perhaps may imply no more than being laid in his grave under a monument of stones ; but the former being the stronger sense, is here followed.

v. 86. *'Tis just, my brother.*] This speech is a farther opening of the true character of Paris. He is a master of civility, no less well-bred to his own sex than courtly to the other. The reproof of Hector was of a severe nature, yet he receives it as from a brother and a friend, with candour and modesty. This answer is remarkable for its fine address ; he gives the hero a decent and agreeable reproof for having too rashly depreciated the gifts of nature. He allows the quality of courage its utmost due, but desires the same justice to those softer accomplishments, which he lets him know are no less the favour of heaven. Then he removes from himself the charge of want of valour, by proposing the single  
 combat

But who like thee can boast a soul sedate,  
So firmly proof to all the shocks of fate?  
Thy force, like steel, a temper'd hardness shows,  
Still edg'd to wound, and still untir'd with blows, 90  
Like steel, uplifted by some strenuous swain,  
With falling woods to strow the wasted plain.  
Thy gifts I praise; nor thou despise the charms  
With which a lover golden Venus arms;  
Soft moving speech, and pleasing outward show, 95  
No wish can gain 'em, but the Gods bestow.  
Yet, would'st thou have the proffer'd combat stand,  
The Greeks and Trojans seat on either hand;  
Then let a mid-way space our hosts divide,  
And, on that stage of war, the cause be try'd: 100  
By Paris there the Spartan king be fought,  
Forauteous Helen and the wealth she brought;

combate with the very man he had just declined to engage; which having shewn him void of any malevolence to his rival on the one hand, he now proves himself free from the imputation of cowardice on the other. Homer draws him (as we have seen) soft of speech, the natural quality of an amorous temper; vainly gay in war as well as love: with a spirit that can be surpris'd and recollected, that can receive impressions of shame or apprehension on the one side, or of generosity and courage on the other; the usual disposition of easy and courteous minds, which are most subject to the rule of fancy and passion. Upon the whole, this is no worse than the picture of a *gentle knight*, and one might fancy the heroes of the modern romance were formed upon the model of Paris.

And who his rival can in arms subdue,  
His be the fair, and his the treasure too.

Thus with a lasting league your toils may cease, 105  
And Troy possess her fertile fields in peace ;

Thus may the Greeks review their native shore,  
Much fam'd for gen'rous steeds, for beauty more.

He said. The challenge Hector heard with joy,  
Then with his spear restrain'd the youth of Troy, 110  
Held by the midst, athwart ; and near the foe  
Advanc'd with steps majestically slow.

While round his dauntless head the Grecians pour  
Their stones and arrows in a mingled show'r.

Then thus the monarch great Atrides cry'd ; 115

Forbear, ye warriors ! lay the darts aside :

A parley Hector asks, a message bears ;

We know him by the various plume he wears.

v. 108. *Much fam'd for gen'rous steeds, for beauty more.*] The original is, "Ἄγρος ἐς ἰππόβοτον, καὶ Ἀχαιῶν καλλιγύναικα. Perhaps this line is translated too close to the letter, and the epithets might have been omitted. But there are some traits and particularities of this nature, which methinks preserve to the reader the air of Homer. At least the latter of these circumstances, that *Greece was eminent for beautiful women*, seems not improper to be mentioned by him who had raised a war on the account of a *Grecian beauty*.

v. 109. *The challenge Hector heard with joy.*] Hector stays not to reply to his brother, but runs away with the challenge immediately. He looks upon all the Trojans as disgraced by the late flight of Paris, and thinks not a moment is to be lost to regain the honour of his country. The activity he shews in all this affair wonderfully agrees with the spirit of a soldier.

Aw'd by his high command the Greeks attend,  
The tumult silence, and the fight suspend. 120

While from the center Hector rolls his eyes  
On either host, and thus to both applies.  
Hear, all ye Trojans, all ye Grecian bands !  
What Paris, author of the war, demands.  
Your shining swords within the sheath restrain, 125  
And pitch your lances in the yielding plain.  
Here, in the midst, in either army's fight,  
He dares the Spartan king to single fight ;  
And wills, that Helen and the ravish'd spoil  
That caus'd the contest, shall reward the toil. 130

v. 123. *Hear, all ye Trojans, all ye Grecian bands.*]

It has been asked how the different nations could understand one another in these conferences, since we have no mention in Homer of any interpreter between them? He who was so very particular in the most minute points, can hardly be thought to have been negligent in this. Some reasons may be offered that they both spoke the same language; for the Trojans (as may be seen in Dion. Halic. lib. 1.) were of Grecian extraction originally. Dardanus the first of their kings was born in Arcadia; and even their names were originally Greek, as Hector, Anchises, Andromache, Astyanax, *etc.* Of the last of these in particular, Homer gives us a derivation which is purely Greek, in Il. 6. v. 403. But however it be, this is no more (as Dacier somewhere observes) than the just privilege of poetry. Æneas and Turnus understand each other in Virgil, and the language of the poet is supposed to be universally intelligible, not only between different countries, but between earth and heaven itself.

Let these the brave triumphant victor grace,  
And differing nations part in leagues of peace.

He spoke in still suspense on either side  
Each army stood: The Spartan chief reply'd.

Me too ye warriors hear, whose fatal right      135  
A world engages in the toils of fight.

v. 135. *Me too ye warriors hear, etc.*] We may observe what care Homer takes to give every one his proper character, and how this speech of Menelaus is adapted to the Laconic; which the better to comprehend, we may remember there are in Homer three speakers of different characters, agreeable to the three different kinds of eloquence. These we may compare with each other in one instance, supposing them all to use the same heads, and in the same order.

The materials of the speech are, The manifesting his grief for the war, with the hopes that it is in his power to end it; an acceptance of the proposed challenge; an account of the ceremonies to be used in the league; and a proposal of a proper caution to secure it.

Now had Nestor these materials to work upon, he would probably have begun with a relation of all the troubles of the nine year's siege, which he hoped he might now bring to an end: he would court their benevolence and good wishes for his prosperity, with all the figures of amplification; while he accepted the challenge, he would have given an example to prove that the single combat was a wise, gallant, and gentle way of ending the war, practised by their fathers; in the description of the rites he would be exceeding particular; and when he chose to demand the sanction of Priam rather than of his sons, he would place in opposition on one side the son's action which began the war, and on the other the impressions of concern or repentance which it must by this time have made in the father's mind, whose wisdom



To me the labour of the field resign ;  
Me Paris injur'd ; all the war be mine.

he would undoubtedly extol as the effect of his age. All this he would have expatiated upon with connexions of the discourses in the most evident manner, and the most easy, gliding undifobling transitions. The effect would be, that the people would hear him with pleasure.

Had it been Ulysses who was to make the speech, he would have mentioned a few of their affecting calamities in a pathetic air ; then have undertaken the fight with testifying such a chearful joy, as should have won the hearts of the soldiers to follow him to the field without being desired. He would have been exceeding cautious in wording the conditions ; and solemn, rather than particular, in speaking of the rites, which he would only insist on as an opportunity to exhort both sides to a fear of the Gods, and a strict regard of justice. He would have remonstrated the use of sending for Priam ; and (because no caution could be too much) have demanded his sons to be bound with him. For a conclusion, he would have used some noble sentiment agreeable to a hero, and (it may be) have inforced it with some inspirited action. In all this you would have known that the discourse hung together, but its fire would not always suffer it to be seen in cooler transitions, which (when they are too nicely laid open) may conduct the reader, but never carry him away. The people would hear him with emotion.

These materials being given to Menelaus, he but just mentions their troubles, and his satisfaction in the prospect of ending them, shortens the proposals, says a sacrifice is necessary, requires Priam's presence to confirm the conditions, refuses his sons with a resentment of that injury he suffered by them, and concludes with a reason for his choice from the praise of age, with a short gravity, and the air of an apophthegm. This he puts in or-

Fall he that must, beneath his rival's arms,  
And live the rest secure of future harms.

140

Two lambs, devoted by your country's rite,  
To Earth a fable, to the Sun a white,  
Prepare, ye Trojans ! while a third we bring  
Select to Jove, th' inviolable king.

Let rev'rend Priam in the truce engage,  
And add the sanction of considerate age ;  
His sons are faithless, headlong in debate,  
And youth itself an empty wav'ring state :

145

Cool age advances venerably wise,

Turns on all hands its deep discerning eyes ;

150

Sees what befall, and what may yet befall,

Concludes from both, and best provides for all.

The nations hear, with rising hopes possess,  
And peaceful prospects dawn in ev'ry breast.

der without any more transition than what a single conjunction affords. And the effect of the discourse is, that the people are instructed by it in what is to be done.

v. 141. *Two lambs devoted.*] The Trojans (says the old scholiast) were required to sacrifice two lambs ; one male of a white colour, to the Sun, and one female, and black, to the Earth ; as the Sun is father of light, and the Earth the mother and nurse of men. The Greeks were to offer a third to Jupiter, perhaps to Jupiter Xenus, because the Trojans had broken the laws of hospitality : On which account we find Menelaus afterwards invoking him in the combat with Paris. That these were the powers to which they sacrificed, appears by their being attested by name in the oath, v. 346, etc.

v. 153. *The nations hear, with rising hopes possess.*] It seemed on more than what the reader would reason-

Book III.     H O M E R's I L I A D.     169

Within the lines they drew their steeds around,     155

And from their chariots issu'd on the ground :

Next all unbuckling the rich mail they wore,

Laid their bright arms along the sable shore.

On either side the meeting hosts are seen,

With lances fix'd, and close the space between.     160

ably expect, in the narration of this long war, that a period might have been put to it by the single danger of the parties chiefly concerned, Paris and Menelaus. Homer has therefore taken care toward the beginning of his poem to obviate that objection; and contrived such a method to render this combat of no effect, as should naturally make way for all the ensuing battles, without any future prospect of a determination but by the sword. It is farther worth observing, in what manner he has improved into poetry the common history of this action, if (as one may imagine) it was the same with that we have in the second book of Dictys Cretensis. *When Paris (says he) being wounded by the spear of Menelaus fell to the ground, just as his adversary was rushing upon him with his sword, he was shot by an arrow from Pandarus, which prevented his revenge in the moment he was going to take it. Immediately on the sight of this perfidious action, the Greeks rose in a tumult; the Trojans rising at the same time, came on, and rescued Paris from his enemy.* Homer has with great art and invention mingled all this with the marvellous, and raised it in the air of fable. *The goddess of love* rescues her favourite; Jupiter debates whether or no the war shall end by the defeat of Paris: Juno is for the continuance of it; Minerva incites Pandarus to break the truce, who thereupon shoots at Menelaus. This heightens the grandeur of the action, without destroying the verisimilitude, diversifies the poem, and exhibits a fine moral; that whatever seems in the world the effect of common causes, is really owing to the decree and disposition of the Gods.

Two heralds now dispatch'd to Troy, invite  
 The Phrygian monarch to the peaceful rite;  
 Talthybius hastens to the fleet, to bring  
 The lamb for Jove, th' inviolable king.

Mean-time, to beauteous Helen, from the skies 165  
 The various goddesses of the rainbow flies:  
 (Like fair Laodice in form and face,  
 The loveliest nymph of Priam's royal race)  
 Her in the palace, at her loom she found;  
 The golden web her own sad story crown'd, 170

v. 165. *Mean-time, to beauteous Helen, etc.*] The following part, where we have the first sight of Helena, is what I cannot think inferior to any in the poem. The reader has naturally an aversion to this pernicious beauty, and is apt enough to wonder at the Greeks for endeavouring to recover her at such an expence. But her amiable behaviour here, the secret wishes that rise in favour of her rightful lord, her tenderness for her parents and relations, the relenting of her soul for the mischief her beauty had been the cause of, the confusion she appears in, the veiling her face, and dropping a tear, are particulars so beautifully natural, as to make every reader, no less than Menelaus himself, inclined to forgive her at least, if not to love her. We are afterwards confirmed in this partiality by the sentiment of the old counsellors upon the sight of her, which one would think Homer put into their mouths with that very view: We excuse her no more than Priam does himself, and all those do who felt the calamities she occasioned: And this regard for her is heightened by all she says herself; in which there is scarce a word, that is not big with repentance and good-nature.

v. 170. *The golden web her own sad story crown'd.*] This is a very agreeable fiction, to represent Helena

The Trojan wars she weav'd (herself the prize)

And the dire triumphs of her fatal eyes.

To whom the Goddess of the painted bow;

Approach, and view the wond'rous scene below!

Each hardy Greek, and valiant Trojan knight,      175

So dreadful late, and furious for the fight,

Now rest their spears, or lean upon their shields;

Ceas'd is the war, and silent all the fields.

Paris alone and Sparta's king advance,

In single fight to toss the beamy lance;      180

Each met in arms the fate of combate tries,

Thy love the motive, and thy charms the prize.

This said the many colour'd maid inspires

Her husband's love, and wakes her former fires;

Her country, parents, all that once were dear,      185

Rush to her thought, and force a tender tear.

O'er her fair face a snowy veil she threw,

And, softly sighing, from the loom withdrew.

Her handmaids Clymene and Æthra wait

Her silent footsteps to the Scæan gate.      190

There sate the seniors of the Trojan race,

(Old Priam's chiefs, and most in Priam's grace)

The king the first; Thymætès at his side;

Lampus and Clytius, long in council try'd;

weaving in a large veil, or piece of tapestry, the story of the Trojan war. One would think that Homer inherited this veil, and that his Iliad is only an explication of that admirable piece of art. Dacier.



Panthus, and Hicetaon, once the strong ;

195

And next, the wisest of the rev'rend throng,

Antenor grave, and sage Ucalegon,

Lean'd on the walls, and bask'd before the sun.

Chiefs, who no more in bloody fights engage,

But wise thro' time, and narrative with age,

200

In summer-days, like grasshoppers rejoice,

A bloodless race, that send a feeble voice.

v. 201. *Like grasshoppers.*] This is one of the justest and most natural images in the world, though there have been critics of so little taste as to object to it as a mean one. The garrulity so common to old men, their delight in associating with each other, the feeble sound of their voices, the pleasure they take in a sun-shiny day, the effects of decay in their chillness, leanness and scarcity of blood, are all circumstances exactly paralleled in this comparison. To make it yet more proper to the old men of Troy, Eustathius has observed that Homer found a hint for this simile in the Trojan story, where Tithon was feigned to have been transformed into a grasshopper in his old age, perhaps on account of his being so exhausted by years, as to have nothing left him but voice. Spondanus wonders that Homer should apply to grasshoppers *οπα λειρόσσαν*, a sweet voice ; whereas that of these animals is harsh and untuneful : and he is contented to come off with a very poor evasion of *Homero fingere quidlibet fas fuit*. But Hesychius rightly observes that *λειρόεις* signifies *ἀπαλός*, *tener* or *gracilis*, as well as *suavis*. The sense is certainly much better, and the simile more truly preserved by this interpretation, which is here followed in translating it *feeble*. However it may be alledged in defence of the common versions, and of madam Dacier's (who has turned it *harmonieuse*) that though Virgil gives the epithet *rauca* to *Cicada*, yet the Greek poets frequently describe the grasshopper as a musical

These, when the Spartan queen approach'd the tow'r,  
In secret own'd resistless beauty's pow'r:

creature, particularly Anacreon, and Theocritus, Idyl.  
1. where a shepherd praises another's singing, by telling him,

Τέτλιγος ἐπεὶ τύγε φέρετον ἄδεις·

It is remarkable that Mr. Hobbes has omitted this beautiful simile.

v. 203. *These, when the Spartan queen approach'd.*] Madam Dacier is of opinion there was never a greater panegyric upon beauty, than what Homer has found the art to give it in this place. An assembly of venerable old counsellors, who had suffered all the calamities of a tedious war, and were consulting upon the methods to put a conclusion to it, seeing the only cause of it approaching towards them, are struck with her charms, and cry out, *No wonder!* etc. Nevertheless they afterwards recollect themselves, and conclude to part with her for the public safety. If Homer had carried these old mens admiration any farther, he had been guilty of outraging nature, and offending against probability. The old are capable of being touched with beauty by the eye; but age secures them from the tyranny of passion, and the effect is but transitory, for prudence soon regains its dominion over them. Homer always goes as far as he should, but constantly stops just where he ought. Dacier.

The same writer compares to this the speech of Holfernes's soldiers on the sight of Judith, ch. 10. v. 18. But though there be a resemblance in the words, the beauty is no way parallel: the grace of this consisting in the age and character of those who speak it. There is some thing very gallant upon the beauty of Helen in one of Lucian's dialogues. Mercury shews Menippus the skulls of several fine women; and when the philo-

They cry'd, No wonder, such celestial charms 205

For nine long years have set the world in arms ;

What winning graces ! what majestic mein !

\* She moves a goddess, and she looks a queen !

Yet hence, oh heav'n ! convey that fatal face,

And from destruction save the Trojan race. 210

The good old Priam welcom'd her, and cry'd,

Approach, my child, and grace thy father's side.

See on the plain thy Grecian spouse appears,

The friends and kindred of thy former years.

sopher is moralizing upon that of Helen : *Was it for this a thousand ships sailed from Greece, so many brave men died, and so many cities were destroyed ? My friend (says Mercury) it is true ; but what you behold is only her skull ; you would have been of their opinion, and have done the very same thing, had you seen her face.*

v. 211. *The good old Priam.*] The character of a benevolent old man is very well preserved in Priam's behaviour to Helena. Upon the confusion he observes her in, he encourages her, by attributing the misfortunes of the war to the gods alone, and not to her fault. This sentiment is also very agreeable to the natural piety of old age ; those who have had the longest experience of human accidents and events, being most inclined to ascribe the disposal of all things to the will of heaven. It is this piety that renders Priam a favourite of Jupiter, (as we find in the beginning of the fourth book) which for some time delays the destruction of Troy ; while his soft nature and indulgence for his children makes him continue a war which ruins him. These are the two principal points of Priam's character, though there are several lesser particularities, among which we may observe the curiosity and inquisitive humour of old age, which gives occasion to the following episode.

Book III.	H O M E R's I L I A D.	175
No crime of thine our present suff'rings draws,		215
Not thou, but heav'n's disposing will, the cause ;		
The Gods these armies and this force employ,		
The hostile Gods conspire the fate of Troy.		
But lift thy eyes, and say, What Greek is he		
(Far as from hence these aged orbs can see)		220

v. 219. *And say what Greek is he ?*] This view of the Grecian leaders from the walls of Troy, is justly looked upon as an episode of great beauty, as well as a masterpiece of conduct in Homer ; who by this means acquaints the readers with the figure and qualifications of each hero in a more lively and agreeable manner. Several great poets have been engaged by the beauty of this passage to an imitation of it. In the seventh book of Statius, Phorbas standing with Antigone on the tower of Thebes, shews her the forces as they were drawn up, and describes their commanders who were neighbouring princes of Bœotia. It is also imitated by Tasso in his third book, where Erminia from the walls of Jerusalem points out the chief warriors to the king ; though the latter part is perhaps copied too closely and minutely ; for he describes Godfrey to be of a port that bespeaks him a prince, the next of somewhat a lower stature, a third renowned for his wisdom, and then another is distinguished by the largeness of his chest and breadth of his shoulders : which are not only the very particulars, but in the very order of Homer's.

But however this manner of introduction has been admired, there have not been wanting some exceptions to a particular or two. Scaliger asks, how it happens that Priam, after nine years siege, should be yet unacquainted with the faces of the Grecian leaders ? This was an old cavil, as appears by the Scholiæ that pass under the name of Didymus, where it is very well answered, that Homer has just before taken care to tell us the he-

Around whose brow such martial graces shine,  
So tall, so awful, and almost divine?

Tho' some of larger stature tread the green,  
None match his grandeur and exalted mien:  
He seems a monarch, and his country's pride.  
Thus ceas'd the king, and thus the fair reply'd.

225

Before thy presence, father, I appear  
With conscious shame and reverential fear.  
Ah! had I dy'd, ere to these walls I fled,  
False to my country, and my nuptial bed,  
My brothers, friends, and daughter left behind,  
False to them all, to Paris only kind!  
For this I mourn, 'till grief or dire disease  
Shall waste the form whose crime it was to please!  
The king of kings, Atrides, you survey,  
Great in the war, and great in arts of sway:

230

235

rees had put off their armour on this occasion of the truce, which had concealed their persons until now. Others have objected to Priam's not knowing Ulysses, who (as it appears afterwards) had been at Troy on an embassy. The answer is, that this might happen either from the dimness of Priam's sight, or defect of his memory, or from the change of Ulysses's features since that time.

v. 227. *Before thy presence.*] Helen is so overwhelmed with grief and shame, that she is unable to give a direct answer to Priam without first humbling herself before him, acknowledging her crime, and testifying her repentance. And she no sooner answers by naming Agamemnon, but her sorrows renew at the name; *He was once my brother, but I am now a wretch unworthy to call him so.*

v. 236. *Great in the war, and great in arts of sway.*] This was the verse which Alexander the Great preferred



My brother once, before my days of shame ;  
And oh ! that still he bore a brother's name !

With wonder Priam view'd the godlike man,  
Extoll'd the happy prince, and thus began. 240

O blest Atrides ! born to prosp'rous fate,  
Successful monarch of a mighty state !

How vast thy empire ! Of yon' matchless train  
What numbers lost, what numbers yet remain !

In Phrygia once were gallant armies known, 245

In ancient time, when Otreus fill'd the throne,  
When godlike Mygdon led their troops of horse,

And I, to join them, rais'd the Trojan force :

Against the manlike Amazons we stood,

And Sangar's stream ran purple with their blood. 250

But far inferior those, in martial grace

And strength of numbers, to this Grecian race.

to all others in Homer, and which he proposed as the pattern of his own actions, as including whatever can be desired in a prince. Plut. Orat. de fort. Alex. 1.

v. 240. *Extoll'd the happy prince.*] It was very natural for Priam on this occasion, to compare the declining condition of his kingdom with the flourishing state of Agamemnon's, and to oppose his own misery (who had lost most of his sons and his bravest warriors) to the felicity of the other, in being yet master of so gallant an army. After this the humour of old-age breaks out, in the narration of what armies he had formerly seen, and bore a part in the command of; as well as what feats of valour he had then performed. Besides which, this praise of the Greeks from the mouth of an enemy, was no small encomium of Homer's countrymen.

This said, once more he view'd the warrior-train :  
 What's he, whose arms lie scatter'd on the plain ?  
 Broad is his breast, his shoulders larger spread, 255  
 Tho' great Atrides overtops his head.  
 Nor yet appear his care and conduct small ;  
 From rank to rank he moves, and orders all.  
 The stately ram thus measures o'er the ground,  
 And master of the flocks, surveys them round. 260

Then Helen thus. Whom your discerning eyes  
 Have singled out, is Ithacus the wife :  
 A barren island boasts his glorious birth ;  
 His fame for wisdom fills the spacious earth.

Antenor took the word, and thus began : 265  
 Myself, O king ! have seen that wond'rous man ;  
 When trusting Jove and hospitable laws,  
 To Troy he came, to plead the Grecian cause ;  
 (Great Menelaus urg'd the same request)  
 My house was honour'd with each royal guest : 270  
 I knew their persons, and admir'd their parts,  
 Both brave in arms, and both approv'd in arts.

v. 258. *From rank to rank he moves.*] The vigilance and inspection of Ulysses were very proper marks to distinguish him, and agree with his character of a wise man, no less than the grandeur and majesty before described are conformable to that of Agamemnon, as the supreme ruler ; whereas we find Ajax afterwards taken notice of only for his bulk, as a heavy hero without parts or authority. This decorum is observable.

v. 271. *I knew their persons, etc.*] In this view of the leaders of the army, it had been an oversight in Ho-

Erect, the Spartan most engag'd our view,  
Ulysses seated, greater rev'rence drew.

mer to have taken no notice of Menelaus, who was not only one of the principal of them, but was immediately to engage the observation of the reader in the single combat. On the other hand, it had been a high indecorum to have made Helena speak of him. He has therefore put his praises into the mouth of Antenor; which was also a more artful way than to have presented him to the eye of Priam in the same manner with the rest: It appears from hence, what a regard he has had both to decency and variety, in the conduct of his poem.

This passage concerning the different eloquence of Menelaus and Ulysses is inexpressibly just and beautiful. The close Laconic conciseness of the one, is finely opposed to the copious, vehement, and penetrating oratory of the other; which is so exquisitely described in the simile of the snow falling *fast*, and sinking *deep*. For it is in this the beauty of the comparison consists, according to Quintilian, l. 12. c. 10. *In Ulyssæ facundiam et magnitudinem junxit, cui orationem nivibus hybernis copia verborum atque impetu parem tribuit.* We may set in the same light with these the character of Nestor's eloquence, which consisted in softness and persuasiveness, and is therefore (in contradistinction to this of Ulysses) compared to honey which drops gently and slowly; a manner of speech extremely natural to a benevolent old man, such as Nestor is represented. Ausonius has elegantly distinguished these three kinds of oratory in the following verses.

*Dulcem in paucis ut Plisthenidem,*

*Et torrentem ceu Dulichii*

*Ningida dicta:*

*Et mellitæ nectare vocis*

*Dulcia fatu verba canentem*

*Nestora regem.*

When Atreus' son harangu'd the list'ning train, 275  
 Just was his sense, and his expression plain,  
 His words succinct, yet full, without a fault;  
 He spoke no more than just the thing he ought.

v. 278. *He spoke no more than just the thing he ought.* Chapman, in his notes on this place and on the second book, has described Menelaus as a character of ridicule and simplicity. He takes advantage from the word *λιγίως* here made use of, to interpret that of the *shrillness* of his voice, which was applied to the acuteness of his sense: He observes, that this sort of voice is a mark of a fool; that Menelaus coming to his brother's feast uninvited in the second book, has occasioned a proverb of folly; that the excuse Homer himself makes for it (because his brother might forget to invite him through much business) is purely ironical; that the epithet *ἀγριόφιλος*, which is often applied to him, should not be translated *warlike*, but one who had *an affectation of loving war*; in short, that he was a weak prince, played upon by others, short in speech, and of a bad pronunciation, valiant only by fits, and sometimes stumbling upon good matter in his speeches, as may happen to the most slender capacity. This is one of the mysteries which that translator boasts to have found in Homer. But as it is no way consistent with the art of the poet, to draw the person in whose behalf he engages the world, in such a manner as no regard should be conceived for him; we must endeavour to rescue him from this misrepresentation. First then, the present passage is taken by antiquity in general to be applied not to his pronunciation, but his eloquence. So Ausonius in the foregoing citation, and Cicero de claris Oratoribus; *Menelaum ipsum dulcem illum quidem tradit Homerus, sed pauca loquentem*. And Quintilian, l. 12. c. 10. *Homerus brevem cum animi jucunditate, et propriam (id enim est non errare verbis) et carentem supervacuis, eloquentiam Menelao dedit*, etc. Secondly, though

But when Ulysses rose, in thought profound,

His modest eyes he fix'd upon the ground,

280

his coming uninvited may have occasioned a jesting proverb, it may naturally be accounted for on the principle of *brotherly love*, which so visibly characterises both him and Agamemnon throughout the poem. Thirdly ἀγαπῶλος, may import a love of war, but not an ungrounded affection. Upon the whole, his character is by no means contemptible, though not of the most shining nature. He is called indeed in the 17th Iliad *μαλθακὸς ἀνιχνεύς*, a *soft warrior*, or one whose strength is of the second rate; and so his brother thought him, when he preferred nine before him to fight with Hector in the 7th book. But on the other hand, his courage gives him a considerable figure in conquering Paris, defending the body of Patroclus, rescuing Ulysses, wounding Helenus, killing Euphorbus, *etc.* He is full of resentment for his private injuries, which brings him to the war with a spirit of revenge in the second book, makes him blaspheme Jupiter in the third, when Paris escapes him, and curse the Grecians in the seventh, when they hesitate to accept Hector's challenge. But this also is qualified with a compassion for those who suffer in his cause, which he every where manifests upon proper occasions; and with an industry to gratify others, as when he obeys Ajax in the seventeenth book, and goes upon his errand to find Antilochus, with some other condescensions of the like nature. Thus his character is composed of qualities which give him no uneasy superiority over others while he wants their assistance, and mingled with such as make him amiable enough to obtain it.

v. 280. *His modest eyes, etc.*] This behaviour of Ulysses is copied by Ovid, Met. 13.

*Astitit atque oculos parum tellure moratos  
Sustulit*—————



As one unskill'd or dumb, he seem'd to stand,  
 Nor rais'd his head, nor stretch'd his sceptred hand;  
 But, when he speaks, what elocution flows!  
 Soft as the fleeces of descending snows,  
 The copious accents fall, with easy art; 285  
 Melting they fall, and sink into the heart!  
 Wond'ring we hear, and fix'd in deep surprize.  
 Our ears refute the censure of our eyes.

The king then ask'd (as yet the camp he view'd).  
 What chief is that, with giant strength endu'd, 290  
 Whose brawny shoulders, and whose swelling chest,  
 And lofty stature far exceed the rest?  
 Ajax the great (the beauteous queen reply'd)  
 Himself a host: the Grecian strength and pride.  
 See! bold Idomeneus superior tow'rs. 295  
 Amidst yon' circle of his Cretan pow'rs,  
 Great as a God! I saw him once before,  
 With Menelaus, on the Spartan shore.  
 The rest I know, and could in order name;  
 All valiant chiefs, and men of mighty fame. 300

What follows in the Greek translated word for word runs thus: *He seemed like a fool, you would have thought him in a rage, or a madman.* How oddly this would appear in our language, I appeal to those who have read Ogilby. The whole period means no more than to describe that behaviour which is commonly remarkable in a modest and sensible man, who speaks in public: his diffidence and respect gives him at his first rising a sort of confusion, which is not indecent, and which serves but the more to heighten the surprize and esteem of those who hear him.

Yet two are wanting of the num'rous train,  
 Whom long my eyes have fought, but fought in vain;  
 Castor and Pollux, first in martial force,  
 One bold on foot, and one renown'd for horse,  
 My brothers these; the same our native shore, 305  
 One house contain'd us, as one mother bore.  
 Perhaps the chiefs, from warlike toils at ease,  
 For distant Troy refus'd to sail the seas:  
 Perhaps their sword some nobler quarrel draws,  
 Asham'd to combat in their sister's cause. 310

So spoke the fair, nor knew her brother's doom,  
 Wrapt in the cold embraces of the tomb;  
 Adorn'd with honours in their native shore,  
 Silent they slept, and heard of wars no more.

Mean time the heralds, thro' the crouded town, 315  
 Bring the rich wine and destin'd victims down.

v. 309. *Perhaps their swords.*] This is another stroke of Helen's concern: the sense of her crime is perpetually afflicting her, and awakes upon every occasion. The lines that follow, wherein Homer gives us to understand that Castor and Pollux were now dead, are finely introduced, and in the spirit of poetry; the muse is supposed to know every thing, past and to come, and to see things distant as well as present.

v. 315. *Mean time the heralds, etc.*] It may not be unpleasing to the reader to compare the description of the ceremonies of the league in the following part with that of Virgil in the twelfth book. The preparations, the procession of the kings, and their congress, are much more solemn and poetical in the latter; the oath and adjurations are equally noble in both.

Idæus' arms the golden goblets prest,  
 Who thus the venerable king address.  
 Arise, O father of the Trojan state!  
 The nations call, thy joyful people wait,  
 To seal the truce, and end the dire debate.  
 Paris thy son, and Sparta's king advance,  
 In measur'd lifts to toss the weighty lance;  
 And who his rival shall in arms subdue,  
 His be the dame, and his the treasure too.  
 Thus with a lasting league our toils may cease,  
 And Troy possess her fertile fields in peace;  
 So shall the Greeks review their native shore,  
 Much fam'd for gen'rous steeds, for beauty more.

} 320

325

With grief he heard, and bade the chiefs prepare 330  
 To join his milk-white coursers to the car:  
 He mounts the seat, Antenor at his side;  
 The gentle steeds thro' Scæa's gates they guide;  
 Next from the car descending on the plain,  
 Amid the Grecian host and Trojan train 335  
 Slow they proceed: The sage Ulysses then  
 Arose, and with him rose the king of men.  
 On either side a sacred herald stands,  
 The wine they mix, and on each monarch's hands  
 Pour the full urn; then draws the Grecian lord 340  
 His cutlace sheath'd beside his pond'rous sword;  
 From the sign'd victims crops the curling hair,  
 The heralds part it, and the princes share;

v. 342. *The curling hair.*] We have here the whole ceremonial of the solemn oath, as it was observed an-

Then loudly thus before th' attentive bands,  
He calls the Gods, and spreads his lifted hands. 345

O first and greatest pow'r ! whom all obey.  
Who high on Ida's holy mountain sway,  
Eternal Jove ! and you bright orb that roll  
From east to west, and view from pole to pole !  
Thou mother Earth ! and all ye living Floods ! 350  
Infernal Furies, and Tartarean Gods,

Who rule the dead, and horrid woes prepare  
For perjur'd kings, and all who falsely swear !  
Hear, and be witness. If, by Paris slain,  
Great Menelaus press the fatal plain ; 355

The dame and treasures let the Trojan keep,  
And Greece returning plow the wat'ry deep.  
If by my brother's lance the Trojan bleed ;  
Be his the wealth, and beauteous dame decreed :  
Th' appointed fine let Ilion justly pay, 360  
And ev'ry age record the signal day.

ciently by the nations our author describes. I must take this occasion of remarking that we might spare ourselves the trouble of reading most books of Grecian *antiquities*, only by being well versed in Homer. They are generally bare transcriptions of him, but with this unnecessary addition, that after having quoted any thing in verse, they say the same over again in prose. The *Antiquitates Homericae* of Foithius may serve as an instance of this. What my lord Bacon observes of authors in general, is particularly applicable to these of antiquities, that they write for ostentation not for instruction, and that their works are perpetual repetitions.

v. 361. *And ev'ry age record the signal day.*] "Ητις καὶ ἑστουμένοισι μετ' ἀνθρώποισι πέλῃται. This seems the

This if the Phrygians shall refuse to yield,  
Arms must revenge, and Mars decide the field.

With that the chief the tender victims slew,  
And in the dust their bleeding bodies threw: 365

natural sense of the line, and not as madam Dacier renders it, *The tribute shall be paid to the posterity of the Greeks for ever*. I think she is single in that explication, the majority of the interpreters taking it to signify that the victory of the Grecians and this pecuniary acknowledgment *should be recorded to all posterity*. If it means any more than this, at least it cannot come up to the sense madam Dacier gives it; for a nation put under perpetual tribute is rather enslaved, than received to friendship and alliance, which are the terms of Agamemnon's speech. It seems rather to be a fine, demanded as a recompence for the expences of the war, which being made over to the Greeks, should *remain to their posterity for ever*; that is to say, which they should never be molested for, or which should never be re-demanded in any age as a case of injury. The phrase is the same we use at this day, when any purchase or grant is at once made over to a man *and his heirs for ever*. With this will agree the Scholiast's note, which tells us the mulct was reported to have been half the goods then in the besieged city.

v. 364. *The chief the tender victims slew.*] One of the grand objections which the ignorance of some moderns has raised against Homer, is what they call a defect in the manners of his heroes. They are shocked to find his kings employed in such offices as slaughtering of beasts, *etc.* But they forget that sacrificing was the most solemn act of religion, and that kings of old in most nations were also chief-priests. This, among other objections of the same kind, the reader may see answered in the preface.



The vital spirit issu'd at the wound,  
And left the members quiv'ring on the ground.  
From the same urn they drink the mingled wine,  
And add libations to the pow'rs divine.  
While thus their pray'rs united mount the sky; 370  
Hear, mighty Jove! and hear, ye Gods on high!  
And may their blood, who first the league confound,  
Shed like this wine, distain the thirsty ground;  
May all their comforts serve promiscuous lust,  
And all their race be scatter'd as the dust! 375  
Thus either host their imprecations join'd,  
Which Jove refus'd, and mingled with the wind.

The rites now finish'd, rev'rend Priam rose,  
And thus express'd a heart o'ercharg'd with woes.  
Ye Greeks and Trojans, let the chiefs engage, 380  
But spare the weakness of my feeble age:  
In yonder walls that object let me shun,  
Nor view the danger of so dear a son.  
Whose arms shall conquer, and what prince shall fall, +  
Heav'n only knows, for heav'n disposes all. 385 +

This said, the hoary king no longer stay'd,  
But on his car the slaughter'd victims laid;  
Then seiz'd the reins his gentle steeds to guide,  
And drove to Troy, Antenor at his side.

Bold Hector and Ulysses now dispose 390  
The lists of combate, and the ground inclose;  
Next to decide by sacred lots prepare,  
Who first shall lance his pointed spear in air.

The people pray with elevated hands,  
 And words like these are heard thro' all the bands. 395  
 Immortal Jove, high heav'n's superior lord,  
 On lofty Ida's holy mount ador'd!  
 Whoe'er involv'd us in this dire debate.  
 Oh give that author of the war to fate  
 And shades eternal! let division cease, 400  
 And joyful nations join in leagues of peace.

With eyes averted Hector haltes to turn  
 The lots of fight, and shakes the brazen urn.  
 Then, Paris, thine leap'd forth; by fatal chance  
 Ordain'd the first to whirl the weighty lance. 405  
 Both armies fate, the combate to survey,  
 Beside each chief his azure armour lay,  
 And round the lists the gen'rous courfers neigh.  
 The beauteous warrior now arrays for fight,  
 In gilded arms magnificently bright: 410  
 The purple cuishes clasp his thighs around,  
 With flow'rs adorn'd, with silver buckles bound:  
 Lycaon's cors'let his fair body drest,  
 Brac'd in, and fitted to his softer breast;  
 A radiant baldric, o'er his shoulder ty'd, 415  
 Sustain'd the sword that glitter'd at his side:  
 His youthful face a polish'd helm o'erspread;  
 The waving horse-hair nodded on his head;  
 His figur'd shield, a shining orb, he takes,  
 And in his hand a pointed jav'lin shakes. 420  
 With equal speed, and fir'd by equal charms,  
 The Spartan hero sheathes his limbs in arms.

Now round the lists th' admiring armies stand,  
 With jav'lins fix'd, the Greek and Trojan band.  
 Amidst the dreadful vale, the chiefs advance, 425  
 All pale with rage, and shake the threat'ning lance.  
 The Trojan first his shining jav'lin threw ;  
 Full on Atrides' ringing shield it flew,  
 Nor pierc'd the brazen orb, but with a bound  
 Leap'd from the buckler blunted on the ground. 430  
 Atrides then his massy lance prepares,  
 In act to throw, but first prefers his pray'rs.

Give me, great Jove ! to punish lawless lust,  
 And lay the Trojan gasping in the dust :  
 Destroy th' aggressor, aid my righteous cause, 435  
 Avenge the breach of hospitable laws !  
 Let this example future times reclaim,  
 And guard from wrong fair friendship's holy name.  
 He said, and pois'd in air the jav'lin sent,  
 Thro' Paris' shield the forceful weapon went, 440  
 His cors'let pierces, and his garment rends,  
 And glancing downward, near his flank descends.  
 The wary Trojan bending from the blow,  
 Eludes the death, and disappoints his foe :  
 But fierce Atrides wav'd his sword, and strook 445  
 Full on his casque ; the crested helmet shook ;

v. 403. *Give me, great Jove.*] Homer puts a prayer in the mouth of Menelaus, but none in Paris's: Menelaus is the person injured and innocent, and may therefore apply to God for justice ; but Paris, who is the criminal remains silent. Spondanus.

The brittle steel, unfaithful to his hand,  
 Broke short: the fragments glitter'd on the sand.  
 The raging warrior to the spacious skies  
 Rais'd his upbraiding voice, and angry eyes: 450  
 Then is it vain in Jove himself to trust?  
 And is it thus the Gods assist the just?  
 When crimes provoke us, heav'n success denies;  
 The dart falls harmless, and the faulchion flies.  
 Furious he said, and tow'rd the Grecian crew 455  
 (Seiz'd by the crest) th' unhappy warrior drew;  
 Struggling he follow'd, while th' embroider'd thong,  
 That ty'd his helmet, dragg'd the chief along.  
 Then had his ruin crown'd Atrides' joy,  
 But Venus trembled for the prince of Troy: 460  
 Unseen she came, and burst the golden band;  
 And left an empty helmet in his hand.  
 The casque, enrag'd, amidst the Greeks he threw;  
 The Greeks with smiles the polish'd trophy view.

v. 447. *The brittle steel, unfaithful to his hand, broke short*——] This verse is cut, to express the thing it describes, the snapping short of the sword. It is the observation of Eustathius on this line of the original, that we do not only see the action, but imagine we hear the sound of the breaking sword in that of the words. *Τεῖχθ' αὖ τε καὶ τετραχθ' ἀδιατρύβην ἔκπεσε χεῖρος.* And that Homer designed it, may appear from his having twice put in the *Θῆτα* (which was a letter unnecessary) to cause this harshness in the verse. As this beauty could not be preserved in our language, it is endeavoured in the translation to supply it with something parallel.

Then, as once more he lifts the deadly dart, 465  
 In thirst of vengeance, at his rival's heart,  
 The queen of love her favour'd champion shrouds  
 (For Gods can all things) in a veil of clouds,  
 Rais'd from the field the panting youth she led,  
 And gently laid him on the bridal bed, 470  
 With pleasing sweets his fainting sense renews,  
 And all the dome perfumes with heav'nly dews.

Mean time the brightest of the female kind,  
 The matchless Helen o'er the walls reclin'd :  
 To her, beset with Trojan beauties, came 475  
 In borrow'd form the \* laughter-loving dame.  
 (She seem'd an ancient maid, well-skill'd to cull  
 The snowy fleece, and wind the twisted wool.)  
 The goddess softly shook her silken vest,  
 That shed perfumes, and whisp'ring thus address'd. 480

\* Venus.

v. 479. *The goddess softly shook, etc.*] Venus having conveyed Paris in safety to his chamber, goes to Helena, who had been spectator of his defeat, in order to draw her to his love. The better to bring this about, she first takes upon her the most proper form in the world, that of a favourite servant-maid, and awakens her passion by representing to her the beautiful figure of his person. Next, assuming her own shape, she frightens her into a compliance, notwithstanding all the struggles of *shame, fear* and *anger*, which break out in her speech to the goddess. This machine is allegorical, and means no more than the power of *love* triumphing over all the considerations of *honour, ease* and *safety*. It has an excellent effect as to the poem, in preserving still in some degree our good opinion of Helena, whom we look up-



Haste, happy nymph ! for thee thy Paris calls,  
 Safe from the fight, in yonder lofty walls,  
 Fair as a God ! with odours round him spread  
 He lies, and waits thee on the well-known bed :  
 Not like a warrior parted from the foe, 485  
 But some gay dancer in the public show.

She spoke, and Helen's secret soul was mov'd ;  
 + She scorn'd the champion, but the man she loved.  
 Fair Venus' neck, her eyes that sparkled fire,  
 And breast reveal'd the queen of soft desire. 490  
 Struck with her persence, strait the lively red  
 Forfook her cheek ; and, trembling, thus she said.  
 Then is it still thy pleasure to deceive ?  
 And woman's frailty always to believe !  
 Say, to new nations must I cross the main, 495  
 Or carry wars to some soft Asian plain ?  
 For whom must Helen break her second Vow ?  
 What other Paris is thy darling now ?

on with compassion, as constrained by a surperior power,  
 and whose speech tends to justify her in the eye of the  
 reader.

v. 487. *She spoke, and Helen's secret soul was mov'd.*]  
 Nothing is more fine than this ; the first thought of Pa-  
 ris's beauty overcomes (unawares to herself) the con-  
 tempt she had that moment conceived of him upon his  
 overthrow. This motion is but natural, and before she  
 perceives the deity. When the affections of a woman  
 have been thoroughly gained, though they may be alie-  
 nated for a while, they soon return upon her. *Homer*  
*knew* (says madam Dacier) *what a woman is capable*  
*of, who had once loved.*

Left to Atrides (victor in the strife)  
 An odious conquest and a captive wife, 500  
 Hence let me sail : and if thy Paris bear  
 My absence ill, let Venus ease his care.  
 A hand-maid goddess at his side to wait,  
 Renounce the glories of thy heav'nly state,  
 Be fix'd for ever to the Trojan shore, 505  
 His spouse, or slave ; and mount the skies no more.  
 For me, to lawless love no longer led,  
 I scorn the coward, and detest his bed ;  
 Else should I merit everlasting shame,  
 And keen reproach, from ev'ry Phrygian dame : 510  
 Ill suits it now the joys of love to know,  
 Too deep my anguish, and too wild my woe.

Then thus incens'd, the Paphian queen replies ;  
 Obey the pow'r from whom thy glories rise :  
 Shou'd Venus leave thee, ev'ry charm must fly, 515  
 Fade from thy cheek, and languish in thy eye.

v. 507. *For me, to lawless love no longer led, I scorn the coward.*] We have here another branch of the female character, which is, to be ruled in their attaches by *successes*. Helen finding the victory belonged to Menelaus, accuses herself secretly of having forsaken him for the other, and immediately entertains a high opinion of the man she had once despised. One may add, that the fair sex are generally admirers of courage, and naturally friends to great soldiers. Paris was no stranger to this disposition of them, and had formerly endeavoured to give his mistress that opinion of him as appears from her reproach of him afterwards.

v. 515. *Shou'd Venus leave thee, ev'ry charm must fly.*] This was the most dreadful of all threats, loss of beauty

Cease to provoke me, lest I make thee more  
 The world's averſion, than their love before;  
 Now the bright prize for which mankind engage,  
 Then, the ſad victim of the public rage.

520

At this, the faireſt of her ſex obey'd,  
 And veil'd her bluſhes in a ſilken ſhade;  
 Unſeen, and ſilent, from the train ſhe moves,  
 Led by the goddeſſes of the ſmiles and loves.

Arriv'd, and enter'd at the palace-gate,  
 The maids officious round their miſtreſs wait;  
 Then all diſperſing, various tasks attend;  
 The queen and goddeſſes to the prince aſcend.

525

Full in her Paris' ſight, the queen of love  
 Had plac'd the beauteous progeny of Jove;  
 Where, as he view'd her charms, ſhe turn'd away  
 Her glowing eyes, and thus began to ſay.

530

and of reputation. Helen, who had been proof to the perſonal appearance of the goddeſſes, and durſt even reproach her with bitterneſs juſt before, yields to this, and obeys all the dictates of love.

v. 531. *She turn'd away her glowing eyes.*] This interview of the two lovers, placed oppoſite to each other, and overlooked by Venus, Paris gazing on Helena, ſhe turning away her eyes, ſhining at once with anger and love, are particulars finely drawn, and painted up to all the life of nature. Euſtathius imagines ſhe looked aſide in the conſciouſneſs of her own weakneſs, as apprehending that the beauty of Paris might cauſe her to relent. Her burſting out into paſſion and reproaches while ſhe is in this ſtate of mind, is no ill picture of frailty: Venus (as madam Dacier obſerves) does not leave

Is this the chief, who lost to sense of shame,  
Late fled the field, and yet survives his fame?  
Oh hadst thou dy'd beneath the righteous sword 535  
Of that brave man whom once I call'd my lord!  
The boaster Paris oft' desir'd the day  
With Sparta's king to meet in single fray:  
Go now, once more thy rival's rage excite,  
Provoke Atrides, and renew the fight: 540  
Yet Helen bids thee stay, lest thou unskill'd  
Should'st fall an easy conquest on the field.

The prince replies; Ah cease, divinely fair,  
Nor add reproaches to the wounds I bear;  
This day the foe prevail'd by Pallas' pow'r; 545  
We yet may vanquish in a happier hour:  
There want not Gods to favour us above:  
But let the business of our life be love:  
These softer moments let delights employ,  
And kind embraces snatch the hasty joy. 550  
Not thus I lov'd thee, when from Sparta's shore  
My forc'd, my willing heav'nly prize I bore,

her, and fondness will immediately succeed to these reproaches.

v. 543. *Ah cease, divinely fair.*] This answer of Paris is the only one he could possibly have made with any success in his circumstance. There was no other method to reconcile her to him, but that which is generally most powerful with the sex, and which Homer (who was learned every way) here makes use of.

v. 551. *Not thus I lov'd thee.*] However Homer may be admired for his conduct in this passage, I find a general outcry against Paris on this occasion. Plutarch has

When first entranc'd in Cranae's Isle I lay,  
Mix'd with thy soul, and all dissolv'd away !

led the way in his treatise of reading Poets, by remarking it as a most heinous act of incontinence in him, to go to bed to his lady in the *day-time*. Among the commentators the most violent is the moral expositor Spondanus, who will not so much as allow him to say a civil thing to Helen. *Mollis, effæminatus, et spurcus ille adulter, nihil de libidine sua imminutum dicit, sed nunc magis ea corripit quam unquam alias, nequidem cum primum ea ipsi dedit* (Latini ita recte exprimunt τὸ μίστεσθαι in re venerea) *in insula Cranae. Cum aliqui homines primi concubitus soleant esse ardentiores*. I could not deny the reader the diversion of this remark, nor Spondanus the glory of his zeal, who was but two and twenty when it was written. Madam Dacier is also very severe upon Paris, but for a reason more natural to a lady: She is of opinion that the passion of the lover would scarce have been so excessive as he here describes it, but for fear of losing his mistress immediately, as foreseeing the Greeks would demand her. One may answer to this lively remark, that Paris having nothing to say for himself, was obliged to testify an uncommon ardour for his lady, at a time when compliments were to pass instead of reasons. I hope to be excused, if (in revenge for her remark upon our sex) I observe upon the behaviour of Helen throughout this book, which gives a pretty natural picture of the manners of theirs. We see her first in tears, repentant, covered with confusion at the sight of Priam, and secretly inclined to return to her former spouse. The disgrace of Paris increases her dislike of him; she rails, she reproaches, she wishes his death; and after all, is prevailed upon by one kind compliment, and yields to his embraces. Methinks when this lady's observation and mine are laid together, the best that can be made of them is to conclude, that since both the sexes have



Thus having spoke, th' enamour'd Phrygian boy 555  
Rush'd to the bed, impatient for the joy.

their frailties, it would be well for each to forgive the other.

It is worth looking backward, to observe the *allegory* here carried on with respect to Helen, who lives through this whole book in a whirl of passions, and is agitated by turns with sentiments of honour and love. The goddesses made use of, to cast the appearance of fable over the story, are Iris and Venus. When Helen is called to the tower to behold her former friends, Iris the messenger of Juno (the goddess of honour) is sent for her; and when invited to the bed-chamber of Paris, Venus is to beckon her out of the company. The forms they take to carry on these different affairs, are properly chosen: the one assuming the person of the daughter of Antenor, who pressed most for her being restored to Menelaus; the other the shape of an old maid, who was privy to the intrigue with Paris from the beginning. And in the consequences, as the one inspires the love of her former empire, friends and country; so the other instils the dread of being cast off by all if she forsook her second choice, and causes the return of her tenderness to Paris. But if she has a struggle for honour, she is in bondage to love; which gives the story its turn that way, and makes Venus oftener appear than Iris. There is in one place a lover to be protected, in another a love-quarrel to be made up, in both which the goddess is kindly officious. She conveys Paris to Troy when he had escaped the enemy; which may signify his love for his mistress, that hurried him away to justify himself before her. She softens and terrifies Helen, in order to make up the breach between them: and even when that affair is finished, we do not find the poet dismisses her from the chamber, whatever privacies the lovers had a mind to: in which circum-

Him Helen follow'd flow with bashful charms,  
And clasp'd the blooming hero in her arms.

While these to love's delicious rapture yield,  
The stern Atrides rages round the field : 560  
So some fell lion whom the woods obey,  
Roars thro' the desert, and demands his prey.  
Paris he seeks impatient to destroy,  
But seeks in vain along the troops of Troy ;  
Ev'n those had yielded to a foe so brave 565  
The recreant warrior, hateful as the grave.  
Then speaking thus, the king of kings arose ;  
Ye Trojans, Dardans, all our gen'rous foes  
Hear and attest ! from heav'n with conquest crown'd,  
Our brother's arms the just success have found : 570

stance he seems to draw aside the veil of his allegory, and to let the reader at last into the meaning of it, That the goddess of love has been all the while nothing more than the passion of it.

v. 553. *When first entranc'd in Cranae's isle.*] It is in the original Νήσο δ' ἐν Κραναιῇ ἐμίγην Φιλότῃτι, καὶ ἔυνῃ. The true sense of which is expressed in the translation. I cannot but take notice of a small piece of prudery in madam Dacier, who is exceeding careful of Helen's character. She turns this passage as if Paris had only her *consent to be her husband* in this island. Pausanias explains this line in another manner, and tells us it was here that Paris had first the enjoyment of her, that in gratitude for his happiness he built a temple of Venus Migonites, the mingler or coupler, and that the neighbouring coast where it was erected was called Migonian from μιγῆναι, a *miscendo*. Paus. Laconicis.

Be therefore now the Spartan wealth restor'd,  
Let Argive Helen own her lawful lord ;  
Th' appointed fine let Ilion justly pay,  
And age to age record this signal day.

He ceas'd ; his army's loud applauses rise, 575  
And the long shout runs echoing through the skies



T H E  
I L I A D.  
B O O K IV.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The breach of the truce, and the first battle.

*THE Gods deliberate in council concerning the Trojan war: They agree upon the continuation of it, and Jupiter sends down Minerva to break the truce. She persuades Pandarus to aim an arrow at Menelaus, who is wounded, but cured by Machaon. In the mean time some of the Trojan troops attack the Greeks. Agamemnon is distinguished in all the parts of a good general; he reviews the troops, and exhorts the leaders, some by praises, and others by reproofs. Nestor is particularly celebrated for his military discipline. The battle joins, and great numbers are slain on both sides.*

*The same day continues through this, as through the last book, (as it does also through the two following, and almost to the end of the seventh book.) The scene is wholly in the field before Troy.*

**A**N D now Olympus' shining gates unfold;  
The Gods, with Jove, assume their thrones of gold:

It was from the beginning of this book that Virgil has taken that of his tenth *Æneid*, as the whole tenor of the story in this and the last book is followed in his twelfth. The truce and the solemn oath, the breach of it by a dart



Immortal Hebe, fresh with bloom divine,  
 The golden goblet crowns with purple wine :  
 While the full bowls flow round, the pow'rs employ 5  
 Their careful eyes on long-contended Tröy.

When Jove, dispos'd to tempt Saturnia's spleen,  
 Thus wak'd the fury of his partial queen.  
 Two pow'rs divine the son of Atreus aid,  
 Imperial Juno and the martial maïd ; 10

thrown by Tolumnius, Juturna's inciting the Latines to renew the war, the wound of Æneas, his speedy cure, and the battle ensuing, all these are manifestly copied from hence. The solemnity, surprize, and variety of these circumstances seem'd to him of importance enough, to build the whole catastrophe of his work upon them ; though in Homer they are but openings to the general action, and such as in their warmth are still exceeded by all that follow them. They are chosen, we grant, by Virgil with great judgment, and conclude his poem with a becoming majesty : yet the finishing his scheme with that which is but the coolest part of Homer's action, tends in some degree to shew the disparity of the poetical fire in these two authors.

v. 3. *Immortal Hebe.*] The Goddess of youth is introduced as an attendant upon the banquets of the Gods, to shew that the divine beings enjoy an eternal youth, and that their life is a felicity without end. Dacier.

v. 9. *Two pow'rs divine.*] Jupiter's reproaching these two goddesses with neglecting to assist Menelaus, proceeds (as M. Dacier remarks) from the affection he bore to Troy : Since, if Menelaus by their help had gained a complete victory, the siege had been raised, and the city delivered. On the contrary, Juno and Minerva might suffer Paris to escape, as the method to continue the war to the total destruction of Troy. And according-

But high in heav'n they sit, and gaze from far,  
The tame spectators of his deeds of war.

Not thus fair Venus helps her favour'd knight,  
The queen of pleasures shares the toils of fight,  
Each danger wards, and constant in her care  
Saves in the moment of the last despair.

Her act has rescu'd Paris' forfeit life,  
Tho' great Atrides gain'd the glorious strife.

ly a few lines after we find them complotting together, and contriving a new scene of miseries to the Trojans.

v. 18. *Tho' great Atrides gain'd the glorious strife.*] Jupiter here makes it a question, Whether the foregoing combat should determine the controversy, or the peace be broken? His putting it thus, *that Paris is not killed, but Menelaus has the victory*, gives a hint for a dispute, whether the conditions of the treaty were valid or annulled; that is to say, whether the controversy was to be determined by the *victory* or by the *death* of one of the combatants. Accordingly it has been disputed whether the articles were really binding to the Trojans or not? Plutarch has treated the question in his *Symposiasts*, l. 9. qu. 3. The substance is this. In the first proposal of the challenge Paris mentions only the victory, *And who his rival shall in arms subdue*: Nor does Hector who carries it say any more. However Menelaus understands it of the death by what he replies: *Fall he that must beneath his rival's arms, and leave the rest*—Iris to Helen speaks only of the former; and Idæus to Priam repeats the same words. But in the solemn oath Agamemnon specifies the latter, *If by Paris slain*—and *If by my brother's arms, the Trojan bleed*. Priam also understands it of both, saying at his leaving the field, *What prince shall fall, heav'n only knows*—(I do not cite the Greek because the English has preserved the same nicety.) Paris himself confesses he has lost the victory, in his speech

Then say, ye pow'rs ! what signal issue waits  
 To crown this deed, and finish all the fates ? 20  
 Shall heav'n by peace the bleeding kingdoms spare,  
 Or rouse the furies, and awake the war ?  
 Yet, would the Gods for human good provide,  
 Atrides soon might gain his beauteous bride,  
 Still Priam's walls in peaceful honours grow, 25  
 And thro' his gates the crouding nations flow.

Thus while he spoke, the queen of heav'n, enrag'd,  
 And queen of war, in close consult engag'd :  
 Apart they sit, their deep designs employ,  
 And meditate the future woes of Troy. 30  
 Tho' secret anger swell'd Minerva's breast,  
 The prudent goddess yet her wrath suppress ;

to Helen, which he would hardly have done, had the whole depended on that alone : And lastly Menelaus (after the conquest is clearly his by the flight of Paris) is still searching round the field to kill him, as if all were of no effect without the death of his adversary. It appears from hence that the Trojans had no ill pretence to break the treaty, so that Homer ought not to have been directly accused of making Jupiter the author of perjury in what follows, which is one of the chief of Plato's objections against him.

v. 31. *Tho' secret anger swell'd Minerva's breast.*]  
 Spondanus takes notice that Minerva, who in the first book had restrained the anger of Achilles, had now an opportunity of exerting the same conduct in respect to herself. We may bring the parallel close, by observing that she had before her in like manner a superior, who had provoked her by sharp expressions, and whose counsels ran against her sentiments. In all which the poet

But Juno, impotent of passion, broke  
Her fullen silence, and with fury spoke.

Shall then, O tyrant of th' æthereal reign !     35

My schemes, my labours, and my hopes be vain ?

Have I, for this, shook Ilion with alarms,

Assembled nations, set two worlds in arms ?

To spread the war, I flew from shore to shore ;

Th' immortal coursers scarce the labour bore.     40

At length ripe vengeance o'er their heads impends,

But Jove himself the faithless race defends :

Loth as thou art to punish lawless lust,

Not all the Gods are partial and unjust.

The fire whose thunder shakes the cloudy skies,     45

Sighs from his inmost soul, and thus replies ;

Oh lasting rancour ! oh insatiate hate

To Phrygia's monarch, and the Phrygian state !

What high offence has fir'd the wife of Jove,

Can wretched mortals harm the pow'rs above ?     50

That Troy and Troy's whole race thou wou'dst confound,

And yon' fair structures level with the ground

Haste, leave the skies, fulfil they stern desire,

Burst all her gates, and wrap her walls in fire !

Let Priam bleed ! if yet thou thirst for more,     55

Bleed all his sons, and Ilion float with gore,

takes care to preserve her still in the practice of that  
Wisdom of which she was goddess.

v. 55. *Let Priam bleed, etc.*] We find in Persius's  
satires the name of Labeo, as an ill poet who made a  
miserable translation of the Iliad ; one of whose verses  
is still preserved, and happens to be that of this place.

To boundless vengeance the wide realm be giv'n,  
 'Till vast destruction glut the queen of heav'n!  
 So let it be, and Jove his peace enjoy,  
 When heav'n no longer hears the name of Troy. 60  
 But should this arm prepare to wreak our hate  
 On thy lov'd realms, whose guilt demands their fate,  
 Presume not thou the lifted bolt to stay,  
 Remember Troy, and give the vengeance way.  
 For know, of all the num'rous towns that rise 65  
 Beneath the rolling sun, and starry skies,  
 Which Gods have rais'd, or earth-born men enjoy;  
 None stands so dear to Jove as sacred Troy.

*Crudum manduces Priamum, Priamique pisinnos.*

It may seem from this, that this translation was servilely literal (as the old Scholiast on Persius observes.) And one cannot but take notice that Ogilby's and Hobbes's in this place are not unlike Labeo's.

*Both king and people thou would'st eat alive,  
 And eat up Priam and his children all.*

v. 61. *But should this arm prepare to wreak our hate  
 On thy lov'd realms———]*

Homer in this place has made Jupiter to prophecy the destruction of Mycenæ the favour'd city of Juno, which happened a little before the time of our author. Strab. l. 8. *The Trojan war being over, and the kingdom of Agamemnon destroyed, Mycenæ daily decreased after the return of the Heraclidæ: For these becoming masters of Peloponnesus, cast out the old inhabitants: so that they who possessed Argos overcame Mycenæ also, and contracted both into one body. A short time after, Mycenæ was destroyed by the Argives, and not the least remains of it are now to be found.*



No mortals merit more distinguish'd grace  
Than godlike Priam, or than Priam's race.  
Still to our name their hecatombs expire,  
And altars blaze with unextinguish'd fire.

70

At this the goddess roll'd her radiant eyes,  
'Then on the thund'rer fix'd them, and replies;  
'Three towns are Juno's on the Grecian plains,  
More dear than all th' extended earth contains,  
Mycenæ, Argos, and the Spartan wall;  
'These thou may'st raze, nor I forbid their fall:  
'Tis not in me the vengeance to remove;  
The crime's sufficient that they share my love.  
Of pow'r superior why should I complain?  
Resent I may, but must resent in vain.  
Yet some distinction Juno might require,  
Sprung with thyself from one celestial fire,  
A goddess born to share the realms above,  
And styl'd the consort of the thund'ring Jove;  
Nor thou a wife and sister's right deny;  
Let both consent, and both by turns comply;  
So shall the gods our joint decrees obey,  
And heav'n shall act as we direct the way.  
See ready Pallas waits thy high commands,  
To raise in arms the Greek and Phrygian bands;  
'Their sudden friendship by her arts may cease,  
And the proud Trojans first infringe the peace

75

80

85

90

The fire of men, and monarch of the sky, 95  
 Th' advice approv'd, and bade Minerva fly,  
 Dissolve the league, and all her arts employ  
 To make the breach the faithless act of Troy.

Fir'd with the charge, she headlong urg'd her flight,  
 And shot like light'ning from Olympus' height. 100  
 As the red comet, from Saturnius sent  
 To fright the nations with a dire portent,  
 (A fatal sign to armies on the plain.  
 Or trembling sailors on the wintry main)

v. 96. *Th' advice approv'd.*] This is one of the places for which Homer is blamed by Plato, who introduces Socrates reprehending it in his dialogue of the republic. And indeed, if it were granted that the Trojans had no right to break this treaty, the present machine where Juno is made to propose perjury, Jupiter to allow it, and Minerva to be commissioned to hasten the execution of it, would be one of the hardest to be reconciled to reason in the whole poem. Unless even then one might imagine, that Homer's heaven is sometimes no more than an ideal world of abstracted beings; and so every motion which rises in the mind of man is attributed to the quality to which it belongs, with the name of the deity who is supposed to preside over that quality superadded to it; in this sense the present allegory is easy enough. Pandarus thinks it *prudence* to gain honour and wealth at the hands of the Trojans by destroying Menelaus. This sentiment is also incited by a notion of *glory*, of which Juno is represented as goddess. Jupiter, who is supposed to know the thoughts of men, permits the action which he is not author of; but sends a prodigy at the same time to give a warning of a coming mischief, and accordingly we find both armies descanting upon the sight of it in the following lines.

Book IV.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      209  
 With sweeping glories glides along in air,      105  
 And shakes the sparkles from its blazing hair:  
 Between both armies thus, in open sight,  
 Shot the bright goddess in a trail of light.  
 With eyes erect the gazing hosts admire  
 The pow'r descending, and the heav'ns on fire!      110  
 The gods, (they cry'd) the gods this signal sent,  
 And fate now labours with some vast event:  
 Jove seals the league, or bloodier scenes prepares;  
 Jove the great arbiter of peace and wars!  
 They said, while Pallas thro' the Trojan throng      115  
 (In shape a mortal) pass'd disguis'd along.  
 Like bold Laodocus, her course she bent,  
 Who from Antenor trac'd his high descent.  
 Amidst the ranks Lycaon's son she found,  
 The warlike Pandarus, for strength renown'd;      120

v. 120. *Pandarus for strength renown'd.*] Homer, says Plutarch in his treatise of the Pythian Oracle, makes not the gods to use all persons indifferently as their second agents, but each according to the powers he is endued with by art or nature. For a proof of this, he puts us in mind how Minerva, when she would persuade the Greeks, seeks for Ulysses; when she would break the truce, for Pandarus; and when she would conquer, for Diomed. If we consult the Scholia upon this instance, they give several reasons why Pandarus was particularly proper for the occasion. The goddesses went not to the Trojans, because they hated Paris and (as we are told in the end of the foregoing book) would rather have given him up, than have done an ill action for him: She therefore looks among the allies, and finds Pandarus who was of a nation noted for perfidiousness, and had a soul avaricious

Whose squadrons, led from black Æsepus' flood,  
With flaming shields in martial circle stood.

To him the goddess : Phrygian ! can'st thou hear  
A well-tim'd counsel with a willing ear ?

What praise were thine, could'st thou direct thy dart, 125  
Amidst his triumph, to the Spartan's heart ?

What gifts from Troy, from Paris would'st thou gain,  
Thy country's foe, the Grecian glory slain ?

Then seize th' occasion, dare the mighty deed,  
Aim at his breast, and may that aim succeed ! 130

But first, to speed the shaft, address thy vow  
To Lycian Phœbus with the silver bow,  
And swear the firstlings of thy flock to pay  
On Zelia's altars, to the God of day.

He heard, and madly at the motion pleas'd, 135  
His polish'd bow with hasty rashness seiz'd.

'Twas form'd of horn, and smooth'd with artful toil ;  
A mountain goat resign'd the shining spoil,

Who pierc'd long since beneath his arrows bled ; }  
The stately quarry on the cliffs lay dead, } 140  
And sixteen palms his brows large honours spread : }

enough to be capable of engaging in this treachery for the hopes of a reward from Paris : as appears by his being so covetous as not to bring horses to the siege for fear of the expence or loss of them ; as he tells Æneas in the fifth book.

v. 141. *Sixteen palms.*] Both the horns together made this length ; and not each, as madam Dacier renders it. I do not object it as an improbability, that the horns were of sixteen palms each ; but that this would

The workman join'd, and flap'd the bended horns,  
And beaten gold each taper point adorns.

This, by the Greeks unseen, the warrior bends,  
Screen'd by the shields of his surrounding friends. 145

would be an extravagant and unmanageable size for a bow is evident.

v. 144. *This, by the Greeks unseen, the warrior bends.*] The poet having held us through the foregoing book, in expectation of a peace, makes the conditions be here broken after such a manner, as should oblige the Greeks to act through the war with that irreconcilable fury, which affords him the opportunity of exerting the full fire of his own genius. The shot of Pandarus being therefore of such consequence (and as he calls it, the *ἔργον ὀδυράων*, the *foundation of future woes*) it was thought fit not to pass it over in a few words, like the flight of every common arrow, but to give it a description some way corresponding to its importance. For this, he surrounds it with a train of circumstances; the history of the bow, the bending it, the covering Pandarus with shields, the choice of the arrow, the prayer, and posture of the shooter, the sound of the string, and flight of the shaft; all most beautifully and lively painted. It may be observed too, how proper a time it was to expatiate in these particulars; when the armies being unemployed, and only one man acting, the poet and his readers had leisure to be the spectators of a single and deliberate action. I think it will be allowed, that the little circumstances which are sometimes thought too redundant in Homer, have a wonderful beauty in this place. Virgil has not failed to copy it, and with the greatest happiness imaginable.

*Dixit, et aurata volucrem Threïssa sagittam*

*Deprompsit pharetra, cornuque insensa tetendit,*

*Et duxit longe, donec curvata coirent*



There meditates the mark ; and couching low,  
Fits the sharp arrow to the well-strung bow.  
One from a hundred feather'd deaths he chose,  
Fated to wound, and cause of future woes.

Then offers vows with hecatombs to crown 150  
Apollo's altars in his native town.

Now with full force the yielding horn he bends,  
Drawn to an arch, and joins the doubling ends ;  
Close to his breast he strains the nerve below,  
'Till the barb'd point approach the circling bow ; 155  
Th' impatient weapon whizzes on the wing ;  
Sounds the tough horn, and twangs the quiv'ring string.

But thee, Atrides ! in that dang'rous hour  
The gods forget not, nor thy guardian pow'r.  
Pallas assists, and (weaken'd in its force) 160  
Diverts the weapon from its destin'd course :  
So from her babe, when slumber seals his eye,  
The watchful mother wafts th' envenom'd fly.

*Inter se capita, et manibus jam tangeret æquis,  
Lava aciem ferri, dextra nervoque papillam.*

*Extemplo teli stridorem aurasque sonantes*

*Audiit una Aruns, hæsitque in corpore ferrum.*

v. 160. *Pallas assists, and (weaken'd in its force) Diverts the weapon———*] For she <sup>early</sup> designed, by all this action, to increase the glory of the Greeks in the taking of Troy : Yet some commentators have been so stupid, as to wonder that Pallas should be employed first in the wounding of Menelaus, and after in the protecting him.

v. 163. *Wafts th' envenom'd fly.*] This is one of those humble comparisons which Homer sometimes uses to di-

Just where his belt with golden buckles join'd,  
 Where linen folds the double corslet lin'd, 165  
 She turn'd the shaft, which hissing from above,  
 Pass'd the broad belt, and thro' the corslet drove;  
 The folds it pierc'd, the plaited linen tore,  
 And raz'd the skin, and drew the purple gore.  
 As when some stately trappings are decreed 170  
 To grace a monarch on his bounding steed,

verify his subject, but a very exact one in its kind, and corresponding in all its parts. The care of the goddess, the unsuspecting security of Menelaus, the ease with which she diverts the danger, and the danger itself, are all included in this short compass. To which may be added, that if the providence of heavenly powers to their creatures is express'd by the love of a mother to her child, if men in regard to them are but as heedless sleeping infants, and if those dangers which may seem great to us, are by them as easily ward'd off as the simile implies; there will appear something sublime in this conception, however little or low the image may be thought at first sight in respect to a hero. A higher comparison would but have tended to lessen the disparity between the gods and man, and the justness of the simile had been lost, as well as the grandeur of the sentiment.

v. 170. *As when some stately trappings, etc.*] Some have judg'd the circumstances in this simile to be superfluous, and think it foreign to the purpose to take notice, that this ivory was intended for the bosses of a bridle, was laid up for a prince, or that a woman of Caria or Mæonia dyed it. Eustathius was of a different opinion, who extols this passage for the variety it presents, and the learning it includes: We learn from hence that the Lydians, and Carians were famous in the first times for their staining in purple, and that the women excelled in works of ivory: as also that there were certain ornaments

A nymph in Caria or Mæonia bred,  
 Stains the pure iv'ry with a lively red ;  
 With equal lustre various colours vie,  
 The shining whiteness, and the Tyrian dye ; 175  
 So, great Atrides ! show'd thy sacred blood,  
 As down thy snowy thigh distill'd the streaming flood.

which only kings and princes were priviledged to wear. But without having recourse to antiquities to justify this particular, it may be alledged, that the simile does not consist barely in the colours ; it was but little to tell us, that the blood of Menelaus appearing on the whiteness of his skin, vied with the purple ivory ; but this implies, that the honourable wounds of a hero are the beautiful dress of war, and become him as much as the most gallant ornaments in which he takes the field. Virgil, it is true, has omitted the circumstance in his imitation of this comparison, *Æn.* 12.

*Indum sanguineo veluti violaverit ostro*

*Si quis ebur—————*

But in this he judges only for himself; and does not condemn Homer. It was by no means proper that his ivory should have been a piece of martial accoutrement, when he applied it so differently, transferring it from the wounds of a hero to the blushes of the fair Lavinia.

v. 177. *As down thy snowy thigh.*] Homer is very particular here, in giving the picture of the blood running in a long trace, lower and lower, as will appear from the words themselves.

Τοῖοί τοι Μενέλαε μιάνην αἵματι μεροῖ  
 Εὐφύεις, κνήμῃ καὶ τ', ἠδὲ σφυρὰ κάλ' ὑπένεσθε.

The translator has not thought fit to mention every one of these parts, first the thigh, then the leg, then the foot,

With horror seiz'd, the king of men descry'd  
The shaft infix'd, and saw the gushing tide:  
Nor less the Spartan fear'd, before he found 180  
The shining barb appear above the wound.  
Then with a sigh that heav'd his manly breast,  
The royal brother thus his grief express'd,  
And grasp'd his hand; while all the Greeks around  
With answering sighs return'd the plaintive sound. 185  
O dear as life! did I for this agree  
The solemn truce, a fatal truce to thee!

which might be tedious in English: but the author's design being only to image the streaming of the blood, it seemed equivalent to make it trickle through the length of an Alexandrine line.

v. 186. *O dear as life, etc.*] This incident of the wound of Menelaus gives occasion to Homer to draw a fine description of fraternal love in Agamemnon. On the first sight of it, he is struck with amaze and confusion, and now breaks out in tenderness and grief. He first accuses himself as the cause of this misfortune, by having consented to expose his brother to the single combat, which had drawn on this fatal consequence. Next he inveighs against the Trojans in general for their perfidiousness, as not yet knowing that it was the act of Pandarus only. He then comforts himself with the confidence that the Gods will revenge him upon Troy; but doubts by what hands this punishment may be inflicted, as fearing the death of Menelaus will force the Greeks to return with shame to their country. There is no contradiction in all this, but on the other side a great deal of nature, in the confused sentiments of Agamemnon on the occasion, as they are very well explained by Spondanus.

Wert thou expos'd to all the hostile train,

To fight for Greece, and conquer, to be slain?

The race of Trojans in thy ruin join,

190

And faith is scorn'd by all the perjur'd line.

Not thus our vows, confirm'd with wine and gore,

Those hands we plighted, and those oaths we swore,

Shall all be vain : When heav'n's revenge is slow,

Jove but prepares to strike the fiercer blow.

195

The day shall come, that great avenging day,

Which Troy's proud glories in the dust shall lay,

When Priam's pow'rs and Priam's self shall fall,

And one prodigious ruin swallow all.

I see the God, already, from the pole,

200

Bare his red arm, and bid the thunder roll ;

I see th'Eternal all his fury shed,

And shake his Ægis o'er their guilty head.

Such mighty woes on perjur'd princes wait ;

But thou, alas ! deserv'st a happier fate.

205

Still must I mourn the period of thy days,

And only mourn, without my share of praise ?

Depriv'd of thee, the heartless Greeks no more

Shall dream of conquests on the hostile shore ;

Troy seiz'd of Helen, and our glory lost,

210

Thy bones shall moulder on a foreign coast ;

While some proud Trojan thus insulting cries,

(And spurns the dust where Menelaus lies)

v. 212. *While some proud Trojan, etc.*] Agamemnon here calls to mind how, upon the death of his brother, the ineffectual preparations, and actions against Troy must



"Such are the trophies Greece from Ilion brings,  
 "And such the conquests of her king of kings! 215  
 "Lo his proud vessels scatter'd o'er the main,  
 "And unreveng'd, his mighty brother slain."

Oh! ere that dire disgrace shall blast my fame,  
 O'erwhelm me, earth! and hide a monarch's flame.

He said: A leader's and a brother's fears 220.  
 Possess his soul, which thus the Spartan cheers:  
 Let not thy words the warmth of Greece abate:  
 The feeble dart is guiltless of my fate:  
 Stiff with the rich embroider'd work around,  
 My vary'd belt repell'd the flying wound, 225

become a derision to the world. This is in its own nature a very irritating sentiment, though it were never so carelessly express'd; but the poet has found out a peculiar air of aggravation, in making him bring all the consequences before his eyes, in a picture of their Trojan enemies gathering round the tomb of the unhappy Menelaus, elated with pride, insulting the dead, and throwing out disdainful expressions and curses against him and his family. There is nothing which could more effectually represent a state of anguish, than the drawing such an image as this, which shews a man increasing his present unhappiness by the prospect of a future train of misfortunes.

v. 222. *Let not thy words the warmth of Greece abate.*] In Agamemnon, Homer has shewn an example of a tender nature, and fraternal affection, and now in Menelaus he gives us one of a generous warlike patience and presence of mind. He speaks of his own case with no other regard, but as this accident of his wound may tend to the discouragement of the soldiers; and exhorts the general to beware of dejecting their spirits from the prosecution of the war. Spondanus.

To whom the king. My brother and my friend,  
Thus, always thus, may heav'n thy life defend !  
Now seek some skilful hand, whose pow'rful art  
May stanch th' effusion, and extract the dart.  
Hearld, be swift, and bid Machaon bring 230  
His speedy succour to the Spartan king ;  
Pierc'd with a winged shaft (the deed of Troy)  
The Grecian's sorrow, and the Dardan's joy.

With hasty zeal the swift Talthybius flies ;  
Thro' the thick files he darts his searching eyes, 235  
And finds Machaon, where sublime he stands  
In arms incircled with his native bands.  
Then thus : Machaon, to the king repair,  
His wounded brother claims thy timely care ;  
Pierc'd by some Lycian or Dardanian bow, 240  
A grief to us, a triumph to the foe.

The heavy tidings griev'd the godlike man ;  
Swift to his succour thro' the ranks he ran :  
The dauntless king yet standing firm he found,  
And all the chiefs in deep concern around. 245  
Where to the steely point the reed was join'd,  
The shaft he drew, but left the head behind.  
Strait the broad belt with gay embroidery grac'd,  
He loos'd ; the corslet from his breast unbrac'd ;  
Then suck'd the blood, and sov'reign balm infus'd, 250  
Which Chiron gave, and Æsculapius us'd.

While round the prince the Greeks employ their care,  
 The Trojans rush tumultuous to the war;  
 Once more they glitter in refulgent arms,  
 Once more the fields are fill'd with dire alarms. 255  
 Nor had you seen the king of men appear  
 Confus'd, unactive, or surpriz'd with fear;  
 But fond of glory, with severe delight,  
 His beating bosom claim'd the rising fight.  
 No longer with his warlike steeds he stay'd, 260  
 Or press'd the car with polish'd brass inlay'd:  
 But left Eurymedon the reins to guide;  
 The fiery courfers snorted at his side.  
 On foot thro' all the martial ranks he moves,  
 And these encourages, and those reprovcs. 265

v. 253. *The Trojans rush tumultuous to the war.*] They advanced to the enemy in the belief that the shot of Pandarus was made by order of the generals. Dacier.

v. 256. *Nor had you seen.*] The poet here changes his narration, and turns himself to the reader in an *apostrophe*. Longinus in his 22d chapter, commends this figure, as causing a reader to become a spectator, and keeping his mind fixed upon the action before him. The apostrophe (says he) *renders us more awakened, more attentive, and more full of the thing described*. Madam Dacier will have it, that it is the muse who addresses herself to the poet in the second person: it is no great matter which, since it has equally its effect either way.

v. 264. *Thro' all the martial ranks he moves, etc.*] In the following review of the army, which takes up a great part of this book, we see all the spirit, art, and industry of a compleat general; together with the proper *characters* of those leaders whom he incites. Agamemnon considers at this sudden exigence, that he should first

Brave men ! he cries (to such who boldly dare  
Urge their swift steeds to face the coming war)  
Your ancient valour on the foes approve ;  
Jove is with Greece, and let us trust in Jove.

addresses himself to all in general ; he divides his discourse to the brave and the fearful, using arguments which arise from confidence or despair, passions which act upon us most forcibly : To the brave, he urges their secure hopes of conquest, since the gods must punish perjury ; to the timorous, their inevitable destruction, if the enemy should burn their ships. After this he flies from rank to rank, applying himself to each ally with particular artifice : He caresses Idomeneus as an old friend, who had promised not to forsake him ; and meets with an answer in that hero's true character, short, honest, hearty, and soldier-like. He praises the Ajaxes as warriors whose examples fired the army : and is received by them without any reply, as they were men who did not profess speaking. He passes next to Nestor, whom he finds talking to his soldiers as he marshaled them ; here he was not to part without a complement on both sides ; he wishes him the strength he had once in his youth, and is answered with an account of something which the old hero had done in his former days. From hence he goes to the troops which lay farthest from the place of action ; where he finds Menestheus and Ulysses, not intirely unprepared, nor yet in motion, as being ignorant of what had happened. He reproves Ulysses for this, with words agreeable to the hurry he is in, and receives an answer which suits not ill with the twofold character of a wise and a valiant man : hereupon Agamemnon appears present to himself, and excuses his hasty expressions. The next he meets is Diomed, whom he also rebukes for backwardness, but after another manner, by setting before him the example of his father. Thus is Agamemnon introduced, praising, terrifying, exhorting, blaming,

'Tis not for us, but guilty Troy to dread,      270

Whose crimes sit heavy on her perjur'd head ;

Her sons and matrons Greece shall lead in chains,

And her dead warriors strow the mournful plains.

Thus with new ardour he the brave inspires ;

Or thus the fearful with reproaches fires.      275

Shame to your country, scandal of your kind !

Born to the fate you well deserve to find !

Why stand ye gazing round the dreadful plain,

Prepar'd for flight, but doom'd to fly in vain ?

Confus'd and panting thus, the hunted deer      280

Falls as he flies, a victim to his fear.

Still must ye wait the foes, and still retire,

'Till yon' tall vessels blaze with Trojan fire ?

Or trust ye, Jove a valiant foe shall chace,

To save a trembling, heartless, dastard race?      285

This said, he stalk'd with ample strides along,

To Crete's brave monarch, and his martial throng ;

High at their head he saw the chief appear,

And bold Meriones excite the rear.

At this the king his gen'rous joy express,      290

And clasp'd the warrior to his armed breast.

Divine Idomeneus ! what thanks we owe

To worth like thine ? what praise shall we bestow ?

excusing himself, and again relapsing into reproofs ; a lively picture of a great mind in the highest emotion. And at the same time the variety is so kept up, with a regard to the different characters of the leaders, that our thoughts are not tired with running along with him over all his army.



To thee the foremost honours are decreed,  
 First in the fight, and ev'ry graceful deed. 295  
 For this, in banquets, when the gen'rous bowls  
 Restore our blood, and raise the warriors souls,  
 Tho' all the rest with stated rules we bound,  
 Unmix'd, unmeasur'd are thy goblets crown'd.  
 Be still thyself; in arms a mighty name; 300  
 Maintain thy honours, and enlarge thy fame.

To whom the Cretan thus his speech address;  
 Secure of me, O king! exhort the rest:  
 Fix'd to thy side, in ev'ry toil I share,  
 Thy firm associate in the day of war. 305  
 But let the signal be this moment giv'n;  
 To mix in fight is all I ask of heav'n.  
 The field shall prove how perjuries succeed,  
 And chains or death avenge their impious deed.

Charm'd with his heat, the king his course pursues, 310  
 And next the troops of either Ajax views;

v. 296. *For this, in banquets.*] The ancients usually in their feasts divided to the guests by equal portions, except when they took some particular occasion to shew distinction, and give the preference to any one person. It was then looked upon as the highest mark of honour to be allotted the best portion of meat and wine, and to be allowed an exemption from the laws of the feast, in drinking wine unmingled and without stint. This custom was much more ancient than the time of the Trojan war, and we find it practised in the banquet given by Joseph to his brethren in Ægypt, Gen. 43. v. ult. *And he sent messes to them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs.* Dacier.

In one firm orb the bands were rang'd around,  
 A cloud of heroes blacken'd all the ground.  
 Thus from the lofty promontory's brow  
 A swain surveys the gath'ring storm below;      315  
 Slow from the main the heavy vapours rise,  
 Spread in dim streams, and sail along the skies,  
 'Till black as night the swelling tempest shows,  
 The cloud condensing as the west-wind blows:  
 He dreads th' impending storm, and drives his flock 320  
 To the close covert of an arching rock.

Such, and so thick, th' embattel'd squadrons stood,  
 With spears erect, a moving iron wood;  
 A shady light was shot from glimm'ring shields,  
 And their brown arms obscur'd the dusky fields.      325

O heroes! worthy such a dauntless train,  
 Whose godlike virtue we but urge in vain,  
 (Exclaim'd the king) who raise your eager bands  
 With great examples, more than loud commands.  
 Ah would the Gods but breathe in all the rest      330  
 Such souls as burn in your exalted breast!  
 Soon should our arms with just success be crown'd,  
 And Troy's proud walls lie smoking on the ground.

Then to the next the gen'ral bends his course;  
 (His heart exults, and glories in his force)      335  
 There rev'rend Nestor ranks his Pylian bands,  
 And with inspiring eloquence commands;

v. 336. *There rev'rend Nestor ranks his Pylian bands.*] This is the prince whom Homer chiefly celebrates for martial discipline; of the rest he is content to say they

With strictest orders sets his train in arms,  
 The chiefs advises, and the soldiers warms.  
 Alastor, Chromius, Hæmon round him wait, 340  
 Bias the good, and Pelagon the great.  
 The horse and chariots to the front assign'd,  
 The foot (the strength of war) he rang'd behind;  
 The middle space suspected troops supply,  
 Inclos'd by both, nor left the pow'r to fly: 345

were valiant, and ready to fight: the years, long observation and experience of Nestor, rendered him the fittest person to be distinguished on this account. The disposition of his troops in this place (together with what he is made to say, that their fore-fathers used the same method) may be a proof that the art of war was well known in Greece before the time of Homer. Nor indeed can it be imagined otherwise, in an age when all the world made their acquisitions by force of arms only. What is most to be wondered at, is, that they had not the use of *cavalry*, all men engaging either on *foot*, or from *chariots* (a particular necessary to be known by every reader of Homer's battles.) In these chariots there were always two persons, one of whom only fought, the other was wholly employed in managing the horses. Madam Dacier, in her excellent preface to Homer, is of opinion, that there were no horsemen until near the time of Saul, threescore years after the siege of Troy; so that altho' cavalry were in use in Homer's days, yet he thought himself obliged to regard the customs of the age of which he writ, rather than those of his own.

v. 344. *The middle space suspected troops supply*] This artifice of placing those men whose behaviour was most to be doubted, in the middle (so as to put them under a necessity of engaging even against their inclinations) was followed by Hannibal in the battle of Zama; as is observed and praised by Polybius, who quotes this verse

He gives command to curb the fiery steed,  
 Nor cause confusion, nor the ranks exceed;  
 Before the rest let none too rashly ride;  
 No strength nor skill, but just in time, be try'd:  
 The charge once made, no warrior turn the rein, 350  
 But fight, or fall; a firm, embody'd train.  
 He whom the fortune of the field shall cast  
 From forth his chariot, mount the next in haste;

on that occasion, in acknowledgment of Homer's skill in military discipline. That our author was the first master of that art in Greece, is the opinion of Ælian, *Tactic. c. 1.* Frontinus gives us another example of Pyrrhus king of Epirus's following this instruction of Homer. *Vide Stratag. lib. 2. c. 3.* So Ammianus Marcellinus, *lib. 14. Imperator catervis peditum infirmis, medium inter acies spacium, secundum Homericam dispositionem, præstituit.*

v. 352. *He whom the fortune of the field shall cast  
 From forth his chariot, mount the next, etc.*

The words in the original are capable of four different significations, as Eustathius observes. The first is, that whoever in fighting upon his chariot shall win a chariot from his enemy, he shall continue to fight, and not retire from the engagement to secure his prize. The second, that if any one be thrown out of his chariot, he who happens to be nearest shall hold forth his javelin to help him up into his own. The third is directly the contrary to the last, that if any one be cast from his chariot, and would mount up into another man's, that other shall push him back with his javelin, and not admit him, for fear of interrupting the combat. The fourth is the sense which is followed in the translation, as seeming much the most natural, that every one should be left to govern his own chariot, and the other who is admitted, fight only with the javelin. The reason of this ad-

Nor seek unpractis'd to direct the car,

Content with jav'lines to provoke the war.

355

Our great forefathers held this prudent course,

Thus rul'd their ardour, thus preserv'd their force;

By laws like these immortal conquests made,

And earth's proud tyrants low in ashes laid.

vice appears by the speech of Pandarus to Æneas in the next book: Æneas having taken him up in his chariot to go against Diomed, compliments him with the choice either to fight, or to manage the reins, which was esteem'd an office of honour. To this Pandarus answers, that it is more proper for Æneas to guide his own horses; lest they not feeling their accustomed master, should be ungovernable, and bring them into danger.

Upon occasion of the various and contrary significations of which these words are said to be capable, and which Eustathius and Dacier profess to admire as an excellence; Mons. de la Motte, in his late discourse upon Homer, very justly animadverts, that if this be true, it is a grievous fault in Homer. For what can be more absurd than to imagine, that the orders given in a battle should be delivered in such ambiguous terms, as to be capable of many meanings? These double interpretations must proceed not from any design in the author, but purely from the ignorance of the moderns in the Greek tongue: It being impossible for any one to possess the dead languages to such a degree, as to be certain of all the graces and negligences; or to know precisely how far the licences and boldnesses of expression were happy, or forced. But critics, to be thought learned, attribute to the poet all the random senses that amuse them, and imagine they see in a single word a whole heap of things, which no modern language can express; so are oftentimes charmed with nothing but the confusion of their own ideas.



Book IV.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      227

So spoke the master of the martial art,      360

And touch'd with transport great Atrides' heart.

Oh! hadst thou strength to match thy brave desires,

And nerves to second what thy soul inspires!

But wasting years that wither human race,

Exhaust thy spirits, and thy arms unbrace.      365

What once thou wert, oh ever might'st thou be!

And age the lot of any chief but thee.

Thus to th' experienc'd prince Atrides cry'd;

He shook his hoary locks, and thus reply'd.

Well might I wish, could mortal wish renew      370

That strength which once in boiling youth I knew;

Such as I was, when Ereuthalion slain.

Beneath this arm fell prostrate on the plain.

But heav'n its gifts not all at once bestows,      +

These years with wisdom crowns, with actions those:      + 375

The field of combat fits the young and bold,

The solemn council best becomes the old:

To you the glorious conflict I resign,

Let sage advice, the palm of age, be mine.

He said. With joy the monarch march'd before,      380

And found Menestheus on the dusty shore,

With whom the firm Athenian phalanx stands;

And next Ulysses with his subject bands.

Remote their forces lay, nor knew so far

The peace infring'd, nor heard the sounds of war;      385

v. 384. *Remote their forces lay.*] This is a reason why the troops of Ulysses and Menestheus were not yet in motion. Though another may be added in respect to

The tumult late begun, they stood intent  
 To watch the motion, dubious of th' event.  
 The king, who saw their squadrons yet unmov'd.  
 With hasty ardour thus the chiefs reprov'd.

Can Peteus' son forget a warrior's part, 390  
 And fears Ulysses, skill'd in ev'ry art?  
 Why stand you distant, and the rest expect  
 To mix in combat which yourselves neglect?  
 From you 'twas hop'd among the first to dare  
 The shock of armies, and commence the war. 395  
 For this your names are call'd, before the rest,  
 To share the pleasures of the genial feast:  
 And can you, chiefs! without a blush survey  
 Whole troops before you lab'ring in the fray?  
 Say, is it thus those honours you requite? 400  
 The first in banquets, but the last in fight.

Ulysses heard: The hero's warmth o'erspread  
 His cheek with blushes: and severe, he said:  
 Take back th' unjust reproach! Behold we stand  
 Sheath'd in bright arms, and but expect command, 405  
 If glorious deeds afford thy soul delight,  
 Behold me plunging in the thickest fight.

the former, that it did not consist with the wisdom of Ulysses to fall on with his forces until he was well assured. Though courage be no inconsiderable part of his character, yet it is always joined with great caution. Thus we see him soon after in the very heat of battle, when his friend was just slain before his eyes, first looking carefully about him, before he would throw his spear to revenge him.

Then give thy warrior-chief a warrior's due.

Who dares to act whate'er thou dar'st to view.

Struck with his gen'rous wrath, the king replies; 410

Oh great in action, and in council wise!

With ours, thy care and ardour are the same,

Nor need I to command, nor ought to blame.

Sage as thou art, and learn'd in human kind,

Forgive the transport of a martial mind. 415

Haste to the fight, secure of just amends;

The gods that make, shall keep the worthy, friends.

He said, and pass'd where great Tydides lay,

His steeds and chariots wedg'd in firm array:

(The warlike Sthenelus attends his side) 420

To whom with stern reproach the monarch cry'd;

Oh son of Tydeus! (he, whose strength could tame

The bounding steed, in arms a mighty name)

Can'st thou, remote, the mingling hosts descry,

With hands unactive, and a careless eye? 425

Not thus thy fire the fierce encounter fear'd:

Still first in front the matchless prince appear'd:

What glorious toils, what wonders they recite,

Who view'd him lab'ring thro' the ranks of fight!

I saw him once, when gath'ring martial pow'rs 430

A peaceful guest, he fought Mycenæ's tow'rs;

v. 430. *I saw him once, when, etc.*] This long narration concerning the history of Tydeus, is not of the nature of those for which Homer has been blamed with some colour of justice: It is not a cold story, but a warm reproof, while the particularizing the actions of the fa-

Armies he ask'd, and armies had been giv'n,  
 Not we deny'd, but Jove forbade from heav'n;  
 While dreadful comets glaring from afar,  
 Forewarn'd the horrors of the Theban war. 435  
 Next, sent by Greece from where Asopus flows,  
 A fearless envoy, he approach'd the foes;  
 Thebe's hostile walls, unguarded and alone,  
 Dauntless he enters, and demands the throne.  
 The tyrant feasting with his chiefs he found, 440  
 And dar'd to combat all those chiefs around;  
 Dar'd and subdu'd, before their haughty lord;  
 For Pallas strung his arm, and edg'd his sword.  
 Stung with the shame, within the winding way,  
 To bar his passage fifty warriors lay; 445  
 Two heroes led the secret squadron on,  
 Mœon the fierce, and hardy Lycophon;  
 Those fifty slaughter'd in the gloomy vale,  
 He spar'd but one to bear the dreadful tale.  
 Such Tydeus was, and such his martial fire; 450  
 Gods! how the son degen'rates from the fire?

No words the godlike Diomed return'd,  
 But heard respectful, and in secret burn'd:

ther is made the highest incentive to the son. Accordingly the air of this speech ought to be inspirited above the common narrative style. As for the story itself, it is finely told by Statius in the second book of the Thebais.

v. 452. *No words the godlike Diomed return'd.*] "When Diomed is reproved by Agamemnon, he holds  
 "his peace in respect to his general; but Sthenelus re-

Not so fierce Capaneus' undaunted son,

Stern as his fire, the boaster thus begun.

455

What needs, O monarch ! this invidious praise,  
Ourselves to lessen, while our fires you raise ?

Dare to be just, Atreides ! and confess

Our valour equal, tho' our fury less.

With fewer troops we storm'd the Theban wall,

460

And happier saw the sev'nfold city fall.

“ torts upon him with boasting and insolence. It is here  
“ worth observing in what manner Agamemnon behaves  
“ himself; he passes by Sthenelus without affording any  
“ reply; whereas just before, when Ulysses testified his  
“ resentment, he immediately returned him an answer.  
“ For as it is a mean and servile thing, and unbecoming  
“ the majesty of a prince, to make apologies to every  
“ man in justification of what he has said or done; so  
“ to treat all men with equal neglect is mere pride and  
“ excess of folly. We also see of Diomed, that though  
“ he refrains from speaking in this place, when the time  
“ demanded action; he afterwards expresses himself in  
“ such a manner, as shews him not to have been insen-  
“ sible of this unjust rebuke (*in the ninth book*) when he  
“ tells the king, he was the first who had dared to re-  
“ proach him with want of courage.” Plutarch of read-  
ing the Poets.

v. 460. *We storm'd the Theban wall.*] The first Theban war, of which Agamemnon spoke in the preceeding lines, was seven and twenty years before the war of Troy. Sthenelus here speaks of the second Theban war, which happened ten years after the first: when the sons of the seven captains conquered the city, before which their fathers were destroyed. Tydeus expired gnawing the head of his enemy, and Capaneus was thunder-struck while he blasphemed Jupiter. Vide Stat. Thebaid.



In impious acts the guilty fathers dy'd ;  
 The sons subdu'd, for heav'n was on their side.  
 Far more than heirs of all our parents fame,  
 Our glories darken their diminish'd name. 465

To him Tydides thus. My friend forbear,  
 Suppress thy passion, and the king revere :  
 His high concern may well excuse this rage,  
 Whose cause we follow, and whose war we wage ;  
 His the first praise, were Ilion's tow'rs o'erthrown, 470  
 And, if we fail, the chief disgrace his own.  
 Let him the Greeks to hardy toils excite,  
 'Tis ours to labour in the glorious fight.

He spoke, and ardent, on the trembling ground  
 Sprung from his car ; his ringing arms resound. 475  
 Dire was the clang, and dreadful from afar,  
 Of arm'd Tydides rushing to the war.  
 As when the winds, ascending by degrees,  
 First move the whitening surface of the seas,

v. 478. *As when the winds.*] Madam Dacier thinks it may seem something odd, that an army going to conquer should be compared to the waves going to break themselves against the shore ; and would solve the appearing absurdity by imagining the poet laid not the stress so much upon this circumstance, as upon the same waves assaulting a rock, lifting themselves over its head, and covering it with foam as the *trophy of their victory*, (as she expresses it.) But to this it may be answered, That neither did the Greeks get the better in this battle, nor will a comparison be allowed intirely beautiful, which instead of illustrating its subject, stands itself in need of so much illustration and refinement, to be brought to agree with it. The passage naturally bears this sense : *As when,*

The billows float in order to the shore,

480

The wave behind rolls on the wave before ;

*upon the rising of the wind, the waves roll after one another to the shore ; at first there is a distant motion in the sea, then they approach to break with noise on the strand, and lastly rise swelling over the rocks, and toss their foam above their heads : So the Greeks, at first, marched in order, one after another silently to the fight.*— Where the poet breaks off from prosecuting the comparison, and by a *prolepsis*, leaves the reader to carry it on, and image to himself the future tumult, rage, and force of the battle, in opposition to that silence in which he describes the troops at present, in the lines immediately ensuing. What confirms this exposition is, that Virgil has made use of the simile in the same sense in the seventh Æneid.

*Fluctus uti primo cœpit cum albescere vento,*

*Paulatim sese tollit mare et altius undas*

*Erigit ; inde imo confurgit ad æthera fundo.*

v. 478. *As when the winds, etc.*] This is the first battle in Homer, and it is worthy observation with what grandeur it is described, and raised by one circumstance above another, until all is involved in horror and tumult : the foregoing simile of the winds, rising by degrees into a general tempest, is an image of the progress of his own spirit in this description. We see first an innumerable army moving in order, and are amused with the pomp and silence ; then awakened with the noise and clamour ; next they join, the adverse gods are let down among them ; the imaginary Persons of Terror, Flight, Discord, succeed to re-inforce them ; then all is undistinguished fury, and a confusion of horrors, only that at different openings we behold the distinct deaths of several heroes, and then are involved again in the same confusion.

'Till, with the growing storm, the deeps arise,  
 Foam o'er the rocks, and thunder to the skies.  
 So to the fight the thick battalions throng,  
 Shields urg'd on shields, and men drove men along. 485  
 Sedate and silent move the num'rous bands;  
 No sound, no whisper but the chief's commands,  
 Those only heard; with awe the rest obey,  
 As if some God had snatch'd their voice away.  
 Not so the Trojans; from their host ascends 490  
 A gen'ral shout that all the region rends.  
 As when the fleecy flocks unnumber'd stand  
 In wealthy folds, and wait the milker's hand,  
 The hollow vales incessant bleating fills,  
 The lambs reply from all the neighbouring hills : 495  
 Such clamours rose from various nations round,  
 Mix'd was the murmur, and confus'd the sound.  
 Each host now joins, and each a God inspires,  
 These Mars incites, and those Minerva fires.  
 Pale Flight around, and dreadful Terror reign; 500  
 And Discord raging bathes the purple plain :  
 Discord ! dire sister of the slaught'ring power,  
 Small at her birth, but rising ev'ry hour,

v. 502. *Discord, dire sister*, etc.] This is the passage so highly extolled by Longinus, as one of the most signal instances of the noble sublimity of this author : where it is said, that the image here drawn of Discord, *whose head touched the heavens*, and *whose feet were on earth*, may as justly be applied to the vast reach and elevation of the genius of Homer. But Mons. Boileau informs us, that neither the quotation nor these words were in the original

While scarce the skies her horrid head can bound,  
She stalks on earth, and shakes the world around ; 505

original of Longinus, but partly inserted by Gabriel de Petra. However, the best encomium is, that Virgil has taken it word for word, and applied it to the person of Fame.

*Parva metu primo, mox sese attollit in auras,  
Ingrediturque solo, et caput inter nubila condit.*

Aristides had formerly blamed Homer for admitting Discord into heaven, and Scaliger takes up the criticism to throw him below Virgil. Fame (he says) is properly feigned to hide her head in the clouds, because the grounds and authors of rumours are commonly unknown. As if the same might not be alleged for Homer, since the grounds and authors of Discord are often no less secret. Macrobius has put this among the passages where he thinks Virgil has fallen short in his imitation of Homer, and brings these reasons for his opinion; Homer represents Discord to rise from small beginnings, and afterwards in her increase to reach the heavens; Virgil has said this of Fame, but not with equal propriety; for the subjects are very different: Discord, though it reaches to war and devastation, is still Discord; nor ceases to be what it was at first: but Fame, when it grows to be universal, is Fame no longer, but becomes knowledge and certainty; for who calls any thing Fame, which is known from earth to heaven? Nor has Virgil equalled the strength of Homer's hyperbole; for one speaks of *heaven*, the other only of the *clouds*. Macrobius Sat. l. 5. c. 13. Scaliger is very angry at this last period, and by mistake blames Gellius for it, in whom there is no such thing. His words are so insolently dogmatical, that barely to quote them is to answer them, and the only answer which such a spirit of criticism deserves. *Glamant quod Maro de Fama dixit eam inter nubila caput condere, cum tamen Homerus*

The nations bleed, where e'er her steps she turns,  
The groan still deepens, and the combate burns.

Now shield with shield, with helmet helmet clos'd,  
To armour armour, lance to lance oppos'd,

*unde ipse accepit, in cælo caput Eridis constituit. Jam tibi pro me respondeo. Non sum imitatus, nolo imitari: non placet, non est verum, Contentionem ponere caput in cælo. Ridiculum est, fatuum est, Homericum est, græculum est. Poet. l. 5. c. 3.*

This fine verse was also criticised by Mons. Perault, who accuses it as a forced and extravagant hyperbole. M. Boileau answers, That hyperboles as strong are daily used even in common discourse, and that nothing is in effect more strictly true than that Discord reigns over all the earth, and in heaven itself; that is to say, among the Gods of Homer. It is not (continues this excellent critic) the description of a giant, as this censor would pretend, but a just allegory; and as he makes Discord an allegorical person, she may be of what size he pleases without shocking us; since it is what we regard only as an idea and creature of the fancy, and not as a material substance that has any being in nature. The expression in the Psalms, that the *impious man is lifted up as a cedar of Libanus*, does by no means imply that the impious man was a giant as tall as cedar. Thus far Boileau; and upon the whole we may observe, that it seems not only the fate of great geniuses to have met with the most malignant critics, but of the finest and noblest passages in them to have been particularly pitched upon for impertinent criticisms. These are the divine boldesses, which in their very nature provoke ignorance and short-sightedness to shew themselves; and which, whoever is capable of attaining, must also certainly know, that they will be attacked by such, as cannot reach them.

v. 508. *Now shield with shield, etc.*] The verses which follow in the original are perhaps excelled by none



Host against host with shadowy squadrons drew. 510

The sounding darts in iron tempests flew,

Victors and vanquish'd join promiscuous cries,

And shrilling shouts and dying groans arise ;

With streaming blood the slipp'ry fields are dy'd,

And slaughter'd heroes swell the dreadful tide. 515

As torrents roll, increas'd by num'rous rills,

With rage impetuous down their echoing hills ;

Rush to the vales, and pour'd along the plain,

Roar thro' a thousand channels to the main ;

in Homer ; and that he had himself a particular fondness for them, may be imagined from his inserting them again in the same words in the eighth book. They are very happily imitated by Statius, lib. 7.

*Jam clypeus clypeis, umbone repellitur umbo,  
Ense minax ensis, pede pes, et cuspide cuspis, etc.*

v. 516. *As torrents roll.*] This comparison of rivers meeting and roaring, with two armies mingling in battle, is an image of that nobleness, which (to say no more) was worthy the invention of Homer and the imitation of Virgil.

*Aut ubi decursu rapido de montibus altis,  
Dant sonitum spumosi amnes, et in æquora currunt,  
Quisque suum populatus iter ;—Stupet inscius alto  
Accipiens sonitum saxi de vertice pastor.*

The word *populatus* here has a beauty which one must be insensible not to observe. Scaliger prefers Virgil's, and Macrobius Homer's, without any reasons on either side, but only one critic's positive word against another's. The reader may judge between them.

The distant shepherd trembling hears the sound ; 520  
So mix both hosts, and so their cries rebound.

The bold Antilochus the slaughter led,  
The first who strook a valiant Trojan dead :  
At great Echepolus the lance arrives,  
Raz'd his high crest, and thro' his helmet drives ; 525  
Warm'd in the brain the brazen weapon lies,  
And shades eternal settle o'er his eyes.  
So sinks a tow'r, that long assaults had stood  
Of force and fire ; its walls besmear'd with blood.  
Him, the bold \* leader of th' Abantian throng 530  
Seiz'd to despoil, and dragg'd the corps along :  
But while he strove to tug th' inserted dart,  
Agenor's jav'lin reach'd the hero's heart.  
His flank, unguarded by his ample shield,  
Admits the lance : He falls, and spurns the field ; 535  
The nerves unbrac'd support his limbs no more ;  
The soul comes floating in a tide of gore.  
Trojans and Greeks now gather round the slain ;  
The war renews, the warriors bleed again ;

v. 522. *The bold Antilochus.*] Antilochus the son of Nestor is the first who begins the engagement. It seems as if the old hero having done the greatest service he was capable of at his years, in disposing the troops in the best order (as we have seen before) had taken care to set his son at the head of them, to give him the glory of beginning the battle.

\* Elphenor.

As o'er their prey rapacious wolves engage, 540  
 Man dies on man, and all is blood and rage.

In blooming youth fair Simoifius fell,  
 Sent by great Ajax to the shades of hell :  
 Fair Simoifius, whom his mother bore  
 Amid the flocks on silver Simois' shore :  
 The nymph descending from the hills of Ide,  
 To seek her parents on his flow'ry side,  
 Brought forth the babe, their common care and joy,  
 And thence from Simois nam'd the lovely boy.  
 Short was his date ! by dreadful Ajax slain, 550  
 He falls, and renders all their cares in vain !

v. 540. *As o'er their prey rapacious wolves engage.*] This short comparison in the Greek consists only of two words, *Αυτοὶ ὡς* which Scaliger observes upon as too abrupt. But may it not be answered that such a place as this, where all things are in confusion, seems not to admit of any simile, except of one which scarce exceeds a metaphor in length ? When two heroes are engaged, there is a plain view to be given us of their actions, and there a long simile may be of use, to raise and enliven them by parallel circumstances ; but when the troops fall in promiscuously upon one another, the confusion excludes distinct or particular images ; and consequently comparisons of any length would be less natural.

v. 542. *In blooming youth fair Simoifius fell.*] This prince received his name from the river Simois, on whose banks he was born. It was the custom of the eastern people to give names to their children derived from the most remarkable accidents of their birth. The holy scripture is full of examples of this kind. It is also usual in the Old Testament to compare princes to trees, cedars, *etc.* as Simoifius is here resembled to a poplar. Dacier.

So falls a poplar, that in wat'ry ground  
 Rais'd high the head, with stately branches crown'd,  
 (Fell'd by some artist with his shining steel,  
 To shape the circle of the bending wheel)

555

[Var. 552. *So falls a poplar.*] Eustathius in Macrobius prefers to this simile that of Virgil in the second Æneid.

*Ac veluti summis antiquam in montibus ornum,  
 Cum ferro accisam crebrisque bipennibus instant  
 Eruiere agricolæ certatim; illa usque minatur,  
 Et tremefacta comam, concusso vertice nutat;  
 Vulneribus donec paulatim evicta supremum  
 Congemuit, traxitque jugis avulsa ruinam.*

Mr. Hobbes, in the preface to his translation of Homer, has discoursed upon this occasion very judiciously. Homer (says he) intended no more in this place than to shew how comely the body of Simoisius appeared as he lay dead upon the bank of Scamander, strait and tall, with a fair head of hair, like a strait and high poplar with the boughs still on; and not at all to describe the manner of his falling, which (when a man is wounded through the breast, as he was with a spear) is always sudden. Virgil's is the description of a great tree falling when many men together hew it down. He meant to compare the manner how Troy after many battles, and after the loss of many cities, conquered by the many nations under Agamemnon in a long war, was thereby weakened, and at last overthrown, with a great tree hewn round about, and then falling by little and little leisurely. So that neither these two descriptions, nor the two comparisons, can be compared together. The image of a man lying on the ground is one thing; the image of falling (especially of a kingdom) is another. This therefore gives no advantage to Virgil over Homer. Thus Mr. Hobbes.

Cut down it lies, tall, smooth, and largely spread,  
With all its beauteous honours on its head ;

There left a subject to the wind and rain,  
And scorch'd by suns it withers on the plain.

Thus pierc'd by Ajax, Simoifius lies

560

Stretch'd on the shore, and thus neglected dies.

At Ajax Antiphus his jav'lin threw ;  
The pointed lance with erring fury flew,  
And Leucus, lov'd by wise Ulysses, flew.

He drops the corpse of Simoifius slain,

565

And sinks a breathless carcase on the plain.

This saw Ulysses, and with grief enrag'd  
Strode where the foremost of the foes engag'd ;

Arm'd with his spear, he meditates the wound,  
In act to throw ; but cautious, look'd around.

570

Struck at his sight the Trojans backward drew,  
And trembling heard the jav'lin as it flew.

A chief stood nigh who from Abydos came,  
Old Priam's son, Democoon was his name ;

The weapon enter'd close above his ear,

575

Cold thro' his temples glides the whizzing spear ;  
With piercing shrieks the youth resigns his breath,

His eye-balls darken with the shades of death ;

Pond'rous he falls ; his clanging arms resound ;

And his broad buckler rings against the ground.

580

Seiz'd with affright the boldest foes appear ;

Ev'n godlike Hector seems himself to fear ;

Slow he gave way, the rest tumultuous fled ;

The Greeks with shouts press on, and spoil the dead ;



But Phœbus now from Ilion's tow'ring height 585  
 Shines forth reveal'd, and animates the fight.  
 Trojans, be bold, and force with force oppose;  
 Your foaming steeds urge headlong on the foes!  
 Nor are their bodies rocks, nor ribb'd with steel;  
 Your weapons enter, and your strokes they feel. 599  
 Have ye forgot what seem'd your dread before?  
 The great, the fierce Achilles fights no more.

Apollo thus from Ilion's lofty tow'rs  
 Array'd in terrors, rous'd the Trojan pow'rs:  
 While war's fierce goddess fires the Grecian foe, 595  
 And shouts and thunders in the fields below.  
 Then great Diores fell, by doom divine,  
 In vain his valour, and illustrious line.  
 A broken rock the force of Pirus threw,  
 (Who from cold Ænus led the Thracian crew) 600

v. 585. *But Phœbus now.*] Homer here introduces Apollo on the side of the Trojans: He had given them the assistance of Mars at the beginning of this battle; but Mars (which signifies courage without conduct) proving too weak to resist Minerva (or courage with conduct) which the poet represents as constantly aiding his Greeks; they want some prudent management to rally them again: he therefore brings in a Wisdom to assist Mars, under the appearance of Apollo.

v. 592. *Achilles fights no more.*] Homer from time to time puts his readers in mind of Achilles, during his absence from the war; and finds occasions of celebrating his valour with the highest praises. There cannot be a greater encomium than this, where Apollo himself tells the Trojans they have nothing to fear, since Achilles fights no longer against them. Dacier.

Full on his ankle dropt the pond'rous stone,  
Burst the strong nerves, and crash'd the solid bone :

Supine he tumbles on the crimson'd sands,  
Before his helpless friends, and native bands,  
And spreads for aid his unavailing hands.

}  
} 605

The foe rush'd furious as he pants for breath,  
And thro' his navel drove the pointed death :  
His gushing entrails smok'd upon the ground,  
And the warm life came issuing from the wound.

His lance bold Thoas at the conqu'ror sent, 610

Deep in his breast above the pap it went,  
Amid the lungs was fix'd the winged wood,

And quiv'ring in his heaving bosom stood :

'Till from the dying chief, approaching near,

Th'Ætolian warrior tugg'd his weighty spear : 615

Then sudden wav'd his flaming faulchion round,

And gash'd his belly with a ghastly wound,

The corpse now breathless on the bloody plain,

To spoil his arms the victor strove in vain ;

The Thracian bands against the victor press'd : 620

A grove of lances glitter'd at his breast.

Stern Thoas, glaring with revengeful eyes,

In fullen fury slowly quits the prize.

Thus fell two heroes ; one the pride of Thrace,

And one the leader of th'Epeian race ; 625

Death's fable shade at once o'ercaſt their eyes,

In dust the vanquish'd, and the victor lies.

With copious slaughter all the fields are red,

And heap'd with growing mountains of the dead.

Had some brave chief this martial scene beheld, 630  
 By Pallas guarded thro' this dreadful field,  
 Might darts be bid to turn their points away,  
 And swords around him innocently play,  
 The war's whole art with wonder had he seen,  
 And counted heroes where he counted men. 635

So fought each host, with thirst of glory fir'd,  
 And crouds on crouds triumphantly expir'd.

v. 630. *Had some brave chief.*] The turning off in this place from the actions of the field, to represent to us a man with security and calmness walking through it, without being able to reprehend any thing in the whole action; this is not only a fine praise of the battle, but as it were a breathing-place to the poetical spirit of the author, after having rapidly run along with the heat of the engagement: he seems like one who having got over a part of his journey, stops upon an eminence to look back upon the space he has passed, and concludes the book with an agreeable pause or respite.

The reader will excuse our taking notice of such a trifle, as that it was an old superstition, that this fourth book of the Iliads being laid under the head, was a cure for the *quartan ague*. Serenus Sammonicus, a celebrated physician in the time of the younger Gordian, and preceptor to that emperor, has gravely prescribed it among other receipts in his medicinal precepts, Præc. 50.

*Mæoniæ Iliados quartum suppose timentî.*

I believe it will be found a true observation, that there never was any thing so absurd or ridiculous, but has at one time or other been written even by some author of reputation: a reflexion it may not be improper for writers to make, as being at once some mortification to their vanity, and some comfort to their infirmity.

A N

E S S A Y

O N

HOMER'S BATTLES.

**P**ERHAPS it may be necessary in this place at the opening of Homer's battles, to premise some observations upon them in general. I shall first endeavour to shew the conduct of the poet herein, and next collect some *antiquities*, that tend to a more distinct understanding of those descriptions which make so large a part of the poem.

One may very well apply to Homer himself, what he says of his heroes at the end of the fourth book, that whosoever should be guided through his battles by Minerva, and pointed to every scene of them, would see nothing through the whole but subjects of surprize and applause. When the reader reflects that no less than the compass of twelve books is taken up in these, he will have reason to wonder by what methods our author could prevent descriptions of such a length from being tedious. It is not enough to say, that though the subject itself be the same, the actions are always different; that we have now distinct combats, now promiscuous fights, now single duels, now general engagements; or that the scenes are perpetually varied; we are now in the fields, now at the fortification of the Greeks, now at the ships, now at the gates of Troy, now at the river Scamander: but we must look farther into the art of the poet to find the reasons of this astonishing variety.

We may first observe that diversity in the *deaths* of his *warriors*, which he has supplied by the vastest fertility of invention. These he distinguishes several ways: Sometimes by the *characters* of the men, their *age*, *office*, *profession*, *nation*, *family*, etc. One is a blooming *youth*, whose father dissuaded him from the war; one is a *priest*, whose piety could not save him; one is a *sportsman*, whom Diana taught in vain; one is the native of a far distant *country*, who is never to return; one is descended from a *noble line*, which ends in his death; one is made remarkable by his *boasting*; another by his *beseeking*, and another, who is distinguished no way else, is marked by his *habit* and singularity of his armour.

Sometimes he varies these deaths by the several *postures* in which his heroes are represented either fighting or falling. Some of these are so exceedingly *exact*, that one may guess from the very position of the combatant, whereabouts the wound will light: Others so very *peculiar* and *uncommon*, that they could only be the effect of an imagination which had searched through all the ideas of nature. Such is that picture of Mydon in the fifth book, whose arm being numbed by a blow on the elbow, drops the reins that trail on the ground; and then being suddenly struck on the temples, falls headlong from the chariot in a soft and deep place: where he sinks up to the shoulders in the sands, and continues a while fixed by the weight of his armour, with his legs quiv'ring in the air, until he is trampled down by the horses.

Another cause of this variety is the difference of the *wounds* that are given in the Iliad: they are by no means like the wounds described by most other poets, which are commonly made in the self-same obvious places: the heart and head serve for all those in general who understand no anatomy, and sometimes for variety they kill men by wounds that are no where mortal but in their poems. As the whole human body is the subject of these, so nothing is more necessary to him who would describe them well, than a thorough knowledge of its structure,

even



even though the poet is not professedly to write of them as an anatomist; in the same manner as an exact skill in anatomy is necessary to those painters that would excel in drawing the naked, though they are not to make every muscle as visible as in a book of chirurgery. It appears from so many passages in Homer that he was perfectly master of this science, that it would be needless to cite any in particular. One may only observe, that if we thoroughly examine all the wounds he has described, though so infinite in number, and so many ways diversified, we shall hardly find one which will contradict this observation.

I must just add a remark, That the various periphrases and circumlocutions by which Homer expresses the single act of *dying*, have supplied Virgil and the succeeding poets with all their manners of phrasing it. Indeed he repeats the same verse on that occasion more often than they——τὸν δὲ σκότος ἔσση' ἐκάλυψε——'Αράσῃσι δὲ τέυχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ, etc. But though it must be owned he had more frequent occasions for a line of this kind than any poet, as no other has described half so many deaths, yet one cannot ascribe this to any sterility of expression, but to the genius of his times, that delighted in these reiterated verses. We find repetitions of the same sort affected by the sacred writers, such as, *He was gathered to his people; he slept with his fathers*; and the like. And upon the whole they have a certain antiquated harmony, not unlike the burden of a song, which the ear is willing to suffer, and as it were rests upon.

As the perpetual horror of combates, and a succession of images of death, could not but keep the imagination very much on the stretch; Homer has been careful to contrive such reliefs and pauses, as might divert the mind to some other scene, without losing sight of his principal object. His *comparisons* are the more frequent on this account; for a *comparison* serves this end the most effectually of any thing, as it is at once correspondent to, and differing from the subject. Those critics who

fancy that the use of comparisons distracts the attention, and draws it from the first image which should most employ it, (as that we lose the idea of the *battle* itself, while we are led by a simile to that of a *deluge* or a *storm* :) Those, I say, may as well imagine we lose the thought of the sun, when we see his reflection in the water, where he appears more distinctly, and is contemplated more at ease, than if we gazed directly at his beams. For it is with the eye of the imagination as it is with our corporeal eye, it must sometimes be taken off from the object in order to see it the better. The same critics that are displeased to have their fancy distracted (as they call it) are yet so inconsistent with themselves as to object to Homer that his similes are too much alike, and are too often derived from the same animal. But is it not more reasonable (according to their own notion) to compare the same man always to the same animal, than to see him sometimes a sun, sometimes a tree, and sometimes a river? Though Homer speaks of the same creature, he so diversifies the circumstances and accidents of the comparisons, that they always appear quite different. And to say the truth, it is not so much the animal or the thing, as the action or posture of them that employs our imagination: two different animals in the same action are more like to each other, than one and the same animal is to himself, in two different actions. And those who in reading Homer are shocked that it is always a *lion*, may as well be angry that it is always a *man*.

What may seem more exceptionable, is his inserting the same comparisons in the same words at length upon different occasions, by which management he makes one single image afford many ornaments to several parts of the poem. But may not one say, Homer is in this like a skilful improver, who places a beautiful statue in a well-disposed garden so as to answer several vistas, and by that artifice one single figure seems multiplied into as many objects, as there are openings from whence it may be viewed?

What farther relieves and softens these descriptions of battles, is the poet's wonderful art of introducing many pathetic circumstances about the deaths of the heroes, which raise a different movement in the mind from what those images naturally inspire, I mean compassion and pity; when he causes us to look back upon the lost riches, possessions, and hopes of those who die: When he transports us to their native countries and paternal seats, to see the griefs of their aged fathers, the despair and tears of their widows, or the abandoned condition of their orphans. Thus when Protefilaus falls, we are made to reflect on the lofty palaces he left half finished; when the sons of Phænops are killed, we behold the mortifying distress of their wealthy father, who saw his estate divided before his eyes, and taken in trust for strangers. When Axylus dies, we are taught to compassionate the hard fate of that generous and hospitable man, whose house was the house of all men, and who deserved that glorious eulogy of *The friend of human-kind*.

It is worth taking notice too, what use Homer every where makes of each little accident or circumstance that can naturally happen in a battle, thereby to cast a variety over his action; as well as of every turn of mind or emotion a hero can possibly feel, such as resentment, revenge, concern, confusion, *etc.* The former of these makes his work resemble a large history-piece, where even the less important figures and actions have yet some convenient place or corner to be shewn in; and the latter gives it all the advantages of tragedy, in those various turns of passion that animate the speeches of his heroes, and render his whole poem the most dramatic of any epic whatsoever.

It must also be observed, that the constant *machines* of the Gods conduce very greatly to vary these long battles, by a continual change of the scene from earth to heaven. Homer perceived them too necessary for this purpose to abstain from the use of them even after Jupiter had enjoined the deities not to act on either side. It is re-

markable how many methods he has found to draw them into every book ; where if they dare not assist the warriors, at least they are very helpful to the poet.

But there is nothing that more contributes to the variety, surprize, and *eclat* of Homer's battles, or is more perfectly admirable in itself, than that artful manner of taking measure, or (as one may say) *gauging* his heroes by each other, and thereby elevating the character of one person, by the opposition of it to that of some other whom he is made to excel. So that he many times describes one, only to image another, and raises one only to raise another. I cannot better exemplify this remark, than by giving an instance in the character of Diomed that lies before me. Let us observe by what a scale of oppositions he elevates this hero, in the fifth book, first to excel all human valour, and after to rival the Gods themselves. He distinguishes him first from the Grecian captains in general, each of whom he represents conquering a single Trojan, while Diomed constantly encounters two at once ; and while they are engaged each in his distinct post, he only is drawn fighting in every quarter, and slaughtering on every side. Next he opposes him to Pandarus, next to Æneas, and then to Hector. So of the gods, he shews him first against Venus, then Apollo, then Mars, and lastly in the eighth book against Jupiter himself in the midst of his thunders. The same conduct is observable more or less in regard to every personage of his work.

This subordination of the heroes is one of the causes that make each of his battles rise above the other in greatness, terror, and importance, to the end of the poem. If Diomed has performed all these wonders in the first combates, it is but to raise Hector, at whose appearance he begins to fear. If in the next battles Hector triumphs not only over Diomed, but over Ajax and Patroclus, sets fire to the fleet, wins the armour of Achilles, and singly eclipses all the heroes ; in the midst of all his glory, Achilles appears, Hector flies, and is slain.

The manner in which his gods are made to act, no less advances the gradation we are speaking of. In the first battles they are seen only in short and separate excursions: Venus assists Paris, Minerva Dioned, or Mars Hector. In the next, a clear stage is left for Jupiter, to display his omnipotence, and turn the fate of armies alone. In the last, all the powers of heaven are engaged and banded into regular parties, Gods encountering Gods, Jove encouraging them with his thunders, Neptune raising his tempests, heaven flaming, earth trembling, and Pluto himself starting from the throne of hell.

II. I am now to take notice of some customs of *antiquity* relating to the *arms* and *art military* of those times, which are proper to be known, in order to form a right notion of our author's descriptions of war.

That Homer copied the manners and customs of the age he writ of, rather than of that he lived in, has been observed in some instances. As that he no where represents *cavalry* or *trumpets* to have been used in the Trojan wars, though they apparently were in his own time. It is not therefore impossible but there may be found in his works some deficiencies in the art of war, which are not to be imputed to his ignorance, but to his judgment.

*Horses* had not been brought into Greece long before the siege of Troy. They were originally eastern animals, and if we find at that very period so great a number of them reckoned up in the wars of the Israelites, it is the less a wonder, considering they came from Asia. The practice of riding them was so little known in Greece a few years before, that they looked upon the Centaurs who first used it, as monsters compounded of men and horses. Nestor in the first Iliad says, he had seen these Centaurs in his youth, and Polypætes in the second is said to have been born on the day that his father expelled them from Pelion to the desarts of *Æthiopia*. They had no other use of horses than to draw their



chariots in battle, so that whenever Homer speaks of *fighting from on horse, taming an horse*, or the like, it is constantly to be understood of fighting from a chariot, or taming horses to that service. This (as we have said) was a piece of decorum in the poet; for in his own time they were arrived to such a perfection in horsemanship, that in the fifteenth Iliad, v. 822. we have a *simile* taken from an extraordinary feat of activity, where one man manages four horses at once, and leaps from the back of one to another at full speed.

If we consider in what high esteem among warriors these noble animals must have been at their first coming into Greece, we shall the less wonder at the frequent occasions Homer has taken to describe and celebrate them. It is not so strange to find them set almost upon a level with men, at the time when a *horse* in the prizes was of equal value with a *captive*.

The chariots were in all probability very low. For we frequently find in the Iliad, that a person who stands erect on a chariot is killed (and sometimes by a stroke on the head) by a foot-soldier with a sword. This may farther appear from the ease and readiness with which they alight or mount on every occasion; to facilitate which, the chariots were made open behind. That the wheels were but small, may be guessed from a custom they had of taking them off and setting them on, as they were laid by, or made use of. Hebe in the fifth book puts on the wheels of Juno's chariot, when she calls for it in haste: and it seems to be with allusion to the same practice that it is said in Exodus, ch. 14. *The Lord took off their chariot wheels, so that they drove them heavily*. The sides were also low; for whoever is killed in his chariot throughout the poem, constantly falls to the ground, as having nothing to support him. That the whole machine was very small and light, is evident from a passage in the tenth Iliad, where Diomed debates whether he shall draw the chariot of Rhesus out of the way, or carry it on his shoulders to a place of safety. All the particulars agree

with the representations of the chariots on the most ancient Greek coins; where the tops of them reached not so high as the backs of the horses, the wheels are yet lower, and the heroes who stand in them are seen from the knee upwards\*. This may serve to shew those critics are under a mistake, who blame Homer for making his warriors sometimes retire behind their chariots, as if it were a piece of cowardice: which was as little disgraceful then, as it is now to alight from one's horse in a battle, on any necessary emergency.

There were generally two persons in each chariot, one of whom was wholly employed in guiding the horses. They used indifferently two, three, or four horses: from hence it happens, that sometimes when a horse is killed, the hero continues the fight with the two or more that remain; and at other times a warrior retreats upon the loss of one; not that he has less courage than the other, but that he has fewer horses.

Their *swords* were all broad cutting swords, for we find they never stab but with their spears. Their *spears* were used two ways, either to push with, or to cast from them, like the missive javelins. It seems surprising, that a man should throw a dart or spear with such force, as to pierce through both sides of the armour and the body (as is often described in Homer.) For if the strength of the men was gigantic, the armour must have been strong in proportion. Some solution might be given for this, if we imagined the armour was generally brass, and the weapons pointed with iron; and if we could fancy that Homer called the spears and swords *brazen* in the same manner that he calls the reins of a bridle *ivory*, only from the ornaments about them. But there are passages where the point of the spear is expressly said to be of brass, as in the description of that of Hector in Iliad 6. Pausanias, Laconicis, takes it for granted, that the arms, as well offensive as defensive, were brass. He

\* See the collections of Goltzius, etc.

says the spear of Achilles was kept in his time in the temple of Minerva, the top and point of which were of brass; and the sword of Meriones, in that of Æsculapius among the Nicomedians was entirely of the same metal. But be it as it will, there are examples even at this day of such a prodigious force in casting darts, as almost exceeds credibility. The Turks and Arabs will pierce through thick planks with darts of hardened wood; which can only be attributed to their being bred (as the ancients were) to that exercise, and to the strength and agility acquired by a constant practice of it.

We may ascribe to the same cause their power of casting *stones* of a vast weight, which appears a common practice in these battles. Those are in a great error, who imagine this to be only a fictitious embellishment of the poet, which was one of the exercises of war among the ancient Greeks and Orientals. \* St. Jerome tells us, it was an old custom in Palæstine, and in use in his own time, to have round stones of a great weight kept in the castles and villages, for the youth to try their strength with. And the custom is yet extant in some parts of Scotland, where stones for the same purpose are laid at the gates of great houses, which they call *putting-stones*.

Another consideration which will account for many things that may seem uncouth in Homer, is the reflection, that, before the use of *fire-arms*, there was infinitely more scope for *personal valour* than in the modern battles. Now whensoever the personal strength of the combatants happened to be unequal, the declining a single combat

\* Mos est in urbibus Palæstinæ, et usque hodie, per omnem Judæam vetus consuetudo fervatur, ut in viculis, oppidis, et castellis rotundi ponantur lapides gravissimi ponderis, ad quos juvenes exercere se solent, et eos pro varietate virium sublevare, alii ad genua, alii ad umbilicum, alii ad humeros, ad caput, nonnulli super verticem, rectis junctisque manibus, magnitudinem virium demonstrantes, pondus attollunt.

could not be so dishonourable as it is in this age, when the arms we make use of put all men on a level. For a soldier of far inferior strength may manage a rapier, or fire-arms so expertly, as to be an overmatch to his adversary. This may prove a sufficient excuse for what in the modern construction might seem cowardice in Homer's heroes, when they avoid engaging with others, whose bodily strength exceeds their own. The maxims of valour in all times were founded upon reason, and the cowardice ought rather in this case to be imputed to him who braves his inferior. There was also more *leisure* in their battles before the knowledge of fire-arms; and this in a good degree accounts for those *harangues* his heroes make to each other in the time of combat.

There was another practice frequently used by these ancient warriors, which was to spoil an enemy of his arms after they had slain him; and this custom we see them frequently pursuing with such eagerness, as if they looked on their victory not complete until this point was gained. Some modern critics have accused them of avarice on account of this practice, which might probably arise from the great value and scarceness of armour in that early time and infancy of war. It afterwards became a point of honour, like gaining a standard from the enemy. Moses and David speak of the pleasure of obtaining many spoils. They preserved them as monuments of victory, and even religion at last became interested herein, when those spoils were consecrated in the temples of the tutular deities of the conqueror.

The reader may easily see, I set down these heads just as they occur to my memory, and only as hints to farther observations; which any one who is conversant in Homer cannot fail to make, if he will but think a little in the same track.

It is no part of my design to inquire what progress had been made in the *art of war* at this early period: The bare perusal of the *Iliad* will best inform us of it. But what I think tends more immediately to the better com-

prehension of these descriptions, is to give a short view of the *scene* of war, the *situation* of Troy, and those places which Homer mentions, with the proper *field* of each battle: putting together, for this purpose, those passages in my author that give any light to this matter.

The ancient city of Troy stood at a greater distance from the sea, than those ruins which have since been shewn for it. This may be gathered from Iliad 5. v. (of the original) 791. where it is said that the Trojans never durst sally out of the *walls* of their town, until the retirement of Achilles; but afterwards combated the Grecians at their very ships, *far from the city*. For had Troy stood (as Strabo observes) so nigh the *sea-shore*, it had been madness in the Greeks not to have built any fortification before their fleet until the tenth year of the siege, when the enemy was so near them: and on the other hand, it had been cowardice in the Trojans not to have attempted any thing all that time, against an army that lay unfortified and untrenched. Besides, the intermediate space had been too small to afford a field for so many various adventures and actions of war. The places about Troy particularly mentioned by Homer lie in this order.

1. The *Scæan gate*: This opened to the field of battle, and was that through which the Trojans made their excursions. Close to this stood the *beech-tree*, sacred to Jupiter, which Homer generally mentions with it.

2. The *hill of wild fig-trees*. It joined to the walls of Troy on one side, and extended to the highway on the other. The first appears from what Andromache says in Iliad 6. v. 432. that *the walls were in danger of being scaled from this hill*; and the last from Iliad 22. v. 145. etc.

3. The *two springs* of Scamander. These were a little higher on the same highway. (Ibid.)

4. Callicolone, the name of a pleasant hill, that lay near the river Simois, on the other side of the town. Iliad 20. v. 53.



5. Bateia, or the sepulchre of Myrinne, stood a little before the city in the plain. *Iliad* 2. v. 318. *of the catalogue.*

6. The monument of Ilus: near the middle of the plain. *Iliad* 11. v. 166.

7. The tomb of Æsytetes commanded the prospect of the fleet, and that part of the sea-coast. *Iliad* 2. v. 301. *of the catalogue.*

It seems by the 465th verse of the second *Iliad*, that the Grecian army was drawn up under the several leaders by the banks of Scamander, on that side towards the ships: In the mean time that of Troy, and the auxiliaries, was ranged in order at Myrinne's sepulchre. *Ibid.* v. 320. *of the catal.* The place of the *first battle*, where Diomed performs his exploits, was near the joining of Simois and Scamander; for Juno and Pallas coming to him alight at the confluence of these two rivers, *Il.* 5. v. 776. and that the Greeks had not yet past the stream, but fought on that side next the fleet, appears from v. 791. of the same book, where Juno says, *the Trojans now brave them at their very ships.* But in the beginning of the sixth book, the place of battle is specified to be between the rivers of Simois and Scamander; so that the Greeks (though Homer does not particularise when, or in what manner) had then crossed the stream toward Troy.

The engagement in the eighth book is evidently close to the Grecian fortification on the shore. That night Hector lay at Ilus's tomb in the field, as Dolon tells us, lib. 10. v. 415. And in the eleventh book the battle is chiefly about Ilus's tomb.

In the twelfth, thirteenth, and fourteenth, about the fortification of the Greeks, and in the fifteenth at the *ships.*

In the sixteenth, the Trojans being repulsed by Patroclus, they engage between the fleet, the river, and the Grecian wall: See v. 396. Patroclus still advancing, they

fight at the gates of Troy, v. 700. In the seventeenth, the fight about the body of Patroclus is under the Trojan wall, v. 403. His body being carried off, Hector and Æneas pursue the Greeks to the fortification, v. 760. And in the eighteenth, upon Achilles's appearing, they retire and encamp without the fortification.

In the twentieth, the fight is still on that side next the sea; for the Trojans being pursued by Achilles, pass over the Scamander as they run toward Troy: See the beginning of book 21. The following battles are either in the river itself, or between that and the city, under whose walls Hector is killed in the 22d book, which puts an end to the battles of the Iliad.

N. B. *The verses above are cited according to the number of lines in the Greek.*

# T H E I L I A D.

## B O O K V.

### T H E A R G U M E N T.

The acts of Diomed.

*DIO MED*, assisted by *Pallas*, performs wonders in this day's battle. *Pandarus* wounds him with an arrow, but the goddess cures him, enables him to discern gods from mortals, and prohibits him from contending with any of the former, excepting *Venus*. *Æneas* joins *Pandarus* to oppose him, *Pandarus* is killed, and *Æneas* in great danger but for the assistance of *Venus*; who, as she is removing her son from the fight, is wounded on the hand by *Diomed*. *Apollo* seconds her in his rescue, and at length carries off *Æneas* to *Troy*, where he is healed in the temple of *Pergamus*. *Mars* rallies the *Trojans*, and assists *Hector* to make a stand. In the mean time *Æneas* is restored to the field, and they overthrow several of the *Greeks*; among the rest *Tlepolemus* is slain by *Sarpedon*. *Juno* and *Minerva* descend to resist *Mars*; the latter incites *Diomed* to go against that God; he wounds him, and sends him groaning to heaven.

*The first battle continues through this book. The scene is the same as in the former.*

**B**UT *Pallas* now *Tydides'* soul inspires,  
Fills with her force, and warms with all her fires,

v. 1. *But Pallas now, etc.*] As in every just history-picture there is one principal figure, to which all the rest

Above the Greeks his deathless fame to raise,  
And crown her hero with distinguish'd praise.

refer and are subservient; so in each battle of the Iliad there is one principal person, that may properly be called the hero of that day or action. This conduct preserves the unity of the piece, and keeps the imagination from being distracted and confused with a wild number of independent figures, which have no subordination to each other. To make this probable, Homer supposes these extraordinary measures of courage to be the immediate gift of the gods; who bestow them sometimes upon one, sometimes upon another, as they think fit to make them the instruments of their designs; an opinion conformable to true theology. Whoever reflects upon this, will not blame our author for representing the same heroes brave at one time, and dispirited at another; just as the gods assist, or abandon them, on different occasions.

v. 1. *Tydidēs.*] That we may enter into the spirit and beauty of this book, it will be proper to settle the true *character* of Diomed, who is the hero of it, Achilles is no sooner retired, but Homer raises his other Greeks to supply his absence; like stars that shine each in his due revolution, until the principal hero rises again, and eclipses all others. As Diomed is the first in this office, he seems to have more of the character of Achilles than any besides. He has naturally an excess of boldness, and too much fury in his temper, forward and intrepid like the other, and running after gods or men promiscuously as they offer themselves. But what differences his character is, that he is soon reclaimed by advice, hears those that are more experienced, and in a word, obeys Minerva in all things. He is assisted by the patroness of wisdom and arms, as he is eminent both for prudence and valour. That which characterises his prudence, is a quick sagacity and presence of mind in all

High on his helm celestial lightnings play, 5  
His beamy shield emits a living ray ;

emergencies, and an undisturbed readiness in the very article of danger. And what is particular in his valour is agreeable to these qualities, his actions being always performed with remarkable dexterity, activity, and dispatch. As the gentle and manageable turn of his mind seems drawn with an opposition to the boisterous temper of Achilles, so his bodily excellencies seem designed as in contrast to those of Ajax, who appears with great strength, but heavy and unwieldy. As he is forward to act in the field, so he is ready to speak in the council : but it is observable that his councils still incline to war, and are by-assed rather on the side of bravery than caution. Thus he advises to reject the proposals of the Trojans in the seventh book, and not to accept of Helen herself, though Paris should offer her. In the ninth he opposes Agamemnon's proposition to return to Greece, in so strong a manner, as to declare he will stay and continue the siege himself if the general should depart. And thus he hears without concern Achilles's refusal of a reconciliation, and doubts not to be able to carry on the war without him. As for his private character, he appears a gallant lover of hospitality in his behaviour to Glaucus in the sixth book ; a lover of wisdom in his assistance of Nestor in the eighth, and his choice of Ulysses to accompany him in the tenth ; upon the whole, an open sincere friend, and a generous enemy.

The wonderful actions he performs in this battle, seem to be the effect of a noble resentment at the reproach he had received from Agamemnon in the foregoing book, to which these deeds are the answer. He becomes immediately the second hero of Greece, and dreaded equally with Achilles by the Trojans. At the first sight of him his enemies make a question, whether he is a man or a God. Æneas and Pandarus go against



Th' unweary'd blaze incessant streams supplies,  
Like the red star that fires th' autumnal skies,

him, whose approach terrifies Sthenelus, and the apprehension of so great a warrior marvellously exalts the intrepidity of Diomed. Æneas himself is not saved but by the interposing of a deity: he pursues and wounds that deity, and Æneas again escapes only by the help of a stronger power, Apollo. He attempts Apollo too, retreats not until the god threatens him in his own voice, and even then retreats but a few steps. When he sees Hector and Mars himself in open arms against him, he had not retired though he was wounded, but in obedience to Minerva, and then retires with his face toward them. But as soon as she permits him to engage with that god, he conquers, and sends him groaning to heaven. What invention and what conduct appears in this whole episode! What boldness in raising a character to such a pitch, and what judgment in raising it by such degrees! While the most daring flights of poetry are employed to move our admiration, and at the same time the justest and closest allegory, to reconcile those flights to moral truth and probability! It may be farther remarked, that the high degree to which Homer elevates this character, enters into the principal design of his whole poem; which is to shew, that the greatest personal qualities and forces are of no effect, when union is wanting among the chief rulers, and that nothing can avail until they are reconciled so as to act in concert.

v. 5. *High on his helm celestial lightnings play.*] This beautiful passage gave occasion to Zoilus for an insipid piece of raillery, who asked how it happened that the hero escaped burning by these fires that continually broke from his armour? Eustathius answers, that there are several examples in history, of fires being seen to break forth from human bodies, as presages of greatness and glory. Among the rest, Plutarch, in the life of A-

When fresh he rears his radiant orb to fight,  
And bath'd in ocean, shoots a kèener light. 10

Alexander, describes his helmet much in this manner. This is enough to warrant the fiction, and were there no such example, the same author says very well, that the imagination of a poet is not to be confined to strict physical truths. But all objections may easily be removed, if we consider it as done by Minerva, who had determined this day to raise Diomed above all the heroes, and caused this apparition to render him formidable. The power of a god makes it not only allowable, but highly noble, and greatly imagined by Homer; as well as correspondent to a miracle in holy scripture, where Moses is described with a glory shining on his face at his descent from mount Sinai, a parallel which Spondanus has taken notice of.

Virgil was too sensible of the beauty of this passage not to imitate it, and it must be owned he has surpassed his original.

*Ardet apex capiti, christisque ac vertice flamma  
Funditur, et vastos umbo vomit aureus ignes.  
Non secus ac liquida si quando nocte cometæ  
Sanguinei lugubre rubent: aut Sirius ardor,  
Ille situm morbosque ferens mortalibus ægris,  
Nascitur, et lævo contristat lumine cælum.*

Æn. x. v. 270.

In Homer's comparison there is no other circumstance alluded to but that of a remarkable brightness: whereas Virgil's comparison, beside this, seems to foretel the immense slaughter his hero was to make, by comparing him first to a comet, which is vulgarly imagined a prognostic, if not the real cause, of much misery to mankind; and again to the dog-star, which appearing with the greatest brightness in the latter end of summer, is supposed

Such glories Pallas on the chief bestow'd,  
 Such, from his arms, the fierce effulgence flow'd :  
 Onward she drives him, furious to engage,  
 Where the fight burns, and where the thickest rage.

The sons of Dares first the combate fought. 15  
 A wealthy priest, but rich without a fault ;  
 In Vulcan's fane the father's days were led,  
 The sons to toils of glorious battle bred ;  
 These singled from their troops the fight maintain,  
 These from their steeds, Tydides on the plain. 20  
 Fierce for renown the brother chiefs draw near,  
 And first bold Phegeus cast his founding spear,  
 Which o'er the warrior's shoulder took its course,  
 And spent in empty air its erring force.  
 Not so, Tydides, flew thy lance in vain, 25  
 But pierc'd his breast, and stretch'd him on the plain.  
 Seiz'd with unusual fear, Idæus fled,  
 Left the rich chariot, and his brother dead.

the occasion of all the distempers of that sickly season. And methinks the objection of Macrobius to this place is not just, who thinks the simile unseasonably applied by Virgil to Æneas, because he was yet on his ship, and had not begun the battle. One my answer, that this miraculous appearance could never be more proper than at the first sight of the hero, to strike terror into the enemy, and to prognosticate his approaching victory.

v. 27. *Idæus fled, left the rich chariot.*] It is finely said by M. Dacier, that Homer appears perhaps greater by the criticisms that have been past upon him, than by the praises which have been given him. Zoilus had a cavil at this place ; he thought it ridiculous in Idæus to

And had not Vulcan lent celestial aid,  
 He too had sunk to death's eternal shade ;      30  
 But in a smoaky cloud the god of fire  
 Preserv'd the son in pity to the fire.  
 The steeds and chariot, to the navy led,  
 Increas'd the spoils of gallant Diomed.

Struck with amaze, and shame, the Trojan crew      35  
 Or slain, or fled, the sons of Dares view ;  
 When by the blood-stain'd hand Minerva prest  
 The god of battles, and this speech address'd.

descended from his chariot to fly, which he might have done faster by the help of his horses. Three things are said in answer to this: First, that Idæus knowing the passion which Diomed had for horses, might hope the pleasure of seizing these would retard him from pursuing him. Next, that Homer might design to represent in this action of Idæus the common effect of fear, which disturbs the understanding to such a degree, as to make men abandon the surest means to save themselves. And then, that Idæus might have some advantage of Diomed in swiftness, which he had reason to confide in. But I fancy one may add another solution, which will better account for this passage. Homer's word is *ἔτλη*, which I believe would be better translated *non perseveravit*, than *non sustinuit defendere fratrem interfectum*: and then the sense will be clear, that Idæus made an effort to save his brother's body, which proving impracticable, he was obliged to fly with the utmost precipitation. One may add, that his alighting from his chariot was not that he could run faster on foot, but that he could sooner escape by mixing with the croud of common soldiers. There is a particular exactly of the same nature in the book of Judges, ch. 4. v. 15. where Sisera alights to fly in the same manner.

'Stern pow'r of war ! by whom the mighty fall,  
Who bathe in blood, and shake the lofty wall ! 40  
Let the brave chiefs their glorious toils divide ;  
And whose the conquest, mighty Jove decide :  
While we from interdicted fields retire,  
Nor tempt the wrath of heav'n's avenging fire.

Her words allay th' impetuous warrior's heat, 45  
The god of arms and martial maid retreat ;  
Remov'd from fight, on Xanthus' flow'ry bounds  
They sate, and listen'd to the dying sounds.

v. 40. *Who bathe in blood.*] It may seem something unnatural, that Pallas, at a time when she is endeavouring to work upon Mars under the appearance of benevolence and kindness, should make use of terms which seem so full of bitter reproaches; but these will appear very properly applied to this warlike deity. For persons of this martial character, who scorning equity and reason, carry all things by force, are better pleased to be celebrated for their power than their virtue. Statues are raised to the conquerors, that is, the destroyers of nations, who are complemented for excelling in the arts of ruin. Demetrius the son of Antigonus was celebrated by his flatterers with the title of Poliorcetes, a term equivalent to one here made use of.

v. 46. *The god of arms and martial maid retreat.*] The retreat of Mars from the Trojans intimates that courage forsook them: It may be said then, that Minerva's absence from the Greeks will signify that wisdom deserted them also. It is true she does desert them, but it is at a time when there was more occasion for gallant actions than for wise counsels. Eustathius.



Meantime, the Greeks the Trojan race pursue,  
And some bold chieftain ev'ry leader flew : 50

v.49. *The Greeks the Trojan race pursue.*] Homer always appears very zealous for the honour of Greece, which alone might be a proof of his being of that country, against the opinion of those who would have him of other nations.

It is observable through the whole Iliad, that he endeavours every where to represent the Greeks as superior to the Trojans in valour and the art of war. In the beginning of the third book he describes the Trojans rushing on to the battle in a barbarous and confused manner, with loud shouts and cries, while the Greeks advance in the most profound silence and exact order. And in the latter part of the fourth book, where the two armies march to the engagement, the Greeks are animated by Pallas, while Mars instigates the Trojans, the poet attributing by this plain allegory to the former a well-conducted valour, to the latter rash strength and brutal force: so that the abilities of each nation are distinguished by the characters of the deities who assist them. But in this place, as Eustathius observes, the poet being willing to shew how much the Greeks excelled their enemies, when they engaged only with their proper force, and when each side was alike destitute of divine assistance, takes occasion to remove the gods out of the battle, and then each Grecian chief gives signal instances of valour superior to the Trojans.

A modern critic observes, that this constant superiority of the Greeks in the art of war, valour, and number, is contradictory to the main design of the poem, which is to make the return of Achilles appear necessary for the preservation of the Greeks: but this contradiction vanishes, when we reflect, that the affront given Achilles was the occasion of Jupiter's interposing in favour of the Trojans. Wherefore the anger of Achilles was not

First Odius falls, and bites the bloody sand,  
His death ennobled by Atrides' hand:

As he to flight his wheeling car addrest,  
The speedy jav'lin drove from back to breast.

In dust the mighty Halizonian lay,

55

His arms resound, the spirit wings its way.

Thy fate was next, O Phæstus ! doom'd to feel

The great Idomeneus' protended steel ;

Whom Borus sent (his son and only joy)

From fruitful Tarne to the fields of Troy.

60

The Cretan jav'lin reach'd him from afar,

And pierc'd his shoulder as he mounts his car ;

Back from the car he tumbles to the ground,

And everlasting shades his eyes surround.

Then dy'd Scamandrius, expert in the chace,

65

In woods and wilds to wound the savage race :

Diana taught him all her sylvan arts,

To bend the bow, and aim unerring darts :

But vainly here Diana's arts he tries,

The fatal lance arrests him as he flies ;

70

pernicious to the Greeks purely because it kept him inactive, but because it occasioned Jupiter to afflict them in such a manner, as made it necessary to appease Achilles, in order to render Jupiter propitious.

v. 63. *Back from the car he tumbles.*] It is in poetry as in painting, the postures and attitudes of each figure ought to be different : Homer takes care not to draw two persons in the same posture ; one is tumbled from his chariot, another is slain as he ascends it, a third as he endeavours to escape on foot, a conduct which is every where observed by the poet. Eustathius.

From Menelaus' arm the weapon sent,  
Thro' his broad back and heaving bosom went :  
Down sinks the warrior with a thund'ring sound,  
His brazen armour rings against the ground.

Next artful Phereclus untimely fell ; 75  
Bold Merion sent him to the realms of hell.  
Thy father's skill, O Phereclus, was thine,  
The graceful fabric and the fair design ;  
For lov'd by Pallas, Pallas did impart  
To him the shipwright's and the builder's art. 80  
Beneath his hand the fleet of Paris rose,  
The fatal cause of all his country's woes ;  
But he, the mystic will of heav'n unknown,  
Nor saw his country's peril, nor his own.  
The hapless artist, while confus'd he fled, 85  
The spear of Merion mingled with the dead.

v. 75. *Next artful Phereclus.*] The character of Phereclus is finely imagined, and presents a noble moral in an uncommon manner. There ran a report, that the Trojans had formerly received an oracle ; commanding them to follow husbandry, and not apply themselves to navigation. Homer from hence takes occasion to feign, that the shipwright, who presumed to build the fleet of Paris when he took his fatal voyage to Greece, was overtaken by the divine vengeance so long after as in this battle. One may take notice too in this, as in many other places, of the remarkable disposition Homer shews to *mechanics*, he never omits an opportunity either of describing a piece of workmanship, or of celebrating an artist.

Thro' his right hip with forceful fury cast,  
 Between the bladder and the bone it past :  
 Prone on his knees he falls with fruitless cries,  
 And death in lasting slumber seals his eyes.

90

From Meges' force the swift Pedæus fled,  
 Antenor's offspring from a foreign bed,  
 Whose gen'rous spouse, Theano, heav'nly fair,  
 Nurs'd the young stranger with a mother's care.

v. 93. *Whose gen'rous spouse, Theano.*] Homer in this remarkable passage commends the fair Theano for breeding up a bastard of her husband's with the same tenderness as her own children. This lady was a woman of the first quality, and (as it appears in the sixth Iliad) the high priestess of Minerva: so that one cannot imagine the education of this child was imposed upon her by the authority or power of Antenor; Homer himself takes care to remove any such derogatory notion, by particularizing the motive of this unusual piece of humanity to have been to please her husband, χαρίζομένη πρὸς εἶ ᾧ. Nor ought we to lessen this commendation by thinking the wives of those times in general were more complaisant than those of our own. The stories of Phœnix, Clytæmnestra, Medea, and many others, are plain instances how highly the keeping of mistresses was resented by the married ladies. But there was a difference between the Greeks and Asiatics as to their notions of marriage: for it is certain the latter allowed plurality of wives; Priam had many lawful ones and some of them princesses who brought great dowries. Theano was an Asiatic, and that is the most we can grant; for the son she nursed so carefully was apparently not by a wife, but by a mistress; and her passions were naturally the same with those of the Grecian woman. As to the degree of regard then shewn to the bastards, they

How vain those cares ! when Meges in the rear      95

Full in his nape infix'd the fatal spear ;

Swift thro' his crackling jaws the weapon glides,

And the cold tongue and grinning teeth divides.

Then dy'd Hypsenor, gen'rous and divine,

Sprung from the brave Dolopion's mighty line,      100

they were carefully enough educated, though not (like this of Antenor) as the lawful issue, nor admitted to an equal share of inheritance. Megapenthes and Nicostratus were excluded from the inheritance of Sparta, because they were born of bond-women, as Pausanias says, but Neoptolemus, a natural son of Achilles by Deidamia, succeeded in his father's kingdom, perhaps with respect to his mother's quality, who was a princess. Upon the whole, however that matter stood, Homer was very favourable to bastards, and has paid them more complements than one in his works. If I am not mistaken, Ulysses reckons himself one in the *Odyssæis*. Agamemnon in the eighth *Iliad* plainly accounts it no disgrace, when charmed with the noble exploits of young Teucer, and praising him in the rapture of his heart, he just then takes occasion to mention his illegitimacy as a kind of panegyric upon him. The reader may consult the passage, v. 284. of the original, and v. 333. of the translation. From all this I should not be averse to believe, that Homer himself was a bastard, as Virgil was, of which I think this observation a better proof, than what is said for it in the common lives of him:

v. 99. — *Hypsenor, gen'rous and divine,*

*Sprung from the brave Dolopion's mighty line ;*

*Who near ador'd Scamander made abode :*

*Priest of the stream, and honour'd as a god.*

From the number of circumstances put together here, and in many other passages, of the parentage, place of abode, profession, and quality of the persons our author



Who near ador'd Scamander made abode,  
 Priest of the stream, and honour'd as a god.  
 On him, amidst the flying numbers found,  
 Eurypylus inflicts a deadly wound;  
 On his broad shoulder fell the forceful brand, } 105  
 Thence glancing downward lopp'd his holy hand, }  
 Which stain'd with sacred blood the blushing sand. }  
 Down sunk the priest: the purple hand of death  
 Clos'd his dim eye, and fate suppress'd his breath.

Thus toil'd the chiefs, in diff'ring parts engag'd, 110  
 In ev'ry quarter fierce Tydides rag'd,  
 Amid the Greek, amid the Trojan train,  
 Rapt thro' the ranks he thunders o'er the plain,  
 Now here, now there, he darts from place to place.  
 Pours on the rear, or lightens in their face. 115

mentions; I think it is plain he compos'd his poem from some records or traditions of the actions of the times preceding, and complied with the truth of history. Otherwise these particular descriptions of genealogies and other minute circumstances would have been an affectation extremely needless and unreasonable. This consideration will account for several things that seem odd or tedious, not to add that one may naturally believe he took these occasions of paying a complement to many great men and families of his patrons, both in Greece and Asia.

v. 108. *Down sunk the priest.*] Homer makes him die upon the cutting off his arm, which is an instance of his skill; for the great flux of blood that must follow such a wound, would be the immediate cause of death.

Thus from high hills the torrents swift and strong  
Deluge whole fields, and sweep the trees along,

v. 116. *Thus from high hills the torrents swift and strong.*] This whole passage (says Eustathius) is extremely beautiful. It describes the hero carried by an enthusiastic valour into the midst of his enemies, and so mingled with their ranks as if himself were a Trojan. And the simile wonderfully illustrates this fury, proceeding from an uncommon infusion of courage from heaven, in resembling it not to a constant river, but a torrent rising from an extraordinary burst of rain. This simile is one of those that draws along with it some foreign circumstances: we must not often expect from Homer those minute resemblances in every branch of a comparison, which are the pride of modern similes. If that which one may call the main action of it, or the principal point of likeness, be preserved; he affects, as to the rest, rather to present the mind with a great image, than to fix it down to an exact one. He is sure to make a fine picture in the whole, without drudging on the under parts; like those free painters who (one would think) had only made here and there a few very significant strokes, that give form and spirit to all the piece. For the present comparison, Virgil in the second *Æneid* has inserted an imitation of it, which I cannot think equal to this, though Scaliger prefers Virgil's to all our author's similitudes from rivers put together.

*Non sic aggeribus ruptis cum spumeus amnis  
Exit, oppositasque evicit gurgite moles,  
Fertur in arva furens cumulo, camposque per omnes  
Cum stabulis armenta trahit——*

Not with so fierce a rage, the foaming flood  
Roars when he finds his rapid course withstood;  
Bears down the dams with unresisted sway,  
And sweeps the cattle and the cotts away. Dryden.

Thro' ruin'd moles the rushing wave resounds,  
 O'erwhelms the bridge, and bursts the lofty bounds ;  
 The yellow harvests of the ripen'd year, 120  
 And flatted vineyards, one sad waste appear !  
 While Jove descends in sluicy sheets of rain.  
 And all the labours of mankind are vain.

So rag'd Tydides, boundless in his ire,  
 Drove armies back, and made all Troy retire. 125  
 With grief the \* leader of the Lycian band  
 Saw the wide waste of his destructive hand :  
 His bended bow against the chief he drew ;  
 Swift to the mark the thirsty arrow flew,  
 Whose forky point the hollow breast-plate tore, 130  
 Deep in his shoulder pierc'd, and drank the gore :  
 The rushing stream his brazen armour dy'd,  
 While the proud archer thus exulting cry'd.

Hither ye Trojans, hither drive your steeds !  
 Lo ! by our hand the bravest Grecian bleeds. 135  
 Not long the deathful dart he can sustain ;  
 Or Phœbus urg'd me to these fields in vain.

So spoke he, boastful ; but the winged dart  
 Stopt short of life, and mock'd the shooter's art.

\* Pandarus.

v. 139, *The dart stopt short of life.*] Homer says it did not kill him, and I am at a loss why M. Dacier translates it, *The wound was slight* : when just after the arrow is said to have pierced *quite through*, and she herself there turns it, *Percoit l'espaule d'outre en outre*. Had it been so slight, he would not have needed the immediate assistance of Minerva to restore his usual vigour, and enable him to continue the fight.

Book V.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      275

The wounded chief behind his car retir'd,      140

The helping hand of Sthenelus requir'd;

Swift from his seat he leap'd upon the ground,

And tugg'd the weapon from the gushing wound;

When thus the king his guardian pow'r address'd,

The purple current wand'ring o'er his vest.      145

O progeny of Jove! unconquer'd maid!

If e'er my god-like fire deserv'd thy aid,

If e'er I felt thee in the fighting field;

Now, goddess, now, thy sacred succour yield.

Oh give my lance to reach the Trojan knight,      150

Whose arrow wounds the chief thou guard'st in fight;

And lay the boaster grov'ling on the shore,

That vaunts these eyes shall view the light no more.

Thus pray'd Iydides, and Minerva heard,

His nerves confirm'd, his languid spirits chear'd;      155

He feels each limb with wonted vigour light;

His beating bosom claims the promis'd fight.

Be bold (she cry'd) in ev'ry combate shine,

War be thy province, thy protection mine;

Rush to the fight, and ev'ry foe controul;      160

Wake each paternal virtue in thy soul;

Strength swells thy boiling breast, infus'd by me,

And all thy godlike father breathes in thee!

Yet more, from mortal mists I purge thy eyes,

And set to view the warring deities.      165

v. 164. *From mortal mists I purge thy eyes.*] This fiction of Homer (says M. Dacier) is founded upon an important truth of religion not unknown to the pagans;

These see thou shun, thro' all th' embattled plain,  
 Nor rashly strive where human force is vain.  
 If Venus mingle in the martial band,  
 Her shalt thou wound : So Pallas gives command.

that God only can open the eyes of men, and enable them to see what they cannot discover by their own capacity. There are frequent examples of this in the Old Testament. God opens the eyes of Hagar that she might see the fountain, in Gen. 21. ver. 14. So Numb. 22. ver. 31. *The Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in his way, and his sword drawn in his hand.* A passage much resembling this of our author. Venus in Virgil's second Æneid performs the same office to Æneas, and shews him the gods who were engaged in the destruction of Troy.

*Aspice ; namque omnem quæ nunc obducta tuenti  
 Mortales hebetat visus tibi, et humida circum  
 Caligat, nubem eripiam—————  
 Apparent diræ facies inimicaque Trojæ  
 Numina magna Deum—————*

Milton seems likewise to have imitated this, where he makes Michael open Adam's eyes to see the future revolutions of the world, and fortunes of his posterity, book 11.

*—————He purg'd with euphrasie and rue  
 The visual nerve, for he had much to see,  
 And from the well of life three drops distill'd.*

This distinguishing sight of Diomed was given him only for the present occasion, and service in which he was employed by Pallas. For we find in the sixth book that upon meeting Glaucus, he is ignorant whether that hero be a man or a god.



With that the blue-ey'd virgin wing'd her flight ; 170  
 The hero rush'd impetuous to the fight ;  
 With tenfold ardour now invades the plain,  
 Wild with delay, and more enrag'd by pain.  
 As on the fleecy flocks, when hunger calls,  
 Amidst the field a brindled lion falls ; 175  
 If chance some shepherd with a distant dart  
 The savage wound, he rouses at the smart,  
 He foams, he roars ; the shepherd dares not stay,  
 But trembling leaves the scatt'ring flocks a prey.  
 Heaps fall on heaps ; he bathes with blood the ground,  
 Then leaps victorious o'er the lofty mound. 181  
 Not with less fury stern Tydides flew ;  
 And two brave leaders at an instant flew :  
 Astynous breathless fell, and by his side  
 His people's pastor, good Hypenor, dy'd ; 185  
 Astynous' breast the deadly lance receives,  
 Hypenor's shoulder his broad faulchion cleaves.  
 Those slain he left ; and sprung with noble rage,  
 Abas and Polyidus to engage ;  
 Sons of Eurydamus, who wife and old, 190  
 Could fates foresee, and mystic dreams unfold ;  
 The youths return'd not from the doubtful plain.  
 And the sad father try'd his arts in vain ;  
 No mystic dream could make their fates appear,  
 Tho' now determin'd by Tydides' spear. 195

v. 194. *No mystic dream.*] This line in the original,  
 Τοῖς ἐκ ἐρχομένοις ὁ γέγων ἐκρίνατ' ὀνειδέας, contains as  
 puzzling a passage for the construction as I have met with

Young Xanthus next, and Thoon felt his rage,  
 The joy and hope of Phænops' feeble age;  
 Vast was his wealth, and these the only heirs  
 Of all his labours, and a life of cares,  
 Cold death o'ertakes them in their blooming years, 200  
 And leaves their father's unavailing tears :  
 To strangers now descends his heapy store,  
 The race forgotten, and the name no more.

in Homer. Most interpreters join the negative particle *ἄν* with the verb *ἐκρίνατο*, which may receive three different meanings : That Eurydamus had not interpreted the dreams of his children when they went to the wars, or that he had foretold them by their dreams they should never return from the wars, or that he should now no more have the satisfaction to interpret their dreams at their return. After all, this construction seems forced, and no way agreeable to the general idiom of the Greek language, or to Homer's simple diction in particular. If we join *αν* with *ἐρχομένοις*, I think the most obvious sense will be this ; Diomed attacks the two sons of Eurydamus an old interpreter of dreams ; his children not returning, the prophet sought by dreams to know their fate ; however they fall by the hands of Diomed. This interpretation seems natural and poetical, and tends to move compassion, which is almost constantly the design of the poet, in his frequent short digressions concerning the circumstances and relations of dying persons.

v. 202. *To strangers now descends his heapy store* ] This is a circumstance, than which nothing could be imagined more tragical, considering the character of the father. Homer says the trustees of the remote collateral relations seized the estate before his eyes (according to a custom of those times) which to a covetous old man must be the greatest of miseries.

Two sons of Priam in one chariot ride,  
Glitt'ring in arms, and combate side by side. 205

As when the lordly lion seeks his food  
Where grazing heifers range the lonely wood,  
He leaps amidst them with a furious bound,  
Bends their strong necks, and tears them to the ground :  
So from their seats the brother-chiefs are torn, 210  
Their steeds and chariot to the navy born.

With deep concern divine Æneas view'd  
The foe prevailing, and his friends pursu'd,

v. 212. *Divine Æneas.*] It is here Æneas begins to act, and if we take a view of the whole episode of this hero in Homer, where he makes but an under-part, it will appear that Virgil has kept him perfectly in the same character in his poem, where he shines as the first hero. His piety and his valour, though not drawn at so full a length, are marked no less in the original than in the copy. It is the manner of Homer to express very strongly the character of each of his persons in the first speech he is made to utter in the poem. In this of Æneas, there is a great air of *piety* in those strokes, *Is he some god who punishes Troy for having neglected his sacrifices?* And then that sentence, *The anger of heaven is terrible.* When he is in danger afterwards, he is saved by the heavenly assistance of two deities at once, and his wounds cured in the holy temple of Pergamus by Latona and Diana. As to his valour, he is second only to Hector, and in personal bravery as great in the Greek author as in the Roman. He is made to exert himself on emergencies of the first importance and hazard, rather than on common occasions : he checks Diomed here in the midst of his fury ; in the thirteenth book defends his friend Deiphobus before it was his turn to fight, being placed in one of the hindmost ranks (which Homer, to take off all ob-

Thro' the thick storm of singing spears he flies,  
Exploring Pandarus with careful eyes.

215

At length he found Lycaon's mighty son;  
To whom the chief of Venus' race begun.

Where, Pandarus, are all thy honours now,  
Thy winged arrows and unerring bow,  
Thy matchless skill, thy yet-unrival'd fame,  
And boasted glory of the Lycian name?

220

jections to his valour, tells us happened because Priam had an animosity to him, though he was one of the bravest of the army.) He is one of those who rescue Hector when he is overthrown by Ajax in the fourteenth book. And what alone were sufficient to establish him a first-rate hero, he is the first that dares resist Achilles himself at his return to the fight in all his rage for the loss of Patroclus. He indeed avoids encountering two at once in the present book; and shews upon the whole a sedate and deliberate courage, which if not so glaring as that of some others, is yet more just. It is worth considering how thoroughly Virgil penetrated into all this, and saw into the very idea of Homer; so as to extend and call forth the whole figure in its full dimensions and colours from the slightest hints and sketches which were but casually touched by Homer, and even in some points too where they were rather left to be understood, than expressed. And this, by the way, ought to be considered by those critics who object to Virgil's hero the want of that sort of courage which strikes us so much in Homer's Achilles. Æneas was not the creature of Virgil's imagination, but one whom the world was already acquainted with, and expected to see continued in the same character; and one who perhaps was chosen for the hero of the Latin poem, not only as he was the founder of the Roman empire, but as this more calm and regular character better agreed with the temper and genius of the poet himself.

Oh pierce that mortal ! if we mortal call  
 That wond'rous force by which whole armies fall :  
 Or God incens'd, who quits the distant skies  
 To punish Troy for slighted sacrifice ;      225  
 (Which oh avert from our unhappy state !  
 For what so dreadful as celestial hate ?)  
 Whoe'er he be, propitiate Jove with pray'r ;  
 If man, destroy ; if God, intreat to spare.

To him the Lycian. Whom your eyes behold, 230  
 If right I judge, is Diomed the bold.  
 Such courses whirl him o'er the dusty field,  
 So tow'rs his helmet, and so flames his shield.  
 If 'tis a God, he wears that chief's disguise :  
 Of if that chief, some guardian of the skies      Or 235  
 Involv'd in clouds, protects him in the fray,  
 And turns unseen the frustrate dart away.  
 I wing'd an arrow, which not idly fell,  
 The stroke had fix'd him to the gates of hell,  
 And, but some God, some angry God withstands,      240  
 His fate was due to these unerring hands,  
 Skill'd in the bow, on foot I fought the war,  
 Nor join'd swift horses to the rapid car.

v. 242. *Skill'd in the bow, etc.*] We see through this whole discourse of Pandarus the character of a vain-glorious passionate prince, who being skilled in the use of the bow, was highly valued by himself and others for this excellence : but having been successful in two different trials of his skill, he is raised into an outrageous passion, which vents itself in vain threats on his guiltless bow. Eustathius on this passage relates a story of a Paphlago-



Ten polish'd chariots I possess'd at home,  
 And still they grace Lycaon's princely dome : 245  
 There veil'd in spacious coverlets they stand ;  
 And twice ten coursers wait their lord's command.  
 The good old warrior bade me trust to these,  
 When first for Troy I sail'd the sacred seas ;  
 In fields, aloft, the whirling car to guide, 250  
 And thro' the ranks of death triumphant ride.  
 But vain with youth, and yet to thrift inclin'd,  
 I heard his counsels with unheedsful mind,  
 And thought the steeds (your large supplies unknown)  
 Might fail of forage in the straiten'd town : 255  
 So took my bow and pointed darts in hand,  
 And left the chariots in my native land.

nian famous like him for his archery, who having missed his aim at repeated trials, was so transported by rage, that breaking his bow and arrows, he executed a more fatal vengeance by hanging himself.

v. 244. *Ten polish'd chariots.*] Among the many pictures Homer gives us of the simplicity of the heroic ages, he mingles from time to time some hints of an extraordinary magnificence. We have here a prince who has all these chariots for pleasure at one time, with their particular sets of horses to each, and the most sumptuous coverings in their stables. But we must remember that he speaks of an Asiatic prince, those Barbarians living in great luxury. Dacier.

v. 252. *Yet to thrift inclin'd.*] It is Eustathius's remark, that Pandarus did this out of avarice, to save the expence of his horses. I like this conjecture, because nothing seems more judicious, than to give a man of a perfidious character a strong tincture of avarice.

Too late, O friend ! my rashness I deplore ;  
 These shafts, once fatal, carry death no more.  
 Tydeus' and Atreus' sons their points have found, 260  
 And undissembled gore pursu'd the wound,  
 In vain they bled : This unavailing bow  
 Serves, not to slaughter, but provoke the foe.  
 In evil hour these bended horns I strung  
 And seiz'd the quiver where it idly hung. 265  
 Curs'd be the fate that sent me to the field,  
 Without a warrior's arms, the spear and shield !  
 If e'er with life I quit the Trojan plain,  
 If e'er I see my spouse and sire again,  
 This bow, unfaithful to my glorious aims, 270  
 Broke by my hand, shall feed the blazing flames.

To whom the leader of the Dardan race :  
 Be calm, nor Phœbus' honour'd gift disgrace.  
 The distant dart be prais'd, tho' here we need  
 The rushing chariot, and the bounding steed. 275

v. 261. *And undissembled gore pursu'd the wound.*] The Greek is ἀρπενὲς αἷμα. He says he is sure it was real blood that followed his arrow ; because it was anciently a custom, particularly among the Spartans, to have ornaments and figures of a purple colour on their breast-plates, that the blood they lost might not be seen by the soldiers, and tend to their discouragement. Plutarch in his Instit. Lacon. takes notice of this point of antiquity, and I wonder it escap'd madam Dacier in her translation.

v. 273. *Nor Phœbus' honour'd gift disgrace.*] For Homer tells us in the second book, ver. 334. of the catalogue, that the bow and shafts of Pandarus were given him by Apollo.

Against yon' hero let us bend our course,  
 And, hand to hand, encounter force with force.  
 Now mount my seat, and from the chariot's height  
 Observe my father's steeds, renown'd in fight ;  
 Practis'd alike to turn, to stop, to chace, 280  
 To dare the shock, or urge the rapid race :  
 Secure with these, thro' fighting fields we go,  
 Or safe to Troy, if Jove assist the foe.  
 Haste, seize the whip, and snatch the guiding rein :  
 The warrior's fury let this arm sustain ; 285  
 Or if to combat thy bold heart incline,  
 Take thou the spear, the chariot's care be mine.

O prince ! (Lycaon's valiant son reply'd)  
 As thine the steeds, be thine the task to guide.  
 The horses practis'd to their lord's command, 290  
 Shall bear the rein, and answer to thy hand.  
 But if unhappy, we desert the fight,  
 Thy voice alone can animate their flight :  
 Else shall our fates be number'd with the dead,  
 And these, the victor's prize, in triumph led. 295

v. 284. *Haste, seize the whip*, etc.] Homer means not here, that one of the heroes should alight or descend from the chariot, but only that he should quit the reins to the management of the other and stand on foot upon the chariot to fight from thence. As one might use the expression *to descend from the ship*, to signify to quit the helm or oar, in order to take up arms. This is the note of Eustathius, by which it appears that most of the translators are mistaken in the sense of this passage, and among the rest Mr. Hobbes.

Thine be the guidance then: with spear and shield  
Myself shall charge this terror of the field.

And now both heroes mount the glitt'ring car;  
The bounding courfers rush amidst the war:  
Their fierce approach bold Sthenelus espy'd, 300  
Who thus, alarm'd, to great Tydides cry'd.

O friend! two chiefs of force immense I see,  
Dreadful they come, and bend their rage on thee:  
Lo the brave heir of old Lycaon's line,  
And great Æneas, sprung from race divine! 305  
Enough is giv'n to fame. Ascend thy car;  
And save a life, the bulwark of our war.

At this the hero cast a gloomy look,  
Fix'd on the chief with scorn, and thus he spoke.

Me dost thou bid to shun the coming fight? 310  
Me would'st thou move to base inglorious flight?  
Know, 'tis not honest in my soul to fear,  
Nor was Tydides born to tremble here.

I hate the cumbrous chariot's slow advance,  
And the long distance of the flying lance; 315

But while my nerves are strong, my force intire,  
Thus front the foe, and emulate my sire.  
Nor shall yon' steeds that fierce to fight convey  
Those threat'ning heroes, bear them both away;  
One chief at least beneath this arm shall die; 320  
So Pallas tells me, and forbids to fly.

v. 320. *One chief at least beneath this arm shall die.*]

It is the manner of our author to make his persons have  
some intimation from within, either of prosperous or ad-

But if she dooms, and if no god withstand,  
 That both shall fall by one victorious hand;  
 Then heed my words: my horses here detain,  
 Fix'd to the chariot by the straiten'd rein; 325  
 Swift to Æneas' empty seat proceed,  
 And seize the courfers of ætherial breed.

verse fortune, before it happens to them. In the present instance, we have seen Æneas, astonished at the great exploits of Diomed, proposing to himself the means of his escape by the swiftness of his horses, before he advances to encounter him. On the other hand, Diomed is so filled with assurance, that he gives orders here to Sthenelus to seize those horses, before they come up to him. - The opposition of these two (as madam Dacier has remarked) is very observable.

v. 327. *The courfers of ætherial breed.*] We have already observed the great delight Homer takes in horses, as well as heroes, of celestial race: and if he has been thought too fond of the genealogies of some of his warriors, in relating them even in a battle; we find him here as willing to trace that of his horses in the same circumstance. These were of that breed which Jupiter bestowed upon Tros, and far superior to the common strain of Trojan horses. So that (according to Eustathius's opinion) the translators are mistaken who turn Τρώϊοι ἵπποι, *the Trojan horses*, in v. 222. of the original, where Æneas extols their qualities to Pandarus. The same author takes notice, that frauds in the case of horses have been thought excusable in all times, and commends Anchises for this piece of theft. Virgil was so well pleased with it, as to imitate this passage in the seventh Æneid.

*Absenti Æneæ currum, geminosque jugales  
 Semine ab æthereo, spirantes naribus ignem,*



The race of those, which once the thund'ring God  
 For ravish'd Ganymede on Tros bestow'd,  
 The best that e'er on earth's broad surface run,      330  
 Beneath the rising or the setting sun.

Hence great Anchises stole a breed, unknown,  
 By mortal mares, from fierce Laomedon:  
 Four of this race his ample stalls contain,  
 And two transport Æneas o'er the plain.      335

These, were the rich immortal prize our own,  
 Thro' the wide world should make our glory known.

Thus while they spoke, the foe came furious on,  
 And stern Lycaon's warlike race begun.

Prince, thou art met. Tho' late in vain assail'd,      340  
 The spear may enter where the arrow fail'd.

He said, then shook the pond'rous lance, and flung,  
 On his broad shield the sounding weapon rung,  
 Pierc'd the tough orb, and in his cuirass hung.      }  
 He bleeds ! the pride of Greece ! (the boaster cries)      345  
 Our triumph now, the mighty warrior lies !

Mistaken vaunter ! Diomed reply'd ;  
 Thy dart has err'd, and now my spear be try'd :  
 Ye 'scape not both ; one, headlong from his car,  
 With hostile blood shall glut the god of war.      350

He spoke, and rising hurl'd his forceful dart,  
 Which driv'n by Pallas, pierc'd a vital part ;

*Illorum de gente, patri quos Dædala Circe  
 Supposita de matre nothos furata creavit.*

Full in his face it enter'd, and betwixt

The nose and eye-ball the proud Lycian fixt ;

Crash'd all his jaws, and cleft the tongue within, 355

'Till the bright point look'd out beneath the chin.

Headlong he falls, his helmet knocks the ground ;

Earth groans beneath him, and his arms resound ;

The starting coursers tremble with affright ;

The soul indignant seeks the realms of night. 360

To guard his slaughter'd friend, Æneas flies,

His spear extending where the carcase lies ;

v. 353. *Full in his face it enter'd.*] It has been asked, how Diomed being on foot, could naturally be supposed to give such a wound as is described here. Were it never so improbable, the express mention that Minerva conducted the javelin to that part, would render this passage unexceptionable. But without having recourse to a miracle, such a wound might be received by Pandarus, either if he stooped, or if his enemy took the advantage of a rising ground, by which means he might not impossibly stand higher, though the other were in a chariot. This is the solution given by the ancient Scholia, which is confirmed by the lowness of the chariots, observed in the Essay on Homer's Battles.

v. 361. *To guard his slaughter'd friend Æneas flies.*] This protecting of the dead body was not only an office of piety agreeable to the character of Æneas in particular, but looked upon as a matter of great importance in those times. It was believed that the very soul of the deceased suffered by the body's remaining destitute of the rites of sepulture, as not being else admitted to pass the waters of Styx. See what Patroclus's ghost says to Achilles in the 23d Iliad.

*Hæc omnis, quam cernis, inops, inhumataque turba est;  
Portitor ille, Charon; hi, quos vehit unda, sepulti.*

Watchful he wheels, protects it ev'ry way,  
 As the grim lion stalks around his prey.  
 O'er the fall'n trunk his ample shield display'd, 365  
 He hides the hero with his mighty shade,  
 And threats aloud : The Greeks with longing eyes  
 Behold at distance, but forbear the prize,  
 Then fierce Tydides stoops ; and from the fields  
 Heav'd with vast force, a rocky fragment wields. 370  
 Not two strong men th'enormous weight could raise,  
 Such men as live in these degen'rate days.

*Nec ripas datur horrendas et rauca fluenta  
 Transportare prius, quam sedibus ossa quierunt.  
 Centum errant annos, volitantque hæc litora circum.*  
 Virg. Æn. 6.

Whoever considers this, will not be surpris'd at those long and obstinate combates for the bodies of the heroes, so frequent in the Iliad. Homer thought it of such weight, that he has put this circumstance of want of burial into the *proposition* at the beginning of his poem, as one of the chief misfortunes that befel the Greeks.

v. 371. *Not two strong men.*] This opinion of a degeneracy of human size and strength in the process of ages, has been very general. Lucretius, lib. 2.

*Jamque adeo fracta est ætas, effoetaque tellus  
 Vix animalia parva creat, quæ cuncta creavit  
 Sæcla, dedique ferarum ingentia corpora partu.*

The active life and temperance of the first men, before their native powers were prejudiced by luxury, may be supposed to have given them this advantage. Celsus in his first book observes, that Homer mentions no sort of

He swung it round; and gath'ring strength to throw,  
Discharg'd the pond'rous ruin at the foe.

Where to the hip th'inserted thigh unites, 375

Full on the bone the pointed marble lights;

Thro' both the tendons broke the rugged stone,

And stripp'd the skin, and crack'd the solid bone.

Sunk on his knees, and stagg'ring with his pains,

His falling bulk his bended arm sustains; 380

Lost in a dizzy mist the warrior lies;

A sudden cloud comes swimming o'er his eyes.

There the brave chief who mighty numbers sway'd,

Oppress'd had sunk to death's eternal shade;

But heav'nly Venus, mindful of the love 385

She bore Anchises in th' Idæan grove,

His danger views with anguish and despair,

And guards her offspring with a mother's care.

diseases in the old heroic times but what were immediately inflicted by heaven, as if their temperance and exercise preserved them from all besides. Virgil imitates this passage, with a farther allowance of the decay, in proportion to the distance of his time from that of Homer. For he says it was an attempt that exceeded the strength of *twelve* men, instead of *two*.

—*Saxum circumspicit ingens*—

*Vix illud lecti bis sex cervice subirent,*

*Qualia nunc hominum producit corpora tellus.*

Juvenal has made an agreeable use of this thought in his fourteenth Satire.

*Nam genus hoc vivo jam decrescebat Homero,*

*Terra malos homines nunc educat, atque pusillos.*

About her much-lov'd son her arms she throws,  
 Her arms whose whiteness match the falling snows. 390  
 Screen'd from the foe behind her shining veil,  
 The swords wave harmless, and the jav'lines fail:  
 Safe thro' the rushing horse, and feather'd flight  
 Of sounding shafts, she bears him from the fight.

Nor Sthenelus, with unassisting hands, 395  
 Remain'd unheedful of his lord's commands;  
 His panting steeds remov'd from out the war,  
 He fix'd with straiten'd traces to the car.  
 Next rushing to the Dardan spoil, detains  
 The heav'nly coursers with the flowing manes: 400  
 These in proud triumph to the fleet convey'd,  
 No longer now a Trojan lord obey'd.  
 That charge to bold Deipylus he gave,  
 (Whom most he lov'd, as brave men love the brave)

v. 591. *Screen'd from the foe behind her shining veil.*] Homer says, she spread her veil that it might be a defence against the darts. How comes it then afterwards to be pierced through, when Venus is wounded? It is manifest the veil was not impenetrable, and is said here to be a defence only as it rendered Æneas invisible, by being interposed. This is the observation of Eustathius and was thought too material to be neglected in the translation.

v. 403. *To bold Deipylus—Whom most he lov'd.*] Sthenelus (says M. Dacier) loved Deipylus, *parce qu'il avoit la même humeur que lui la même jalousie*. The words in the original are ὅτι οἱ φρεσὶν ἄγρια ἦν. *Because his mind was equal and consentaneous to his own*. Which I should rather translate, with regard to the character of Sthenelus, that he had the same *bravery*, than the same *wisdom*.



Then mounting on his car, resum'd the rein, 405  
And follow'd where Tydides swept the plain.

Meanwhile (his conquest ravish'd from his eyes)  
The raging chief in chace of Venus flies :  
No goddess she commission'd to the field,  
Like Pallas dreadful with her sable shield, 410  
Or fierce Bellona thund'ring at the wall,  
While flames ascend, and mighty ruins fall ;  
He knew soft combates suit the tender dame,  
New to the field, and still a foe to fame.  
Thro' breaking ranks his furious course he bends, 415  
And at the goddess his broad lance extends ;  
Thro' her bright veil the daring weapon drove,  
Th' ambrosial veil, which all the graces wove ;

For that Sthenelus was not remarkable for wisdom, appears from many passages, and particularly from his speech to Agamemnon in the fourth book, upon which see Plutarch's remark, v. 456.

v. 408. *The chief in chace of Venus flies.*] We have seen with what ease Venus takes Paris out of the battle in the third book, when his life was in danger from Menelaus ; but here when she has a charge of more importance and nearer concern, she is not able to preserve herself or her son from the fury of Diomed. The difference of success in two attempts so like each other, is occasioned by that penetration of sight with which Pallas had endued her favourite. For the gods in their intercourse with men are not ordinarily seen, but when they please to render themselves visible ; wherefore Venus might think herself and her son secure from the insolence of this daring mortal ; but was in this deceived, being ignorant of that faculty, wherewith the hero was enabled to distinguish gods as well as men.

Her snowy hand the razing steel profan'd,  
 And the transparent skin with crimson stain'd. 420  
 From the clear vein a stream immortal flow'd,  
 Such stream as issues from a wounded god :

v. 419. *Her snowy hand the razing steel profan'd.*] Plutarch in his *Symposiacs*, l. 9. tells us, that Maximus the rhetorician propos'd this far-fetched question at a banquet, *On which of her hands Venus was wounded?* and that Zopyrion answer'd it by asking, *On which of his legs Philip was lame?* But Maximus repli'd it was a different case: For Demosthenes left no foundation to guess at the one, whereas Homer gives a solution of the other, in saying that Diomed throwing his spear *across*, wounded her wrist: so that it was her right hand he hurt, her left being opposit to his right. He adds another humorous reason from Pallas's reproaching her afterwards, as having got this wound while she was stroking and soliciting some Grecian lady, and unbuckling her zone; *An action* (says this philosopher) *in which no one would make use of the left hand.*

v. 422. *Such stream as issues from a wounded god.*] This is one of those passages in Homer, which have given occasion to that famous censure of Tully and Longinus, *That he makes gods of his heroes, and mortals of his gods.* This, taken in a general sense, appear'd the highest impiety to Plato and Pythagoras; one of whom has banish'd Homer from his commonwealth, and the other said he was tortured in hell, for fictions of this nature. But if a due distinction be made of a difference among beings superior to mankind, which both the Pagans and Christians have allow'd, the fables may be easily account'd for. *Wounds inflict'd on the dragon, bruising the serpent's head*, and other such metaphorical images, are consecrated in holy writ, and apply'd to angelical and incorporeal natures. But in our author's days they had a notion of gods that were *corporeal*, to whom they ascrib'd

Pure emanation ! uncorrupted flood ;

Unlike our gross, diseas'd, terrestrial blood :

bodies, though of a more subtle kind than those of mortals. So in this very place he supposes them to have blood, but blood of a finer or superior nature. Notwithstanding the foregoing censures, Milton has not scrupled to imitate and apply this to angels in the Christian system, when Satan is wounded by Michael in his sixth book, v. 327.

——— *Then Satan first knew pain,  
And writh'd him to and fro convolv'd ; so sore  
That griding sword with discontinuous wound  
Pass'd thro' him ; but th' æthereal substance clos'd,  
Not long divisible, and from the gash  
A stream of nectarous humour issuing flow'd,  
Sanguin, such as celestial spirits may bleed——  
Yet soon he heal'd, for spirits that live throughout,  
Vital in ev'ry part, not as frail man  
In entrails, head or heart, liver or reins,  
Cannot but by annihilating die.*

Aristot. cap. 26. Art. Poet. excuses Homer for following fame and common opinion in his account of the gods, though no way agreeable to truth. The religion of those times taught no other notions of the deity, than that the gods were beings of human forms and passions, so that any but a real Anthropomorphite would probably have past among the ancient Greeks for an impious heretic : They thought their religion, which worshipped the gods in images of human shape, was much more refined and rational than that of Ægypt and other nations, who adored them in animal or monstrous forms. And certainly gods of human shape cannot justly be esteemed or described otherwise, than as a celestial race, superior  
only

(For not the bread of man their life sustains, 425  
Nor wine's inflaming juice supplies their veins.)

only to mortal men by greater abilities, and a more extensive degree of wisdom and strength, subject however to the necessary inconveniencies consequent to corporeal beings. Cicero, in his book de Nat. Deor. urges this consequence strongly against the Epicureans, who though they deposed the gods from any power in creating or governing the world, yet maintained their existence in human forms. *Non enim sentitis quam multa vobis suscipienda sunt, si impetraveritis ut concedamus eandem esse hominum et Deorum figuram; omnis cultus et curatio corporis erit eadem adhibenda Deo quæ adhibetur homini, ingressus, cursus, accubatio, inclinatio, sessio, comprehensio, ad extremum etiam sermo et oratio. Nam quod et mares Deos et foeminas esse dicitis, quid sequatur videtis.*

This particular of the wounding of Venus seems to be a fiction of Homer's own brain, naturally deducible from the doctrine of corporeal gods above mentioned; and considered as poetry, no way shocking. Yet our author, as if he had foreseen some objection, has very artfully inserted a justification of this bold stroke, in the speech Dione soon after makes to Venus. For as it was natural to comfort her daughter, by putting her in mind that many other deities had received as ill treatment from mortals by the permission of Jupiter; so it was of great use to the poet, to enumerate those ancient fables to the same purpose, which being then generally assented to, might obtain credit for his own. This fine remark belongs to Eustathius.

v. 424. *Unlike our gross, diseas'd, terrestrial blood, etc.]*  
The opinion of the incorruptibility of celestial matter seems to have been received in the time of Homer. For he makes the immortality of the gods to depend upon the incorruptible nature of the nutriment by which they are sustained; as the mortality of men to proceed from

With tender shrieks the goddess fill'd the place,  
 And dropt her offspring from her weak embrace.]  
 Him Phœbus took : he casts a cloud around  
 The fainting chief, and wards the mortal wound. 430

Then with a voice that shook the vaulted skies,  
 The king insults the goddess as she flies.  
 Ill with Jove's daughter bloody fights agree,  
 The field of combat is no scene for thee :  
 Go, let thy own soft sex employ thy care, 435  
 Go lull the coward, or delude the fair.  
 Taught by this stroke, renounce the war's alarms,  
 And learn to tremble at the name of arms.

Tydides thus. The goddess, seiz'd with dread,  
 Confus'd, distracted, from the conflict fled. 440  
 To aid her, swift the winged Iris flew,  
 Wrapt in a mist above the warring crew.  
 The queen of love with faded charms she found,  
 Pale was her cheek, and livid look'd the wound.  
 To Mars, who fate remote they bent their way ; 445  
 Far on the left, with clouds involv'd he lay ;  
 Beside him stood his lance distain'd with gore,  
 And, rein'd with gold his foaming steeds before.

the corruptible materials of which they are made, and by which they are nourished. We have several instances in him from whence this may be inferred, as when Diomed questions Glaucus, if he be a god or mortal, he adds, *One who is sustained by the fruits of the earth.* Lib. 6. v. 175.



Low at his knee she begg'd, with streaming eyes,  
 Her brother's car, to mount the distant skies,      450  
 And shew'd the wound by fierce Tydides giv'n,  
 A mortal man, who dares encounter heav'n.  
 Stern Mars attentive hears the queen complain,  
 And to her hand commits the golden rein;  
 She mounts the seat oppress'd with silent woe,      455  
 Driv'n by the goddess of the painted bow.  
 The lash resounds, the rapid chariot flies,  
 And in a moment scales the lofty skies.  
 There stopp'd the car, and there the couriers stood,  
 Fed by fair Iris with ambrosial food,      460  
 Before her mother Love's bright queen appears,  
 O'erwhelm'd with anguish and dissolv'd in tears;  
 She rais'd her in her arms, beheld her bleed,  
 And ask'd what god had wrought this guilty deed?  
 Then she; This insult from no god I found,      465  
 An impious mortal gave the daring wound!  
 Behold the deed of haughty Diomed!  
 'Twas in the son's defence the mother bled.  
 The war with Troy no more the Grecians wage;  
 But with the gods (th' immortal gods) engage.      470

v. 449. *Low at his knee she begg'd.*] All the former English translators make it, *She fell on her knees*, an oversight occasioned by the want of a competent knowledge in antiquities (without which no man can tolerably understand this author.) For the custom of praying on the knees was unknown to the Greeks, and in use only among the Hebrews.

Dione then. Thy wrongs with patience bear,  
 And share those griefs inferior pow'rs must share :  
 Unnumber'd woes mankind from us sustain,  
 And men with woes afflict the gods again.  
 The mighty Mars in mortal fetters bound, 475  
 And lodg'd in brazen dungeons under ground,  
 Full thirteen moons imprison'd roar'd in vain ;  
 Otus and Ephialtes held the chain :  
 Perhaps had perish'd ; had not Hermes care  
 Restor'd the groaning god to upper air. 480

v. 472. *And share those griefs inferior pow'rs must share.*] The word *inferior* is added by the translator, to open the distinction Homer makes between the divinity itself, which he represents impassible, and the subordinate celestial beings or spirits.

v. 475. *The mighty Mars, etc.*] Homer in these fables, as upon many other occasions, makes a great show of his theological learning, which was the manner of all the Greeks who had travelled into Ægypt. Those who would see these allegories explained at large, may consult Eustathius on this place. Virgil speaks much in the same figure, when he describes the happy peace with which Augustus had blest the world :

————— *Furor impius intus*

*Sæva sedens super arma, et centum vinctus ænis*

*Post tergum nodis, fremit horridus ore cruento.*

v. 476. *Perhaps had perish'd.*] Some of Homer's censurers have inferred from this passage, that the poet represents his gods subject to death ; when nothing but great misery is here described. It is a common way of speech to use *perdition* and destruction for *misfortunes* : The language of scripture calls eternal punishment *pe-*

Great Juno's self has borne her weight of pain,  
 Th' imperial partner of the heav'nly reign;  
 Amphitryon's son infix'd the deadly dart,  
 And fill'd with anguish her immortal heart.  
 Ev'n hell's grim king Alcides' power confess'd, 485  
 The shaft found entrance in his iron breast;  
 To Jove's high palace for a cure he fled,  
 Pierc'd in his own dominions of the dead;  
 Where Pæon sprinkling heav'nly balm around,  
 Assuag'd the glowing pangs, and clos'd the wound. 490  
 Rash, impious man! to stain the blest abodes,  
 And drench his arrows in the blood of gods!

But thou (tho' Pallas urg'd thy frantic deed)  
 Whose spear ill-fated makes a goddess bleed,  
 Know thou, whoe'er with heav'nly pow'r contends, 495  
 Short is his date, and soon his glory ends;  
 From fields of death when late he shall retire,  
 No infant on his knees shall call him sire.

*ishing everlastingly.* There is a remarkable passage to this purpose in Tacitus, An. 6. which very lively represents the miserable state of a distracted tyrant: It is the beginning of a letter from Tiberius to the senate: *Quid scribam vobis, P. C. aut quomodo scribam, aut quid omnino non scribam hoc tempore, Dii me De.eque pejus perdant quam perire quotidie sentio, si scio.*

v. 498. *No infant on his knees shall call him sire.*] This is Homer's manner of foretelling that he shall perish unfortunately in battle, which is infinitely a more artful way of conveying that thought than by a direct expression. He does not simply say, he shall never return from the war, but intimates as much by describing

Strong as thou art, some god may yet be found,  
 To stretch thee pale and gasping on the ground; 500  
 Thy distant wife, Ægiale the fair,  
 Starting from sleep with a distracted air,

the loss of the most sensible and affecting pleasure that a warrior can receive at his return. Of the like nature is the prophecy at the end of this speech of the hero's death, by representing it in a dream of his wife's. There are many fine strokes of this kind in the prophetic parts of the Old Testament. Nothing is more natural than Dione's forming those images of revenge upon Diomed, the hope of which vengeance was so proper a topic of consolation to Venus.

v. 500. *To stretch thee pale, etc.*] Virgil has taken notice of this threatening denunciation of vengeance, though fulfilled in a different manner, where Diomed in his answer to the ambassador of K. Latinus enumerates his misfortunes, and imputes the cause of them to this impious attempt upon Venus. *Æneid. lib. 11.*

*Invidisse Deos patriis ut redditus oris  
 Conjugium optatum et pulchram Calydonā viderem?  
 Nunc etiam horribili visu portenta sequuntur:  
 Et socii amissi petierunt Æquora pennis:  
 Fluminibusque vagantur aves (heu dira meorum  
 Supplicia!) et scopulos lacrymosis vocibus implent.  
 Hæc adeo ex illo mihi jam speranda fuerunt  
 Tempore, cum ferro cœlestia corpora demens  
 Appetii, et Veneris violavi vulnere dextram.*

v. 501. *Thy distant wife.*] The poet seems here to compliment the fair sex at the expence of truth, by concealing the character of Ægiale, whom he has described with the disposition of a faithful wife; though the history of those times represents her as an abandoned prosti-

Shall rouse thy slaves, and her lost lord deplore,  
The brave, the great, the glorious, now no more !

This said, she wip'd from Venus' wounded palm 505  
The sacred Ichor, and infus'd the balm.

Juno and Pallas with a smile survey'd,  
And thus to Jove began the blue-ey'd maid.

Permit thy daughter, gracious Jove ! to tell  
How this mischance the Cyprian queen befel. 510

As late she try'd with passion to inflame  
The tender bosom of a Grecian dame,  
Allur'd the fair with moving thoughts of joy,  
To quit her country for some youth of Troy ;  
The clasping zone, with golden buckles bound, 515  
Raz'd her soft hand with this lamented wound.

The fire of gods and men superior smil'd,  
And, calling Vunus' thus address'd his child.

tute, who gave up her own person and her husband's crown to her lover. So that Diomed at his return from Troy, when he expected to be received with all the tenderness of a loving spouse, found his bed and throne possessed by an adulterer, was forced to fly his country, and seek refuge and subsistence in foreign lands. Thus the offended goddess executed her vengeance by the proper effects of her own power, by involving the hero in a series of misfortunes proceeding from the incontinence of his wife.

v. 517. *The fire of gods and men superior smil'd.*] One may observe the decorum and decency our author constantly preserves on this occasion: Jupiter only *smiles*, the other gods *laugh out*. That Homer was no enemy to mirth may appear from several places of his poem; which so serious as it is, is interspersed with many gaye-



Not these, O daughter, are thy proper cares,  
Thee milder arts besit, and softer wars;

520

ties, indeed more than he has been followed in by the succeeding epic poets. Milton, who was perhaps fonder of him than the rest, has given most into the ludicrous; of which his *paradise of fools* in the third book, and his *jesting angels* in the sixth, are extraordinary instances. Upon the confusion of Babel, he says there was *great laughter in heaven*: as Homer calls the laughter of the gods in the first book ἀσβεστος γέλος, an *inextinguishable laugh* but the scripture might perhaps embolden the English poet, which says, *The Lord shall laugh them to scorn*, and the like. Plato is very angry at Homer for making the deities laugh, as a high indecency and offence to gravity. He says the gods in our author represent magistrates and persons in authority, and are designed as examples to such: on this supposition, he blames him for proposing immoderate laughter as a thing decent in great men. I forgot to take notice in its proper place, that the epithet *inextinguishable* is not to be taken literally for dissolute or ceaseless mirth, but was only a phrase of that time to signify cheerfulness and seasonable gayety; in the same manner as we may now say, *to die with laughter*, without being understood to be in danger of dying with it. The place, time, and occasion, were all agreeable to mirth: It was at a banquet; and Plato himself relates several things that past at the banquet of Agathon, which had not been either decent or rational at any other season. The same may be said of the present passage: raillery could never be more natural than when two of the female sex had an opportunity of triumphing over another whom they hated. Homer makes Wisdom herself not able, even in the presence of Jupiter, to resist the temptation. She breaks into a ludicrous speech, and the supreme being himself vouchsafes a smile at it. But this (as Eustathius remarks) is not introduced without judgment and

Sweet smiles are thine, and kind endearing charms  
To Mars and Pallas leave the deeds of arms.

Thus they in heav'n : While on the plain below  
The fierce Tydides charg'd his Dardan foe,  
Flush'd with celestial blood pursu'd his way, 525  
And fearless dar'd the threatening god of day ;  
Already in his hopes he saw him kill'd,  
Tho' screen'd behind Apollo's mighty shield.  
Thrice rushing furious, at the chief he strook ;  
His blazing buckler thrice Apollo shook ; 530  
He try'd the fourth : when breaking from the cloud.  
A more than mortal voice was heard aloud.

O son of Tydeus, cease ! be wise, and see  
How vast the diff'rence of the gods and thee ;  
Distance immense ! between the pow'rs that shine 535  
Above, eternal, deathless, and divine,  
And mortal man ! a wretch of humble birth,  
A short-liv'd reptile in the dust of earth.

So spoke the god who darts celestial fires ;  
He dreads his fury, and some steps retires. 540

precaution. For we see he makes Minerva first beg Jupiter's permission for his piece of freedom, *Permit thy daughter, gracious Jove* ; in which he asks the reader's leave to enliven his narration with this piece of gayety.

v. 540. *He dreads his fury, and some steps retires.*] Diomed still maintains his intrepid character ; he retires but a *step or two* even from Apollo. The conduct of Homer is remarkably just and rational here. He gives Diomed no sort of advantage over Apollo, because he would not feign what was intirely incredible, and what no allegory could justify. He wounds Venus and Mars, as

Then Phœbus bore the chief of Venus' race  
 To Troy's high fane, and to his holy place ;  
 Latona there and Phœbe heal'd the wound,  
 With vigour arm'd him, and with glory crown'd.

This done, the patron of the silver bow

545

A phantome rais'd, the same in shape and show

it is morally possible to overcome the irregular passions which are represented by those deities. But it is impossible to vanquish Apollo, in whatsoever capacity he is considered, either as the Sun, or as Destiny: one may shoot at the sun, but not hurt him; and one may strive against destiny, but not surmount it. Eustathius.

v. 546. *A phantome rais'd.*] The fiction of a god's placing a phantome instead of the hero, to delude the enemy and continue the engagement, means no more than that the enemy thought he was in the battle. This is the language of poetry, which prefers a marvellous fiction to a plain and simple truth, the recital whereof would be cold and uninteresting. Thus Minerva's guiding a javelin, signifies only that it was thrown with art and dexterity; Mars taking upon him the shape of Acamas, that the courage of Acamas incited him to do so, and in like manner of the rest. The present passage is copied by Virgil in the tenth Æneid, where the spectre of Æneas is raised by Juno or the Air, as it is here by Apollo or the Sun; both equally proper to be employed in forming an apparition. Whoever will compare the two authors on this subject, will observe with what admirable art, and what exquisite ornaments, the latter has improved and beautified his original. Scaliger in comparing these places, has absurdly censured the phantome of Homer for its inactivity; whereas it was only formed to represent the hero lying on the ground, without any appearance of life or motion. Spenser in the eighth canto of the third book seems to have improved this imagination

With great Æneas ; such the form he bore,  
And such in fight the radiant arms he wore.  
Around the spectre bloody wars are wag'd,  
And Greece and Troy with clashing shields engag'd. 550  
Meantime on Ilion's tow'r Apollo stood,  
And calling Mars, thus urg'd the raging god.

Stern pow'r of arms, by whom the mighty fall,  
Who bathe in blood, and shake the embattel'd wall,  
Rise in thy wrath ! to hell's abhor'd abodes 555  
Dispatch yon' Greek, and vindicate the gods.  
First rosy Venus felt his brutal rage ;  
Me next he charg'd, and dares all heav'n engage :  
The wretch would brave high heav'n's immortal fire,  
His triple thunder, and his bolts of fire. 560

The god of battle issues on the plain,  
Stirs all the ranks, and fires the Trojan train ;  
In form like Acamas, the Thracian guide,  
Enrag'd, to Troy's retiring chiefs he cry'd :  
How long, ye sons of Priam ! will ye fly, 565  
And unreveng'd see Priam's people die ?  
Still unresisted shall the foe destroy,  
And stretch the slaughter to the gates of Troy ?  
Lo brave Æneas sinks beneath his wound,  
Not godlike Hector more in arms renown'd : 570  
Haste all, and take the gen'rous warrior's part,  
He said ; new courage swell'd each hero's heart.

in the creation of his false Florimel, who performs all the functions of life, and gives occasion for many adventures.

Sarpedon first his ardent soul express'd,  
And, turn'd to Hector, these bold words address'd.  
Say, chief, is all thy ancient valour lost, 575  
Where are thy threats, and where thy glorious boast,  
That propt alone by Priam's race should stand  
Troy's sacred walls, nor need a foreign hand?  
Now, now thy country calls her wanted friends,  
And the proud vaunt in just derision ends. 580  
Remote they stand, while alien troops engage,  
Like trembling hounds before the lion's rage.  
Far distant hence I held my wide command,  
Where foaming Xanthus laves the Lycian land,  
With ample wealth (the wish of mortals) blest, 585  
A beauteous wife, and infant at her breast;

v. 575. *The speech of Sarpedon to Hector.*] It will be hard to find a speech more warm and spirited than this of Sarpedon, or which comprehends so much in so few words. Nothing could be more artfully thought upon to pique Hector, who was so jealous of his country's glory, than to tell him he had formerly conceived too great a notion of the Trojan valour; and to exalt the auxiliaries above his countrymen. The description Sarpedon gives of the little concern or interest himself had in the war, in opposition to the necessity and imminent danger of the Trojans, greatly strengthens this preference, and lays the charge very home upon their honour. In the latter part which prescribes Hector his duty, there is a particular reprimand in telling him how much it behoves him to animate and encourage the auxiliaries; for this is to say in other words, you should exhort them, and they are forced on the contrary to exhort you.

With



With those I left whatever dear could be;  
 Greece, if she conquers, nothing wins from me.  
 Yet first in fight my Lycian bands I chear,  
 And long to meet this mighty man ye fear.      590  
 While Hector idle stands, nor bids the brave  
 Their wives, their infants, and their altars save.  
 Haste, warrior, haste! preserve thy threaten'd state;  
 Or one vast burst of all-involving fate  
 Full o'er your tow'rs shall fall, and sweep away      595  
 Sons, fires, and wives, an undistinguish'd prey.  
 Rouze all thy Trojans, urge thy aids to fight;  
 These claim thy thoughts by day, thy watch by night:  
 With force incessant the brave Greeks oppose;  
 Such cares thy friends deserve, and such thy foes.      600

Stung to the heart the gen'rous Hector hears,  
 But just reproof with decent silence bears.  
 From his proud car the prince impetuous springs;  
 On earth he leaps; his brazen armour rings.  
 Two shining spears are brandish'd in his hands;      605  
 Thus arm'd, he animates his drooping bands,  
 Revives their ardour, turns their steps from flight,  
 And wakes anew the dying flames of fight,  
 They turn, they stand: the Greeks their fury dare,  
 Condense their pow'rs, and wait the growing war.      610

As when, on Ceres' sacred floor, the swain  
 Spreads the wide fan to clear the golden grain,

v. 611. *Ceres' sacred floor.*] Homer calls the threshing floor *sacred* (says Eustathius) not only as it was consecrated to Ceres, but in regard of its great use and ad-

And the light chaff, before the breezes born,  
Ascends in clouds from off the heapy corn ;  
The grey dust, rising with collected winds, 615  
Drives o'er the barn, and whitens all the hinds.  
So white with dust the Grecian host appears,  
From trampling steeds, and thundring charioteers.  
The dusky clouds from labour'd earth arise,  
And roll in smoaking volumes to the skies. 620  
Mars hovers o'er them with his sable shield,  
And adds new horrors to the darken'd field :  
Pleas'd with his charge, and ardent to fulfil  
In Troy's defence Apollo's heav'nly will :  
Soon as from fight the blue-ey'd maid retires, 625  
Each Trojan bosom with new warmth he fires.  
And now the god, from forth his sacred fane,  
Produc'd Æneas to the shouting train ;  
Alive, unharm'd, with all his peers around,  
Erect he stood, and vig'rous from his wound : 630  
Inquiries none they made ; the dreadful day  
No pause of words admits, no dull delay ;  
Fierce Discord storms, Apollo loud exclaims,  
Fame calls, Mars thunders, and the field's in flames.  
Stern Diomed with either Ajax stood, 635  
And great Ulysses bath'd in hostile blood.  
Embodied close, the lab'ring Grecian train  
The fiercest shock of charging hosts sustain ;

vantage to human-kind ; in which sense also he frequently gives the same epithet to *cities*, etc. This simile is of an exquisite beauty.

Unmov'd and silent, the whole war they wait,  
Serenely dreadful, and as fix'd as fate. 640

So when th' embattel'd clouds in dark array  
Along the skies their gloomy lines display,

v. 641. *So when th' embattel'd clouds*] This simile contains as proper a comparison, and as fine a picture of nature as any in Homer; however it is to be feared the beauty and propriety of it will not be very obvious to many readers, because it is the description of a natural appearance which they have not had an opportunity to remark, and which can only be observed in a mountainous country. It happens frequently in very calm weather, that the atmosphere is charged with thick vapours, whose gravity is such that they neither rise nor fall, but remain poized in the air at a certain height, where they continue frequently for several days together. In a plain country this occasions no other visible appearance, but of an uniform cloudy sky; but in a hilly region these vapours are to be seen covering the tops, and stretched along the sides of the mountains; the clouded parts above being terminated and distinguished from the clear parts below by a strait line running parallel to the horizon, as far as the mountains extend. The whole compass of nature cannot afford a nobler and more exact representation of a numerous army, drawn up in the line of battle, and expecting the charge. The long-extended even front, the closeness of the ranks, the firmness, order, and silence of the whole, are all drawn with great resemblance in this one comparison. The poet adds, that this appearance is while Boreas and the other boisterous winds, which disperse and break the clouds, are laid asleep. This is as exact as it is poetical; for when the winds arise, this regular order is soon dissolved. This circumstance is added to the description, as an ominous anticipation of the flight and dissipation of the Greeks, which soon ensued when Mars and Hector broke in upon them.

When now the north his boist'rous rage has spent,  
 And peaceful sleeps the liquid element,  
 The low-hung vapours, motionless and still, 645  
 Rest on the summits of the shaded hill;  
 'Till the mists scatters as the winds arise,  
 Dispers'd and broken thro' the ruffled skies.

Nor was the gen'ral wanting to his train,  
 From troop to troop he toils thro' all the plain. 650  
 Ye Greeks, be men ! the charge of battle bear ;  
 Your brave associates, and yourselves revere !

v. 651. *Ye Greeks, be men, etc.*] If Homer in the longer speeches of the Iliad, says all that could be said by eloquence, in the shorter he says all that can be said with judgment. Whatever some few modern critics have thought, it will be found upon due reflection, that the length or brevity of his speeches is determined as the occasions either allow leisure or demand haste. This concise oration of Agamemnon is a master-piece in the Laconic way. The exigence required he should say something very powerful, and no time was to be lost. He therefore warms the brave and the timorous by one and the same exhortation, which at once moves by the love of glory, and the fear of death. It is short and full, like that of the brave Scotch general under Gustavus, who upon sight of the enemy, said only this ; *See ye those lads ? Either sell them, or they will sell you.*

v. 652. *Your brave associates, and yourselves revere.*] This noble exhortation of Agamemnon is correspondent to the wise scheme of Nestor in the second book : where he advised to rank the soldiers of the same nation together, that being known to each other, all might be incited either by a generous emulation or a decent shame. Spondanus.

Let glorious acts more glorious acts inspire,  
 And catch from breast to breast the noble fire !  
 On valour's side the odds of combat lie, 655  
 The brave live glorious, or lamented die ;  
 The wretch who trembles in the field of fame,  
 Meets death, and worse than death, eternal shame.

These words he seconds with his flying lance,  
 To meet whose point was strong Deicoon's chance ; 660  
 Æneas' friend, and in his native place  
 Honour'd and lov'd like Priam's royal race :  
 Long had he fought the foremost in the field ;  
 But now the monarch's lance transpierc'd his shield :  
 His shield too weak the furious dart to stay, 665  
 Thro' his broad belt the weapon forc'd its way ;  
 The grizly wound dismiss'd his soul to hell,  
 His arms around him rattled as he fell.

Then fierce Æneas brandishing his blade,  
 In dust Orsilochus and Crethon laid, 670  
 Whose sire Diocleus, wealthy, brave and great,  
 In well-built Pheræ held his lofty seat :  
 Sprung from Alpheus, plenteous stream ! that yields  
 Increase of harvests to the Pylian fields.

He got Orsilochus, Diocleus he, 675  
 And these descended in the third degree.  
 Too early expert in the martial toil,  
 In fable ships they left their native soil,  
 T'avenge Atrides : now, untimely slain,  
 They fell with glory on the Phrygian plain. 680



So two young mountain lions, nurs'd with blood  
 In deep recesses of the gloomy wood,  
 Rush fearless to the plains, and uncontroul'd  
 Depopulate the stalls and waste the fold;  
 'Till pierc'd at distance from their native den, 685  
 O'erpower'd they fall beneath the force of men.  
 Prostrate on earth their beauteous bodies lay,  
 Like mountain firs, as tall and straight as they.  
 Great Menelaus views with pitying eyes,  
 Lifts his bright lance, and at the victor flies; 690  
 Mars urg'd him on: yet, ruthless in his hate,  
 The god but urg'd him to provoke his fate.  
 He thus advancing, Nestor's valiant son  
 Shakes for his danger, and neglects his own;

v. 691. *Mars urg'd him on.*] This is another instance of what has been in general observed in the discourse on the battles of Homer, his artful manner of making us measure one hero by another. We have here an exact scale of the valour of Æneas and Menelaus; how much the former outweighs the latter, appears by what is said of Mars in these lines, and by the necessity of Antilochus's assisting Menelaus: as afterwards what over-balance that assistance gave him, by Æneas's retreating from them both. How very nicely are these degrees marked on either hand! This knowledge of the difference which nature itself sets between one man and another, makes our author neither blame these two heroes for going against one, who was superior to each of them in strength; nor that one for retiring from both, when their conjunction made them an overmatch to him. There is great judgment in all this.

Struck with the thought, should Helen's lord be slain,  
And all his country's glorious labours vain. 696

Already met the threat'ning heroes stand;  
The spears already tremble in their hand:  
In rush'd Antilochus, his aid to bring,  
And fall or conquer by the Spartan king. 700

These seen, the Dardan backward turn'd his course,  
Brave as he was, and shunn'd unequal force.  
The breathless bodies to the Greeks they drew;  
Then mix in combate, and their toils renew.

First Pylæmenes, great in battle, bled, 705  
Who sheath'd in brass the Paphlagonians led.  
Atrides mark'd him where sublime he stood;  
Fix'd in his throat, the jav'lin drank his blood.  
The faithful Mydon, as he turn'd from fight  
His flying coursers, sunk to endless night: 710

A broken rock by Nestor's son was thrown:  
His bended arm receiv'd the falling stone,  
From his numb'd hand the iv'ry-studded reins,  
Dropt in the dust, are trail'd along the plains:  
Meanwhile his temples feel a deadly wound; 715  
He groans in death, and pond'rous sinks to ground:  
Deep drove his helmet in the sands, and there  
The head stood fix'd, the quiv'ring legs in air:

v. 696. *And all his country's glorious labours vain.*] For (as Agamemnon said in the fourth book upon Menelaus's being wounded) if he were slain, the war would be at an end, and the Greeks think only of returning to their country. Spondanus.

'Till trampled flat beneath the courfers feet,  
The youthful victor mounts his empty feat,  
And bears the prize in triumph to the fleet.

} 720

Great Hæctor ſaw, and raging at the view  
Pours on the Greeks: the Trojan troops purſue:  
He fires his hoſt with animating cries,  
And brings along the furies of the ſkies.

725

Mars, ſtern deſtroyer! and Bellona dread,  
Flame in the front, and thunder at their head;  
'This ſwells the tumult and the rage of fight;  
That ſhakes a ſpear that caſts a dreadful light;  
Where Hæctor march'd, the god of battles ſhin'd, 730  
Now ſtorm'd before him, and now rag'd behind.

'Tydides paus'd amidſt his full career;  
Then firſt the hero's manly breaſt knew fear.  
As when ſome ſimple ſwain his cot forſakes,  
And wide thro' ſens an unknown journey takes; 735  
If chance a ſwelling brook his paſſage ſtay,  
And foam imperious croſs the wand'rer's way,  
Confus'd he ſtops, a length of country paſt,  
Eyes the rough waves, and tir'd, returns at laſt.

v. 726. *Mars, ſtern deſtroyer, etc.*] There is a great nobleneſs in this paſſage. With what pomp is Hæctor introduced into the battle, where Mars and Bellona are his attendants! The retreat of Diomed is no leſs beautiful; Minerva had removed the miſt from his eyes, and he immediately diſcovers Mars aſſiſting Hæctor. His ſurprize on this occaſion is finely imaged by that of the traveller on the ſudden ſight of the river.

Book V.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      315

Amaz'd no less the great Tydides stands ;      740

He stay'd, and turning, thus address'd his bands.

No wonder, Greeks ! that all to Hector yield,

Secure of fav'ring gods, he takes the field ;

His strokes they second, and avert our spears :

Behold where Mars in mortal arms appears !      745

Retire then, warriors, but sedate and slow ;

Retire, but with your faces to the foe.

Trust not too much your unavailing might ;

'Tis not with Troy, but with the gods ye fight.

Now near the Greeks the black battalions drew ;      750

And first two leaders valiant Hector slew,

His force Anchialus and Mnesthes found,

In ev'ry art of glorious war renown'd ;

In the same car the chiefs to combat ride,

And fought united, and united dy'd.      755

Struck at the fight, the mighty Ajax glows

With thirst of vengeance, and assaults the foes.

His massy spear with matchless fury sent,

Thro' Amphius' belt and heaving belly went :

Amphius Apæsus' happy foil possess'd,      760

With herds abounding, and with treasure blest'd ;

But Fate resistless from his country led

The chief, to perish at his people's head.

Shook with his fall the brazen armour rung,

And fierce, to seize it, conqu'ring Ajax sprung ;      765

Around his head an iron tempest rain'd ;

A wood of spears his ample shield sustain'd ;

Beneath one foot the yet warm corps he press'd,  
 And drew his jav'lin from the bleeding breast :  
 He could no more ; the show'ring darts deny'd 770  
 To spoil his glitt'ring arms, and plummy pride.  
 Now foes on foes came pouring on the fields,  
 With bristling lances, and compacted shields ;  
 'Till in the steely circle straiten'd round,  
 Forc'd he gives way, and sternly quits the ground. 775  
 While thus they strive, Tlepolemus the great,  
 Urg'd by the force of unresisted fate,  
 Burns with desire Sarpedon's strength to prove ;  
 Alcides' offspring meets the son of Jove.  
 Sheath'd in bright arms each adverse chief came on, 780  
 Jove's great descendant, and his greater son.  
 Prepar'd for combat, ere the lance he tost.  
 The daring Rhodian vents his haughty boast.  
 What brings this Lycian counsellor so far,  
 To tremble at our arms, not mix in war ? 785  
 Know thy vain self, nor let their flatt'ry move,  
 Who style thee son of cloud-compelling Jove.  
 How far unlike those chiefs of race divine,  
 How vast the diff'rence of their deeds and thine !

v. 784. *What brings this Lycian counsellor so far.*]  
 There is a particular sarcasm in Tlepolemus's calling  
 Sarpedon in this place *Λυκίων Βεληφόρε*, *Lycian coun-*  
*sellor*, one better skilled in oratory than war ; as he was  
 the governor of a people who had long been in peace, and  
 probably (if we may guess from his character in Homer)  
 remarkable for his speeches. This is rightly observed by  
 Spondanus, though not taken notice of by M. Dacier.



Jove got such heroes as my fire, whose soul      790

No fear could daunt, nor earth, nor hell controul.

Troy felt his arm, and yon' proud ramparts stand

Rais'd on the ruins of his vengeful hand :

With six small ships, and but a slender train,

He left the town, a wide deserted plain.      795

But what art thou ? who deedless look'st around,

While unreveng'd thy Lycians bite the ground :

Small aid to Troy thy feeble force can be,

But wert thou greater, thou must yield to me.

Pierc'd by my spear to endless darkness go !      800

I make this present to the shades below.

The son of Hercules, the Rhodian guide,

Thus haughty spoke. The Lycian king reply'd.

Thy fire, O prince ! o'erturn'd the Trojan state,

Whose perjur'd monarch well deserv'd his fate ;      805

Those heav'nly steeds the hero fought so far,

False he detain'd, the just reward of war :

Nor so content, the gen'rous chief defy'd,

With base reproaches and unmanly pride.

But you, unworthy the high race you boast,      810

Shall raise my glory when thy own is lost :

Now meet thy fate, and by Sarpedon slain,

Add one more ghost to Pluto's gloomy reign.

v. 792. *Troy felt his arm.*] He alludes to the history of the first destruction of Troy by Hercules, occasioned by Laomedon's refusing that hero the horses, which were the reward promised him for the delivery of his daughter Hesione.

He said: both jav'lines at an instant flew;  
 Both struck, both wounded, but Sarpedon's flew: 815  
 Full in the boaster's neck the weapon stood,  
 Transfix'd his throat, and drank the vital blood;  
 The soul disdainful seeks the caves of night,  
 And his seal'd eyes for ever lose the light.

Yet not in vain, Tlepolemus, was thrown 820  
 Thy angry lance; which piercing to the bone  
 Sarpedon's thigh, had robb'd the chief of breath;  
 But Jove was present, and forbade the death.  
 Borne from the conflict by his Lycian throng,  
 The wounded hero dragg'd the lance along. 825  
 (His friends, each busy'd in his sev'ral part,  
 Thro' haste or danger had not drawn the dart.)  
 The Greeks with slain Tlepolemus retir'd;  
 Whose fall Ulysses view'd, with fury fir'd;  
 Doubtful if Jove's great son he should pursue, 830  
 Or pour his vengeance on the Lycian crew.  
 But heav'n and fate the first design withstand,  
 Nor this great death must grace Ulysses' hand.  
 Minerva drives him on the Lycian train;  
 Alastor, Cromius, Halius strow'd the plain, 835

v. 809. *With base reproaches and unmanly pride.*] Methinks these words κακῶ ἠνιπαπε μύθῳ include the chief sting of Sarpedon's answer to Tlepolemus, which no commentator that I remember has remarked. He tells him Laomedon deserved his misfortune, not only for his perfidy, but for injuring a brave man with unmanly and scandalous reproaches; alluding to those which Tlepolemus had just before cast upon him.

Alcan-

Alcander, Prytanis, Noemon fell,

And numbers more his sword had sent to hell :

But Hector saw ; and furious at the sight,

Rush'd terrible amidst the ranks of fight.

With joy Sarpedon view'd the wish'd relief, 840

And, faint, lamenting, thus implor'd the chief.

Oh suffer not the foe to bear away

My helpless corps, an unassisted prey ;

If I, unblest, must see my son no more,

My much-lov'd consort, and my native shore, 845

Yet let me die in Ilion's sacred wall ;

Troy, in whose cause I fell, shall mourn my fall.

He said, nor Hector to the chief replies,

But shakes his plume, and fierce to combat flies,

v. 848. *Nor Hector to the chief replies.*] Homer is in nothing more admirable than in the excellent use he makes of the silence of the persons he introduces. It would be endless to collect all the instances of this truth throughout his poem ; yet I cannot but put together those that have already occurred in the course of this work, and leave to the reader the pleasure of observing it in what remains. The silence of the two heralds, when they were to take Briseis from Achilles, in lib. .i. of which see note 39. In the third book, when Iris tells Helen the two rivals were to fight in her quarrel, and that all Troy were standing spectators ; that guilty princess makes no answer, but casts a veil over her face and drops a tear ; and when she comes <sup>th</sup> after into the presence of Priam, she speaks not, until after he has in a particular manner encouraged and commanded her. Paris and Menelaus being just upon the point to encounter, the latter declares his wishes and hopes of conquest to heaven ; the former being engaged in an unjust cause,

Swift as a whirlwind drives the scatt'ring foes, 850  
And dies the ground with purple as he goes.

Beneath a beech, Jove's consecrated shade,  
His mournful friends divine Sarpedon laid :  
Brave Pelagon, his fav'rite chief, was nigh,  
Who wrench'd the jav'lin from his sinewy thigh. 855

says not a word. In the fourth book, when Jupiter has expressed his desire to favour Troy, Juno declaims against him, but the Goddess of Wisdom, though much concerned, holds her peace. When Agamemnon too rashly reproves Diomed, that hero remains silent, and in the true character of a rough warrior, leaves it to his actions to speak for him. In the present book, when Sarpedon has reproached Hector in an open and generous manner, Hector preserving the same warlike character, returns no answer, but immediately hastens to the business of the field; as he also does in this place, where he instantly brings off Sarpedon, without so much as telling him he will endeavour his rescue. Chapman was not sensible of the beauty of this, when he imagined Hector's silence here proceeded from the pique he had conceived at Sarpedon for his late reproof of him. That translator has not scrupled to insert this opinion of his in a groundless interpolation altogether foreign to the author. But indeed it is a liberty he frequently takes, to draw any passage to some new, far-fetched conceit of his invention : insomuch, that very often before he translates any speech, to the sense or design of which he gives some fanciful turn of his own, he prepares it by several additional lines purposely to prepossess the reader of that meaning. Those who will take the trouble may see examples of this in what he sets before the speeches of Hector, Paris, and Helena, in the sixth book, and innumerable other places.

The fainting soul stood ready wing'd for flight,  
And o'er his eye-balls swum the shades of night ;

But Boreas rising fresh, with gentle breath,  
Recall'd his spirit from the gates of death.

The gen'rous Greeks recede with tardy pace, 860  
Tho' Mars and Hector thunder in their face ;  
None turn their backs to mean ignoble flight,  
Slow they retreat, and ev'n retreating fight.

Who first, who last, by Mars and Hector's hand  
Stretch'd in their blood, lay gasping on the sand ? 865

v. 858. *But Boreas rising fresh.*] Sarpedon's fainting at the extraction of the dart, and reviving by the free air, shews the great judgment of our author in these matters. But how poetically has he told this truth, in raising the god Boreas to his hero's assistance, and making a little machine of but one line ! This manner of representing common things in figure and person, was perhaps the effect of Homer's Ægyptian education.

v. 860. *The gen'rous Greeks, etc.*] This slow and orderly retreat of the Greeks, with their front constantly turned to the enemy, is a fine encomium both of their courage and discipline. This manner of retreat was in use among the ancient Lacedæmonians, as were many other martial customs described by Homer. This practice took its rise among that brave people, from the apprehensions of being slain with a wound received in their backs. Such a misfortune was not only attended with the highest infamy, but they had found a way to punish them who suffered thus even after their death, by denying them (as Eustathius informs us) the rites of burial.

v. 864. *Who first, who last, by Mars and Hector's hand  
Stretch'd in their blood, lay gasping on the sand ?*  
This manner of breaking into an interrogation, amidst the description of a battle, is what serves very much to



Teuthras the great, Orestes the renown'd  
 For manag'd steeds, and Trechus prefs'd the ground ;  
 Next Oenomaus, and Oenops' offspring dy'd ;  
 Oresbius last fell groaning at their side :  
 Oresbius, in his painted mitre gay, 870  
 In fat Bœotia held his wealthy sway,  
 Where lakes surround low Hyle's watry plain ;  
 A prince and people studious of their gain.

The carnage Juno from the skies survey'd,  
 And touch'd with grief bespoke the blue-ey'd maid. 875  
 Oh sight accurst ! shall faithless Troy prevail,  
 And shall our promise to our people fail ?  
 How vain the word to Menelaus giv'n  
 By Jove's great daughter and the queen of heav'n,  
 Beneath his arms that Priam's tow'rs should fall ; 880  
 If warring gods for ever guard the wall !  
 Mars, red with slaughter, aids our hated foes :  
 Haste, let us arm, and force with force oppose !

She spoke ; Minerva burns to meet the war :  
 And now heav'n's empress calls her blazing car 885

awaken the reader. It is here an invocation to the muse that prepares us for something uncommon ; and the muse is supposed immediately to answer, *Teuthras the great*, etc. Virgil, I think, has improved the strength of this figure by addressing the apostrophe to the person whose exploits he is celebrating, as to Camilla in the eleventh book.

*Quem telo primum, quem postremum, aspera virgo,  
 Dejicis ? aut quot humi morientia corpora fundis ?*

v. 885. *And now heav'n's empress calls her blazing car*, etc.] Homer seems never more delighted than when

At her command rush forth the steeds divine ;  
 Rich with immortal gold their trappings shine.  
 Bright Hebe waits, by Hebe, ever young,  
 The whirling wheels are to the chariot hung.  
 On the bright axle turns the bidden wheel 890  
 Of sounding brass ; the polish'd axle steel.  
 Eight brazen spokes in radiant order flame ;  
 The circles gold, of uncorrupted frame,  
 Such as the heav'ns produce : and round the gold  
 Two brazen rings of work divine were roll'd. 895  
 The bossy naves of solid silver shone ;  
 Braces of gold suspend the moving throne :  
 The car behind an arching figure bore ;  
 The bending concave form'd an arch before.  
 Silver the beam, th' extended yoke was gold, 900  
 And golden reins th' immortal coursers hold.  
 Herself, impatient, to the ready car  
 The coursers joins, and breathes revenge and war.  
 Pallas disrobes ; her radiant veil unty'd,  
 With flow'rs adorn'd, with art diversify'd. 905

he has some occasion of displaying his skill in *mechanics*. The detail he gives us of this chariot is a beautiful example of it, where he takes occasion to describe every different part with a happiness rarely to be found in descriptions of this nature.

v. 904. *Pallas disrobes.*] This fiction of Pallas arraying herself with the arms of Jupiter, finely intimates (says Eustathius) that she is nothing else but the wisdom of the Almighty. The same author tells us, that the ancients marked this place with a star, to distinguish it as one of those that were perfectly admirable. Indeed there

(The labour'd veil her heav'nly fingers wove)

Flows on the pavement of the court of Jove.

Now heav'n's dread arms her mighty limbs invest,

Jove's cuirass blazes on her ample breast;

Deck'd in sad triumph for the mournful field, 910

O'er her broad shoulders hangs his horrid shield,

Dire, black, tremendous! round the margin roll'd,

A fringe of serpents hissing guards the gold:

is a greatness and sublimity in the whole passage, which is astonishing, and superior to any imagination but that of Homer, nor is there any that might better give occasion for that celebrated saying, *That he was the only man who had seen the forms of the gods, or the only man who had shewn them.* With what nobleness he describes the chariot of Juno, the armour of Minerva, the Ægis of Jupiter, filled with the figures of Horror, Affright, Discord, and all the terrors of war, the effects of his wrath against men; and that spear with which his power and wisdom overturns whole armies, and humbles the pride of the kings who offend him! But we shall not wonder at the unusual majesty of all these ideas, if we consider that they have a near resemblance to some descriptions of the same kind in the sacred writings, where the Almighty is represented armed with terror, and descending in majesty to be avenged on his enemies: *The chariot, the bow, and the shield of God,* are expressions frequent in the Psalms.

v. 913. *A fringe of serpents.*] Our author does not particularly describe the fringe of the Ægis, as consisting of serpents; but that it did so may be learned from Herodotus in his fourth book. "The Greeks, says he, borrowed the vest and shield of Minerva from the Lybians, only with this difference, that the Lybian shield was fringed with thongs of leather, the Grecian with serpents." And Virgil's description of the same Ægis agrees with this, *Æn.* 8. v. 435.

Here all the terrors of grim war appear,  
 Here rages Force, here tremble Flight and Fear, 915  
 Here storm'd Contention, and here Fury frown'd,  
 And the dire orb portentous Gorgon crown'd.  
 The massy golden helm she next assumes,  
 That dreadful nods with four o'ershading plumes ;  
 So vast, the broad circumference contains 920  
 A hundred armies on a hundred plains.  
 The goddess thus th' imperial car ascends ;  
 Shook by her arm the mighty jav'lin bends,

*Ægidaque horrifera, turbatæ Pallidis arma,  
 Certatim squamis serpentum, auroque polibant,  
 Connexosque angues——*

This note is taken from Spondanus, as is also Ogilby's on this place, but he has translated the passage of Herodotus wrong, and made the Lybian shield have the serpents which were peculiar to the Grecian. By the way I must observe, that Ogilby's notes are for the most part a transcription of Spondanus's.

v. 920. *So vast, the wide circumference contains a hundred armies.*] The words in the original are ἑκατον πόλειω περιέσσει ἀργεῖαν, which are capable of two meanings ; either that this helmet of Jupiter was sufficient to have covered the armies of an hundred cities, or that the armies of an hundred cities were engraved upon it. It is here translated in such a manner that it may be taken either way, though the learned are most inclined to the former sense, as that idea is greater and more extraordinary, indeed more agreeable to Homer's bold manner, and not extravagant if we call in the allegory to our assistance, and imagine it (with M. Dacier) an allusion to the providence of God that extends over all the universe.

Pond'rous and huge; that when her fury burns,  
Proud tyrants humbles, and whole hosts o'erturns. 925

Swift at the scourge th' ethereal courfers fly,  
While the smooth chariot cuts the liquid sky.  
Heav'n gates spontaneous open to the pow'rs,  
Heav'n's golden gates, kept by the winged hours;

v. 928. *Heav'n gates spontaneous open'd.*] This marvellous circumstance of the gates of heaven opening themselves of their own accord to the divinities that pass through them, is copied by Milton, lib. 5.

——— *At the gate*

*Of heav'n arriv'd, the gate self-open'd wide  
On golden hinges turning, as by work  
Divine the sov'reign architect had fram'd.*

And again in the seventh book,

————— *Heav'n open'd wide*

*Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,  
On golden hinges moving*—————

As the fiction that the hours are the guards of those gates, gave him the hint of that beautiful passage in the beginning of his sixth,

————— *The morn*

*Wak'd by the circling hours, with rosy hand  
Unbarr'd the gates of light, etc.*

This expression of *the gates of heaven* is in the Eastern manner, where they said the *gates* of heaven, or of earth, for the *entrance* or *extremities* of heaven or earth; a phrase usual in the scriptures, as is observed by Dacier.

v. 929. *Heav'n's golden gates kept by the winged hours.*] By the *hours* here are meant the *seasons*; and so Hobbes translates it, but spoils the sense by what he adds,



Book V.      H O M E R's I L I A D.      327

Commission'd in alternate watch they stand,      930

The sun's bright portals and the skies command,

Involve in clouds th' eternal gates of day,

Or the dark barrier roll with ease away.

The founding hinges ring : on either side

The gloomy volumes, pierc'd with light, divide.      935

The chariot mounts, where deep in ambient skies

Confus'd, Olympus' hundred heads arise ;

Where far apart the thund'rer fills his throne,

O'er all the gods, superior and alone.

There with her snowy hand the queen restrains      940

The fiery steeds, and thus to Jove complains.

O fire ! can no resentment touch thy soul ?

Can Mars rebel, and does no thunder roll ?

What lawless rage on yon' forbidden plain,

What rash destruction ! and what heroes slain ?      945

Venus, and Phœbus with the dreadful bow,

Smile on the slaughter, and enjoy my woe.

Mad, furious pow'r ! whose unrelenting mind

No god can govern, and no justice bind.

Say, mighty father ! shall we scourge his pride,      950

And drive from fight th' impetuous homicide ?

*Tho' to the seasons Jove the power gave*

*Alone to judge of early and of late ;*

Which is utterly unintelligible, and nothing like Homer's thought. Natalis Comes explains it thus, lib. 4. c. 5.

*Homerus libro quinto Iliadis non solum has, portas coeli servare, sed etiam nubes inducere et serenum facere, cum libuerit ; quippe cum apertum coelum, serenum nominent poetæ, at clausum, tectum nubibus.*

To whom assenting, thus the thund'rer said :  
Go ! and the great Minerva be thy aid.

To tame the monster-god Minerva knows,  
And oft' afflicts his brutal breast with woes.

955

He said ; Saturnia, ardent to obey,  
Lash'd her white steeds along th' aerial way.  
Swift down the steep of heav'n the chariot rolls,  
Between th' expanded earth and starry poles.  
Far as a shepherd, from some point on high,  
O'er the wide main extends his boundless eye ;  
Thro' such a space of air, with thund'ring sound,  
At ev'ry leap th' immortal couriers bound,

960

v. 954. *To tame the monster-god Minerva knows.*] For it is only *wisdom* that can master *strength*. It is worth while here to observe the conduct of Homer. He makes Minerva, and not Juno, to fight with Mars ; because a combat between Mars and Juno could not be supported by any allegory to have authorized the fable : whereas the allegory of a battle between Mars and Minerva is very open and intelligible. Eustathius.

v. 960. *Far as a shepherd, etc.*] Longinus citing these verses as a noble instance of the sublime, speaks to this effect. “ In what a wonderful manner does Homer  
“ exalt his deities ; measuring the leaps of their very  
“ horses by the whole breadth of the horizon ! Who  
“ is there that considering the magnificence of this hy-  
“ perbole, would not cry out with reason, That if these  
“ heavenly steeds were to make a second leap, the world  
“ would want room for a third ?” This puts me in mind of that passage in Hesiod's Theogony, where he describes the height of the heavens, by saying a smith's anvil would be nine days in falling from thence to earth.

Troy now they reach'd, and touch'd those banks divine  
 Where silver Simois and Scamander join. 965  
 There Juno stopp'd, and (her fair steeds unloos'd)  
 Of air condens'd a vapour circumfus'd :  
 For these, impregnant with celestial dew  
 On Simois' brink ambrosial herbage grew.  
 Thence to relieve the fainting Argive throng, 970  
 Smooth as the sailing doves, they glide along.

v 971. *Smooth as the sailing doves.*] This simile is intended to express the lightness and smoothness of the motion of these goddesses. The doves to which Homer compares them, are said by the ancient scholiast to leave no impression of their steps. The word βάραν in the original may be rendered *ascenderunt* as well as *incesserunt*; so may imply (as M. Dacier translates it) moving without touching the earth, which Milton finely calls *smooth sliding without step*. Virgil describes the gliding of one of these birds by an image parallel to that in this verse.

— *Mox ære lapsa quieto,*

*Radit iter liquidum, celeres neque commovet alas.*

This kind of movement was appropriated to the gods by the Ægyptians, as we see in Heliodorus, lib. 3. Homer might possibly have taken this notion from them. And Virgil in that passage where Æneas discovers Venus by her gait, *Et vera incessu patuit Dea*, seems to allude to some manner of moving that distinguished divinities from mortals. This opinion is likewise hinted at by him in the fifth Æneid, where he so beautifully and briefly enumerates the distinguishing marks of a deity.

The best and bravest of the Grecian band  
 (A warlike circle) round Tydides stand;  
 Such was their look as lions bath'd in blood,  
 Or foaming boars, the terror of the wood. 975  
 Heav'n's empress mingles with the mortal croud,  
 And shouts, in Stentor's founding voice, aloud:  
 Stentor the strong, endu'd with brazen lungs,  
 Whose throat surpass'd the force of fifty tongues.

Inglorious Argives! to your race a shame, 980  
 And only men in figure and in name!  
 Once from the walls your tim'rous foes engag'd,  
 While fierce in war divine Achilles rag'd,  
 Now issuing fearless they possess the plain,  
 Now win the shores, and scarce the seas remain, 985

————— *Divina signa decoris,*  
*Ardentesque notate oculos: qui spiritus illi,*  
*Qui vultus, vocisque sonus, vel gressus eunti!*

This passage likewise strengthens what is said in the notes on the first book, v. 268.

v. 978 *Stentor the strong, endu'd with brazen lungs.* ]  
 There was a necessity for criers whose voices were stronger than ordinary, in those ancient times, before the use of trumpets was known in their armies. And that they were in esteem afterwards, may be seen from Herodotus, where he takes notice that Darius had in his train an Egyptian, whose voice was louder and stronger than any man's of his age. There is a farther propriety in Homer's attributing this voice to Juno; because Juno is no other than the *air*, and because the *air* is the cause of *sound*. Eustathius, Spondanus.

Her

Her speech new fury to their hearts convey'd;  
 While near Tydides stood the Athenian maid;  
 The king beside his panting steeds she found,  
 O'erspent with toil, reposing on the ground;  
 To cool his glowing wound he fate apart, 990  
 (The wound inflicted by the Lycian dart)  
 Large drops of sweat from all his limbs descend,  
 Beneath his pond'rous shield his sinews bend,  
 Whose ample belt that o'er his shoulder lay,  
 He eas'd; and wash'd the clotted gore away. 995  
 The goddess leaning o'er the bending yoke,  
 Beside his coursers, thus her silence broke.

Degen'rate prince! and not of Tydeus' kind,  
 Whose little body lodg'd a mighty mind;  
 Foremost he press'd in glorious toils to share, 1000  
 And scarce refrain'd when I forbade the war.  
 Alone, unguarded, once he dar'd to go,  
 And feast incircled by the Theban foe;

v. 998. *Degen'rate prince!* etc.] This speech of Minerva to Diomed derives its whole force and efficacy from the offensive comparison she makes between Tydeus and his son. Tydeus when he was single in the city of his enemy, fought and overcame the Thebans, even though Minerva forbade him; Diomed in the midst of his army, and with enemies inferior in number, declines the fight, though Minerva commands him. Tydeus disobeys her, to engage in the battle; Diomed disobeys her, to avoid engaging; and that too after he had upon many occasions experienced the assistance of the goddess. Madam Dacier should have acknowledged this remark to belong to Eustathius.



There brav'd, and vanquish'd, many a hardy knight ;  
 Such nerves I gave him, and such force in fight. 1005  
 Thou too no less hast been my constant care ;  
 Thy hands I arm'd, and sent thee forth to war :  
 But thee or fear deters, or sloth detains ;  
 No drop of all thy father warms thy veins.

The chief thus answer'd mild. Immortal maid ! 1010  
 I own thy presence, and confess thy aid.  
 Not fear, thou know'st, with-holds me from the plains :  
 Nor sloth hath seiz'd me, but thy word restrains :  
 From warring gods thou bad'st me turn my spear,  
 And Venus only found resistance here. 1015  
 Hence, goddess ! heedful of thy high commands,  
 Loth I gave way, and warn'd out Argive bands ;  
 For Mars, the homicide, these eyes beheld,  
 With slaughter red, and raging round the field.

Then thus Minerva. Brave Tydides, hear ! 1020  
 Not Mars himself, nor ought immortal fear.  
 Full on the god impel thy foaming horse :  
 Pallas commands, and Pallas lends thee force.  
 Rash, furious, blind, from these to those he flies,  
 And ev'ry side of wav'ring combat tries ; 1025

v. 1024. *Rash, furious, blind, from these to those he flies.*] Minerva in this place very well paints the manners of Mars, whose business was always to fortify the weaker side, in order to keep up the broil. I think the passage includes a fine allegory of the nature of war. Mars is called inconstant, and a breaker of his promises, because the chance of war is wavering, and uncertain victory is perpetually changing sides. This latent mean-

Large promise makes, and breaks the promise made;  
Now gives the Grecians, now the Trojans aid.

She said, and to the steeds approaching near,  
Drew from his seat the martial charioteer.  
The vig'rous pow'r the trembling car ascends: 1030  
Fierce for revenge; and Diomed attends.  
The groaning axle bent beneath the load;  
So great a hero, and so great a god.  
She snatch'd the reins, she lash'd with all her force,  
And full on Mars impell'd the foaming horse: 1035  
But first, to hide her heav'nly visage, spread  
Black Orcus' helmet o'er her radiant head.

ing of the epithet ἀλλαπρόσταλλος, is taken notice of by Eustathius.

v. 1033. *So great a god.*] The translation has ventured to call a goddess so; in imitation of the Greek, which uses the word Θεός promiscuously for either gender. Some of the Latin poets have not scrupled to do the same. Statius, *Thebaid* 4. (speaking of Diana)

*Nec caret umbra Deo.*

And Virgil, *Æn.* 2. where Æneas is conducted by Venus thro' the dangers of the fire and the enemy;

*Descendo, ac ducente Deo, flammam inter et hostes  
Expedior* —————

v. 1037. *Black Orcus' helmet.*] As every thing that goes into the dark empire of Pluto, or Orcus, disappears and is seen no more; the Greeks from thence borrowed this figurative expression, *to put on Pluto's helmet*, that is to say, *to become invisible*. Plato uses this proverb in the tenth book of his Republic, and Aristophanes in *Acharense*. Eustathius.

Just then gigantic Periphas lay slain,  
 The strongest warrior of th' Ætolian train ;  
 The god who slew him, leaves his prostrate prize 1040  
 Stretch'd where he fell, and at Tydides flies.  
 Now rushing fierce in equal arms appear,  
 The daring Greek ; the dreadful God of war !  
 Full at the chief, above his courser's head,  
 From Mars his arm th' enormous weapon fled : 1045  
 Pallas oppos'd her hand, and caus'd to glance  
 Far from the car, the strong immortal lance.  
 Then threw the force of Tydeus' warlike son ;  
 The jav'lin hiss'd ; the goddess urg'd it on :  
 Where the broad cincture girt his armour round, 1050  
 It pierc'd the god : his groin receiv'd the wound.  
 From the rent skin the warrior tugs again  
 The smoking steel. Mars bellows with the pain :  
 Loud as the roar encountring armies yield,  
 When shouting millions shake the thund'ring field. 1055

v. 1054. *Loud as the roar encountring armies yield.*]  
 This *hyperbole* to express the roaring of Mars, so strong  
 as it is, yet is not extravagant. It wants not a quali-  
 fying circumstance or two ; the voice is not human, but  
 that of a deity ; and the comparison being taken from  
 an army, renders it more natural with respect to the god  
 of war. It is less daring to say, that a god could send  
 forth a voice as loud as the shout of two armies, than  
 that Camilla, a Latin nymph, could run so swiftly over  
 the corn as not to bend an ear of it. Or, to alledge a  
 nearer instance, that Polyphemus, a meer mortal, shook  
 all the island of Sicily, and made the deepest caverns of  
 Ætna roar with his cries. Yet Virgil generally escapes

Both armies start, and trembling gaze around;  
 And earth and heav'n rebellow to the sound.  
 As vapours blown by Auster's sultry breath,  
 Pregnant with plagues, and shedding seeds of death,  
 Beneath the rage of burning Sirius rise, 1060  
 Choak the parch'd earth, and blacken all the skies;  
 In such a cloud the god from combat driv'n,  
 High o'er the dusty whirlwind scales the heav'n.  
 Wild with his pain, he fought the bright abodes,  
 There fullen fate beneath the fire of gods, 1065  
 Show'd the celestial blood, and with a grone  
 Thus pour'd his plaints before th' immortal throne.

the censure of those moderns who are shocked with the bold flights of Homer. It is usual with those who are slaves to common opinion, to overlook or praise the same things in one, that they blame in another. They think to depreciate Homer in extolling the judgment of Virgil, who never shewed it more than when he followed him in these boldnesses. And indeed they who would take boldness from poetry, must leave dulness in the room of it.

v. 1058. *As vapours blown, etc.*] Mars after a sharp engagement, amidst the rout of the Trojans, wrapt in a whirlwind of dust, which was raised by so many thousand combatants, flies towards Olympus. Homer compares him in this estate, to those black clouds, which during a scorching southern wind in the dog-days, are sometimes born towards heaven; for the wind at that time gathering the dust together, forms a dark cloud of it. The heat of the fight, the precipitation of the Trojans, together with the clouds of dust that flew above the army, and took Mars from the sight of his enemy, supplied Homer with this noble image. Dacier.

Can Jove, supine, flagitious facts survey,  
 And brook the furies of this daring day ?  
 For mortal men celestial pow'rs engage, 1070  
 And gods on gods exert eternal rage.  
 From thee, O father ! all these ills we bear,  
 And thy fell daughter with the shield and spear :  
 Thou gav'st that fury to the realms of light,  
 Pernicious, wild, regardless of the right. 1075  
 All heav'n beside revers thy sov'reign sway,  
 Thy voice we hear, and thy behests obey :  
 'Tis hers t' offend, and ev'n offending share  
 Thy breast, thy counsels, thy distinguish'd care :  
 So boundless she, and thou so partial grown, 1080  
 Well may we deem the wond'rous birth thy own.  
 Now frantic Diomed, at her command,  
 Against th' immortals lifts his raging hand,  
 The heav'nly Venus first his fury found,  
 Me next encountring, me he dar'd to wound : 1085  
 Vanquish'd I fled : ev'n I the god of fight,  
 From mortal madness scarce was sav'd by flight.  
 Else had'st thou seen me sunk on yonder plain,  
 Heap'd round, and heaving under loads of slain !

v. 1074. *Thou gav'st that fury to the realms of light, pernicious, wild, etc.*] It is very artful in Homer, to make Mars accuse Minerva of all those faults and enormities he was himself so eminently guilty of. Those people who are the most unjust and violent, accuse others, even the best, of the same crimes : every irrational man is a distorted rule, tries every thing by that wrong measure, and forms his judgment accordingly. Eustathius.



Or pierc'd with Grecian darts, for ages lie, 1090  
 Condemn'd to pain tho' fated not to die.

Him thus upbraiding with a wrathful look  
 The lord of thunder view'd, and stern bespoke.  
 To me, perfidious ! this lamenting strain ?  
 Of lawless force shall lawless Mars complain ? 1095  
 Of all the gods who tread the spangled skies,  
 Thou most unjust, most odious in our eyes !

v. 1091. *Condemn'd to pain, tho' fated not to die.*] Those are mistaken who imagine our author represents his gods as mortal. He only represents the inferior or corporeal deities as capable of pains and punishments, during the will of Jupiter, which is not inconsistent with true theology. If Mars is said in Dione's speech to Venus to have been near *perishing* by Otus and Ephialtes, it means no more than lasting misery, such as Jupiter threatens him with when he speaks of precipitating him into Tartarus. Homer takes care to tell us both of this god and of Pluto, when Pæon cured them, that they were not mortal.

Οὐ μὲν γάρ τε καταθνήσκος γ' ἐτέτυκτο.

v. 1096. *Of all the gods—Thou most unjust, most odious, etc.*] Jupiter's reprimand of Mars is worthy the justice and goodness of the great governor of the world, and seems to be no more than was necessary in this place. Homer hereby admirably distinguishes between Minerva and Mars, that is to say, between Wisdom and ungoverned Fury ; the former is produced from Jupiter without a mother, to show that it proceeds from God alone ; (and Homer's alluding to that fable in the preceding speech shows that he was not unacquainted with this opinion.) The latter is born of Jupiter and Juno, because, as Plato explains it, whatever is created by the

Inhuman discord is thy dire delight,  
 The waste of slaughter, and the rage of fight.  
 No bound, no law thy fiery temper quells,                    1100  
 And all thy mother in thy soul rebels.

ministry of second causes, and the concurrence of matter, partakes of that original spirit of division which reigned in the *chaos*, and is of a corrupt and rebellious nature. The reader will find this allegory pursued with great beauty in these two speeches; especially where Jupiter concludes with saying he will not destroy Mars, because he comes from himself; God will not annihilate Passion, which he created to be of use to Reason: “Wisdom (says Eustathius upon this place) has occasion for passion, in the same manner as princes have need of guards. Therefore reason and wisdom correct and keep passion in subjection, but do not intirely destroy and ruin it.”

V. 1101. *And all thy mother in thy soul rebels, etc.*] Jupiter says of Juno, that *she has a temper which is insupportable, and knows not how to submit, though he is perpetually chastising her with his reproofs*. Homer says no more than this, but M. Dacier adds, *Si je ne la retenois par la severite des mes loix, il n'est rien qu'elle ne bouleversust dans l'Olympe et sous l'Olympe*. Upon which she makes a remark to this effect, “That if it were not for the laws of providence, the whole world would be nothing but confusion.” This practice of refining and adding to Homer's thought in the text, and then applauding the author for it in the notes, is pretty usual with the more florid modern translators. In the third Iliad, in Helen's speech to Priam, v. 175. she wishes she had rather died than followed Paris to Troy. To this is added in the French, *Mais je ne'eus ni assez de courage ni assez de vertu*, for which there is not the least hint in Homer. I mention this particular instance in pure justice, because in the treatise *de la corruption*

In vain our threats, in vain our pow'r we use;  
 She gives th' example, and her son pursues.  
 Yet long th' inflicted pangs thou shalt not mourn, 1104  
 Sprung since thou art from Jove, and heav'nly born  
 Else, findg'd with lightning, had't thou hence been  
 thrown,

Where chain'd on burning rocks the Titans groan.

Thus he who shakes Olympus with his nod;  
 Then gave to Pæon's care the bleeding god.  
 With gentle hand the balm he pour'd around, 1110  
 And heal'd th' immortal flesh, and clos'd the wound.  
 As when the fig's prest juice, infus'd in cream,  
 To curds coagulates the liquid stream,

*de gout exam. de Liv. 3.* she triumphs over Mons. de la Motte, as if he had omitted the sense and moral of Homer in that place, when in truth he only left out her own interpolation.

v. 1112. *As when the fig's prest juice, etc.*] The sudden operation of the remedy administered by Pæon, is well expressed by this similitude. It is necessary just to take notice, that they anciently made use of the juice or sap of a fig for runnet, to cause their milk to coagulate. It may not be amiss to observe, that Homer is not very delicate in the choice of his allusions. He often borrowed his similes from low life, and provided they illustrated his thoughts in a just and lively manner, it was all he had regard to.

THE allegory of this whole book lies so open, is carried on with such closeness, and wound up with so much fullness and strength, that it is a wonder how it could enter into the imagination of any critic, that these actions of Diomed were only a daring and extravagant fiction in Homer, as if he affected the marvellous at any

Sudden the fluids fix, the parts combin'd ;

Such, and so soon, th' æthereal texture join'd. XVI 5

rate. The great moral of it is, that a brave man should not contend against heaven, but resist only Venus and Mars, incontinence and ungoverned fury. Diomed is proposed as an example of a great and enterprizing nature, which would perpetually be venturing too far, and committing extravagancies or impieties, did it not suffer itself to be checked and guided by Minerva or Prudence: for it is this Wisdom (as we are told in the very first lines of the book) that raises a hero above all others. Nothing is more observable than the particular care Homer has taken to shew he designed this moral. He never omits any occasion throughout the book, to put it in express terms into the mouths of the gods, or persons of the greatest weight. Minerva, at the beginning of the battle, is made to give this precept to Diomed ; *Fight not against the gods, but give way to them, and resist only Venus.* The same goddess opens his eyes, and enlightens him so far as to perceive when it is heaven that acts immediately against him, or when it is man only that opposes him. The hero himself, as soon as he has performed her dictates in driving away Venus, cries out, not as to the Goddess, but as to the Passion, *Thou hast no business with warriors, is it not enough that thou deceivest weak women ?* Even the mother of Venus, while she comforts her daughter, bears testimony to the moral: *That man* (says she) *is not long-lived who contends with the gods.* And when Diomed, transported by his nature, proceeds but a step too far, Apollo discovers himself in the most solemn manner, and declares this truth in his own voice, as it were by direct revelation: *Mortal, forbear, consider ! and know the vast difference there is between the gods and thee. They are immortal and divine, but man a miserable reptile of the dust.*

Cleans'd from the dust and gore, fair Hebe drest

His mighty limbs in an immortal vest.

Glorious he fate in majesty restor'd,

Fast by the throne of heav'n's superior lord.

Juno and Pallas mount the blest abodes,

1120

Their task perform'd, and mix among the gods.

*The End of the First Volume.*







