

HOMER'S ODYSSEY



W. Mottershead

HOMER'S ODYSSEY



"FLASHING SHE FELL TO THE EARTH FROM
THE GLITTERING HEIGHTS OF OLYMPUS"

HOMER'S ODYSSEY

A LINE-FOR-LINE TRANSLATION IN
THE METRE OF THE ORIGINAL BY
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EDITOR OF "SELECTIONS FROM THE INFERNO" GOETHE'S "IPHIGENIE" MILTON'S "AREOPAGITICA"
MORE'S "UTOPIA" VIRGIL'S "AENEID" I & VI ETC

WITH TWENTY-FOUR ILLUSTRATIONS BY
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TO
MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER
AND TO ALL THOSE WHOSE LOVE
FOR HOMER AND FOR WHATEVER
ELSE IN ART IS TRUE AND BEAUTI-
FUL GAVE ME THE COURAGE TO
UNDERTAKE AND THE ENDURANCE
TO COMPLETE THIS VERSION OF
THE ODYSSEY

**Ἦτοι μὲν πολλῶν ἐπιθεύομαι ἄλλὰ μοι ἀντῶ
Ἔργον ἀέξουσιν μάκαρες θεοὶ, ᾧ ἐπιμίμνω.

PREFACE

IN his *Lectures on Translating Homer* Matthew Arnold advises the translator to have nothing to do with side questions—such as the question whether Homer ever existed. I should rather say that, however much interest he may take in antiquarian, or philological, or other side questions, it is best for him to give a wide berth to theoretics and polemics. Indeed, if the translator is one who fulfils Matthew Arnold's requirements by 'reading Homer perpetually for the sake of his poetry'—if he has experienced the happiness of long and continuous intimacy with what is so beautiful and so restful—he will shrink with pain from the Babel and the acrimony of literary disputation, and will feel much inclined to say nothing at all, knowing full well that, whatever he may say or may leave unsaid, his work will have to speak for itself. But I have been asked to write a Preface, and must do so.

¶ I shall state briefly the origin and the object of my version and the main principles that have guided me. Also I shall give what information may seem likely to prove interesting or useful on the subject of the metre—some of it highly superfluous for scholars; and lastly I shall explain the pronunciation of the more difficult Greek names that occur in the poem.

¶ It was many years ago, in Central Africa, that I first conceived the wish to translate the *Odyssey*. At that time Dante, Homer and Shakespeare were often my only companions, save those well-loved *ἐπίηpes ἐταῖροι*—my faithful blacks; and while exploring the unknown regions and navigating the stormy waters of Nyasa I re-read the Wanderings of Odysseus with an interest very different from that with which I had studied them formerly for academical purposes, and I was so deeply moved by the poem that I naturally felt a desire to share my pleasure with others.

¶ I knew, of course, that English translations existed—some of them of high literary merit; but what I longed to do was to reproduce the original, as far as might be, in its simplicity, its directness and its rapidity—characteristics which were, as far as I could remember, scarcely discernible in the metrical versions that I had seen. I longed to produce a translation which, although perhaps not constructed after the rules of any literary Beckmesser, might act, so to speak, as a good conductor for transmitting some of the vibration, the warmth and the impetuosity of the poem—some of that fascinating influence which Homer's simple, direct, rapid narration exercised on me—and thus might enable readers ignorant of Greek to follow the story with ease, and to experience something of the same pleasure as those feel who can read the original.

¶ This wish remained dormant for many years, and when at last under favouring influences it revived and demanded a form I found myself obliged to consider what form I should choose for it. The more I had become familiar

Preface with Homer and with what, like Homer, is truly great and beautiful, the more I had perceived that there is no affinity between such things and affectation, and I had become more and more determined to avoid everything affected, quaint, archaic, 'literary,' 'poetical,'—to clear my mind of cant, as Dr. Johnson advises—to ignore the jargon and the maxims of the so-called literary person, and to endeavour to use a diction natural, simple, vigorous, direct, such as Homer himself uses. I also felt more and more determined to be literal, as far as was consistent with a natural, unaffected, idiomatic diction—to give, as nearly as possible, just what Homer said, and to give it, as far as possible, just as he said it—to act up to Browning's maxim :

*In translation, if you please,
Exact!—No pretty lying that improves
To suit the modern taste!*

Moreover I felt more and more convinced that in order to attain my object I must choose a rhythmical form. I was, therefore, faced with the question : What rhythmical form ?

¶ Rime, whether in couplets or in stanzas, I rejected at once. It seemed to me essentially alien to Homer, and perhaps I was somewhat influenced by the dislike with which the Greeks and Romans seem to have regarded it, and by memories of the ridicule attaching to Cicero's unlucky '*O fortunatam natam me consule Romam!*' Besides, I felt that it would necessitate paraphrase and 'pretty lying,' and would ruin the continuous flow of the narrative ; and all these reasons of mine were confirmed and supplemented later by Matthew Arnold's *Lectures*, which I first saw after I had translated about two Books.

¶ As for the ballad-form, it seemed to me still more alien to Homer than even rimed couplets or stanzas. The merits of the English ballad are something totally different from the merits of Homer's poetry, and, although on rare occasions it rises to a pathos almost comparable with that of the *Odyssey*, it is associated, alas, with a great deal that is very prosaic, very banal, very 'pert and jaunty,' and the ballad-metre has, as Matthew Arnold well says, 'no capacity for sustained nobleness.' Moreover a ballad-form had for me the insuperable objection that it did not allow line-for-line translation or any possibility of reproducing Homer's forms of expression.

¶ Blank verse, again, seemed to have other and perhaps greater disadvantages. The grandeur of Milton (to quote Matthew Arnold once more) is one thing, and the grandeur of Homer is another. The general movement of blank verse is that of the *più fermo*—the strong, determined effort of upward motion ; whereas that of the hexameter is like the downward rush of an impetuous stream. The use of blank verse, with its laboured movement, its system of pauses and its phrasing so entirely different from that of Homer, would have

necessitated more than perhaps any other metre the wholesale recasting of *Preface* the original.

¶ Thus, by a process of elimination, I was reduced to some rhythm which had some similarity or analogy to the rhythm of Homer himself.

¶ I did not at once conclude that it was necessary or even advisable to adopt Homer's *metre*, for I knew that (as Calverley well points out) all the essentials of a rhythm may be secured without servile imitation of *metre*, and that Homer's swing and rapidity might possibly be reproduced in some metre analogous to the hexameter, such as that of Tennyson's *Voyage of Maeldune*.

¶ But I failed in my quest, and began to think of adopting—and, indeed, for a time I did attempt to use—some line roughly resembling the old hexameter; for I myself was then somewhat strongly affected by the widespread prejudice against the hexameter pure and simple. I fancied it might be possible to accommodate the 'barbarous hexameter' to the requirements of modern criticism by furnishing it with an *anacrusis*—that is, with one or two, or even three, short hopping syllables prefixed to the line as a kind of 'take-off,' such as one has sometimes in music before the actual air begins. Also I thought it might prevent monotony—of which some critics of the hexameter so bitterly complain—if one adopted a very rough, jolting kind of rhythm, like that of Clough's *Bothie*, and paid scant attention to spondees and dactyls, using almost any kind of 'foot' and depending almost entirely on the vigour of the language and the effect of several good thumping stresses to pull one through the verse, in the same way as in many a well-known line of Shakespeare, Milton, or Dante, the scansion does not stand the tests of the syllable-counter, but the rhythm of the thought and the vigour of the words carry one, like a great wave, over all obstacles.

¶ Then, for a time, I was rather taken by Worsley's suggestion that we might perhaps adopt as the ending of the typical English hexameter the rhythm — ∪ ∪ | — ∪ — | — ∪ (e.g. 'sails of the black-hulled vessel,' instead of 'sails of the beautiful vessel'). This rhythm occurs fairly frequently in Homer and rarely in Virgil and is decidedly effective when occasionally used; * but I soon discovered that after a few consecutive lines it becomes very wearisome, even when varied with the more usual and (in English especially) far more musical rhythm — — | — ∪ ∪ | — ∪ (e.g. 'dark-eyed sons of Achaea').

¶ Thus, step by step I was driven back to Homer's metre, and at last I began to ask myself: Why not try *that*?

¶ Well—I had read most that had been written against the English hexameter. I knew Tennyson's bitter lines (though I had never discovered against *what* 'barbarous experiments' they were launched), and I knew Lord Derby's

* In the Preface to his second volume Worsley gives several passages from the *Odyssey* translated in this rhythm.

Preface 'pestilent heresy of the hexameter,' and the amusing couplet directed against Schiller and Goethe, namely :

*In Weimar und in Jena macht man Hexameter wie der ;
Aber die Pentameter sind doch noch excellenter.*

Moreover I was informed by those who professed to have a delicate ear for the music of words that no man, woman or child, unless they knew Greek or Latin, could recognize any rhythm at all in the English hexameter.

¶ But on the other hand I felt myself, and I was certain that every man and woman and child who understood English must feel, the wondrous rhythm of

How art thou fallen from Heav'n, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning !

—perhaps the finest bit of music in our language, and a perfect English hexameter.

¶ And then I remembered not a few other grand and musical combinations of English words in hexameter rhythm, or something very similar, such as 'the Lord God omnipotent reigneth'; and I bethought me of many a well-known and popular English poem (to say nothing of *Evangeline* and *Andromeda* and the *Bothie*) the metre of which is composed of dactyls and spondees, or of anapaests, and has a much nearer affinity to the hexameter than to the iambic or trochaic metres of ordinary English verse. I found that such poems are more numerous than I had imagined and that they are to be found on almost every slope of our English Parnassus, from the lowly habitat of 'Old Mother Hubbard' to the levels of 'I am monarch of all I survey,' of 'The Assyrian came down,' of the *Hymn to Proserpine*, and of Tennyson's *Voyage of Maeldune*.

¶ This *Voyage of Maeldune* is one of the most musical poems in English literature, and its metre is very nearly that of the hexameter.*

¶ Moreover (and this is a point of much importance, as we shall see) the beauty of its lines, though of course mainly due to the exquisite choice of words, is also to some extent due to two other reasons, *viz.* the coincidence of stress and length (which shall be explained later) and the contrast between the light, rippling dactyls and the sonorous, dignified spondees. How wonderfully beautiful, for instance, are these lines !

*And the brooks glittered on in the light without sound, and the long waterfalls
Poured in a thunderless plunge to the base of the mountain walls.*

*And the red passion-flower to the cliffs and the dark-blue clematis clung,
And starr'd with a myriad blossom the long convolvulus hung.*

¶ But in spite of this proof that a metre composed on somewhat the same

* Technically speaking it is 'a rimed catalectic hexameter with or without anacrusis,' *i.e.* a rimed hexameter lopped of its final syllable and sometimes preceded by one or more light, tripping syllables as a 'take-off.'

lines as the hexameter, without actually being a hexameter, can produce surprisingly beautiful effects in English verse, this *Maeldune* metre has characteristics which, I think, make it hopelessly un-Homeric—especially the bang at the end of the line, and the rime.

Thus germinated in my mind the conviction—and it has struck root deeper every day during the last four years—that for the object which I had in view the only possible metre was Homer's own metre; that is to say, the most accurate imitation of it that was consistent with a natural, vigorous, idiomatic diction.

But it may be well, for the sake of those who are unfamiliar with the measure, to explain briefly the main characteristics of the metre used by Homer, after which it will be easier for me to describe and illustrate the fortunes of the English hexameter, and to explain the principles by which I have been guided.

The hexameter is so called because it is a measure consisting of six 'feet.' The last foot is always a *spondee* (— —) or a *trochee* (— ∪). The fifth foot is generally a *dactyl* (— ∪∪) but occasionally a spondee. The other four feet may be either spondees or dactyls. Thus, the first line of Virgil's *Aeneid* (I cite Latin as Greek may cause difficulties) is scanned as follows :

The ancient hexameter

Ārma vīr|ūmq̄ue cān|ō Trō|jāe q̄ui | p̄rīmūs āb | ōrīs.

Now, here are two things to be especially noticed :

[1] None of the feet, except the last, consists of a single word, but is formed of portions of distinct words, so that the whole line is, as it were, jointed together like some vertebrate creature. Lines have not always so many joints as this one, but they need a joint (a *caesura*) especially in the middle—in the third or, anyhow, in the fourth foot—to prevent them falling into two similar, or nearly similar, halves. This line has what are called weak breaks in the first, second and fifth feet, and strong breaks in the third and fourth. It is easy to see that with all the many possible variations and combinations of dactyls and spondees, and with all these different ways of breaking (or jointing) the line, the number of different hexameters that can be constructed is very great, so that there is no reason why the metre of Homer and Virgil should be more monotonous than that of Shakespeare and Milton.

[2] Each foot is composed of either two or three syllables. These syllables are either *long* or *short*. A syllable in Greek and Latin is long when its vowel is naturally long (as in *cānō*, *Trōjāe*, *p̄rīmūs* and *ōrīs*), or when its vowel becomes long by position, *i.e.* when the vowel is followed by two or more consonants, which make the pronunciation of the syllable need more of an effort, or take more time. Thus, the first syllable of *Arma* is necessarily long, and if *p̄rīmūs* were followed by a consonant instead of by *ab*, its final syllable would become long.

Preface ¶ All ancient Greek and Latin verse is similarly based on the 'quantity' of syllables, every syllable being (with just a few exceptions) necessarily either long or short.*

The English hexameter ¶ The rhythm of English verse, as of most modern verse, is based not on 'quantity' (length of syllables) but on accent or stress.

¶ Of course, English words have what one might call 'quantity' or length: that is, certain syllables take much more effort or time to pronounce than others, and often a long syllable is unaccented while a short syllable may have a strong accent or stress. Thus in the word 'forest' the second syllable takes much more time and effort to pronounce than the first syllable, but the first is sharply accented. If we went by 'quantity,' we should certainly have to regard the word 'forest' as an iambus (∪—), but nobody with any ear for rhythm would use it as such.

False principles of construction ¶ However, some theorists, and even a few verse writers, have insisted that the English hexameter should be based, like the ancient hexameter, on 'quantity,' quite irrespectively of accent. The result of acting up to this theory is generally something that cannot be recognized as a verse by the ordinary English reader.

The quantitative hexameter ¶ Sir Philip Sidney, one of the earliest writers of the English hexameter, constructed his verses on this system, and on the whole they are quite unreadable, though now and then, when by a happy chance the natural accent coincides with his 'longs,' the line is good enough, as

First shall | virtue be | vice and | beauty be | counted a | blemish.

¶ Stanihurst, the collaborator of the well-known chronicler Holinshed, translated (about 1600) Virgil's *Aeneid* into hexameters constructed on a similar system—and very queer things they are. Those who are familiar with Virgil will perhaps recognize a certain famous passage under the following disguise:

With tentative listning eache wight was settled in harckning.

Then father Aeneas chronicled from lofty bed hautie :

' Though my queasy stomach that bloodie recital abhorreth,

You bid me, O Princesse, to scarrifie a festered old sore . . . '

¶ This system of constructing English hexameters on the basis of 'quantity'

* It is possible that in Virgil, and perhaps in Homer, accent (that is, the natural stress laid on certain syllables, and not necessarily long syllables) may have formed a kind of undercurrent of rhythm, whose undulations did not always coincide with the rhythm of the 'longs and shorts,' as is also often the case in good blank verse. But we know too little on this subject to be able to feel any certainty. The accents which are used nowadays in Greek were invented by Alexandrine grammarians, in order to aid in securing what they considered to be the right accentuation, at a time when the classical Greek was dying out as a spoken language. When read aloud by a modern Greek, the verse of Homer seems to us to have little or no affinity to the quantitative hexameter, and, of course, none to the English hexameter.

without due attention—or in intentional opposition—to the natural accent has been advocated by some modern theorists,* but nothing has resulted therefrom but a few rather grotesque and unreadable experiments, and, as Matthew Arnold well says, the one thing necessary, if we are to have anything better than such experiments, is that the English hexameter should be easily readable—should ‘read itself’—should have something of the ease and rapidity and lucidity of Homer himself.

¶ Now no one, I think, will deny that such lines as the following ‘read themselves’:

- How art thou fallen from Heav’n, O Lucifer, Son of the Morning.* [Is. xiv, 12]
- Clearly the rest I behold of the dark-eyed sons of Achaea.* [Hawtrey]
- Or, if you please, with the fork in the garden uprooting potatoes.* [Clough]
- Over the sea, past Crete, on the Syrian shore to the southward.* [Kingsley]
- Flashing she fell to the earth from the glittering heights of Olympus.* [Od. i, 102]
- Thine was the counsel that captured the wide-wayed city of Priam.* [Od. xxii, 230]

¶ And when we consider why such lines run easily and ‘read themselves,’ we find it is because their basis is *accentual*—because a natural stress, or accent, falls strongly on just those syllables which occupy the places of the ‘longs’ in the old hexameter, and because all the syllables occupying the places of the ‘shorts’ are light and unemphasized.

¶ Therefore, in spite of all theories to the contrary, I believe that Matthew Arnold is right when he says: “I think prudent criticism must recognize in the current English hexameter (that is, the *accentual*, as distinguished from the *quantitative* hexameter) a fact which cannot so lightly be set aside: it must acknowledge that by this hexameter the English ear and the genius of the English language have in their own way adopted, have translated for themselves, the Homeric hexameter, and that a rhythm which has thus grown up, which is thus in a manner the production of nature, has in its general type something necessary and inevitable, something which admits change only within narrow limits . . . I think, therefore, that the prudent critic will feel that in English poetry the hexameter, if used at all, must be in the main the English hexameter now current.”

¶ But, most unfortunately, many of the advocates of the ‘*accentual*’ against the ‘*quantitative* hexameter’—that is, the ‘current English hexameter’ against the hexameter of Sidney and Stanihurst—have made a fatal mistake in maintaining that quantity (length, weight) does not exist at all in English, or, if it does, that it is a *quantité négligeable*. Anyhow, my ear has become ever more and more impatient of the ordinary English hexameter with its

The accentual hexameter

* For example, by Mr. Spedding, the Averroes of Bacon.

Preface disregard of quantity—the beauty and vigour of a line seeming to me to depend mainly on the coincidence of quantity and accent, and on the use of true spondees and dactyls.

¶ The first, I think, who made a serious attempt to advocate and acclimatize the accentual hexameter was Robert Southey.* But his ‘principles of adaptation,’ as he called them, such as the free use of the trochee (— ∪) instead of the true spondee (— —) and the ‘licence of using any foot of two or three syllables at the beginning of the line,’ seem to me to be totally false. Moreover, the offensive tone of his hexametric *Vision of Judgment* (a deification of King George the Third even more odiously offensive than Seneca’s comic ‘pumpkin-fication’ of the Emperor Claudius) would in any case have done more to damn than to popularize the metre.

¶ In 1846 there appeared in *Blackwood’s Magazine* a translation of *Iliad I* and of *Iliad XXIV* into English hexameters. It was, as Mr. Blackwood informs me, by Sir Walter Scott’s son-in-law and biographer, Lockhart. In regard to metre these hexameters are, I think, a great improvement on Southey’s; but the general effect seems to me to be very flat and dull. However, this attempt to render Homer in his own metre excited a good deal of interest and admiration. Letters of approval, mingled with criticisms and suggestions, appeared in the Magazine, signed M. L., but written, it seems, by that modern Pico della Mirandola, the famous Dr. Whewell, Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, who had already printed a not very successful hexametric version of portions of Goethe’s *Hermann und Dorothea*.†

¶ Another and a more important fact resulted from these hexameters of Lockhart. Longfellow was much taken by them, and their influence turned the scale in favour of the hexameter when he was (about 1847) considering what metre to adopt for his *Evangeline*.

¶ Longfellow’s hexameters have been criticized very severely, and doubtless Worsley is right when he says that “we ought to avoid the indiscriminate use of irregular feet and that random accumulation of consonants which gives such a blundering and floundering effect to many of the otherwise beautiful verses of Longfellow.” A line that is ‘blundering and floundering’ can perhaps hardly be ‘otherwise beautiful’; but no one with an ear for the music of

* Probably influenced by the success of the version of Homer by Voss in German hexameters and by the immense popularity of the same writer’s *Luise*, and of Goethe’s *Hermann und Dorothea*.

† The rules laid down and practised by Dr. Whewell appear to me as fatally false as those of Southey, especially his rejection of the true spondee in favour of the trochee, and his disregard of the length of syllables. But, as is also the case with Lockhart, it is mainly the want of a direct, vigorous, unaffected form of expression that, as it seems to me, makes his verses unreadable. Here are two lines:

“And he would be perhaps content with a servant that worse were,
Who this knew and used, and would peevish be to be better.”

words, or with any feeling for poetry, can fail to find not only much that is 'tenderly elegant' (as Matthew Arnold calls it) but also much that is truly beautiful in *Evangeline*, in spite of its faulty metre, and in spite of up-to-date criticism. Preface

¶ In connexion with this point it may be interesting to hear Matthew Arnold once more. "I think," he says, "that the dislike of the English hexameter is rather among the professional critics than among the general public; I think the reception which Mr. Longfellow's *Evangeline* has met with indicates this. I think that if a version of the *Iliad** in English hexameters was made by a poet who, like Mr. Longfellow, has that indefinable quality which renders him popular—something *attractive* in his talent, which communicates itself to his verses—it would have a great success among the general public."

¶ In a passage that I have already quoted from Matthew Arnold's *Lectures* he speaks of the possibility of certain 'changes' being introduced into the current English hexameter which, combined of course with other and more important factors, might give us a readable and attractive result. I believe that such changes are well and briefly summed up in Worsley's advice "to consult the claims of scansion as much as possible, though never at the expense of a true accentual rhythm, the ear alone being the supreme arbiter in all English versification." True principles of construction

¶ It is, I believe, through their violation of this principle that modern writers of the English hexameter have for the most part failed—for I fear we must allow that they have failed, in spite of the brilliant but apparently transitory popularity of *Evangeline*.

¶ Perhaps this needs a little elucidation, so I will here give some of the rules that I believe to be involved in this principle—rules which I did not deduce theoretically but learnt by experience and tested by practice, and which compelled me to recast a very considerable amount of the first half-dozen Books that I had translated.†

[1] The accents (stresses) should fall naturally and strongly on the syllables that occupy the places that the 'longs' occupy in the old metre. Such a syllable should itself be, as far as possible, long, heavy, emphatic, or weighted with *meaning* when somewhat short in pronunciation—a syllable that makes one pause to think, such as a monosyllabic verb, noun, adjective, emphatic adverb or conjunction—or that syllable in a longer word which bears the weight of the meaning.

* My own feeling is that the English hexameter is the only right metre for attempting to reproduce the rapid onward movement of the *Odyssey*. The *Iliad* is more dramatic and rhetorical, and I do not feel quite so sure about it.

† *Viz.* Books V to XII. I then tackled I to V, and lastly XIII to XXIV. I mention this because I should prefer the later books to be regarded as that part of my work in which the metre keeps most closely to my principles.

- [2] The syllables occupying the places of the 'shorts' (i.e. the last two syllables of the dactyls) should be, as far as possible, short, light, unemphatic—such as articles, unemphatic copulas, pronouns,* short and unemphatic auxiliaries, short prefixes and terminations in longer or compound words, and never (even if short in pronunciation) any monosyllable or dissyllable that makes one pause to think, such as a verb, a noun, or an adjective.
- [3] The true spondee (— —) should be used, especially for the second and the fourth feet. The trochee (— ∪) should be eschewed.†

¶ To illustrate the violation of all these three rules we might take many and many a line of Southey, Lockhart, Dr. Whewell and others. For violations of [2] let us take Kingsley's *Andromeda*, a poem which, except for this characteristic, I greatly admire. The jewel-like richness of the diction and the vigour and directness of the expression put it on a level far above the range of mere scansion-criticism, but, nevertheless, I cannot feel satisfied with the following dactyls (and there are plenty more of this type to be found in *Andromeda*), for one of the two final syllables of the foot is either unmistakably long in time, or is far too weighted with meaning: *slow-footed*; *all gathered*; *golden-haired*; *home-going*; *sea-gulls swept*; (*till the*) *boy red with (anger)*; (*at*) *length she looked (forth)*. Such dactyls make the poem seem to me like richly harmonized music full of painful faults in rhythm.

¶ Then in reference to [3] take such a line as this one by Calverley (known as a master of metre and a severe critic of *Evangeline*):

As in the | heights of | heav'n the | moon . . .

and compare it with lines of Kingsley in which he uses the true spondee with fine effect, e.g.:

Lifting her | long white | arms wide-|spread to the | walls of the | basalt . . .

Fearing the | stars of the | sky and the | roll of the | dark-blue | water . . .

or with the line by Dr. Hawtrey before quoted:

Clearly the rest I behold of the dark-eyed sons of Achaea.

¶ Besides the above-given rules a matter of great importance is that of the breaks. The typical English hexameter should retain the *caesura* of the ancient verse in the third or fourth foot; but I think that a greater variety of

* Pronouns and also copulas are of course sometimes emphasized and can be used as 'longs.' In such cases Milton wrote *hee*, *wee*, etc. The words *and*, *for*, and a few others may, I think, be used either as longs or shorts according to the context. Pause, position and emphasis may of course lend a word length (weight). In such cases one has to apply to common sense for guidance, as is indeed often necessary in scanning Homer's verses.

† In some cases I have intentionally retained some word, such as 'sacred,' 'bronzen,' 'Father (Zeus),' although false spondees, because there was only a choice between renouncing the one right word or allowing myself a slight metrical irregularity, such as Homer sometimes allows himself.

break, and of rhythm, should be allowed than would pass muster in a copy of *Preface* Latin or Greek hexameters. For such rhythms therefore I do not apologize. **C** But it cannot be repeated too often that in poetry—and even in one's *Metre of* attempts to produce readable verse—metre is of secondary importance. The *secondary* rhythm of thought and feeling is of far more importance. Great *importance* poets are great firstly because they are poets, and secondly because they are masters of metre; and also for the translator there are questions of far greater importance than that of scansion—one of these questions being that of diction, of the choice of words and forms of expression. But to enter into this question at all adequately would lead me too far afield. Nor is it necessary that I should do so, for, firstly, I can refer to Matthew Arnold's *Lectures*—to all he says about directness, rapidity, dignity, Shakespearean liberty, vigour, idiom, the avoidance of grotesqueness, quaintness, affectation, oddity, dialect, etc., as containing a full and accurate* account of my own creed in this matter; and, secondly, I prefer to offer to the reader my work, in which I have carried out my principles as well as I could, rather than to weary him with theories. Whether I have succeeded in producing a version which will serve as a satisfactory medium between Homer and English readers and will help them to follow the story with ease and pleasure, lies on the knees of the gods. The very great and ever-increasing encouragement that I have received from those (and they are many) who have heard the thing read aloud, as well as from not a few eminent scholars, makes me hope that it may be so. If not, then I shall have an ample reward in the memory of the intense and long-continued happiness which I have enjoyed while engaged in the work, much of which was done during my wanderings and clamberings amidst the mountains of Switzerland.

C The following letter (printed here with the kind consent of G. A. Macmillan, Esq.) seems to me very interesting, for it was written by one who, although he modestly disclaimed any technical knowledge of the subject, had an extraordinarily keen *flair* in literary questions.

From ALEXANDER MACMILLAN

To I. C. WRIGHT

October 28, 1864

C “. . . As I said before I have no sort of right to offer a judgment on the respective merits of blank verse and hexameters. But no authorities however

* Except that I do not think he has perceived enough that Homer's language, though it never sinks into banality, does alter its level very much indeed with the speaker and the occasion. The 'large utterance' of the Homeric gods differs *toto caelo* from the language used by the old nurse, or the good old swineherd, or the malicious goatherd, or the impudent Melanthis, or the insolent youths among the suitors—differs also greatly from that used by Nausicaa, or by old Laertes, or by Athene herself when she has assumed the disguise of a young girl. And the language of each one of these seems to have a character of its own.

Preface big can take away my private likings. Mr. Tennyson, yourself and other high authorities say I ought not to like them, but the fact remains that I do like them. I would give anything to see Homer done with a metre like Clough's poem. . . . Your own admirable rendering I admire much, but the pace does not commend itself to my ear as harmonious with the mental mood which I feel in Homer. Pope's jingle I dislike exceedingly, and can in no degree respond to the praise men of infinitely higher claims to judge give it. I am thankful to you exceedingly for a faithful and forcible and harmonious rendering, but as I read I feel an impatience to see the verse break into a gallop or a canter. I ought to say that I am not influenced in the hexameter question by Professor Arnold's arguments, which indeed I have not read. If I bowed to authority—and how can I in a point of taste any more than in the colour of my hair?—Tennyson would clearly be first. I spent three days with him about a fortnight ago, and the question was debated between him and two scholars of eminence—one a distinguished Senior Classic of Cambridge. Beyond a general conclusion that you could not make English hexameters like Greek ones, I could see no result. It was not denied that a powerful and effective metre analogous to the hexameter and suited to the genius of the English language would be a great thing. Even these high authorities could not settle among themselves whether there was *quantity* in English metre! Tennyson maintained there was. He should know."

My thanks are especially due to those scholars and English writers who have kindly permitted me to print their letters of approval, namely, to the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, to Bishop Welldon, to Dr. Walter Leaf, Professor Edward Dowden, Professor R. Y. Tyrrell, Professor Verrall, Canon Wood, Canon Armour, Mr. G. H. Hallam, Mr. W. E. Heitland, Mr. T. W. Rolleston, Mr. W. F. Smith, and my old school-friend, Edward Carpenter. Also my warm thanks are due to my publisher for the very great interest that he has taken in the book and his anxious desire to do everything in his power to give it every chance of success; and also to Mr. Patten Wilson for his beautiful illustrations.

In conclusion, I must not forget to confess my obligations to the scholarly prose version of the *Odyssey* by S. H. Butcher and Andrew Lang, from which I have culled not a few choice words and well-turned phrases.

VILLA CHENEVIÈRE, VEVEY
June 1911

H. B. COTTERILL

ONE of the advantages of using Homer's own metre is that one can introduce the names in their original rhythm. To do this one must of course make the English accent fall on the long Greek syllables, and thus keep the same scansion as in Homer. We must pronounce Telemachus and Nausicaa as Tēlēmāchūs and Naūsīcāā; and surely this is not only perfectly easy, but far more dignified and musical than pronouncing the name as Naū-sīcký-ēr. Similarly, the following are scanned as (or nearly as) in Greek:

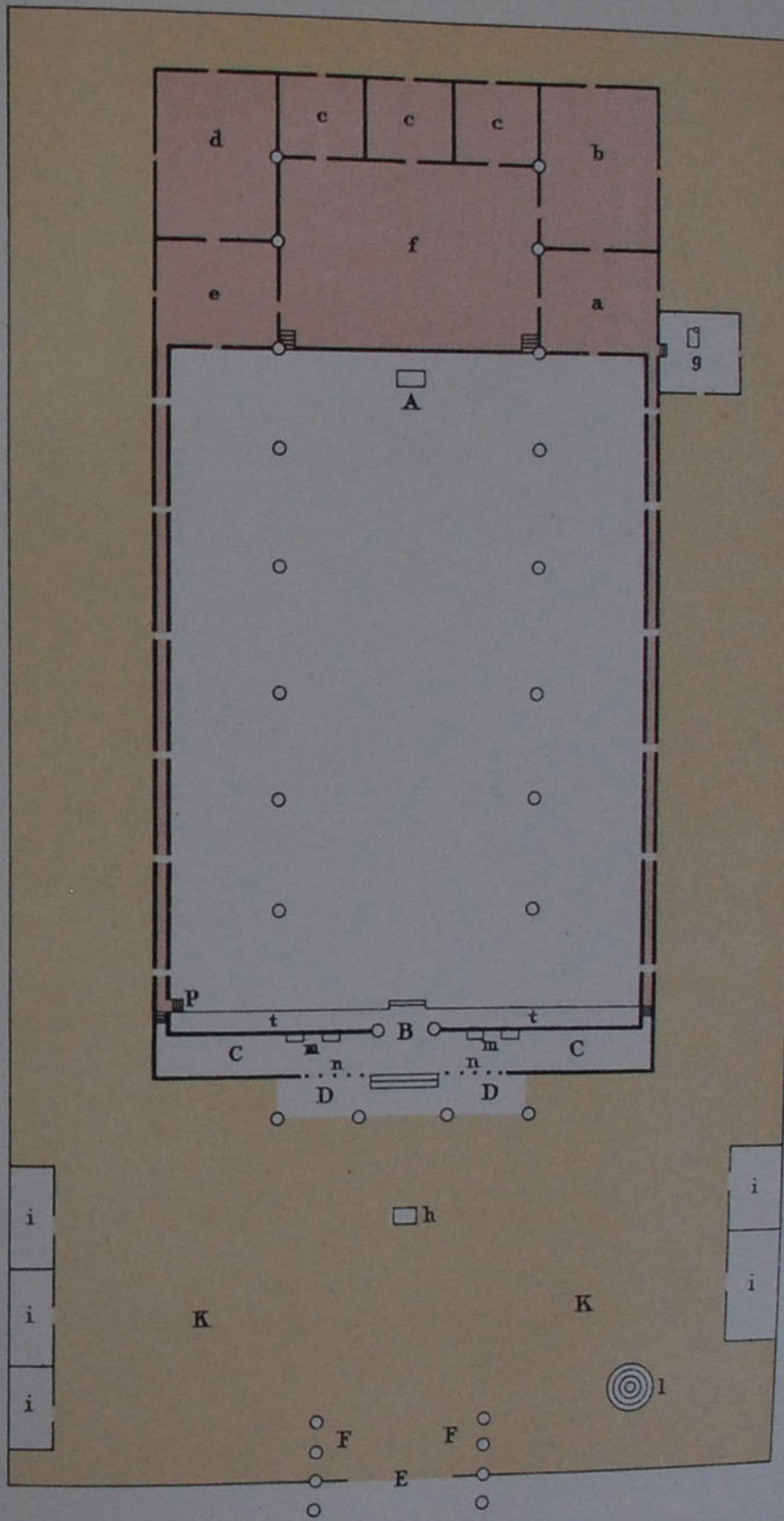
Note on Pronunciation of Names

	— — (sometimes — u).				— u u —
Circe		Peleus		Acroneōs	
Nauteus		Proteus		Alcinoūs	Idomeneūs
Nereus		etc.		Anchialus	Laōdamas
				Amphialus	Leucotheē
				Autolycus	Nausicaā
Arete	— — — —	Phoenicē		Deīphobus	Nausithoūs
Alcmenē		Rhexenor		Eēlios	Pandarēūs
Iphthimē		Tydides		Eidotheē	Peirithoūs
				Euryalus	Pontonoūs
				Eurylochus	Ocyālus
				Eurymedon	Tāygetus
				Eurynomē	Teiresias
				Hermionē	Telemachus
				Iasion	Telepylus
					Tyndareūs
					u — u u
Alpheūs (Greek — — u)	Eretmēus			Boethoūs	
Amphīōn (Greek — — —)	Erinyes			Iardanus	Leiocritus
Athene (or — ā)	Hephaestus (or Hēph...)				Peisistratus
Cronīon	Laertes (or Lā...)				
Cythēra (but Cŷthērēā)	Malea				
Echephron	Melantheūs (or thŷūs)			Clymenus	Scheriē (but Schérian)
Elatrēus	Orion (Greek — — —)			Halius	Stratius
Epēūs	Poseidon			Polybus	Tityōs
					u u — u
				Anticleia	Eurycleia
					u — — u
Agamemnon	Halosydne			Poseidāōn	
Aphrodite	Hyperion				
Clytemnestra	Menelāus				
Clytoneūs	Megapenthes				
Diomedes	Philoctetes (or u — — —)				
Echenēūs	Polycastē				
Eteoneūs	Thrasymedes				
					u u — — —
					Philomeleides

It is generally a relief to find a few exceptions to a rule, and pleasant to discover a few inconsistencies in those who try to impose their rules upon us, so I daresay I shall be forgiven if my readers discover that in some cases where the word seems to go more easily and naturally with its English accentuation I have ventured thus to use it: e.g. Bóreas, Pólybus, Clýmene, Pélias, Theoclýmenus, Piérian, A'rēs; and I have also sometimes found it necessary, compelled by *il fren dell'arte*, to shorten the -eus in some names as Nereus, Proteus, and Odysseus. In order to avoid taking this last regrettable liberty I had used the Latin form 'Ulysses'—which has the advantage of being more liquid and musical than Odysseus—but I was persuaded by friends who are in closer touch with English scholarship than any one can be who has lived abroad for thirty years to renounce it in favour of the Greek form.

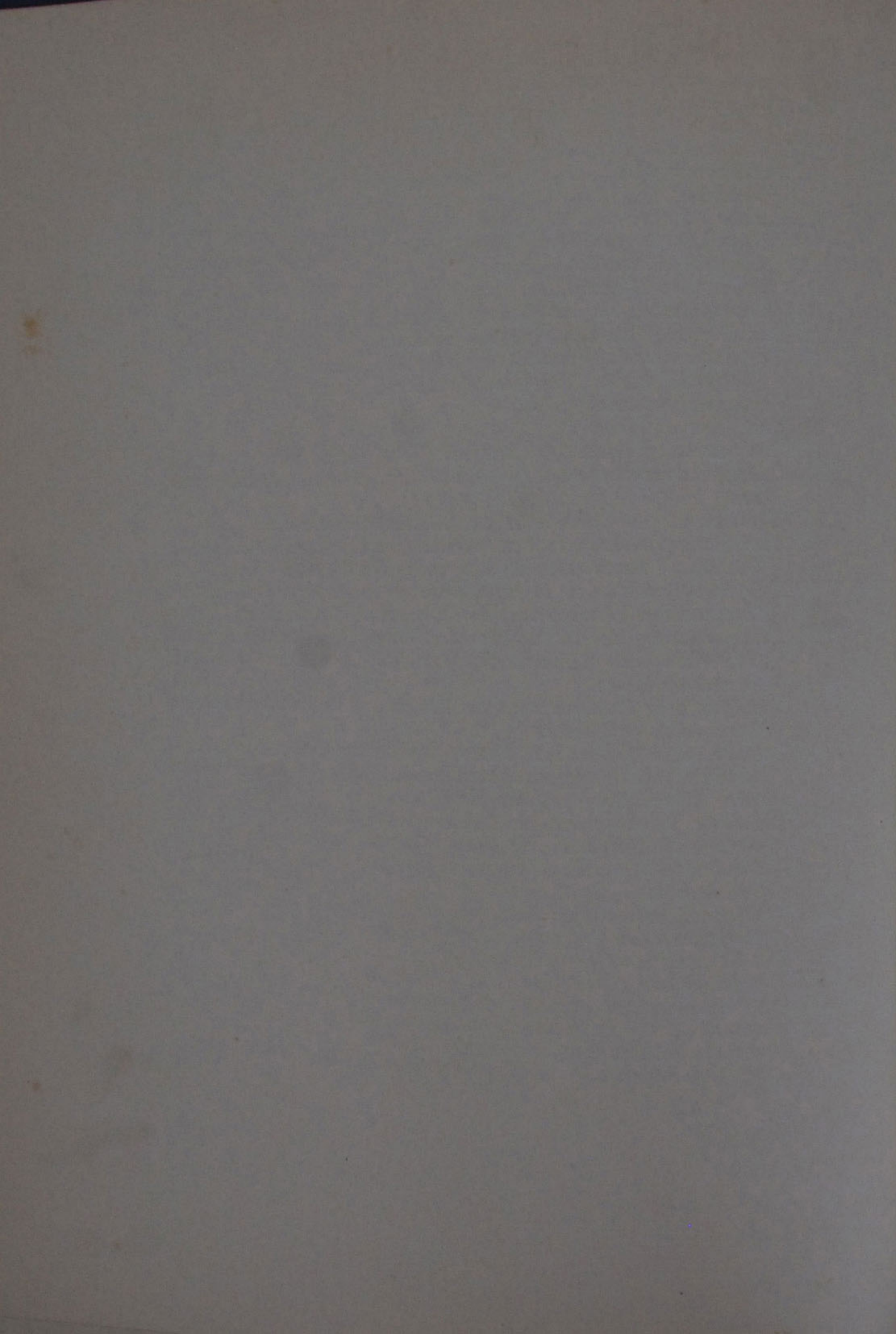
THE main features of this plan are such as one finds in ordinary representations of ancient Greek houses, but many details are due to what Homer says, sometimes not very clearly, about the palace of Odysseus, and also about the palaces of Alcinous, Nestor and Menelaus. The Homeric palace, or large house, stood sometimes amid orchards, vineyards and gardens (viii, 112-130; cf. xxiv, 336 sq.). It was surrounded by a courtyard, probably of stamped earth, with trees in it (xxiii, 190), enclosed by a fence, or by a wall plastered and whitewashed within (iv, 42), and sometimes topped with branches (ix, 185; xiv, 10). The court-gate (E) was such as could be tied with a rope (xxi, 391), and had a pillared portal outside and (F) a portico (*aitheusa*, 'sunning-place,' xxi, 390; xxii, 449) inside, and had no high threshold (vii, 130), for they drive in and out of the court (xv, 191) and the stables are in it (iv, 40). We have now entered the court, and the palace faces us. It will be easy to fill up the picture from the following facts and references. The pink colour on the plan represents upper rooms or passages.

- K. 'Levelled space' for games (iv, 627).
 l. 'Tholos'; dome-roofed kitchen? (xxii, 442).
 b. Altar of Zeus (xxii, 334).
 i. Outhouses (vi, 303), stables (iv, 40), mill-house (xx, 106).
 D. Portico, 'aitheusa' of house, roofed, 're-echoing.' Guests sleep here in hot weather (iii, 399).
 C. Inner porch, elevated 'stoep.' Used as guest room (xx, 1).
 n. Open lattices.
 m. 'Polished stones,' seats (iii, 406; viii, 6).
 B. Front door; 'beautiful door of the court' (xxii, 137). Door-posts of cypress and threshold of ash (xvii, 339). In Alcinous' palace posts of silver and threshold of bronze (vii, 89). Threshold high (to exclude snakes, etc.), so that one 'steps over' it and finds oneself on a 'stone threshold,' an elevated stone slab or platform, within.
 t. The 'stone threshold' (xxii, 1, etc.). On this Odysseus, Telemachus, the swineherd and the cowherd stand when fighting the suitors. I believe it to be at this (not the upper) end of the hall, and to extend across the whole width of the hall, to the postern, which is 'flush with it' (xxii, 126). From this stone platform (perhaps a part of the stone foundation of old wooden houses) there were probably a couple of steps down to the floor of the hall, which was here perhaps of stamped earth (xxi, 122) or possibly paved. The inside walls were smooth and 'gleaming' (xxii, 121).
 P. Postern (xxii, 125) flush with stone threshold and with steps to hall-floor; leads up to elevated passage (pink) communicating with upper back apartments (pink) and having 'mouth' with stairs into C on both sides of hall (xxii, 137).
 The great hall (megaron) had high roof (xxii, 298) with 'smoke-stained' roof-beams (xxii, 239), of pine (xix, 38), and openings between wall and roof for escape of smoke (i, 320). Between the pillars supporting the roof were 'beautiful alcoves' (xix, 37), and in the outer wall of each alcove were perhaps 'splits' or loophole windows, for light (xxii, 143).
 A. The hall hearth, near which stood the 'thrones,' easy chairs, etc., of Penelopeia (Arete, Alcinous) in colder weather. (The action of the *Odyssey*, forty-two days, begins in autumn. Before it ends it is cold at night and early morning, and fires are needed.)
 f. The women's 'upper apartment,' for work, etc. The upper storey alone is here represented (pink). The ground floor below (back-hall) was for cooking and the day tasks of the women. The men thralls slept below; the women upstairs. Stairs lead up from the hall.
 a. Penelopeia's bedroom; has lattice overlooking the hall, for she hears and sees what is going on—hears Telemachus sneeze (xvii, 541)—and a window overlooking the road (xxiii, 365). Nausicaa's bedroom has a stove (vii, 7).
 b. Women's sleeping-room.
 c. 'Rooms of Odysseus' (xxii, 143) for various purposes.
 d. Upper treasure chamber where the bow is stored (xxi, 8) and the arms are hidden by Odysseus and his son (xix, 17; xxii, 140). There was also a lower (underground?) treasure room (ii, 337; xvi, 285).
 e. Telemachus' bedroom (i, 425; xix, 48).
 g. Odysseus' room (on ground floor), described in xxiii, 190 sq.



CONTENTS

<i>Book</i>		<i>Contents</i>
	I. ATHENE VISITS TELEMACHUS IN ITHACA	
	II. THE COUNCIL OF THE ITHACAN PRINCES. TELEMACHUS STARTS ON HIS JOURNEY	13
	III. TELEMACHUS AT PYLOS	25
	IV. TELEMACHUS AT SPARTA. THE SUITORS PLOT TO KILL HIM AS HE RETURNS	39
	V. HERMES SENT BY ZEUS TO ORDER CALYPSO TO RELEASE ODYSSEUS. THE BUILDING OF THE RAFT. THE STORM. ODYSSEUS CAST ASHORE ON THE ISLE OF THE PHAEACIANS	61
	VI. ODYSSEUS AND NAUSICAA	75
	VII. ODYSSEUS ARRIVES AT THE PALACE OF ALCINOUS	85
	VIII. THE GAMES. THE BLIND BARD DEMODOCUS	95
	IX. ODYSSEUS REVEALS HIS NAME AND BEGINS THE STORY OF HIS ADVENTURES [BOOKS IX–XII]. THE LOTUS-EATERS AND THE CYCLOPS	111
	X. THE LAESTRYGONIANS. CIRCE	127
	XI. THE VISIT TO HADES	143
	XII. THE SIRENS. SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS. THE CATTLE OF THE SUN-GOD	161
	XIII. ODYSSEUS IS BROUGHT ON A PHAEACIAN SHIP TO ITHACA. ATHENE MEETS HIM	173
	XIV. ODYSSEUS AT THE COTTAGE OF THE SWINEHERD EUMAEUS	185
	XV. TELEMACHUS RETURNS SAFELY FROM SPARTA AND REACHES THE SWINEHERD'S COTTAGE. THE SWINEHERD RELATES HIS OWN STORY TO ODYSSEUS	199
	XVI. THE SWINEHERD GOES TO THE TOWN TO TELL PENELOPEIA ABOUT TELEMACHUS. RECOGNITION OF ODYSSEUS BY TELEMACHUS	215
	XVII. TELEMACHUS RETURNS TO THE PALACE. ODYSSEUS AND EUMAEUS FOLLOW. THE GOATHERD MELANTHIUS. THE OLD DOG ARGUS. ODYSSEUS ENTERS HIS HOME	229
	XVIII. THE FIGHT OF ODYSSEUS WITH THE BEGGAR IRUS. PENELOPEIA ACCEPTS GIFTS FROM THE SUITORS	245
	XIX. ODYSSEUS AND TELEMACHUS REMOVE THE ARMS. ODYSSEUS CONVERSES WITH PENELOPEIA, BUT IS NOT RECOGNIZED. THE OLD NURSE RECOGNIZES HIM. DESCRIPTION OF BOAR-HUNT.	257
	XX. DRAMATIC PAUSE BEFORE THE CATASTROPHE. A CLOUDLESS MORNING WITH A FLASH FROM THE BLUE. ODYSSEUS CONVERSES WITH THE SWINEHERD AND THE COWHERD, TO TEST THEM. HE IS INSULTED BY THE SUITORS	273
	XXI. PENELOPEIA BRINGS THE BOW. ODYSSEUS REVEALS HIMSELF TO THE SWINEHERD AND COWHERD. THE TRIAL OF THE BOW	285
	XXII. THE SLAUGHTER OF THE SUITORS.	297
	XXIII. THE RECOGNITION OF ODYSSEUS BY PENELOPEIA	311
	XXIV. HERMES GUIDES THE SOULS OF THE SUITORS TO HADES. AGAMEMNON AND ACHILLES IN HADES. ODYSSEUS DEPARTS TO THE FARM AND REVEALS HIMSELF TO HIS FATHER, LAERTES. THEY ARE ATTACKED BY THE SUITORS. ATHENE INTERVENES AND PEACE IS MADE	321
		xxi



LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

“FLASHING SHE FELL TO THE EARTH FROM THE GLITTERING HEIGHTS OF OLYMPUS” (BOOK I, LINE 102)		
PENELOPEIA UNRAVELS HER WEB	Frontispiece	14
TELEMACHUS AND PEISISTRATUS ARRIVE AT LACEDAEMON		36
THE STRUGGLE WITH PROTEUS		50
THE BUILDING OF THE RAFT		66
NAUSICAA AND ODYSSEUS		78
“NIGH TO THE GATE THERE MET HIM THE GREY-EYED GODDESS ATHENE”		86
ODYSSEUS TAKES PART IN THE CONTESTS		98
ODYSSEUS AND THE CYCLOPS		122
CIRCE AND THE COMRADES OF ODYSSEUS		130
IN THE WORLD OF THE DEAD		144
THE SIRENS		164
THE ARRIVAL AT ITHACA		174
IN THE COTTAGE OF THE SWINEHERD		186
“FAREWELL TO YOU BOTH, YOUNG MEN!”		202
TELEMACHUS RECOGNIZES HIS FATHER		218
THE MEETING WITH MELANTHIUS		234
ODYSSEUS AND IRUS		246
THE RECOGNITION OF ODYSSEUS BY EURYCLEIA		268
THE PRAYER OF PENELOPEIA		274
THE STRINGING OF THE BOW		294
THE SLAUGHTER OF THE SUITORS		302
THE RECOGNITION OF ODYSSEUS BY HIS WIFE		316
ODYSSEUS AND LAERTES		328

ODYSSEY BOOK I

SING, O Muse, of the man so wary and wise, who in far lands
Wandered whenas he had wasted the sacred town of the Trojans.
Many a people he saw and beheld their cities and customs,
Many a woe he endured in his heart as he tossed on the ocean,
Striving to win him his life and to bring home safely his comrades.
Ah but he rescued them not, those comrades, much as he wished it.
Ruined by their own act of infatuate madness they perished,
Fools that they were—who the cows of the sun-god, lord Hyperion,
Slaughtered and ate; and he took from the men their day of returning.
Sing—whence-ever the lay—sing, Zeus-born goddess, for us too!

Now were all of the rest of the Greeks who had 'scaped from destruction
Safely at home and secure from the dangers of war and the ocean,
All but the one, whom yearning in vain for his wife and his homeland
Still did the beautiful goddess, the sea-nymph lady Calypso,
Hold in her hollow caves, with a longing to make him her husband.
Ay and at last, when the year in the slow revolution of seasons
Came, in the which, as the gods had ordained, he returned to his country,
Ithaca's isle, e'en then was he nowise free from his troubles,
Though once more with his own; and the gods were touched with compassion,
All but Poseidaon, who was ever unceasingly angered
Raging at godlike Odysseus and keeping him far from his homeland.
Now was he gone to revisit the far-off Aethiop people—
Aethiop people that dwell wide-sundered, furthest of mortals,
Some where sinks Hyperion to rest, some where he ariseth.
Here he expected of rams and of oxen a solemn oblation,
Here he rejoiced as he sat at the feast. But the other immortals
Unto the mansion of Zeus the Olympian gathered together.
Then in the midst brake silence the Father of men and immortals,
Since in the depths of his heart he remembered the noble Aegisthus
Slaughtered by King Agamemnon's son, far-famous Orestes;
Mindful of him these words he addressed to the gods everlasting:
"Verily! how these mortals of earth give blame to the heaven!
Evil is sent by the gods, they affirm! It is they that in folly,
Ay in the madness of folly, o'erleaping their destiny, seek it.
Thus did Aegisthus, in spite of his fate predestined, in madness
Marry the wife of Atrides and murdered her lord at his coming.
Fully he knew of the doom that impended—for this we foretold him,

Sending him Hermes, the keen-eyed Slayer of Argus, to warn him
Neither to murder the man nor his wife to solicit as suitor :
Else shall Orestes repay for his father a terrible vengeance
After the days of his youth, when he learneth to long for his homeland.
Such was the warning of Hermes, but nowise heeded Aegisthus
Well-meant counsel—and now he hath paid all reckonings fully.”
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“Father of Gods, O mighty Cronion, the highest of Monarchs !
Truly he lies o’erwhelmed by a doom that he merited richly.
Thus too perish whoever of men such deed shall accomplish !
Ah but the heart in my bosom is rent for the wileful Odysseus.
Hard is his fate : long years doth he ceaselessly suffer affliction
Far from his home on a sea-girt isle : ’tis the navel of ocean,
Even this isle well-wooded, whereon hath dwelling a goddess,
Daughter of Atlas, the wizard of bale, who of every ocean
Knoweth the watery depths, and alone upholdeth the pillars
Soaring aloft and keeping the earth and heaven asunder.
This is the god whose daughter a wretched and sorrowing mortal
Keepeth, and ever with soft and with flattering words of endearment
Charms him, to make him forgetful of Ithaca’s isle ; and Odysseus
Yearns to behold once more but the smoke rise eddying upward
Out of the land of his birth—and he longeth to die. But within thee
All unmoved is thy spirit, Olympian. What ! did Odysseus
Ne’er by the ships of the Greeks do honour to thee with oblations,
There, on the Trojan plain ? Then why so wroth at the man, Zeus ?”
Her then in turn gave answer the Father who gathers the storm-clouds :
“Nay but my child, what word from the door of thy lips hath escaped thee !
How am I likely to cease to remember the godlike Odysseus,
Him who in mind all mortals excels and in giving oblation
Unto the gods everlasting who dwell in the infinite heaven ?
No—but Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, stubbornly rageth,
Angered because of his son, by Odysseus bereft of his eyesight,
Even that equal of gods the immense Polyphemus, a Cyclops
Greater than all of the others. Thoösa the nymph was his mother,
Daughter of Phorcys the lord of the barren expanses of ocean.
She in the hollow caves of the sea held tryst with Poseidon.
Hence to Odysseus it haps that, albeit the King Earth-shaker
Slayeth him not, yet he maketh him wander afar from his homeland.
Come now, all of us here—let us straight take counsel together
How he shall once more win to his home ; and Poseidon will surely
Cease from his wrath, for he ne’er will be able alone to oppose us,

Setting at nought and defying the will of the other immortals.”
Him then again gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“ Father of all of us, mighty Cronion, the highest of Monarchs !
Seems it a thing well-pleasing to all of the blessed immortals
Thus to permit to return to his home wise-hearted Odysseus,
Then let us bid Hermeias the messenger, Slayer of Argus,
Speedily winging his flight to the far Ogygian island,
Bring to the fair-tressed nymph our will’s immutable verdict,
Even that patient Odysseus return and arrive at his homeland.
Now—for myself—I shall visit the Ithacan island, if haply
Rousing his son still more I can light in his bosom the courage
Unto a meeting to summon the long-haired lords of Achaea,
Yea and a warning to utter to all of the suitors, who slaughter
Sheep of his thick-thronged folds and his shambling crook-horned cattle.
Then as his guide will I bring him to Sparta and Pylos the sandy,
Tidings to hear, if he can, of the homeward return of his father.
Hence too honour and fame shall he win in the land of the living.”
These words uttered she bound to her ankles the beautiful sandals,
Golden, immortal, that carry her over the waters of ocean
Swift as the blast of a storm, and across earth’s boundless expanses.
Then with her powerful spear bronze-bladed, of terrible keenness,
Weighty, enormous and strong—wherewith in the ranks of the battle
Vanquisheth all that she hateth that daughter of Zeus the Almighty—
Flashing she fell to the earth from the glittering heights of Olympus
Down, till on Ithacan land she alit by the porch of Odysseus,
E’en by the courtyard door, with the spear in her hand, and she stood there
Likened in form to a stranger, to Mentos, Taphian chieftain.
Then was she quickly aware of the arrogant suitors, who haply
Under the porch of the palace at draughts their minds were amusing,
Seated on skins of the cows they had slaughtered themselves for a banquet.
Busily flitting around were pages attendant and henchmen :
Some in the bowls were mixing together the wine and the water,
Others with sponges porous and soft were washing the tables,
Setting them forth, while others apportioned the plentiful messes.
Godlike Telemachus was the first of them all to perceive her.
Grievously troubled at heart he was sitting amidst of the suitors,
Picturing how peradventure his valiant father from somewhere
Suddenly coming and driving the suitors in rout from the palace
Honour again might win as the lord of his own possessions.
Dreaming thereon as he sat with the suitors, he noticed Athene.
Straight to the portal he went, for he felt sore vexed in his spirit

Seeing a stranger so long at the door, and, whenas he arrived there,
Grasping her right and taking the bronzen spear from the goddess,
Opened in greeting his lips, and with swift-winged words he addressed her :
“Hail, O stranger ! With us thou art sure of a welcome ; and later,
After partaking of food, thou’lt tell us if aught thou art needing.”
These words spoken, he turned and was followed by Pallas Athene.
Unto the high-roofed mansion he led her, and stepping within it
Leaned on the shaft of a pillar the spear he was bearing, and fixed it
Into a stand bright-polished wherein were resting the others,
Many and many a spear of the valiant-hearted Odysseus ;
Then on a chair, outspreading the cover of linen, he set her :
Richly adorned was the chair, and below for the feet was a footstool.
Close to it set he a seat for himself rich-broidered, withdrawing
Far from the suitors, in fear that the stranger annoyed by the uproar
Loathing for food might feel, with that insolent rabble about him ;
Ay and he also was fain of his long-lost father to ask him.
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer
Beautiful, golden, and over a basin of silver she poured it,
Bidding him wash ; and she stationed a polished table beside him.
Then did a grave house-dame bring bread and lay it before him
Lavishly adding thereto of her stores full many a dainty.
Carrying platters aloft came also the carver and offered
Dishes of various meats ; and golden goblets he gave them,
Ofttimes filling the which passed hither and thither the henchman.
Now to the hall came crowding the arrogant suitors, and straightway
All of them sat them in order adown on the couches and armchairs.
Soon was the water for washing of hands poured out by the henchman,
Baskets of wheaten bread up-piled were brought by the maidens
While that the youths wreathed high with the foaming liquor the wine-bowls.
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Came to the mind of the suitors the thought of a different pleasure,
Even of singing and dancing—for such is the crown of a banquet.
So, when a herald had handed a beautiful harp to the singer
Phemius (ever unwilling he sang, compelled by the suitors),
Unto the sounds of his harping his exquisite voice he uplifted.
Telemachus meanwhile spake low to the goddess Athene,
Holding his head right close, to be noticed of none of the others :
“ List, dear stranger !—for sure at my words thou’lt never be angered—
Such are the pleasures of such !—harp-playing and dancing ! No wonder,
Seeing they eat the possessions of others, nor fear the avenger !

Eat the possessions of him whose whitening bones peradventure
Rot in the rain on the land or roll in the waves of the ocean !
Were they to see him return some day to the Ithacan homeland,
All of them straight to the gods would pray to be lighter in running
Rather than richer endowed with the treasures of gold and of garments.
Nay, it is vain ! he is dead of a pitiful death, nor is longer
Comfort remaining, whoever of earth-born mortals denies it
Saying he cometh again—since dead is the day of his coming.
Come now tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it :
Who art thou ? Whence dost thou come ? Tell too of thy city, thy parents.
Whose is the vessel whereon thou art come ? How haps it that sailors
Brought thee to Ithacan land ? What folk did they boast to belong to,
Seeing, methinks, it was never on foot that thou hither arrivedst ?
One thing further relate me exactly, for fain will I know it :
Art thou a traveller new to the land, or a friend of my father—
Guest peradventure ? for such came oftentimes unto his homestead,
Many a one, while yet he remained in the land of the living.”
Him then in turn gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
“ Well, I will tell thee of all that thou askest and truly relate it.
Mentes—such is my name. Of a wise-souled father I boast me,
Anchialus, and myself am the prince of the Taphian sea-folk.
Now am I come to a port of thy land with my vessel and comrades
Sailing the wine-dark deep on my way to a city of strangers,
Tempsa ; for copper I seek, and my cargo is glittering iron.
Yonder my ship on the side of the country afar from the city
Lieth in Reithron’s port, by the wood-clothed Neïan headland.
Yes, it is true—we can boast to be guest-friends one of another
Even from days long past. If thou doubt’st, go ask of the grandsire,
Hero Laertes. They say that he now no more to the city
Cometh, but living afar in the uplands suffers affliction
Sole with an ancient crone who attends to his eating and drinking,
Placing before him his food when exhaustion cometh upon him
Weariedly creeping about on the sloping knoll of his vineyard.
Now I am here—for they said he was home once more in his country,
Even thy father ; but heaven, it seemeth, hath hindered his coming.
Nathless never on earth has he perished, the godlike Odysseus :
Still he is living, methinks, mid the broad expanses of ocean,
Held on a sea-girt isle, where hostile people retain him,
Savages, forcing him all unwillingly still to remain there.
Nay, I will venture to speak as a prophet—for deep in my bosom
Heaven hath planted a thought that I feel to be sure of fulfilment,

A'

Though I am neither at all a diviner or augur unerring—
Verily not much longer afar from his well-loved homeland
Still shall he stay, not e'en though fetters of iron constrain him:
Sure he will plan his escape—such master of many devices.
Now come tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it,
Whether indeed (as thy stature proclaims) thou art child of Odysseus.
Marvellous both of thy head and thy beautiful eyes is the likeness
Unto the man that I knew when we oft held converse together,
Ere he embarked for the land of the Trojans, whither so many
Others, chiefs of the Argives, in hollow vessels departed.
Since then ne'er did I see him again, nor was seen by Odysseus."

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:

"Well, Sir stranger, the truth will I tell thee and clearly relate it.
Ever my mother hath called me the child of Odysseus. For my part
How can I know? Not the wisest of sons can discover his father.
Would that my fortune had made me the child of a happier mortal,
Son of a man whom age finds living in peace in his homestead!
Elsewise heaven hath will'd it: the most ill-fated of all men,
He, as they say, is my sire. Thus far can I answer thy question."

Him then again gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:

"Surely for thee is the heaven no nameless race in the future
Keeping in store—for a son so worthy of Penelopeia.

Now come, tell me a thing that I ask thee and clearly explain it:

What doth this banqueting mean? and this crowd? Why needful thy presence?

Hold they a wedding? or bout? No club-collation it seemeth:

Such is the insolent licence in which they appear to indulge them

Banqueting here in thy hall! Just cause for a man to be angered,

Were but a sensible person to see such shameful proceeding!"

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:

"Since, O stranger, thou fain wouldst hear of this matter and learn it,

Once did the house of my sire seem like to be rich and be blameless,—

Like to remain what it was while here in his home he was living.

Other, alas, was the will of immortals who plotted his ruin.

Lo, they have made him to vanish—as utterly vanished hath no man

Ever before. Nay, e'en for his death ne'er thus had I sorrowed,

Had he but met it amidst of his mates in the land of the Trojans,

Or in the arms of his friends, when he wound to an ending the warfare.

Then had the hosts of Achaea erected a tomb to his honour;

Yea and for me—for his son—he had left great glory behind him.

Ah but the spirits of storm to a death inglorious swept him,

Vanished, unseen and unheard of; and nothing but mourning and anguish

Me he bequeathed ! Nor now do I sorrow and make lamentation
Only for him ; for the gods send other and grievous afflictions.
All of the chief of the men who as princes rule in the islands,
Samos and Dulichium and the woodlands rich of Zacynthus,
Ay and as many besides as in rock-bound Ithaca lord it,
All come wooing my mother and wasting the wealth of the homestead.
She dares neither reject their hateful proposals of marriage,
Nor can she end it ; and thus do the men, consuming, devouring,
Ruin my home—me too will they soon o'erwhelm in its ruin.”
Then in exceeding displeasure again spake Pallas Athene :
“ Nay by the gods, right sorely thou need'st that the absent Odysseus
Come to thee quickly and lay strong hands on the impudent suitors !
Would that I saw him this moment in front of the door of the palace
Suddenly stand—with his helmet and shield and a couple of lances—
Such as he was in the days when mine eyes first lighted upon him
Making him merry and quaffing his wine in the hall of my homestead,
Newly from Ephyra come—from the town of the Mermerid Ilus.
Even to such far land had he sailed in his swift-winged vessel
Seeking a drug right deadly of which he was fain to possess him—
Poison, to smear on the tips of his bronze-shod arrows ; but Ilus
Gave it him not, for he shrank from the wrath of the gods everlasting.
Yet from my father he gat it, who loved him in marvellous fashion.
O that he came—e'en such an Odysseus—to visit the suitors,
Bringing on all of them speedy perdition and nuptials of anguish !
Nay but we know not the truth ; on the knees of the gods it is lying,
Whether he ever shall come, or shall come no more, to avenge him
Here in the halls of his home ; but do thou take thought, I exhort thee,
How to eject from the hall of thy palace this rabble of suitors.
Now mark well what I say, and give it thy earnest attention.
Summon to-morrow to come to a council the princely Achaeans ;
Make to them all an announcement and call on the gods to be witness.
Order the suitors from here to disperse each one to his homestead ;
While for thy mother—if truly her heart be enamoured of wedlock,
Send her again to her home—to the house of her powerful father.
There can her parents arrange for the wedding and settle the presents,
All of the wealth that is wont with a well-loved daughter to follow.
Now for thyself—such plan I suggest : 'twere wise to accept it.
Manning with twice ten rowers a vessel—thy goodliest galley—
Start on the quest for thy sire, who so long is afar and unheard of.
Haply an earth-born man shall inform thee, or haply shall Rumour,
Daughter of Zeus, who on earth is the busiest bringer of tidings.

Firstly betake thee to Pylos, the godlike Nestor to question.
Thence seek Sparta, the court of the fair-haired prince Menelaus :
He was the last to return of the bronzen-coated Achaeans,
Shouldst thou be told of thy father as living and homeward returning,
Surely for one year more thou'lt bear with the waste of thy substance.
Should they report him as perished and gone from the land of the living,
Quickly return, and regaining the well-loved home of thy fathers
Straightway build him a tomb, and funeral offerings offer
Many and rich, as is meet, and thy mother bestow on a husband.
Then, when at last these things are duly fulfilled and accomplished,
Hold thou counsel at once with the thoughts and the feelings within thee
How to be quit of the suitors, and here in the hall of thy homestead
Slay them by craft or by open assault. No more it beseems thee
Childish thoughts to indulge, for thy age no longer is childish.
Surely thou know'st of the fame that was won by the noble Orestes :
How he is praised by the nations for killing his father's assassin,
Crafty Aegisthus, who murdered his sire, great King Agamemnon.
Also do thou, dear lad, as in form thou art comely and stalwart,
Show thee courageous and win thee a name in the age that is coming !
Now I am fain to descend once more to my swift-winged vessel,
Where are waiting my men, and, I doubt not, chafe at my absence.
Take thou thought for thyself and attend to the counsel I gave thee."

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

" Verily, stranger, with kindly intent these words thou hast uttered,
Like to a father advising his son. I shall never forget them.

Yet, I beseech thee, remain, though eager to haste on thy journey !
Stay till refreshed with a bath, and the heart in thy bosom contented,
Back to thy ship thou returnest with gladness, bearing a present
Rare in its worth and its beauty—a present to keep as an heirloom ;
Such will I give thee—the gift of a friend to a friend that he loveth."

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :

" Nay, no longer withhold me ! I yearn me away on my journey.
Touching thy present—whatever thy heart shall enjoin thee to give me—
Give it when back I am coming, to carry it straight to my homeland.
Choose it as rare as thou wilt ; it will gain thee another as goodly."

These words spoken, departed the grey-eyed goddess Athene,
Flitting away as a bird by the roof-hole. Deep in his bosom
Courage and manly resolve she had planted, and roused a remembrance
Keener than erst of his sire ; and he marked the emotion within him
Greatly astonied in spirit, suspecting a deity's presence.
Then to the suitors he went and the strength of a god was upon him.

Here was the minstrel beginning to sing, and the suitors in silence
Listening sat ; and he sang of the homeward return of the Grecians,
Pitiful story of woes inflicted by Pallas Athene.

Odyssey

1

326 - 364

Now in her upper apartment the wise-souled Penelopeia,
Daughter of Icarius, was aware of the wonderful singing.
Straightway leaving her room by the high-built stair she descended ;
Neither alone did she go ; two maidens followed behind her.
So when at last she had come to the suitors, that fairest of women
Stood by the post of the door of the massively builded apartment,
Holding in front of her cheeks soft folds of her glistering head-dress.
There as she stood, with a trusty attendant on this and on that side,
Suddenly bursting in tears to the godlike bard she addressed her :
“ Phemius, many another enrapturing story thou knowest,
Deeds of immortals and men—themes often by singers recounted.
Such be thy song as thou sitt’st with the guests. Let them listen in silence
Quaffing the wine. But desist, I beseech, from the strain thou art singing,
Pitiful story, that ever the heart in the depths of my bosom
Woundeth—for me hath befallen an inconsolable sorrow ;
Such was the well-loved lord that I mourn—nor can ever forget him—
One whose fame is abroad through Hellas and midmost Argos.”
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :
“ Wherefore, mother, prevent that the sweet-voiced singer delight us
E’en as his spirit is moved ? It is never the singer, believe me,
Bringeth us bale ; it is Zeus that is guilty thereof ; he allotteth
Every mortal that liveth on bread what fortune he willeth.
Nor do I blame that he singeth the pitiful fates of the Argives,
Seeing that ever by mortals the more extolled is a singer
Singing the song that the newest resounds in the ears of the people.
Therefore harden thy heart and thy mind with the courage to listen.
’Twas not Odysseus alone that was reft of the day of returning
Back from the Trojan land ; there perished many another.
Now to thy chamber return and attend to thine own occupation,
Even the loom and the distaff, and order thy maiden attendants
Busily keep to their tasks ; we men will attend to the talking,
All of us—chiefly myself ; it is I that am lord of the household.”
Full of amazement she turned her to go to the women’s apartment,
Hiding the masterful words of her son deep down in her bosom.
So to her upper apartment ascending with maiden attendants
Here she lamented Odysseus her well-loved husband, till gently
Slumber was poured on her lids by the grey-eyed goddess Athene.

Now in the shadowy hall loud clamour arose of the suitors,
Each one uttering prayers to the gods to possess her in marriage,
Till sage Telemachus spake out and began to address them:
"Hearken, my mother's suitors—outrageous and riotous brawlers!
Now let us fall to the feast and be merry—but boisterous uproar
Keep we afar! It is pleasant to list to the song of a minstrel
Such as this singer of mine; for in voice he is like an immortal.
Early to-morrow I ask you to come to the place of the council,
All of you. There shall I make you an open and plain declaration,
Bidding you quit these halls. Ye can seek your junketings elsewhere.
Feed on your own! Go feasting in turn each one with the other!
Should it however appear to your minds more pleasant and better
Thus to devour the possession of others, nor fear the avenger,
Waste as ye will!—but the gods everlasting I call to my succour,
Hoping that heaven will grant such deeds to receive retribution.
Then in this selfsame hall shall ye perish—and none shall avenge you."
Thus did he speak, and the men all biting their lips in amazement
Marvelled at Telemachus and the valiant words he had spoken.

Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed him:
"Verily, Telemachus, it is heaven itself that hath taught thee
Such big blustering vaunts, such impudent boldness of language.
Never Cronion, I trust, would choose for the Ithacan island
Thee as a king—though truly thou claimest the right to inherit!"
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:
"Antinous—and I trust at my words thou'lt never be angered—
E'en this honour—if offered by Zeus—I am ready to bear it.
Deemest thou ruling the worst of the evils that mortals inherit?
Nay—to be ruler is never an evil; for quickly the homestead
Richer and richer becomes and the man held higher in honour.
Many another however among the Achaeans is chieftain
Here in the rock-bound Ithacan isle, both aged and younger.
One of them haply will gain him the title—as dead is Odysseus.
But, for myself, I intend to be master and lord of my household,
Lord of my servants—of all that the sword of Odysseus hath won me."

"Telemachus, on the knees of the gods everlasting it lieth
Who as the king of the Ithacan island shall rule the Achaeans.
Hold thou fast to thy own! be the master and lord of thy household!
Never shall any be found that shall venture with force to assail thee,
Seeking to ruin thy home—while Ithaca stands as a nation.
Now, good friend, I am fain to examine thee touching this stranger.

Whence arrived is the man? What folk doth he boast to belong to?
Where is his land, and his kin? Where lies the domain of his homestead?
Came he perchance some tidings to bring of thy father's returning?
Travels he hither in hope some want of his own to provide for?
How of a sudden he rose and was gone! in a moment was vanished,
Ere we had made us acquainted! yet seemed not a churl in appearance!"

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:
"Eurymachus, clean gone is the hope of my father's returning,
Nor do I further believe in reports, where'er they may come from,
Nor divination consider of aught—such tales as my mother
Hears from the lips of diviners she calls to the house and examines.
This is an ancient guest of my household. He cometh from Taphos.
Mentes—such is his name. Of a wise-souled father he boasts him,
Anchialus, and himself is the prince of the Taphian sea-folk."
Thus did he speak; but he knew in his heart 'twas a goddess immortal.

Now to the joys of the dance and the pleasures of singing they turned them,
Making them merry, and thus they awaited the coming of even;
Nor was the merriment over when come was the darkness of even;
Then at the last they departed to sleep, each one to his homestead.
Telemachus, where fronting the fair-built court was his chamber
(Built aloft was the room in a site with a beautiful prospect)
Thither betook him to bed, while deep in his spirit he pondered.
Thither with torches ablaze attended him also the trusty
Eurycleia, the daughter of Ops, who was son of Pisenor.
Once, long since, had Laertes expended his wealth to possess her,
Then in her prime; and a score of his kine as the price he had given.
Honour he gave her as much as his own true wife in the household;
Nor did he make her his mistress; he shrank from the wrath of his consort.
She was the servant that carried the torches to light him; she loved him
More than the rest of the maids, and had served as the nurse to his childhood.
Now so soon as the door of the fair-built chamber she opened,
Seating him down on the bed, of his doublet soft he disrobed him;
This to the hands of the careful and sage old dame he entrusted.
She, when at length she had folded the tunic and skilfully smoothed it,
Hanging it up on a peg at the side of his rich-carved bedstead,
Went from the chamber, and pulling the door by the handle of silver
Shut it and fastened it, drawing the bolt well home with the latch-string.
Here for the livelong night, close covered with wrappings of sheep's wool,
Lying he thought of the journey that Pallas Athena had plann'd him.

ODYSSEY BOOK II

NOW when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Out of his bed uprising the well-loved son of Odysseus
Donned his apparel, suspended the keen-edged sword from his shoulder,
Under his smooth-skinned feet then tying his beautiful sandals
Out of his chamber he came, as a god immortal in presence ;
Nor did he further delay, but the clear-voiced heralds he ordered
Unto a council to summon the long-haired sons of Achaea.
These then made proclamation, and quickly they gathered together.

Now when they all had collected together and formed an assembly,
Bearing a bronzen spear in his hand to the council he gat him,
Neither alone did he go—by his fleet-paced dogs he was followed.
Wondrous too was the grace that around him was shed by Athene,
Making the people to marvel that saw him approach ; and the elders
Yielded him place, and he sat him adown in the seat of his father.
First then rising the hero Aegyptus began to address them ;
Bowed was his body by age, but his mind held infinite knowledge.
One of his well-loved sons with the godlike hero Odysseus
Sailed in the hollow vessels to Ilium famed for its horses,
Antiphus, skilled with the spear : he was slain by the terrible Cyclops,
Caught in his cavern—the last that the monster had roasted and eaten.
Though he possessed three others (the one with the suitors consorted,
Eurynomus, and the two aye tended the fields of the homestead)
Him howbeit he never forgat, but bewailed him and mourned him ;
Ay and in tears as he thought of his son he arose to address them :
“ Ithacans, listen I pray to the words I am wishful to utter.
Never was yet our meeting of council or session assembled
Since that the noble Odysseus in hollow vessels departed.
Who is it now that hath summoned us here ? who found it so urgent ?
One of the younger among us perhaps, or one of the elders ?
Would he perchance some tidings impart of the army returning—
Tidings that first he hath learn'd and of which he can give us assurance ?
Or for the weal of the state hath he aught to inform or advise us ?
Sure it is some good man. Fair fortune attend him, and heaven
Grant him a boon, fulfilling whatever his soul desireth ! ”

Thus did he speak, and rejoicing the well-loved son of Odysseus
Took it as omen, nor seated remained, but intent to harangue them

Forth in the midst of the council he stood; and at once was a sceptre
Placed in his hand by Pisenor, the herald expert and sagacious.
Then to the aged Aegyptus he turned, and first he addressed him:
"Sire, not afar is the man that thou seek'st; right soon shalt thou see him.
He that hath summoned you hither am I—who am foremost in sorrow.
Neither, alas, is it news I impart of the army returning,
News that is come to me first, and of which I can give you assurance;
Nor for the weal of the state is it aught I can tell or advise you.
No—it is mine own need.—On my home is calamity fallen
Twofold: firstly a sire right noble I mourn, who among you,
All of you here, was a monarch and lovingly ruled as a father.
Second, and worse, is an evil that soon on the whole of my homestead
Infinite ruin will bring, and my substance utterly squander:
Suitors I mean, who in spite of the wish of my mother annoy her,
(Some of them favourite sons of the noblest here in my presence)
Cowards, who fear to betake them at once to the house of her father
Icarius, who alone should settle the gifts for his daughter,
Yea and bestow her at will on the wooer that winneth his favour.
These now every day to the house come flocking, and daily
Slaughtering oxen and sheep and the fat-fed goats of the farmstead
Revel at feasts, and carousing and quaffing the fiery red wine,
Wantonly waste. Nigh all is consumed, nor still is a man there,
Such as Odysseus of yore, to avert this plague from the household.
We, all powerless now to avert it, await for the future
Truly a pitiful lot, and shall know not how to defend us.
Sooth, to defend me I lack not the will, had I only the power,
Since it is not to be borne what I suffer; nor truly I deem it
Fair for my home to be ruined: yourselves should also resent it,
Ay and if only for shame that ye feel of the neighbouring nations
Dwelling around us—or else for the dread of the anger of heaven,
Lest in its wrath at the deeds ill done it shall send you reverses.
Now I petition you all by Olympian Zeus and by Justice,
Goddess that gathers together the councils of men and dissolves them,
Spare me, my friends! Nay, leave me alone with my pain and my sorrow!
Leave me to mourn!—unless that my father, the noble Odysseus,
Acting in malice did ill to the well-greaved sons of Achaea,
Which to requite ye are treating me evilly, also in malice,
While these men ye abet. 'Twere verily more to my profit
Were it yourselves that consumed my paternal estate and my cattle!
Were it yourselves, right soon would compensation be offered;
Else, in the streets of the town we had made an appeal and entreaty,



PENELOPEIA UNRAVELS HER WEB

Claiming amends, till the whole of the loss were duly repaid us.
Now it is worse—on my heart ye inflict an incurable torture.”
These words uttered, the sceptre he dashed to the ground in his anger,
Bursting in tears, and the whole of the council was touched with compassion.

Odyssey
II
78 - 117

Then did the rest all silent remain, nor was any that ventured
Telemachus to assail and to answer with words of resentment ;
Antinous was the one who alone addressed him in answer :
“Telemachus, big boaster, unbridled in temper—what prat’st thou,
Thus to insult us and fasten the blame of the matter upon us ?
'Tis not the princely Achaeans that wrong thee by wooing thy mother,
Nay, 'tis that mother of thine, who in guile all women exceedeth.
Past is already the third, and the fourth year soon will be passing,
Since she began deluding the hearts of the noble Achaeans.
All she befooleth with hopes, and she giveth her promise to each one,
Sending them many a message ; but things quite other she longs for.
Yea and besides in her heart this crafty device she hath plotted :
Rearing a spacious loom in her hall, she betook her to weaving,
Working a broad and a delicate web ; and anon she addressed us :
'Princes, who sue for my hand—since dead is the godlike Odysseus—
Patiently wait, though eager to hasten my marriage, till fully
Woven this web—lest vainly I forfeit the fruits of my spinning.
Lo, 'tis a shroud for the hero Laertes, to wrap him, whenever
Bringing his destined doom low-laying death overtakes him ;
Else in Achaea's land might well some woman reproach me,
Were he to lie, who possessed such riches, lacking a grave-cloth.’
So did she speak and within us the valiant heart was persuaded.
Thus then all of the day at the spacious loom she was weaving ;
During the night she unravelled the web with her torches beside her.
Three long years with her secret device she befooled the Achaeans ;
Till, when the fourth year came, and as season was followed by season,
Then at the last (since one of her women, who knew it, had told us),
While at the loom her magnificent web she unravelled, we caught her.
Thus was she forced, though sorely unwilling, to finish her labour.
Thee such answer the suitors return—thou'lt soon understand it
Turning it o'er in thy mind, and likewise all the Achaeans.
Touching this mother of thine—dismiss her, and bid her to marry
Whomsoever her father commands or that pleaseth her fancy.
Should she however continue insulting the sons of Achaea,
Using the arts in the which she is richly endowed by Athene,
Deftness in exquisite work and the talent for cunning invention

—Ay and invention of guile—such guile as we never in old times
Hear of the fair-tressed wives or the daughters of ancient Achaeans,
Tyro or Alcmene or the fair-crowned lady Mycene—
None of them all had the clever devices that Penelopeia
Knoweth to practise—and here's a device not seemly, not decent!
Well—they will never desist consuming thy living and substance
While this woman retaineth the purpose that powers immortal
Plant in her bosom. A mighty renown for herself she is winning
Doubtless—but also for thee a regret for thy vanished riches.
Touching us suitors—we mean to betake us nor homeward nor elsewhere,
Till she has married the man that she chooses of all the Achaeans.”
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer:
“Antinous, it is nowise possible thus to eject her;
She is the mother that bare me and reared me. My father is absent,
Dead or alive; and amends right heavy—for me a disaster—
Icarius will demand, if I wilfully force her to leave me.
Nor from her father alone shall I suffer, for heaven will surely
Punish me worse when my mother shall call on the awful Erinyes,
Forced to depart from her home; and of all mankind will the censure
Fall on my head. Thus, never and never the word will I utter.
Now for yourselves—if the spirit within you is wroth and indignant,
Well then, quit ye my halls! Ye can seek your junketings elsewhere.
Feed on your own! Go feasting in turn each one with the other!
Should it however appear to your minds more pleasant and better
Thus to devour the possessions of others, nor fear the avenger,
Waste as ye will! But the gods everlasting I call to my succour,
Hoping that heaven will grant such deeds to receive retribution:
Then in this selfsame hall shall ye perish—and none shall avenge you.”
Thus pray'd Telemachus, and the Father who speaketh in thunder
Sent two eagles, that swooped from aloft, from the crest of a mountain.
Swift as the blast of a storm for a while came flying together
Both of them, each by the side of the other outspreading his pinions,
Till right over the place of the council and buzzing assembly
Suddenly wheeling they circled around and with many a flapping
Gazed in the faces of all with a glare foreboding destruction.
Then with his claws each clutched at the neck and the cheeks of the other,
Sweeping away to the right straight over the roofs of the city.
All in astonishment stared at the eagles, whenas they beheld them,
Wondering much in their hearts what things were destined to happen.
Then stood forth and addressed them the hero, old Halitherses,
Mastor's son, who alone of his age was surpassingly gifted

Birds to discern as a seer and tell the event that was coming.
Moved with a kindly intention he spake and addressed the assembly:
"Ithacans, listen I pray to the words I am wishful to utter!
Chiefly I speak to the suitors—for them concern my predictions,
Since that on them there rolleth a mighty disaster: Odysseus
Now not long from his friends shall absent him, but even already
Near is at hand and is sowing for these their doom and destruction,
All of them—ay and on many another he bringeth disaster,
Many of us that inhabit the far-seen Ithaca. Come then,
Ere it befall let us counsel to end their mischief—their selves too,
See that they end it! and truly the sooner they end it, the better.
Not as a fool unpractised I prophesy: sure is my knowledge.
Ay, I affirm, in regard to the man, that it all is accomplished,
All that I once foretold, when the Argive leaders embarked them,
Sailing for Troy—and together with these went cunning Odysseus.
'Many a woe shall he suffer,' I said, 'and his comrades shall perish.
Then in the twentieth year he shall come, unknown, unexpected,
Back to his home.' Lo, all these things are finding fulfilment."
Forthwith Polybus' son, prince Eurymachus, made answer:
"Go to thy home, old gaffer, and prophesy there to thy children,
Lest peradventure on them some mighty disaster is rolling!
Touching this matter, methinks I can prophesy better than thou canst.
Many a feathered fowl in the sunlight spaces of heaven
Flutters about—nor do all bring augury. Dead is Odysseus,
Dead in a distant land. Had ye gone to perdition together
Well had it been, for thou ne'er hadst talked such folly as augur,
Nor hadst Telemachus thus further incited to anger,
Hoping a gift for thy house, I suppose—if he careth to give one.
Now will I speak to thee plainly a word that shall find a fulfilment:
While that a man like thee that is elder and wiser than others
Leadeth a younger astray with his words and incites him to anger,
First for the youngster himself far worse is the trouble he causeth,
(Ay and he ne'er will be able to help him because of the men here)
While for thyself, old man, we shall force thee to pay us a forfeit
Such as shall madden thy soul; and a grievous pain it will cause thee.
Also to Telemachus this counsel I publicly offer:
Straight let him order his mother to go to the house of her father;
There can her parents arrange for the wedding and settle the presents,
All of the wealth that is wont with a well-loved daughter to follow;
Ere it be done, we shall never (believe me), we sons of Achaea,
Cease from this forcible wooing; we fear not a mortal that liveth,

Not e'en Telemachus—how fluent soever his tongue be.
Nor do we hold divination for aught—of the which in thy dotage
Emptily prating thou makest thyself still more to be hated.
Yea, his estate shall be eaten to nothing, nor any requital
Ever be made, till she cease with delays to befool the Achaeans
Touching her marriage;—and we meanwhile, all patiently waiting,
Still for this fair perfection compete, forgetful of others,
Leaving unsought such wives as a man might willingly wed with.”
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer:
“Eurymachus and the rest of you high-born nobles and suitors,
Touching this matter I cease to entreat; no more will I utter.
Known is already the truth to the gods and to all the Achaeans.
Grant me howbeit a good swift vessel and twenty companions,
Such as shall help to accomplish the voyaging thither and hither,
Since I intend to betake me to Sparta and Pylos the sandy,
Tidings to learn of my father's return who so long is unheard of.
Haply an earth-born man shall inform me, or haply shall Rumour,
Daughter of Zeus, who on earth is the busiest bringer of tidings.
Should I be told of my father as living and homeward returning,
Surely for one more year I can bear with the waste of my substance.
Should they report him as perished and gone from the land of the living,
Forthwith quickly regaining the well-loved home of my fathers,
Here I shall build him a tomb and funeral offerings offer,
Many and rich, as is meet, and my mother bestow on a husband.”
These words spoken he sat him adown; then rose to address them
Mentor, once of the noble Odysseus a faithful companion.
Him, when he sailed, did the hero entrust with the care of his homestead,
Leaving the old man there to command in the house and protect it.
Moved with a kindly intention he spake and addressed the assembly:
“Ithacans, listen I pray to the words I am wishful to utter!
Never be kindly affectioned again, nor loving and gentle,
Any that beareth the sceptre as king, nor righteously minded!
Nay, let him rather be hard and be cruel and practise injustice!
So is it true that the godlike Odysseus by none is remembered,
None of the people he governed and lovingly ruled as a father.
'Tis not the arrogant suitors so much that I view with resentment,
Though outrageous the deeds that they do with malicious intention,
Since they imperil their heads, audaciously braving Odysseus,
Eating his wealth, in belief that he ne'er shall return to the homeland.
Nay, I am wroth far more with the rest of the people—with you here
Silently sitting with never a word of rebuke for the suitors,

Never attempting to stay these few, though many ye number.”
Him addressing replied Leiocritus, son of Euenor :
“ Mentor, mischievous fool, where wander thy wits? and what prat’st thou,
Bidding them stop us? Methinks ye will find it a difficult matter
Fighting with men for a feast—and with men who exceed you in number.
E’en if Odysseus himself, your Ithacan hero, appearing
Found at the feast in his house the illustrious band of the suitors,
Were he to long in his spirit to drive us away from his mansion,
Verily little his wife would joy, despite of her yearnings,
Seeing him safely returned ; for a doom disgraceful awaits him
Fighting with those that exceed him in number. ’Tis folly thou talkest.
Come now, all of you people, disperse, each man to his farmstead.
Touching this youth, Halitherses and Mentor shall see to his voyage,
Both of them being of yore good friends of the house of his father.
Natheless, long will he linger, I trow, exploring for tidings
Only in Ithaca island, and never accomplish the journey.”

Thus he addressed them, and hastily all from the council dispersed them,
Scattering hither and thither, and each man went to his homestead,
All but the suitors—who went to the house of the godlike Odysseus.

Meantime Telemachus, to the beach of the ocean withdrawing,
Washed in the hoar salt water his hands, and he prayed to Athene :
“ List, O thou who as god yestreen to the home of my fathers
Camest, and badest me traverse the mist-bound gulf of the ocean,
Tidings to seek of my father’s return, who so long is unheard of :
Yea, thou badest me go, but Achaeans hinder my going,
Chiefly of all those men o’erweening and wicked, the suitors.”
Thus as he uttered his prayer drew nigh him the goddess Athene,
Likened to Mentor in voice and also in bodily semblance.
Then did she open her lips, and with swift-winged words she addressed him :
“ Telemachus, thou’lt prove not in future a fool or a coward,
Hast thou within thee a drop of the valiant blood of thy father—
Such was he ever at winning his purpose in word and in action—
Nor shall I fear that thy voyage be vain or be never accomplished ;
While if thou beest no son of Odysseus and Penelopeia,
Then can I nowise hope that thy wishes will find a fulfilment.
Seldom indeed is a son to be found who can rival his father ;
Most are worse—but it happens at times that the child is the better.
Nay but in future, I know, thou’lt prove not a fool or a coward,
Nor is the craft of Odysseus in thee so totally wanting ;

Odyssey Therefore good is my hope thou'lt bring these works to fulfilment.
11 Come, put away from thy mind the designs and the thoughts of the suitors,
280-319 Senseless fools that they are—yea, equally foolish and wicked—
Unsuspecting of death and the darkness of doom that is rolling
Nearer, to swallow them all on the selfsame day in perdition.
Touching the journey thou longst to attempt, nought now shall delay it,
Such is the friendship I feel for the son, as I felt for the father.
Straight will I get thee a good swift ship, and will come as thy comrade.
Now, I exhort thee, return to thy home and consort with the suitors.
There for the journey prepare thy provision and stow it in vessels,
Wine in the jars, white meal of the barley, the marrow of mortals,
Packed in the well-sewn skins. Meantime will I levy as shipmates
Those of the people that offer them gladly; and many a vessel
Lies on the sea-girt island of Ithaca, newer and older;
One of them first I shall choose—whichever appears to be fittest—
Then we can quickly equip her and set her afloat on the ocean.”

These words uttered Athena, the daughter of Zeus, and incited
Telemachus to depart; who, aware of the voice of the goddess,
Went on his way to the palace with heart that was grievously troubled.
Here in the halls of his home he discovered the arrogant suitors
Busy with flaying of goats and with singeing of swine in the courtyard.
Seeing him Antinous with a laugh came forward to meet him,
Clasped him at once by the hand, and with accents of welcome addressed him:
“Telemachus, big boaster, unbridled in temper, I pray thee,
Nourish within no more such anger in word and in action!
Come, let us see thee be merry and feast and carouse as aforetime!
All these things, be assured, we Achaeans will duly attend to,
Even a vessel and crew—picked rowers, to carry thee quickly
Tidings to seek of the noble Odysseus in beautiful Pylos.”
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:
“Antinous, I can never with boisterous brawlers as you be
Peacefully sit at the board and delight me in quiet enjoyment.
Were't not enough in the past to have wasted so many a treasure—
Wasted so much of my riches, ye suitors, in days of my childhood?
Now I am grown to a man, and I listen to all that is spoken,
Listen and learn and, as stronger within me is waxing my spirit,
Soon shall I try to excite doom's terrible furies against you,
Whether I journey to Pylos or stay still here in my country.
Nay, I shall go—nor in vain shall I go on the journey I speak of—
Go as a passenger. Ne'er shall I get me a vessel or rowers

Granted by you : it is thus, I am sure, ye determined to treat me.”
Speaking, he snatched full lightly his hand from the hand of the suitor
Antinous ; but the rest, in the palace preparing a banquet,
Seeing it, jeered and with words insulting disdainfully mocked him,
While in their midst thus spake one insolent youth to another :
“ Verily Telemachus is devising us death and destruction !
Either from Pylos the sandy his friends he will bring to avenge him,
Or from the city of Sparta ! He seemeth in terrible earnest !
Else to the fertile fields of the Ephyran land he intendeth
Straight to betake him, and thence some drug right deadly to fetch him,
Poison, to cast in the bowl, that we all of us perish together.”
Then in the midst made answer an insolent youth to the other :
“ Ay, who knoweth ? perchance as he sails in his hollow vessel,
Wandering far from his home, he will perish, as perished Odysseus.
Were it to hap, ’twould make our troubles the more and the greater,
Seeing that all of his goods ’twere need to divide, and the homestead
Give to his mother to have and to hold with the man that she marries.”

Thus did they speak ; but he gat him adown to a room of his father’s
Vaulted and broad, where piles were lying of gold and of copper,
Garments also in chests and fragrant oil in abundance ;
Many a cask moreover of wine sweet-savoured and ancient
Stood there, holding within it a liquor divine, undiluted.
Close to the wall and in order they stood, lest haply Odysseus
Back to his home might come, all toils and sufferings ended.
Doors close-fitting and furnished with locks were hung in the portals,
Folding together, and here was a matron by night as by daytime
Wont to resort, who it all full wisely and carefully guarded,
Eurycleia, the daughter of Ops, who was son of Pisenor.
Her now Telemachus to the store-room called, and addressed her :
“ Come, good mother, decant me a wine, I beseech thee, in wine-jars,
Sweet—ay, even the choicest of all but the wine that thou keepest
Mindful of him, ill-fated—if haply appearing from somewhere
Godlike Odysseus shall come, escaping from doom and destruction.
Fill me a dozen of jars and fit all closely with covers.
Pour me as well fine barley in well-sewn wallets of leather.
Twenty in all be the measures of meal of the mill-ground barley.
Only thyself mayst know it. Let all be collected together.
During the eveningtide I shall fetch it, as soon as my mother
Unto her upper apartment ascends and prepares her for slumber,
Since I intend to betake me to Sparta and Pylos the sandy,

Odyssey Tidings to hear, if I may, or my well-loved father's returning."
Hearing the words he had spoken, the dear nurse Eurycleia
Uttered a woful lament, and with swift-winged words she addressed him:
"Why, ah why, in thy heart, dear child, should such an intention
Ever arise? How canst thou be wishing to wander in far lands,
Thou the belov'd sole son of thy mother? A far from his country
Perished is godlike Odysseus amidst some people of strangers;
Yea and as soon as thou goest the men will be plotting behind thee
How to destroy thee with guile and divide all these thy possessions.
Stay now quiet at home on thy lands. Sure, ne'er is it needful
Thus to go toiling and wandering off on the wastes of the ocean."
Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:
"Comfort thee, nurse; not without God's will is the thing that I purpose.
Now come swear to me nought to reveal to my mother belovéd
Ere that of days not less than eleven or twelve shall be ended
(Save that she miss me before and shall ask and shall learn my departure),
Lest she lament me with tears and her fair face mar with her weeping."
Then by the oath that is mighty among the immortals she sware it.
So when at last she had given her oath and had finished the plighting,
Straight did the dear old mother decant him the wine in the wine-jars,
Packed him besides fine barley in well-sewn wallets of leather.
Telemachus then returned to the house to consort with the suitors.

Other was now the device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene.
Likened to Telemachus through all of the city she hastened
Seeking the men; and each she accosted imparting her orders,
Bidding them come to the good swift ship at the fall of the even.
Also to Phronius' son she addressed her, the famous Noëmon,
Begging a swift-winged ship; and he willingly promised to lend one.
So when the even was come and darkened was every roadway,
Down to the salt sea water the vessel they hauled, and aboard her
All of the tackle they shipped that by well-decked vessels is carried.
Then was she moored by the point of the bay, and the stalwart rowers
Gathered aboard, each urged to his work by the voice of the goddess.

Planning another device did the grey-eyed goddess Athene
Forthwith go on her way to the palace of godlike Odysseus;
Here a delightsome slumber she shed on the eyes of the suitors,
Dazing them so that the wine-cups dropt from the hands of the drinkers.
Soon to the town they departed to lay them to slumber, unable
Still at the banquet to sit, since drowsiness fell on their eyelids.

Calling to Telemachus did the grey-eyed goddess Athene
Summon him forth from the midst of the fair-built halls of the mansion,
Likened to Mentor in voice and also in bodily semblance :
“ Come now, Telemachus—for already thy well-greaved shipmates
Sit at the oar, and for nought are waiting but thee to despatch them.
Come, let us quickly be gone, nor longer delay them from starting.”
These words uttered, at once went forward Pallas Athene,
Hastily leading the way, and he followed the steps of the goddess.
Now when at last they had gotten them down to the sea and the vessel,
Here on the strand of the ocean the long-haired youths they discovered ;
These prince Telemachus as their lord and their leader accosted :
“ Hither, my friends ! let us fetch the provisions. Already together
All at the house is collected. My mother with nought is acquainted,
Neither the others—the maids ; one only I told of my purpose.”
These words uttered, he guided them forward ; they following after
Fetched the provisions and bringing them all to the well-decked vessel
Stowed them aboard at the hest of the well-loved son of Odysseus.
Then did he mount on the ship, and before him Athena embarking
Sat her adown at the stern of the vessel, and near to the goddess
Telemachus took seat ; and the shipmates loosing the cables
Mounted the vessel themselves and sat them adown on the benches.
Sent was a fair stern-wind by the grey-eyed goddess Athene,
Blustering Zephyr, that roars as he sweepeth the wine-dark ocean.
Then called Telemachus to his men and exhorted and bade them
Set their hands to the gear ; and they set them to work as he urged them.
Raising the pine-wood mast to its height, in the notch of the cross-bar
Firmly they fixed it, and bracing it taut to the prow with the forestays
Hoisted the fair white sails with the ropes tight-twisted of oxhide.
Struck was the midst of the sail by the wind, and the purpling billow
Shouted in front of the prow as she moved on her way in the waters
Over the waves of the ocean, rejoicing her course to accomplish.
Now in the swift black vessel when all of the gear they had fastened,
Setting them bowls for the mixing of wine full-brimming with liquor
Unto the gods immortal, eternal, they offered libation,
Chiefly the grey-eyed goddess, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty.
Thus then all of the night and into the dawn she was speeding.

ODYSSEY BOOK III

THEN, as the sun rushed up from the beautiful lake of the ocean
Into a heaven of brass and brought back light for immortals,
Yea and for mortals that live on the earth, rich giver of harvests,
Unto the Pylian city they came, strong castle of Neleus.

Here on the shore of the ocean the people had slain as oblation
Bulls all black to the blue-haired god, Earth-shaking Poseidon,
Companies nine were there, five hundred seated in each one
Feasting, and nine of the bulls each company kept for a portion.
Busy were all with the tasting of livers and burning of thigh-bones
While to the land these bore with their well-built vessel, and straightway
Striking the canvas they brailed it aloft; and they moored her and landed.
Out of her Telemachus stepped down, and before him Athene.

First then breaking the silence the grey-eyed goddess addressed him:
"Telemachus, no need is at hand, not the least, to be bashful.

Even for this thou hast traversed the ocean—to hear of thy father,
What land hideth his bones and what was the doom he encountered.
Come now, straightly address thee to Nestor, the tamer of horses,
So shall we learn what counsel he holdeth concealed in his bosom.
Come and entreat him thyself, and the whole of the truth he will tell thee;
Ne'er will he speak what is false; right wise is the heart of the hero."

Her sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer:

"Mentor, how shall I venture to go—how dare to salute him?

Never as yet was I practised at all in the art of a speaker;
Ay and a youth feels bashful to question a man that is older."

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:

"Telemachus, some thoughts thou'lt find in the depths of thy bosom,
Some will be sent by a god, since never and never (I know it)
Save by the will of the gods thou wast born and art come to thy manhood."

These words uttered, at once went forward Pallas Athene
Hastily leading the way; and he followed the steps of the goddess.
Soon to the throng close-seated they came of the Pylian people.
Here in the midst with his sons sat Nestor; round him his comrades
Roasting or spitting the flesh were busy preparing the banquet.
These, when the strangers they saw, came hurrying eagerly forward,
Hands outstretching in welcome and bidding them both to be seated.
Foremost was Nestor's son Peisistratus; close he approached them,
Welcomed them both with the hand and gave them as seats at the banquet

Thick soft fleeces that lay on the sand of the salt sea water,
Close by the side of his sire and his brother the prince Thrasymedes.
Portions before them he set of the entrail meat, and he poured them
Wine in a goblet of gold, and he pledged them a welcome, addressing
Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis :
“Offer a prayer, O guest, to the King Earth-shaking Poseidon,
Since to the god of the sea is the feast that ye chance to arrive at.
Pour thy libation and offer thy prayer, as the custom ordaineth ;
Then this goblet of wine honey-sweet pass on to thy comrade
Bidding him make a libation and pray—and I doubt not that he too
Prays to the gods everlasting; for gods are needed by all men.
Younger however he seemeth—in years far rather my equal ;
Wherefore first to thyself do I offer the cup of libation.”

These words spoken, the goblet of wine sweet-savoured he tendered.
Much did Athena rejoice at the stripling's wisdom and judgment,
First to herself that he offered the gold-wrought cup of libation ;
Fervently then did she utter a prayer to the god of the ocean :
“Hear me, Poseidaon, Earth-girdler, hear me ! Refuse not
Answer to this our prayer ! grant all these things a fulfilment !
Firstly to Nestor himself and his sons give glory and honour,
Then to the rest vouchsafe—to the whole of the Pylian people—
Favour and grace in requital of this their splendid oblation.
Us too grant that we safely return, when it all is accomplished,
All, for the winning of which we are come in the swift black vessel.”
Thus as she prayed, of herself she was bringing it all to fulfilment.
Then from the goddess receiving the two-cupped beautiful goblet
Prayed in the selfsame manner the well-loved son of Odysseus.

Now when the outside meat they had roasted and drawn from the skewers,
All they apportioned and sat them adown to a glorious banquet,
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Then he addressed them, the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :
“Now is a moment befitting to ask and to question the strangers
Touching themselves—for they now are fully contented with feasting.
Friends, come tell of yourselves. Whence sail ye the paths of the waters ?
Come ye to chaffer for gain, or recklessly roaming at random
Like to the pirates and rovers that wander and rob on the ocean,
Setting their lives on the hazard in bringing disaster on others ?”
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn made answer ;
Boldly he spake, for Athena herself in his bosom had planted

Courage to ask of his sire who was vanished so long from his homeland,
Yea and honour and glory to win in the land of the living:
“ Nestor, Neleus’ son, great glory of all the Achaeans,
Whence we arrive thou hast asked me. Behold, I will tell thee exactly.
Hither we came from the Ithacan isle ’neath Neïon’s headland.
This is a quest of my own, not a matter that toucheth the people.
Following far-spread rumour I journey in search of my father,
Even of godlike Odysseus the brave, who, they tell me, aforeside
Stood at thy side in the battle and plundered the Ilian city.
Now of the rest of the heroes, as many as warred with the Trojans,
Tidings we hear, where any a pitiful doom hath encountered,
While for the fate of my sire—it is kept untold by Cronion:
None hath the power to say quite certainly where he is perished,
Whether by hostile tribes overwhelmed he was slain on the dry land,
Whether he lies in the depths mid the billows of Amphitrite.
Wherefore now to thy knees I am come, in the hope thou art willing
News of his pitiful death to impart, if perchance thou beheldest it
Even with thine own eyes, or hast heard some tale from another,
One who has wandered—for destined to ill from his birth was Odysseus.
Nor do thou shrink to offend, nor speak soft words in compassion;
Tell me exactly the truth—how far thou hast chanced to behold him.
Lo, I entreat thee—if ever my father, the noble Odysseus,
Either by word or by action accomplished the thing that he promised
Where in the Trojan land ye Achaeans suffered affliction,
This, I beseech thee, remember, and tell me the whole as it happened.”
Him gave answer the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor:
“ Ah, dear friend, thou recallest the sorrows that once in the distant
Trojan land we endured, the invincible sons of Achaea—
All those toils that we suffered in ships on the mist-bound ocean,
Seeking for spoil wherever Achilles was wishful to lead us.
How too fighting in front of the strong-built city of Priam
Battle we waged. Here fell of Achaeans the best and the bravest;
Here lies Ajax, the equal of Ares; here is Achilles,
Here Patroclus, in counsel a peer of the gods everlasting;
Here too lieth my son, my beloved, the strong and the noble
Antilochus, who with fleetness excelled in the race and the battle:
Ay and besides all this, what travail unending we suffered—
Where is the mortal on earth to be found that can fully relate it?
Even for five whole years, or for six, ’twere vain to abide here
Asking to hear of the woes once borne by the noble Achaeans;
Ere it was told, outwearied, I ween, thou’dst sail for thy homeland.

Odyssey Nine years warring at Troy did we busily scheme for its downfall,
III Weaving a tissue of wiles, which Zeus scarce granted fulfilment.

118-158 There might never another with him in devices of wisdom
Dare to compete, since far he surpassed all others in cunning,
Godlike Odysseus I mean, ay even thy father—if truly
He was thy sire; and amazement possesseth me while I behold thee,
Seeing that verily even in speech thou art like him, nor would one
Say that a man so young could speak so like to an elder.
All these years have never myself and the godlike Odysseus
Spoken diversely at meetings of men or the councils of chieftains;
Ever we held one mind, and with counsels of prudence and wisdom
Planned for the Greeks that it all might turn to the highest advantage.
Yet, when at last we had wasted the high-built city of Priam,
After from thence we had sailed and a god had dispersed the Achaeans,
Then in his heart did the Father a terrible homeward returning
Plot for them, seeing that neither with wisdom at all nor with justice
Most of them acted; and many encountered a doom right doleful,
Whelmed by the wrath of the grey-eyed daughter of Zeus the Almighty;
Yea, it was she that the quarrel excited between the Atridae;
These then called to the place of assembly the host of Achaeans
Hurriedly, all in disorderly haste, when the sun was a-sinking.
Heavy with wine they collected together, the sons of Achaea.
Both then spake of the reason for which they had summoned the people;
First Menelaus addressed him to all the Achaeans and bade them
Think of the homeward return o'er broad expanses of ocean;
Nor pleased this Agamemnon at all, for he ordered the people
Still to remain and sacred oblations of cattle to offer,
Thus to appease by atonement the terrible wrath of Athene,
Fool that he was, not knowing she ne'er would list to persuasion,
Seeing that lightly is turned not the mind of the gods everlasting.
Thus then violent words exchanging the one with the other
Stood these two; but the host of the well-greaved sons of Achaea
Rose with a terrible din, and in twain was divided the council.
All that night did we lie and with hearts indignant we brooded,
Angered the one with the other; for Zeus our ruin was planning;
Then, at the dawn, down dragging the ships to the vast salt ocean
Straight we embarked our spoil, deep-girdled women and chattels,
While that a half of the host hung back, and remaining encamped there
Kept with the King Agamemnon Atrides, as sheep with a shepherd.
Thus then half of us mounted the vessels, and rowing them swiftly
Voyaged—for calmed by a god was the ocean that teemeth with monsters.

Landing on Tenedos island we made to the gods an oblation,
Yearning for home ; but the Father of heaven had planned to prevent it,
Pitiless god, who aroused once more fierce quarrels amongst us.
Some then turning again their twy-beaked galleys departed,
Even the wise and the wary Odysseus with all of his comrades,
Taking the part once more of the King Agamemnon Atrides.
Then with the rest of my ships all following closely behind me
Thence did I flee ; for I saw that a deity plotted us evil ;
Fled too, rousing his mates, Tydides equal of Ares.
Following later behind us the fair-haired prince Menelaus
Found us in Lesbos arrived, and the long sea-voyage debating,
Whether to steer for the sea from the coast of precipitous Chios,
Making the Psyrian isle, and keeping the island to larboard,
Or to the landward of Chios to hold by tempestuous Mimas ;
This we entreated the god to declare by an omen, and giving
Manifest answer he bade us the midmost sea to Euboea
Boldly to cross and escape by the path that was shortest from peril.
Then did a stern-wind shrilling arise, and it blew, and the vessels
Speedily traversed the realm of the fishes, until at Geraestus
During the night they arrived ; and we offered of bulls to Poseidon
Many a thigh, since crossed was a mighty expanse of the ocean.
Four days after at Argos a part of the gallant squadron,
Vessels of Tydeus' son, Diomedes, tamer of horses,
Anchored ; but onward for Pylos I held, and the favouring stern-wind
Never was quenched from the day that a deity sent it to waft us.
Thus I arrived, dear child, not knowing what happed, and I learnt not
Aught of the rest—who safely returned, who perished returning ;
Only the rumours I hear as I sit in the hall of my palace ;
These, as is right, will I tell to thee fully, and hide from thee nothing.
Safely, they say, came home the ferocious Myrmidon spearmen,
Led by the glorious son of the dauntless-hearted Achilles ;
Safely returned Philoctetes, the far-famed offspring of Poias ;
Likewise Idomeneus gained Creta with all his companions,
All that escaped from the war—since none were reft by the ocean.
What was the fate of Atrides ye know, though far is your homeland—
How he returned, and his death was so cruelly planned by Aegisthus :
Ay but Aegisthus himself was repaid in a terrible manner.
So is it always good for a son to be left when a mortal
Perisheth ; even as here 'twas the son of the slain that avenged him,
Killing the crafty Aegisthus, who murdered his glorious father.
Also do thou, dear lad (as in form thou art comely and stalwart),

Odyssey Show thee courageous, and win thee a name in the age that is coming."

111
200-240

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

"Nestor, Neleus' son, great glory of all the Achaeans,
Grandly indeed did he wreak his revenge, and the land of Achaea
Ever shall spread his renown till it reach unborn generations.
Would that the gods might will with a strength like his to endue me
Thus to repay these suitors for all their cruel transgressions,
All the infatuate deeds that they wickedly scheme for my ruin.
Ah but, alas, not such is the fortune that destiny spun us,
Me and my father ! Whatever befalls, it is needful to bear it."

Him gave answer the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :

"Now that thy words, dear friend, have waked in my mind a remembrance,
Truly they tell me that suitors who woo for thy mother in numbers
Throng to thy palace and do thee despite, devising thy ruin.
Say, dost thou willingly suffer the insult ? or else do the people
There in thy country dislike thee, obeying a warning from heaven ?
Yet—who knows ?—he can come and requite this iniquitous outrage,
Either appearing alone or with all of the host of Achaea.
Ah ! were only the will of the grey-eyed goddess Athene
Thee such love to vouchsafe as she granted the famous Odysseus
Erst in the Trojan land, where many afflictions we suffered !

(Never in sooth did I see such visible favour of heaven
Such as the manifest aid he was given by Pallas Athene.)

Were it but only her will such favouring love to vouchsafe thee,
Some of the suitors, methinks, would grow forgetful of wedlock."

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

"Sire, not yet, do I fear me, will this thou hast said be accomplished :
Great is the import thereof ; awe filleth my heart, and unhop'd for
Were the event, should even the gods permit it to happen."

Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene :

"Telemachus, what word by the door of thy lips hath escaped thee !
Easily e'en from afar can a god, if he wishes, restore one.
I for myself would choose full many a toil and affliction,
Ere that I won me a day of return and arrived at my homeland,
Rather than come and be slain at my hearth, like King Agamemnon
Craftily trapped to his death by his wife and the traitor Aegisthus.
Truly not even the gods have power, though much they may love him,
Death that is common to all to defend from a mortal, whenever
Bringing his destined doom low-laying death overtakes him."

Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :

"Mentor, hereof let us cease to debate ; let us sorrow in silence.

Never shall this prove true ; he shall never return ; for already
Planned by the deathless gods is his doom ; death's darkness awaits him.
Now I am wishful to turn to a theme far other and question
Nestor, who all surpasseth in wise discernment and counsel,
Since, it is said, he hath reigned through three generations of mortals ;
Yea and he seemeth indeed in appearance like an immortal.
Nestor, Neleus' son, I beseech thee, relate to me truly,
How was Atrides slain, wide-governing King Agamemnon ?
Where meanwhile was the prince Menelaus ? and how did Aegisthus
Use such craft as to murder a man so greatly the stronger ?
Say, was the prince not there, in Achaea and Argos, but elsewhere
Wandering over the world, when the bold foul crime was accomplished ?"
Him gave answer the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor :
" Well then listen, my son, while all of the truth I relate thee.
E'en of thyself canst clearly conceive what end had befallen
Had but the other Atrides, the fair-haired prince Menelaus,
Coming from Troy discovered Aegisthus alive in the palace :
Verily over the corse of the dead no earth had they scattered ;
Dogs and the ravening fowls of the heaven had torn it to pieces,
Cast from the city afar on the plain ; of the women of Argos
None had bewailed him ; for truly a terrible deed he committed.
While in a far-off land enduring so many a hardship
Troy we besieged, in his idle retreat mid the meadows of Argos
Aye with his flattering words Agamemnon's wife he was tempting.
Now at the first she rejected the shameless deed he suggested,
Fair Clytemnestra ; for good was the heart that she bare in her bosom.
Yea and moreover at court was a bard, whom King Agamemnon
Sailing for Troy had enjoined full straitly to tend on his consort.
Yet, when at last by the will of the gods was determined her ruin,
Then did Aegisthus removing the bard to a desolate island
Leave him to furnish a spoil and a feast to the birds of the heaven :
Her to his home as a lover he led, and she willingly followed.
Many a fat ox-thigh did he burn at the shrines of immortals,
Many a rich-worked web and a treasure of gold he suspended,
Now that the deed was fulfilled that his heart ne'er ventured to hope for.
Meantime homeward returning from Troy were sailing together
I and Atrides the king, our fleets consorted in friendship.
Sunium's cape we had reached, high hallowed headland of Athens ;
Here was the pilot of prince Menelaus by Phoebus Apollo
Stricken with painless shafts which smote him and suddenly slew him,
E'en as the rudder he held and swiftly was speeding the vessel,

Phrontis Onétorides, who surpassed all mortals as helmsman
Vessels to pilot when storms came suddenly sweeping upon them.
Thus was the prince held back, though eager to haste on the journey,
Wishing his mate to inter and with funeral rites to bewail him.
Hence he at last set sail and, over the wine-dark ocean
Steering his hollow ships, to the mountainous cape of Malea
Straightly he ran; but a course right wretched the god of the thunder
Shaped for him then; outpouring the shrill-voiced blast of the storm-wind,
Rollers he sent upsurging aloft and enormous as mountains.
Sundered in twain was the fleet: some drave to the island of Creta,
Where the Cydonian race by the streams of Iardanus dwelleth.
Here is a smooth and precipitous rock confronting the ocean
Out in the mist-bound deep on the uttermost borders of Gortyn,
Where, on the left of the cape, great rollers aroused by the south wind
Sweep upon Phaestus, and small is the rock-spit barring the surges.
Hither arriving with half of the fleet were saved from destruction
Hardly the crews; while hurled on the sharp-edged crags by the rollers
Perished the ships. Five others—the rest of his blue-prow'd vessels—
Carried away by the waves and the wind were drifted to Egypt.
Here did he gain much wealth, and a treasure of gold he collected,
Wandering thus with his ships midst nations of barbarous language.
Meanwhile plotted Aegisthus at home his iniquitous treason,
Murdered Atrides and bowed to subjection beneath him the people.
Thus seven years did he reign mid the treasures of golden Mycenae;
Then, in the eighth, o'ertook him his doom, for the godlike Orestes
Back from the city of Athens returned—and he slew the assassin,
Crafty Aegisthus, who murdered his sire, great King Agamemnon.
Now, when the slaying was done, and a funeral feast to the Argives
O'er his detestable mother he gave and the craven Aegisthus,
Lo, on the selfsame day Menelaus good at the war-cry
Landed, and many a treasure he brought as the freight of his vessels.
Ay and, my friend, take care, nor long from thy country absent thee,
Leaving possessions behind, and strangers too in thy homestead,
Mortals outrageous as these, lest parting thy substance among them
All of thy wealth they devour, and vain prove also thy journey.
Rather I earnestly bid and exhort that to prince Menelaus
Straight thou proceed; for a short while since he returned from a far land,
Ay from a country of men whence none might dream in his spirit
E'er to return, had the blasts of the storm once forced him to wander
Into a sea so mighty that even the birds of the heaven
Not in a year may traverse the vast and terrible water.

Come, set forth with thy vessel at once and thy comrades; or wilt thou
Rather by land, I will lend thee a chariot gladly and horses,
Ay and my sons will be ready, I know it, as guides to escort thee
Unto divine Lacedaemon to find fair-haired Menelaus;
Yea and thyself shalt entreat him the whole of the truth to reveal thee;
Ne'er will he speak what is false; right wise is the heart of the hero."

Ere he had ended the sun sank down and the gloom was approaching.
Then from the midst of them answered the grey-eyed goddess Athene:
"Verily, sire, right well were all these matters related.
Now let us order the tongues to be sliced and the wine to be mingled;
So shall we unto Poseidon and all of the other immortals
Offer libation, and then shall bethink us of sleep—for 'tis bed-time;
Sunk is already the day in the gloom of the west, nor beseems it
Longer to sit at a feast of the gods, but to think of departure."
Thus she addressed them, the daughter of Zeus. To her words they attended.
Over the hands of the feasters the water was poured by the henchmen,
While that the youths wreathed high with the foaming liquor the wine-bowls.
Then, when to each they had handed a wine-cup primed for libation,
Casting the tongues in the flames they arose and poured it upon them.
So when at last they had poured and had drunk to their hearts' satisfaction,
Then did Athena and also the godlike son of Odysseus
Both of them wish to be gone and return to the hollow vessel;
Nestor however with words of persuasion attempted to stay them:
"Father Zeus and all of the gods everlasting forbend it!
Ne'er will I let you depart to the swift-winged vessel, and treat me
Like to a man whose house quite lacketh in raiment—a pauper—
One that has got no rugs in his home nor plenty of blankets
Both for the use of himself and his guests—soft bedding to sleep in.
Nay, I possess in my house both wrappers and beautiful blankets,
Nor shall the well-loved son, by my troth, of a man as Odysseus
Sleep on the deck of a ship while yet in the land of the living
Still I exist, or a son or a daughter be left in my palace
Strangers to welcome as guests, should ever they chance to arrive here."
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:
"Well is it spoken in sooth, dear father, and well it beseemeth
Telemachus to obey, since thus 'twere certainly better.
Wherefore now let him follow thee hence and repose till the morning
There in the halls of thy palace; but I to the black-hulled vessel
Mean to return, to inspirit my mates and to bring them the tidings,
Being the one of the crew that alone might claim to be elder,

Odyssey Since that the others, the striplings that follow as friends and as shipmates,
III All are equals in age of the high-souled son of Odysseus.
363-401 Then I shall lay me to rest by the side of the black-hulled vessel
Just for the night, and at dawn to the bold Cauconian people
Mean to depart, to collect me a debt now owing a long time,
Neither a trifle. But him take back to thy home, and to-morrow
Send in a car with thy son as a guide, and provide him with horses,
Even the swiftest of all of thy steeds and the best at endurance."

These words spoken, departed the grey-eyed goddess Athene
Likened in form to an osprey; and all were filled with amazement,
Yea and the long-lived king was astonished whenas he beheld it.
Grasping the hand of the son of Odysseus he hailed and addressed him:
"Truly, my friend, thou'lt prove as a man not a coward or weakling,
Seeing that e'en in thy youth thou'rt thus by immortals attended.
Surely was this, of the gods that inhabit Olympian mansions,
None but the daughter of Zeus, most glorious Tritogeneia,
Even the goddess that honoured thy valiant sire mid the Argives.
Grant me thy grace, O queen! Fair fame vouchsafe, I beseech thee,
Unto myself and my sons and my honoured and well-loved consort;
So shall I offer thee, goddess, a broad-brow'd heifer, a yearling
Still unbroken nor yet brought under the yoke by the ploughman;
Such is the victim I promise to slay, and her horns shall be gilded."
Thus did he speak, and his prayer was accepted by Pallas Athene.
Then uprising the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor
Led to his beautiful palace his sons and his daughters' husbands.

Now when at length they had come to the far-famed halls of the chieftain,
All of them sat them in order adown on the couches and armchairs,
Then by the ancient monarch was mixed for his guests in a wine-bowl
Wine sweet-savoured: eleven the years it had stood in the store-room
Ere that the matron had opened the jar, unloosing its cover;
Such was the wine that he mixed in the crater, and making libation
Prayed to Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.
So when at last they had poured and had drunk to their hearts' satisfaction,
All of the others departed to sleep, each one to his homestead,
All save Telemachus, dear son of the godlike Odysseus:
Him gave lodgment the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor
Under the echoing porch, on a bedstead with beautiful carvings,
Next to that spearman renown'd, Peisistratus, leader of heroes,
Sole of his sons still left an unmarried youth in the palace.

Then did he lay him to rest in the innermost room of the mansion,
Where was arrayed by the lady his wife their bedding and bedstead.

Odyssey

III

402 - 441

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Hastily roused him the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor.
Issuing forth from his palace he sat on the polished stonework,
Where in the front of the high house-door were benches of marble
White and gleaming with unguent, whereon was accustomed aforesimes
Neleus oft to recline, that peer of immortals in counsel.
Neleus long since mastered by Fate had departed to Hades;
Now sat there Gerenian Nestor, Achaea's defender,
Holding his sceptre, and round him his sons came thronging together
Issuing forth each one from his room, Stratius and Echephron,
Perseus and Arétus and the equal of gods Thrasymedes.
These as the sixth the heroic and young Peisistratus followed,
Bringing the godlike Telemachus; and they set him beside them.
Then brake silence the warrior-knight Gerenian Nestor:
"Haste ye, I pray, dear sons, and quickly accomplish my longing;
Firstly of all will I sue for the grace of the goddess Athene,
Since at my bountiful feast to the god she was visibly present.
One of you go to the plain for a heifer, and see that she quickly
Hither be brought. Let a herd of the cattle be ordered to drive her.
One to the black-hulled vessel of Telemachus great-hearted
Hasten, to summon his mates, and let twain of them only remain there.
Then let another at once go order Laërces the goldsmith
Hither to come for the purpose of gilding the horns of the heifer.
All of you others remain here closely and send to the handmaids;
Bid them to spread us a feast in the far-famed hall of the palace,
Also to hand round chairs and to bring bright water and fuel."
So when he spoke all hastened to work; soon come was the heifer
Out of the plain; soon came from the swift-winged well-built vessel
Comrades of Telemachus great-hearted; and come was the smith too
Bearing the tools of his craft in his hands and his smithy utensils,
Even the anvil and hammer and pincers of delicate fabric,
Made for the working of gold; came also the goddess Athene,
Fain to receive the oblation; and old Gerenian Nestor
Gave to Laërces the gold, and he gilded the horns of the heifer
Skilfully, making the goddess rejoice at the beautiful victim.
Leading the cow by the horns now came Stratius and Echephron;
Water besides for the hands in a basin with flowery carvings
Arétus bare forth from a room; in his left was a basket

Odyssey Holding the groats of the corn; Thrasymedes steadfast in battle
III Stood with his sharp-edged axe by the cow, all ready to fell her;
442-480 Perseus lifted the bowl for the blood, while Nestor the aged
Opened the rites with ablution and sprinkled the grain, to Athene
Ardently praying, and cast in the flames as an earnest the forelock.

Now when at last were ended the prayers and the barley was sprinkled,
Instantly Nestor's son, high-spirited prince Thrasymedes,
Stepping anigh smote home with the axe: on the nape it descended
Cutting the tendons, and loosened the might of the heifer; and wailing
Rose from the women, the wives of the sons and the consort of Nestor,
Eurydice, who of prince Clymenus was the first-born daughter.
Then from the wide-way'd earth they uplifted the head of the victim
Baring the throat, and the leader of men Peisistratus cut it.
Out of it flowed black blood; from the bones departed the spirit.
Soon was the body dismembered, and cutting the meat from the thigh-bones
All of it duly they sliced and covered it over with caul-fat,
Making it double, and laid at the top raw chunks of the carcass.
This did the old king burn on the billets, and fiery red wine
Over it poured; and with five-pronged forks stood striplings beside him.
Now when the meat of the thighs was consumed and the liver was eaten,
Chopping the rest of it small on the skewers they spitted the pieces;
Then with the long sharp spits in their hands they began with the roasting.
Meantime bathed was the son of Odysseus by fair Polycaste,
Latest-born of the daughters of old Neleian Nestor.
So when at length he was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,
Round him she cast fair raiment—a beautiful mantle and doublet;
Out of the bath then stepping, in semblance like an immortal,
Down by the prince of the people, the old King Nestor, he sat him.
So when the outside meat they had roasted and drawn from the skewers,
Sitting them down they partook of the banquet; and nobles as henchmen
Served them and carried the wine in the goblets of gold to the feasters.

Now when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Thus brake silence the warrior-knight, Gerenian Nestor:
“Sons, come send for the car and the fair-maned horses, and quickly
Yoke them, that Telemachus may forthwith fare on his journey.”
Thus did he speak, and they gave good heed to his words and obeyed him;
Unto a car they attached full quickly the fleet-paced horses,
Also provisions of bread and of wine were stowed by the house-dame,
Relishes too—such food as is eaten by Zeus-loved princes.



TELEMACHUS AND PEISISTRATUS ARRIVE AT LACEDAEMON

Forthwith Telemachus on the beautiful chariot mounted,
Also that leader of men Peisistratus, offspring of Nestor,
Into the car upmounted beside him, and grasping the rein-straps
Whipped to a start, and the horses at once right willingly cantered
Down to the plain, soon leaving the steep-built city of Pylos,
Then for the whole of the day kept shaking the yoke on their shoulders,
Till, when the sun sank down and darkened was every roadway,
Unto the township of Phera they came and the house of Diocles,
Offspring of Orsilochus, who was son of the River Alphéus;
Here did they rest for the night, and as guests he entreated them kindly.

Odyssey
III
481 - 497

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Straightway yoking the steeds, and the inlaid chariot mounting,
Forth of the echoing portal they drave and the gate of the courtyard.
Then did he whip to a start, and forward they willingly galloped,
First to a plain wide-waving with wheat, then further and further
Eager to finish their course pressed onward the fleet-paced horses,
Till, as the sun sank down and darkened was every roadway,

ODYSSEY BOOK IV

FAIR Lacedaemon they reached, embosomed in cavernous mountains,
Here to the mansion they drave of the far-famed prince Menelaus.
Him in his palace they found in the midst of a throng of his kindred
Holding a marriage feast for his peerless son and his daughter,
Sending her forth to the son of Achilles, the router of cohorts,
Whom long since in the land of the Trojans he promised the maiden,
Vowing to give her; and heaven was now completing the marriage.
Her was he sending with cars and with chariot-horses to journey
Unto the city renown'd of the Myrmidons, where he was chieftain.
Also a bride he was taking—Alector's daughter, of Sparta—
Unto his son, the belovéd and stalwart youth Megapenthes,
Born of a slave—for to Helen an offspring never was granted
After she once gave birth to a daughter of exquisite beauty,
Hermione, who was fair as the Queen Aphrodite the golden.

Thus were holding a feast in the high-roofed halls of the palace
Neighbours and all of the kin of the far-famed prince Menelaus,
Making them merry; amidst them a godlike singer was singing
Unto the sound of the harp; and aye as his song was beginning
Went two tumblers whirling around in the midst of the feasters.

Meanwhile reaching the gate of the palace the twain with their horses,
Nestor's glorious son and Telemachus the heroic,
Halted, and here came forth and beheld them the lord Eteoneus,
Ever-alert attendant of far-famed King Menelaus;
Hurrying back to the house to report to the prince of the people,
Close to his side he approached, and swift-winged words he addressed him:
“Guests be arrived, unknown—O Zeus-loved King Menelaus!—
Two be the men, and like to the offspring of Zeus the Almighty.
Say, shall we loose from the yokes for the men their fleet-paced horses,
Or shall we send them away where others shall give them reception?”
Sorely displeased gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaus:
“Ne'er did I deem thee a fool, Boëthous' son, Eteoneus,
—Never till now; but behold, it is childish folly thou pratest.
Verily both of us often as guests at the table of others
Ate of their bread ere safely we landed—if truly in safety
Zeus will protect us from evils to come. Go, loosen the horses;
Then to the hall lead forward the strangers to share in the banquet.”

Thus did he speak, and the man from the hall went busily hasting,
Calling on other alert attendants and bidding them follow.
These then, loosing from under the yoke all sweating the horses,
Carefully fastened them both in the stall, each one at a manger,
Poured out spelt in the manger and mixed it with glittering barley,
Tilted the chariot up to the smooth white wall of the courtyard,
Then with the strangers returned to the wonderful house; and with marvel
Gazing around them they entered the home of the Zeus-loved monarch.
For, as the sheen of the sun or the moon, there floated a glory
Over the high-roofed palace of far-famed King Menelaus.
Then, when at last they had sated their eyes with the pleasure of gazing,
Straightway into a bath well polished they entered and bathed them.
Now when the women had washed them and rubbed them with oil of the olive,
Round them they cast soft mantles of wool and doublets and led them,
Into the hall; and they seated them nigh Menelaus Atrides.
Water for washing of hands by a maiden was brought in an ewer
Beautiful, golden; and over a basin of silver she poured it,
Bidding them wash, and she stationed a polished table beside them.
Then did a grave house-dame bring bread and lay it before them,
Lavishly adding thereto from her stores full many a dainty.
Carrying platters aloft came also a carver and offered
Dishes of various meats; and gold-wrought goblets he gave them.
Then to the strangers a greeting addressed fair-haired Menelaus:
"Now partake of the food, and be welcome heartily! Later,
After the supper is done, we shall ask your names and inform us
Whence your descent—for in neither is perished the blood of the parent;
Both are surely the children of chieftains nurtured by heaven,
Bearers of sceptres. By churls were suchlike never begotten."
These words spoken he took rich meat and placed it beside them,
Roast of the chine of an ox that was served for himself as an honour.
Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them.

Now when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Telemachus then turned him to Nestor's son and addressed him,
Holding his head right close, to be noticed of none of the others:
"Nestor's son, dear friend, the delight of my heart, I beseech thee,
Mark but the flashing of bronze in the echoing halls of the palace,
Ay and of ivory too, and of amber, of gold and of silver.
Such, I believe, inside is the mansion of Zeus on Olympus!
Riches unending! Amazement possesseth me while I behold it."
Thus as he spake it was noted of fair-haired prince Menelaus;

Wherefore lifting his voice these swift-winged words he addressed them:
"Nay, dear children, with Zeus to compete none dareth of mortals;
Lasting for ever and ever remain his mansion and riches.
Whether a mortal exists that can rival my treasures I know not;
Possible were it; but far did I wander and sorely I suffered
Bringing them home in my ships, and the eighth year saw my arrival.
Even to Cyprus I came and to Phoenicé and to Egypt;
Aethiop tribes I beheld, and Erembian; visited Sidon,
Libya too, where lambs from their birth bear horns on the forehead;
Here do the flocks thrice yeon in the year's complete revolution;
Never is lacking abundance to any—to lord or to shepherd—
Either of sweet white milk, or of flesh for the table, or cheeses;
Such an unfailing supply is afforded by flocks to the milker.
While that in these far lands I was journeying, gathering riches,
Wandering widely, another had meantime murdered my brother,
Caught unawares by the craft of his wife—that woman accurséd:
Thus do I feel no joy in the wealth whereof I am master.
Ah but, I trow, these things ye have heard your fathers recounting,
Whosoever they be, for immense was the woe that I suffered,
Even the loss of a home right happy and wealth in abundance.
Would that I dwelt in a homestead with only a part of my riches,
Yea with a third, and that still were living the heroes who perished
There on the plain of the Troad afar from the pastures of Argos.
Still, though all of the men I bewail and am ever lamenting,
Ofttimes thinking thereon as I sit in the halls of my palace,
Bidding my soul for awhile to delight in her sorrow, and sometimes
Bidding her cease (since soon one wearies of chill lamentation),
None of them all howbeit I mourn, though sorely I miss them,
So as I grieve for the one—whose memory brings me abhorrence
Even of food and of sleep; for of all of the sons of Achaea
None could dare and endure as Odysseus; but destiny gave him
Many a woe, and to me this inconsolable sorrow,
Sorrow for one that is vanished away long years, and we know not
Whether he lives or is dead; and I ween that at home they bewail him,
Aged Laertes his sire, and the true-souled Penelopeia,
Yea and Telemachus, whom he left as a babe in his homestead."
Thus did he speak, and a longing to wail in the youth was awakened,
While at the name of his sire from his eye there trickled a teardrop.
Hastily then uplifting his mantle of purple, he held it
Close to his face with his hands; which marking the prince Menelaus
Doubtfully mused for a while in the depths of his mind and his spirit,

Odyssey Whether to leave him alone and allow him to mention his father,
IV Or to begin forthwith and with questions straitly to test him,
118 - 157

Thus as he mused and revolved such things in his mind and his spirit,
Out of the fragrant recess of a high-roofed chamber appearing
Helen approached—like Artemis, goddess of glittering arrows.
Set was her well-wrought chair by her maiden attendant Adrasté,
While by Alcippe a wrapper was carried of delicate sheep-wool;
Phylo carried a basket of silver, a present to Helen
Given by Polybus' wife, Alcandré, dwelling in Thebae,
City of Égypt, the houses whereof hold many a treasure.
Polybus gave to the prince two bathing-vessels of silver,
Two great tripods as well, and of gold ten talents he gave him.
Also his consort bestowed right beautiful presents on Helen,
Even a distaff of gold, and a fine-wrought basket of silver
Standing on wheels; but in gold were finished the rims of the basket.
This was the one now placed at her side by the maiden attendant
Laden with yarn well-dressed for the spinning, and o'er it the distaff
Lay outstretched with its wool dark-dyed of a violet colour.
So she reclined on the chair; and below for her feet was a footstool.
Straightway then to her husband she spake and questioned him closely:
“ Know we at all these men, Zeus-foster'd king Menelaus?
What is the race they avow, these strangers that visit thy palace?
Should I dissemble, or speak what is true? I am minded to speak it.
Never before, I affirm, did I see such likeness in mortal,
Whether in woman or man (it amazeth me while I behold it),
Such as the youth here bears to the son of the noble Odysseus,
Telemachus, who was left as a newborn child in the homestead,
While that his father and ye the Achaeans for sake of a wanton,
Even myself, came boldly assailing the town of the Trojans.”
Her then in answer addressed these words fair-haired Menelaus:
“ Verily now I perceive, O lady, the likeness thou notest.
Such were truly the hands and the feet of the hero Odysseus;
Such was the glance of his eyes, and also his hair and his forehead.
Ay and behold, just now, as I spake concerning Odysseus,
Calling to mind how sorely he toiled and suffered affliction
All for my sake, from the eyes of the youth there trickled a teardrop;
Hastily then to his face he uplifted his mantle of purple.”
Him then addressing did Nestor's son Peisistratus answer:
“ Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,
Verily this is indeed, as thou sayest, the son of Odysseus ;

Lowly however he beareth his spirit and holds it unseemly
Now on his early arrival to utter presumptuous language
Here in the presence of one whose voice as a god's doth enchant us,
Touching myself, I was sent by the knight Gerenian Nestor
Him to attend on his journey as guide—for he longed to behold thee,
Hoping to hear thee suggest some counsel for word or for action.
Many a trouble and grief, when a father is gone from the homestead,
Falls on a son, if he lacketh another to help and defend him.
Telemachus has it thus—for his father is vanished, and no one,
None in the land of his birth, can he find to protect him from ruin.”
Him then in answer addressed these words fair-haired Menelaus:
“Verily now 'tis the son of a friend that is come to my palace,
One that hath borne for the sake of myself full many a trial!
Great was my longing to welcome him home as I welcomed no other,
None of the Argives, had Zeus the Olympian, god of the thunder,
Granted us both to return with the swift ships over the ocean.
Then had I found him a city in Argos and made him a homestead,
Bidding him come with his goods and his child from the Ithacan island,
Ay and with all of his people—A town I had emptied of dwellers,
One of the towns in the region anigh, of the which I am chieftain.
Here had we oft foregathered in friendship, and nothing had ever
Parted us, each one loving and happy in love of the other,
Till at the last with its shadow the darkness of death overwhelmed us.
All howbeit was fated, I ween, and the envy of heaven
Cut from the one poor mortal the hope of return to his homeland.”

Thus did he speak, and a longing to wail in them all he awakened:
Weeping was Argive Helen, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty;
Weeping was Telemachus, and prince Menelaus Atrides;
Neither did Nestor's son keep tearless eyes as he listened,
Deep in his spirit recalling the thought of the hero unrivalled
Antilochus, who was slain by the glorious son of the Morning.
Thinking thereon, to the monarch with swift-winged words he addressed him:
“Atreus' son, of thy wisdom, surpassing the wisdom of mortals,
Ancient Nestor was wont to recount us, if e'er in his palace
Mention was made of thy name and we plied each other with questions.
Now too follow my counsel, if possible—since, as I hold it,
Wailing amidst of a banquet is far from a pleasure, and daylight
Soon will be dawning. I blame not indeed nor resent as unseemly
Weeping for one who is dead—whose destined doom is accomplished.
This is the one last due we can offer to pitiful mortals, . . .

Even the cutting of hair and the falling from cheeks of the teardrop.
 I too mourn for the lost—for a brother that died—of the Argives
 None of the worst; and methinks thou'rt like to have known him; for my part
 Ne'er did I meet or behold him; but ever of all was the foremost
 Antilochus, it is said, unrivalled in speed and in fighting."
 Him then in turn gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaus:
 "Friend, thou speak'st as a man endowed with the spirit of wisdom
 Well might speak and perform—yea, even a man that is elder.
 Seeing that such is thy father, to speak thus wisely becomes thee.
 Easily known is the child of a man whom Father Cronion
 Destines to bliss on the day of his birth and the day of his marriage.
 Such is the fortune that all of his life he hath granted to Nestor,
 Yea and allots him a smooth old age in the halls of his homestead,
 Blesséd in sons so wise and all unrivalled as spearmen.
 Now let us, putting away this sadness that lately befell us,
 Mind us again of the feast. Let a page bring water and pour it
 Over the hands. In the morn we shall find full many a story,
 Telemachus and myself, to recount each one to the other."
 Thus did he speak and Asphalion on the hands poured water,
 Ever-alert attendant of far-famed prince Menelaus.
 Then did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them.

Meantime Helen the daughter of Zeus planned other devices,
 Casting a drug in the wine from the which were drinking the feasters.
 Soother of pain is the drug, and of wrath, and of every sorrow;
 Whosoe'er should swallow a draught thus mixed in a wine-bowl,
 Not for the space of a day on his cheeks would trickle a teardrop,
 Not if his father himself should die or the mother that bare him,
 Nay not e'en if his brother be slain, or the son that he loveth
 Fall by the edge of the sword, and he see them dying before him.
 Many a suchlike drug, both potent and kindly, did Helen
 Gain from the consort of Thon, Polydamna, a woman of Egypt.
 (Here doth the fertile soil breed potent plants in abundance,
 Many benign, thus mixed as a potion, and many malignant.
 Every dweller in Egypt moreover surpasseth as healer
 Others of mortals; for truly the folk is the race of Paeëon.)

So when the potion was mingled she bade bear forth to the drinkers,
 Then once more brake silence, addressing her husband in answer:
 "Zeus-loved king Menelaus Atrides, and all of you present,
 Sons of illustrious sires . . . (It is God who to this or to that one

Giveth of good or of evil. To him are possible all things),
Seated remain, I beseech, in the hall, and renewing the banquet
Take ye enjoyment in tales—I will tell one suiting the season.
All of the stories I ne'er can relate, nor e'en can I name them,
All the adventurous feats of the dauntless-hearted Odysseus;
One will I tell that was dared and was done by the valiant hero
While in the Trojan land ye Achaeans suffered affliction.
Unto disfiguring stripes of the lash he subjected his body;
Then with his shoulders enveloped in pitiful wraps, as a bondman,
Into the wide-way'd town of the foe he audaciously entered.
Here he assumed the disguise of an utterly different person,
Even a beggar—a part scarce his at the camp of the Grecians.
Thus in the town of the Trojans he entered; nor felt a suspicion
Any but I—for beneath the disguise of the beggar I knew him;
Ay and I questioned him too; but he met me with crafty evasions.
Lastly, whenas he was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,
Raiment I gave him to don and the solemn assurance I made him
Not to betray him amidst of the Trojan folk as Odysseus,
Till to the huts of the camp he had come and the swift-winged vessels.
Then did he clearly inform me of all the designs of the Grecians.
Thus he escaped, and many a Trojan he slew with the broadsword
Ere to the Greeks he was come; and he carried them plentiful tidings.
Then did the women of Troy raise shrill lamentation; but my heart
Joy'd, for already my spirit was changed, and again I was yearning
Back to my home, and repented the madness that queen Aphrodite
Sent me when thither, afar from my well-loved country, she led me,
Making me part from my child and my marriage-bed and a husband
Lacking in nought—nor gifts of the mind nor beauty of person.”

Her then in turn gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaus:
“Verily, lady, thou tellest thy tale in an excellent manner.
Many a hero I knew, and his inmost thoughts and his counsels
Carefully marked, and in many a far-off land did I travel,
Yet did I never behold with my eyes such daring in mortal
Like to the inborn courage of dauntless-hearted Odysseus.
Hear this too that was dared and was done by the valiant hero.
While in the wood-built horse were sitting the chiefs of the Argives,
All of us, plotting to bring on the enemy death and destruction,
Thither anon thou camest. (A deity surely impelled thee,
One that was wishing to grant to the Trojans glory and honour.)
Godlike Deïphobus came also giving thee escort.

Testing by touch of the fingers the hollow ambush, thou passedst
 Thrice all round it, and calling by name on the chiefs of the Argives
 Madest thy voice to resemble the voice of a woman of Argos.
 Meanwhile Tydeus' son and myself and the godlike Odysseus
 Sat in the midst and listened intent to thy voice as it called us.
 Both of us others indeed kept longing to rise and to rush forth
 Out of the ambush, or else from within to respond to thy calling;
 Only Odysseus opposed our eager excitement and stay'd us.
 Then, all silent remaining the rest of the sons of Achaea,
 Anticlus was alone still wishing to give thee an answer,
 Ay and he opened his mouth; but Odysseus was sudden and closed it
 Firmly with powerful hands, thus saving the lives of the Grecians,
 Holding him fast till away thou wast summoned by Pallas Athene."
 Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:
 "Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,
 Still more grievous it seems that to hinder his pitiful ending
 Nought did avail, though truly within him his heart was of iron.
 Now will I beg thee to show us to bed; 'tis the season already
 Gladly to lay us to rest and with slumber sweet to delight us."

Thus did he speak, and Argive Helen commanded her maidens
 Under the porch two beds to arrange, and beautiful blankets,
 Purple, upon them to cast, and over them coverlets spreading,
 Mantles of wool moreover to lay enwrapping them warmly.
 So from the hall went quickly the handmaids carrying torches.
 Then, when the beds were strown, with a henchman to guide them the strangers,
 Nestor's glorious son and Telemachus the heroic,
 Came forth unto the porch in the front of the palace and slept there.
 Atreus' son too slept in the innermost room of the mansion,
 Long-robed Helen reposing anigh, most lovely of women.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
 Then from his bed uprose Menelaus good at the war-cry,
 Donned his apparel and hung him his keen-edged sword from his shoulder;
 Under his smooth-skinned feet then tying his beautiful sandals
 Out of his chamber he came as a god immortal in presence;
 Near to Odysseus' son then seating himself he addressed him:
 "Hero Telemachus, come say what reason hath brought thee
 Hither to fair Lacedaemon across wide wastes of the ocean,
 Whether a public affair or a private? Tell me exactly!"
 Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer:

“Captain of warrior hosts, Zeus-loved Menelaus Atrides,
Hither for news I am come—hast thou aught to relate—of my father.
Wasted away and devoured is the wealth of my lands and my homestead;
Filled is my palace with foes, who for ever infest it, and slaughter
Sheep of my thick-thronged folds and my shambling, crook-horned cattle;
Suitors these of my mother, exceedingly insolent mortals.
Wherefore now to thy knees am I come, if perchance thou art able
News of his pitiful death to impart. Peradventure thou sawst it
Even with thine own eyes, or hast heard some tale from another,
One who had wandered—for born to a pitiful fate was Odysseus.
Nor do thou shrink to offend, nor speak soft words in compassion.
Tell me exactly the truth—how far thou hast chanced to behold him.
Lo, I entreat thee:—if ever my father, the noble Odysseus,
Either by word or by deed accomplished the thing that he promised
Where in the Trojan land ye Achaeans suffered affliction,
This, I beseech thee, remember, and tell me the whole as it happened.”

Sorely displeased gave answer the fair-haired prince Menelaus:
“Nay, by the gods! in the bed of a man right valiant-hearted
These have chosen a couch for themselves—poor cowardly creatures!
E’en as it haps when a hind in the lair of a powerful lion
Maketh a bed for her fawns, new-litter’d and delicate sucklings,
Fares then forth to the slopes and the grassy ravines of the mountains
Seeking for pasture—and lo, to his covert returning the lion
Suddenly maketh of both of the yeanelings a terrible ending;
Thus shall a terrible ending be made of the men by Odysseus.
Would that, by Father Zeus and Athena and Phoebus Apollo,
Such as he proved when of yore in the flourishing island of Lesbos
Fearless he met with the huge Philomeleides in a contest,
Wrestled and heavily threw him, and all the Achaeans exulted;
Would that he came—e’en such an Odysseus—to visit the suitors,
Bringing to all of them speedy perdition and nuptials of anguish!
Now for the matter whereof thou dost ask and entreat me, I promise
Nought will I wrest from the truth, nor evasively speak and deceive thee;
All that the ancient god of the sea—that prophet unerring—
Told me, of this will I nought keep back nor attempt to conceal it.

Once, as in Egypt I yearned to return to my home, the immortals
Hindered me still, for I failed to perform sufficing oblations
(Yea and the deities will it that mortals shall keep their commandments).
Now by the mouth of Aegyptus, amidst deep surges of ocean,

Riseth an isle—and the name that they give to the island is Pharos—
Distant so far from the coast that a hollow vessel can reach it
Sailing the whole of a day when the wind blows shrilly behind her.
Here is a haven secure, whence many a well-built vessel
Puts forth into the ocean, with dark sweet water replenished.
Days full twenty herein by the gods I was holden, nor ever
Rose with a favouring breath such breeze of the sea as attendeth
Vessels, to waft them along o'er wide expanses of ocean.
Now had the food been wholly consumed, and the strength of my comrades,
Save for the help of a goddess who felt compassion and saved me,
Daughter of Proteus, ancient and powerful god of the ocean,
Eidotheë, whose heart I had strongly aroused to affection.
While I was roaming alone and afar from the others she met me.
These all over the coast of the isle were wandering widely
Fishing with well-bent hooks, since famine gnawed at their belly.
Near to my side she approached and uplifted her voice and addressed me:
'Utterly childish thou seemst, O stranger, and indolent-witted.
Or is it choice that hath made thee remiss? Does suffering please thee?
Lo, it is long in this isle thou art holden, nor seemst to be able
Any escape to devise; and thy comrades' spirit is failing.'
Thus did she speak; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed her:
'Whichsoever thou be'st of the goddesses, all will I tell thee.
Nowise willingly here am I held, but have surely by sinning
Angered immortals who dwell in the wide expanses of heaven.
Therefore tell me, I pray—since gods have knowledge of all things—
Which of the deities fetters me thus, and has hindered my going?
Tell me the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse!'
Thus did I speak; forthwith responded the beautiful goddess:
'Yea, O stranger, the truth will I tell thee and clearly explain it.
Oft doth an ancient god of the ocean—the prophet unerring—
Proteus, hither resort—an Egyptian immortal, who knoweth
Every deep of the seas, and as herdsman serveth Poseidon.
Him do the voices of all as the father proclaim who begat me.
Lo now, shouldst thou be able by laying an ambush to catch him,
All he will surely reveal thee—the course and the bounds of thy journey—
Tell thee the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse;
Ay and if so thou shalt wish, Zeus-fostered prince, he will tell thee
All that has happened of good and of ill in the halls of thy homestead
During the years thou hast fared on a journey so long and so grievous.'
Thus did she speak; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed her:
'Plan me an ambush thyself for the old sea-god, to ensnare him,

Lest too soon he shall see me and, ware of my purpose, escape me.
Truly to master a god is a difficult task for a mortal.'
So did I speak; forthwith responded the beautiful goddess:
'Yea, O stranger, the truth will I tell thee and plainly declare it:
Oft as the sun upmounting attaineth the middle of heaven,
Out of the brine creeps forth that ancient oracular sea-god,
Hidden beneath black ripples he comes when the Zephyr is blowing,
Crawls from the water, and lays him to sleep in the shade of a cavern.
Round him the brood fin-footed of seals of the fair Halosydne
Issuing forth from the grey salt sea lie huddled together
Sleeping, and rank is the smell they emit of the deep salt water.
Unto the spot will I guide thee as soon as the morn is appearing;
There will I hide thee and station thy comrades. Be careful to choose thee
Three of the bravest of all of thy men in the well-decked vessels.
Now of the magical wiles of that ancient god I will tell thee:
First he will number his seals and will go on his round to inspect them;
After the counting is over and every seal is inspected,
Down in the midst, as a shepherd amidst of his flock, he will lay him.
Now so soon as ye see him at last well settled for slumber,
Then is the moment at hand that ye look to your strength and your courage:
Hold to him fast, however he longs and attempts to escape you!
This he will try by assuming the form of whatever of creatures
Creeps on the earth, and of water, and fire that fiercely consumeth.
Yet shall ye ever the more persistently hold him and grip him,
Till at the last he shall speak and himself shall address thee a question,
Bearing the shape once more in the which he was seen as he slumbered;
Then shalt thou loosen thy hold from the ancient god and release him;
Question him too, O prince, which deity beareth thee malice;
Ask him the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse.'

These words uttered, she plunged in the flood of the billowing ocean.
Then to the vessels, that lay high-beached on the sands of the sea-shore,
Straight I returned, and my heart as I went grew dark with forebodings.
After at last I had come to the sea and arrived at my vessels,
After the supper was done and ambrosial night was descending,
Then did we lay us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.
Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Straight I betook me along by the beach of the wide-wayed waters
Uttering many a prayer to the gods. Of the band of my shipmates
Three I had brought, whom chiefly I trusted for any adventure.
Meanwhile plunging below in the broad-spread gulf of the ocean

Out of the watery depths four sea-calves' skins she had carried,
All of them flayed quite fresh—a device for ensnaring her father.
Then, so soon in the sand she had scooped out hollows for hiding,
Sitting she waited until we arrived at the spot and approached her.
So in the lairs she arranged us and covered us each with a seal's skin.
Terrible now had it been—this lying in ambush; for sorely
Tried us the deadly malodorous stench of the brine-bred sea-calves;
(Where is the man would care to be couched with a monster of ocean?)
This howbeit she spared us, devising what greatly relieved us:
Bringing ambrosia, under the nostrils of each she applied it,
Breathing a scent so sweet that it conquered the stench of the sea-beasts.
Thus then all of the morning we waited with hearts of endurance,
Till at the last from the brine came flocking the seals, and they laid them
One by another in ranks on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.
High was the noon when the old god crawled from the water, and straightway,
Finding his fat-fed flock, went round it and counted the number,
Counting us too in the number of seals, nor felt a suspicion,
Noticing nought of the snare; and he laid him to slumber amidst them.
Suddenly then with a shout did we cast us upon him and hold him
Fast with the hands; and the old sea-god forgot not his cunning.
Firstly, behold, to the form of a long-maned lion he changed him,
Then to a serpent, and then an enormous boar, and a leopard;
Melted to water, and then as a tree shot towering upward.
Natheless still we persistently held him with hearts of endurance,
Till at the last, grown weary of trying his magic devices,
Thus did he speak—that old sea-god—and addressed me a question:
'Say now, which of immortals hath given thee counsel, Atrides,
Thus to enforce me by laying an ambush? For what dost thou want me?'
So did he speak; forthwith then I answered and thus I addressed him:
'Nay, thou knowest it! Why dost thou prate, old man, to mislead me?
Lo, it is long in this isle I am holden, nor yet am I able
Any escape to devise, and the heart in my bosom is failing.
Therefore tell me, I pray (since gods have knowledge of all things),
Which of the deities fetters me thus and has hindered my going?
Tell me the way to return and the teeming ocean to traverse.'
So did I speak; forthwith then he answered and thus he addressed me:
'Ay, but thou shouldst have offered to Zeus and to other immortals,
Ere embarking, a goodly oblation and prayed them to bring thee
Over the wine-dark sea with the utmost speed to thy country,
Since thou art fated thy friends no more to revisit, and never
Win to thy well-built home and arrive at the land of thy fathers,



THE STRUGGLE WITH PROTEUS

Ere once more to the flood of the heav'n-sprung river of Egypt
Making return thou shalt offer again some splendid atonement
Unto immortals who dwell in the wide expanses of heaven.
Then shall the deities grant thee the path that thy soul desireth.
Thus did he speak and my spirit was utterly broken within me,
Since he had bid me retraverse my path on the mist-bound ocean
Back to the river Aegyptus, so long and grievous a journey.
Yet e'en thus did I find me the words to address him in answer:
'Well then, all will I duly perform, old man, as thou biddest.
Tell me however a thing that I ask thee, and clearly explain it:
Whether the whole of the Greeks came home unscathed in their vessels,
All who remained when with Nestor I sailed from the land of the Trojans.
Know'st thou of any that met an inglorious death on the ocean,
Or at the hands of his kindred, when wound to the end was the warfare?'

Odyssey

IV

477-516

So did I speak; forthwith then he answered and thus he addressed me:
'Atreus' son, what maketh thee ask? 'Twere verily better
Nothing to know, nor to learn of my thoughts. Not long, I assure thee,
Tearless wouldst thou remain, if with all these sorrows acquainted.
Many a man of the Grecians is fallen and many surviving.
Two of the leaders alone of the bronzen-coated Achaeans
Perished returning (thyself wert present during the warfare).
One, still living, I ween, on the wide-spread ocean is holden.
Ajax met with his death in the midst of his long-oared vessels.
First by Poseidaon he was favoured, and coming to Gyrae
Under enormous cliffs found refuge safe from the ocean,
Yea and had surely escaped, though hated by Pallas Athene,
Had he not uttered a vaunt in his pride and infatuate madness,
Saying in spite of the gods he had traversed the gulf of the waters.
Him did Poseidon hear as he uttered the arrogant boasting.
Straight with his powerful hands did the sea-god seizing his trident
Smite on the rock Gyraean a blow which cleft it asunder.
Part of it held, but the part that was broken was flung in the ocean,
Even the portion whereon he had climbed and had sat in his madness.
So to the infinite depths of the billowing ocean it bore him.
There did he die, down-swallowing floods of the salt sea water.
Touching thy brother, escaping the dangers of ocean he safely
Crossed in his hollow ships, by the favour of Hera protected.
Ay and he nearly as far as Malea's precipitous headland
Now was arrived, when a tempest of wind down-sweeping upon him
Carried him, heavily groaning, away to the home of the fishes,

Odyssey Unto a distant bound of the land, once home of Thyestes,
IV Later the dwelling-place of Aegisthus, the son of Thyestes.
517 - 556 Hence too dawned for thy brother a hope of returning in safety.
Veered by the gods was the wind to a breeze which wafted him homeward.
Then at the last did he step on the land of his birth, and exultant,
Touching the earth of his own dear country he kissed it, and teardrops
Many and hot did he shed in his joy at beholding his homeland.
Him from a sentinel crag did the watcher descry, who was stationed
There by the crafty Aegisthus and promised reward for his watching,
E'en two talents of gold; and the whole of a year he had watched there,
Lest that the king should pass and make him remember his prowess.
Straight did he haste with the news to the house of the prince of the people.
Here forthwith was a plot right cunning devised by Aegisthus:
Choosing him twenty—the best of the fighters—he set them in ambush,
While at the opposite end of the hall he commanded a banquet.
Then did he go to invite Agamemnon the prince of the people;
Even with cars and with horses he met him—but brooded on murder;
Welcomed him home, all unsuspecting of treason—and killed him—
Feasted him—killed him—as one might slaughter an ox at the manger.
Neither was left one man that had followed with King Agamemnon,
Nor of Aegisthus' men: all died in the hall of the palace.'

Thus did he speak, and my spirit was utterly broken within me.
Bitterly weeping I sat on the sand, and the heart in my bosom
Cared not for living on earth or longer beholding the sunlight.
Then, when at last I was weary of weeping and writhing in anguish,
Speaking again he addressed me, that ancient oracular sea-god:
'Atreus' son, no longer, I pray, persist in this endless
Weeping, wherein no gain we shall find. Nay, rather bethink thee
How with the utmost speed to arrive at the land of thy fathers;
So shalt thou seize him alive, unless he is killed by Orestes
Ere thou arrivest and findest them holding his funeral banquet.'
Thus as he spake, in my heart and my valiant spirit within me
Once more comfort revived, though bitter indeed was my sorrow.
Then did I open my lips and with swift-winged words I addressed him:
'Now their fate do I know. Come, tell me the name of the third one,
Even the one still held in the midst of the wide-spread ocean,
Living or dead. Though bitter my grief, I am eager to hear it.'
Thus did I speak; forthwith then he answered and thus he addressed me:
'He that I mean is Odysseus the Ithacan, son of Laertes.
Him I beheld on an island, and plentiful tears he was shedding,

Held in Calypso's halls ; for the sea-nymph still with compulsion
Keepeth him there all hopeless of reaching the land of his fathers,
Since no ship well-fitted with oars he possesseth or shipmates,
Such as to help him to traverse the wide expanses of ocean.
Touching thyself and thy fate, O Zeus-loved prince Menelaus,
Not with thy doom thou'lt meet midst horse-grazed meadows of Argos.
Thee to the ends of the earth and the plain Elysian later
Gods everlasting shall bring, where dwells fair-haired Rhadamanthys ;
Here is a life that of all is the lightest for earth-born mortals :
Here comes never the snow, nor a violent tempest and rain-storm ;
Here incessantly breatheth the breeze of the soft-voiced Zephyr
Sent by the ocean to bring to the land and its dwellers refreshment.
Yea, since Helen is thine, gods hail thee as son of the Highest.'

These words uttered, he plunged in the flood of the billowing ocean.
Then to the vessels, together with those my heroic companions,
Straight I returned, and my heart as I went grew dark with forebodings.
After at last we had come to the sea and arrived at the vessel,
After the supper was made and ambrosial night was descending,
Then did we lay us to sleep on the surf-beat strand of the ocean.
Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Firstly of all down-dragging the ships to the vast salt water
On to the well-trimmed vessels we carried the sails and the mainmasts,
Then ourselves we embarked and seating us down on the benches
Smote with the well-ranged oars on the grey-green brine of the ocean.
Back to the stream we returned of the heav'n-sprung river of Egypt ;
Here our vessels I moored and performed sufficing oblations.
So when appeased was the wrath of the gods everlasting, I straightway
Built Agamemnon a tomb, for his fame's undying remembrance ;
Which things duly fulfilled I departed, and favouring breezes,
Sent by the deities, sped me across to the home that I yearned for.
Now come, hearken I pray, and remain thou here in my palace
Till the eleventh is past and the twelfth day come to its dawning ;
Then will I speed thy departing and offer thee glorious presents,
Horses three and a car well polished ; and then I will give thee
Also a beautiful cup, that whenever thou makest libation
Unto the gods thou'lt think of thy friend so long as thou livest."
Him sage Telemachus addressing in turn gave answer :
"Ah, Menelaus, attempt no longer, I beg, to detain me !
E'en for the space of a year 'twere easy to sit with contentment
Here at thy side, nor yearn to revisit my home and my parents,

Such is the wonderful pleasure with which to thy words and thy stories
 Ravished I list; but already my mates are weary of waiting
 Over in beautiful Pylos—for long is the time thou hast kept me.
 Touching thy gift, give rather a present to keep as an heirloom!
 Horses to Ithaca ne'er will I take—far liefer I leave them
 Here, as the pride of thy stalls. Thou art lord of a plain and of pastures
 Widely extending and bearing abundance of lotus and spear-grass,
 Waving with wheat and with spelt and with broad-ear'd glistening barley.
 Ithaca holds not a mead, nor widespread courses for riding;
 Pastures it offers for goats more lovely than pastures for horses.
 Suited for riding and pasturing horses is none of the islands
 Lying exposed to the ocean, and Ithaca less than the others."
 Thus did he speak. With a smile Menelaus good at the war-cry
 Touched him caressing, and thus with a word of affection addressed him:
 "Noble indeed is thy blood, dear child, since nobly thou speakest.
 Well, I will make an exchange in the gifts—I can readily do so.
 Out of the store of the treasures that lie in my palace as heirlooms
 One that is fairest of all, unrivalled in worth, will I give thee,
 Even a bowl for the mixing of wine, well-fashioned of silver,
 All of it solid; but finished with gold is the lip of the vessel.
 This is a work of Hephaestus that hero Phaedimus gave me,
 King of the people of Sidon, who once in his palace received me,
 Thither returning, and now I am wishful on thee to bestow it."

Thus long time did they hold such converse one with the other.
 Meantime banqueters flocked to the house of the godlike monarch
 Bringing the sheep for the feast, and wine which gladdens a mortal.
 Bread moreover was sent by the fair-tressed wives of the feasters.
 Then in the hall of the palace they busily furnished a banquet.

Meantime sported the suitors in front of the home of Odysseus,
 Taking delight in the hurling of spears and in casting the discus,
 Using a levelled ground that was often the scene of their uproars.
 Seated was Antinous, and anigh him was sitting the godlike
 Eurymachus. These two were bravest and best of the suitors.

Now came Phronius' son, and approached them, the famous Noëmon.
 Turning to Antinous he addressed him and asked him a question:
 "Antinous, do we know in the least—doth none of us know it,—
 How soon Telemachus is returning from Pylos the sandy?
 Off he is gone with a vessel of mine, and it happens I need her

Over to spacious Elis to cross, for a dozen of brood-mares
There I possess. Hard-labouring mules I am rearing beneath them,
Still unbroken, and one I will take from the mother and train it.”
Thus did he speak, and they gazed with amazement, for ne'er had they deemed him
Gone to Neleian Pylos, but thought he was still in the country,
Somewhere either afield with the flocks or perhaps with the swineherd.
Then spake Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed him :
“Tell me the truth ! Say, when did he go ? What followers took he ?
Were they the pick of the Ithacan youths, or a crew of his own men,
Servants and thralls of the farm ? He was capable even of this too.
Also relate me the truth of the matter and give me assurance :
Took he by force and in spite of thy wishes thy black-hulled vessel ?
Or was it willingly lent him—thy ship—when he asked and entreated ?”
Straightway Phronius' son thus answered, the famous Noëmon :
“Willingly lent was my ship. How could one possibly otherwise,
Seeing a man like this, with a mind so full of vexations,
Begging a loan ? ’Twas truly a difficult thing to refuse him.
Also the noblest youths of the land—we only excepted—
Join'd him as crew ; and Mentor I noticed embarking as captain,
Mentor or else an immortal in all points like him exactly.
One thing puzzles me still ; for the godlike Mentor I saw here
Yester dawn—but the vessel had started already for Pylos.”
These words uttered, he left them and went to the house of his father,
While in the valiant spirits of both fierce anger was kindled.
Unto the suitors they called to desist from the games and be seated.
Then spoke Antinous, Eupheithes' son, and addressed them :
Wroth was the man, with a heart in the turbulent depths of his bosom
Swelling with rage, and his two eyes blazing as flames of a furnace :
“Heavens ! A fine thing now—and an impudent too—has accomplished
Telemachus, with this voyage of his that we never believed in.
Gone is the child, and in spite of us all ! He has simply defied us—
Got them to launch him a ship, and has chosen the best of the rowers !
Now still more of a plague he will prove. Zeus hurl to perdition
Him and his fury before he shall hatch new troubles to vex us.
Come now, give me a good swift vessel and twenty companions,
So shall I lay me an ambush and watch his arrival, and catch him
Just 'twixt Ithacan shores and the rock-bound island of Samos.
Doleful enough he'll find these sailings in search of a father !”
Thus did he speak, and they all of them shouted approval and urged it.
Then forthwith uprising they entered the house of Odysseus.

Odyssey Neither for long thereafter from Penelopeia was hidden
IV All that was said, and the plot so darkly devised by the suitors.
675-714 Medon the herald informed her, who oft to the plottings had listened
Standing outside of the court as they wove these counsels within it.
Thorough the palace he hasted to tell it to Penelopeia,
Till, as he stepped from the stone of the door she perceived and addressed him:
“Wherefore, herald, I pray, art thou sent by the arrogant suitors?
Cam'st thou to order the women attendants of godlike Odysseus
Laying aside their tasks to prepare these masters a banquet?
Would that without more wooings, without more banquetings either,
Now on the spot they'd sup their last and their latest supper!
Ye that as wolves come trooping and wasting the wealth of the homestead,
Riches of Telemachus wise-hearted, I ween that ye never
Heard your fathers in days of the past—you being but children—
Speak of Odysseus and how he was prized by the men that begat you,
How that he never in word or in deed wrought any injustice
Unto the people—the wont of a ruler appointed by heaven,
While that he hateth the one of his subjects and favours another.
No! by Odysseus was none e'er treated with pride and presumption,
Whilst for yourselves . . . what spirit is yours, what shameless behaviour,
Plainly appears; and to him that is kind ye are utterly thankless.”
Then did the sage old Medon, the herald, address her in answer:
“Would, dear lady, that this were the worst of the evils that threaten!
Greater by far is the crime, and fraught more fully with danger,
Now by the suitors devised. God grant that they never fulfil it!
Telemachus with the edge of the sword they are meaning to murder
While he is voyaging homeward; for, hoping to hear of his father,
Lately he started for Pylos the fair and divine Lacedaemon.”

Thus did he speak, and with knees and with heart all quaking she stood there.
Speechless long she remained, struck mute, while gathering teardrops
Flooded her eyes, and the flow of her clear-voiced utterance failed her,
Till at the last she recovered her speech and addressed him in answer:
“Wherefore, herald, I pray, is my son departed? He nowise
Needed to mount on a ship—on a swift-paced vessel that sailors
Ride as a horse and traverse the watery waste of the ocean.
Wills he that even his name no longer remain in remembrance?”
Then did the sage old Medon, the herald, in answer address her:
“Whether a deity urged him I know not, or whether within him
Moved was his spirit to journey to Pylos to gain him assurance
Or of his father's return or else of the fate he hath met with.”

These words uttered he turned and retraversed the house of Odysseus,
While o'erwhelmed with her grief, heartbroken, and wholly unable
Still on a chair to remain—of the many that stood in her homestead—
Down by the threshold she sank on the floor of the well-built chamber,
Uttering pitiful wails, and around her lamented her maidens,
All of the women attendants, the young as the old, in the palace.

These then addressing with many a groan spake Penelopeia :
“Dear ones, listen—for sorrow hath Zeus the Olympian sent me
Passing the sorrows of all of the friends and the mates of my childhood.
Erstwhile lost I a husband—my lord with the heart of a lion—
Foremost of all of the Grecians in every manly perfection,
Him whose fame is abroad through Hellas and midmost Argos.
Now is my dearly-belovéd, my son, swept hence by the storm-blasts,
Vanished from hearing and home—nay, e'en of his going I heard not !
Ah, hard-hearted ! for none of you, none, took thought to inform me,
Waking me out of my slumbers, and none, though fully ye knew it,
Said to me aught when he mounted aboard of the black-hulled vessel.
Had I but known he was making him ready to fare on a journey,
Verily either at home he had stay'd, though bent on departure,
Else he had left me behind him dead in the halls of his homestead.
Nay come, one of you haste and the good old Dolius summon,
Even the slave I received, ere hither I came, from my father.
Now to my garden of trees he attends. Go, see that he quickly
Sit by the side of Laertes and tell him of all that has happened.
He peradventure will weave a device in his mind, and in public
Unto the people will proffer his plaint of the men who so fiercely
Purpose his seed to destroy and the seed of the godlike Odysseus.”

Her did the nurse give answer, the dear old Eurycleia :

“Slay me, my mistress belov'd, with the pitiless blade, or in pity
Leave me to live in thy halls—not a word will I hide of the matter.
All of it, all, did I know ; I supplied him with all that he wanted,
Even with bread and with sweet strong wine, and I solemnly promised
Nothing to thee to reveal till the twelfth day came to its dawning
(Didst thou not miss him before, and by questioning learn his departure)
Lest thou perchance shouldst weep and thy fair face mar with thy weeping.
Nay now, bathe thee with water and throw fresh raiment around thee,
Then to thy upper apartment ascending with women attendants
Pray to Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.
She is a goddess that even from death will be able to save him.
Trouble the old man not !—he hath trouble enough—and believe me,
Ne'er is the race of Arceisius' son by the blesséd immortals

Odyssey Hated so wholly; an heir shall survive and shall hold in possession
11 High-roof'd homes and the fruitful domains spread widely around them."

756-798.

Thus did she still her lament and her pitiful tears; and her lady,
After herself she had bathed and cast fresh raiment around her,
Unto her upper apartment ascending with women attendants
Placed in a basket the barley for sprinkling and prayed to Athene:
"Daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis, thou maiden unwearied,
Listen! If ever of yore in his homestead wileful Odysseus
Burnt to thy honour the fat thigh pieces of sheep or of oxen,
This I beseech thee remember, and rescue my son, my beloved!
Ward far off the malicious designs of the insolent suitors!"

These prayers uttered, she wailed, and her vows were heard by the goddess,
While from the shadowy hall came sounding the din of the suitors,
All of the insolent youths thus shouting, the one to the other:

"Lo now, truly at last our lady of many a wooer
Thinketh of wedding—nor knows that the death of her son is determined."

Thus spake one to the other, nor knew they of what was determined.

Antinous then turned to his fellows, and thus he addressed them:

"See to avoid, good sirs, all language loudly disdainful—

All such boasting—that none to the palace within shall report it.

Rather in silence, so far as ye can, let us rise and accomplish

All we bespake, for the thing we decided was fully agreed on."

Thus did he speak, and choosing him twenty, the best of the rowers,

Forthwith went on his way to the ship and the strand of the ocean.

Here did they first draw down to the deep sea water a vessel,

Then, on the black-hulled vessel embarking the sails and the mast-tree,

All of the oars to the tholes made fast with the lashings of leather,

Each in its place, and the white sails hoisted aloft on the yardarm.

Weapons also aboard were carried by haughty attendants.

Now when at last she was moor'd high out in the harbour, embarking

There on the vessel they supped and awaited the coming of even.

Still in her upper apartment remained wise Penelopeia.

Fasting she lay on her couch, and heedless of thirst and of hunger

Mused on her valiant son—was he yet to escape from destruction,

Or was he doomed as the victim to fall of the arrogant suitors?

E'en as a lion that wavers in doubt in the throng of the hunters,

Fearing, as closer they draw the insidious circle around him,

Thus did she waver in doubt till, a deep sleep falling upon her,

Backward softly she sank with her joints all loosened, and slumbered.

Other was now the device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene.
First she created a phantom. In form it was like to a woman,
Iphthimé, who was daughter of Icarius great-hearted,
(Her Eumelus had taken to wife, and her home was at Pherae.)
Then did she send it to go to the palace of godlike Odysseus,
Bidding it make the bewailing and sorrowing Penelopeia
Cease from her groaning and shedding of tears and her sad lamentation.
Into the room by the hole of the latch-string entered the phantom,
Stood at the head of the queen, and thus it began to address her:
"Sleep'st thou, Penelopeia, outwearied at heart with thy mourning?
Ne'er can it hap that the gods, who live at their ease in the heaven,
Wish thee to weep and to sorrow. Again to his home they will bring him,
Even thy son—for in nought hath he vexed the immortals by sinning."
Then forthwith gave answer the wise-souled Penelopeia,
Though at the portal of dreams she already was slumbering softly:
"Wherefore now art thou come, O sister? Never aforetime
Here to resort was thy wont, since distant far is thy homestead.
Yea and thou biddest me cease from my pain and forget my afflictions,
All those many afflictions that torture my mind and my spirit!
Erstwhile lost I a husband—my lord with the heart of a lion,
Foremost of all of the Achaeans in every manly perfection,
Him whose fame is abroad through Hellas and midmost Argos.
Now is my well-loved son on a hollow vessel departed,
Yet but a child, unskilled in the deeds of a man and in speaking.
Him I lament more bitterly still than I mourned for his father,
Yea I lament and I tremble in fear lest aught shall befall him
Either among those people he visits, or else on the ocean,
Seeing that many a foe plots evil devices against him,
Longing to kill him or ever he win to the land of his fathers."
Then to the queen once more made answer the shadowy phantom:
"Take thou courage, nor feel in thy heart such dread and despondence.
She who attendeth and guards him is such that a mortal in peril
Ever will pray her to stand at his side (for to aid she is able),
Pallas Athena, the goddess who pities thee now in thy sorrow;
Yea it is she that hath bidden me come this message to bring thee."
Then to the phantom again spake wise-souled Penelopeia:
"Art thou divine, or hast listened to words by divinity spoken,
Come, I beseech, and the fate of that other unfortunate tell me,
Whether he still is alive on the earth and beholdeth the sunlight,

Odyssey
IV
794-833

Odyssey Or—is he dead and already below in the mansion of Hades ?”

IV Then to the queen once more made answer the shadowy phantom:
834-847 “Touching the fate of thy lord I can say to thee nothing for certain

Whether he lives or is dead ; and an evil is idle discussion.”

These words uttered it glided away by the bolt of the doorpost

Into the air and the breezes of heaven ; and out of her slumbers

Penelopeia awoke, and the heart in her bosom was lightened,

Such was the clearness with which had approached her that vision of midnight.

Now had the suitors embarked and had voyaged the paths of the waters
Plotting a violent death in their hearts for the son of Odysseus.

Far from the land there riseth a crag in the midst of the waters,

Just 'twixt Ithacan shores and the rock-bound island of Samos,

Asteris ; tiny the inch, but within it a harbour for shipping

Twy-mouthed ; here the Achaeans awaited him, lying in ambush.

ODYSSEY BOOK V

WHILE that the Morn from the couch of her consort, lordly Tithonus,
Newly arisen was bringing the daylight to men and immortals,
Unto a session of council the deities gathered, and midst them
Sat high thundering Zeus, whose might of them all is the greatest.
Then did Athena begin of Odysseus, his many afflictions

Calling to mind, for it grieved her to think of him still with the sea-nymph :
"Father Zeus and ye other immortals eternally blessed,
Never be kindly affectioned again, nor loving and gentle,
Any that beareth the sceptre as king, nor righteously minded !
Nay, let him rather be hard and be cruel and practise injustice !
So is it true that the godlike Odysseus by none is remembered,
None of the people he governed and lovingly ruled as a father.
Now on an island he lieth, and cruel the pain that he suffers,
Held in Calypso's halls ; for the sea-nymph still with compulsion
Keepeth him there all hopeless of reaching the land of his fathers,
Since no ship well-fitted with oars he possesseth or shipmates,
Such as to help him to traverse the wide expanses of ocean.
Also his dearly-belovéd, his son, they are meaning to murder
While he is voyaging homeward ; for hoping to hear of his father
Lately he journeyed to Pylos the fair and divine Lacedaemon."
Her then in turn gave answer the Father who gathers the storm-clouds :
"Nay but my child, what word by the door of thy lips hath escaped thee ?
Surely the plan was devised, and by none but thyself, that Odysseus
Safely returned to his home should wreak his revenge on the suitors.
Telemachus do thou guard with thy guidance (for well thou art able)
So that without all harm he shall come to the land of his fathers,
While all baffled the suitors return once more in the vessel."

These words uttered, to Hermes, his well-loved son, he addressed him :
"Hermes—for ever as herald thou bear'st the behests of immortals—
Bring to the fair-tressed nymph our will's immutable verdict,
Even that patient Odysseus return and arrive at his homeland,
Neither by furthering aid of the gods nor of men that be mortal—
Nay, on a firm-lashed raft shall he sail and with sufferings many
Days full twenty shall drift, till he come to the Scherian island,
Land of a nation akin to the gods, Phaeacian people ;
These in their hearts will revere him and honour him like an immortal,
Yea and will send him again in a ship to his well-loved homeland,

Giving him many a present of bronze and of gold and of raiment,
Riches so great as he never had won from the land of the Trojans
Had he returned unscathed and received full share of the booty.
Thus is he fated his friends once more to revisit and once more
Win to his high-roofed home and arrive at the land of his fathers.”

Thus when he spake, Hermeias the Messenger, Slayer of Argus,
Quickly obeyed, and he bound to his ankles the beautiful sandals,
Golden, immortal, that carry him over the waters of ocean
Swift as the blast of a storm, and across earth's boundless expanses ;
Took then his wand, with the which men's eyes he entranceth to slumber
E'en as he wills, while others again from their sleep he awaketh.
So with the rod in his hand the redoubtable Slayer of Argus
Flew, till above the Piërian land from the sky to the ocean
Plunging he sped mid the waves of the sea, as a cormorant speedeth
Over the perilous gulfs of the barren expanses of ocean,
Chasing the fishes and drenching in salt sea water its plumage.
Thus Hermeias was borne mid the infinite throng of the billows,
Till at the last he arrived at the shore of that far-off island.
Here from the violet depths of the ocean emerging he mounted
Into the island until he was come to a cavern capacious,
Home of the fair-tressed nymph of the sea ; and he found her within it.
High from a hearth shot upward a flame, and widely around it
Odours of splintered cedar and juniper over the island
Spread as it blazed ; and within with a beautiful voice she was singing,
Moving in front of her loom, and with shuttle of gold she was weaving.
Close to the cavern and clustered around it was growing a coppice ;
Alder was there and poplar and cypress of delicate perfume.
Many a long-winged bird in the copse found covert at night-time,
Many a falcon and owl, and crook-billed chattering sea-crows,
Birds of the brine which busy themselves with a life on the ocean.
Here too, stretching in front of the hollow mouth of the cavern,
Trailed a luxuriant vine rich-laden with many a cluster.
Four bright runnels of water arose from a neighbouring fountain,
Each one nigh to the other but turned to a different channel.
Spreading around soft meadows with violets blossomed and parsley
Richly bedight—yea e'en an immortal, if haply he came there,
All might wondering view and rejoice in his heart to behold it.

Here stood gazing in wonder the Messenger, Slayer of Argus,
Till at the last, when his spirit was fully contented with gazing,

Into the wide-mouthed cavern he entered ; and standing before her
Straightway known was the god to the beautiful goddess Calypso,
Seeing that never unknown is a deity unto another,
None of the spirits immortal, not e'en if he dwells at a distance.
Not inside of the cavern he found great-hearted Odysseus.
Out on the beach he was sitting and weeping, as ever aforetime,
Painfully racking his soul with his grieving and groaning and weeping,
Gazing with tears in his eyes at the barren expanse of the ocean.
Now with a question addressed him the beautiful goddess Calypso,
After the god on a polished and glittering chair she had seated :
" God of the golden wand, Hermeias, revered and beloved,
Say now, why art thou come ? Thou camest rarely aforetime.
Tell me the whole of thy thought. I am bid by my heart to fulfil it,
What to fulfil I am able, if Fate shall permit the fulfilment.
Now come, follow within ! I will give thee a welcome as guest-friend."
These words uttered the goddess, and placing a table beside him
Full of ambrosia, mixed him of rich red nectar a goblet.
Soon was he drinking and eating, the Messenger, Slayer of Argus.
Now when at length he had supped and contented his spirit with eating,
Unto the goddess he turned and thus he addressed her in answer :
" Thou who art goddess hast questioned a god on his coming, and therefore
All that as message I bear will I truly relate, as thou biddest.
Zeus hath commanded me hither to come, and I came—but unwilling.
Who would willingly cross such spaces of salt sea water ?
Terrible, endless ! and never at hand was a city of mortals
Where to the gods oblation of choice fat victims is offered.
Ah but the mind and the purpose of Zeus who beareth the aegis
None can evade or annul, not even another immortal.
Here in thy home is a man, he asserts, most wretched of all men,
All of the others who fought at the siege of the city of Priam
Nine long years—In the tenth, when the city was sacked, they departed
Homeward ; but during the voyage they sinned and offended Athene ;
Therefore roused she the wind and enormous billows against them.
Then did the rest, yea all of his brave companions, perish ;
Hither alone he was borne by the stress of the wind and the billows
Him Zeus bids thee to send on his way—and as quickly as may be.
Destiny willeth it not that he die here far from his dear ones,
Since he is fated his friends once more to revisit and once more
Win to his high-roofed home and arrive at the land of his fathers."

Thus did he speak and she shuddered, the beautiful goddess Calypso ;

Then upraised she her voice and with swift-winged words she addressed him:
 "Truly ye gods are cruel of heart and exceedingly jealous!
 Ever ye grudge that a goddess shall mate with a man that is mortal,
 Openly though it be done and she take him as consort and love him.
 Thus when Orion was chosen by Morning, the roseate-fingered,
 All of you gods were jealous, who live at your ease in the heaven,
 Till in Ortygia's isle chaste Artemis, golden-enthronéd,
 Launching her painless shafts assailed him and suddenly slew him.
 Also with Iasion when the fair-tressed goddess Demeter,
 Yielding herself to desire, was united in tender embracements,
 While in a thrice-ploughed fallow they lay, right quickly perceived it
 Zeus; and he cast with the blinding bolt of his thunder and slew him.
 Now once more ye are jealous, ye gods, that I live with a mortal,
 Even the man that I saved as he clung to the keel of his vessel
 Sole—for the swift-winged ship with the blinding bolt of his thunder
 Zeus in the midst of the wine-dark ocean had smitten and shattered.
 Then did the rest, yea all of his brave companions, perish;
 Hither alone was he borne by the stress of the wind and the billows.
 Him did I tenderly cherish and nourish, and also I promised
 Even to make him immortal and ageless for ever and ever.
 Ah but the mind and the purpose of Zeus who beareth the aegis
 None can evade or annul, not even another immortal.
 So, let him go!—since such is the will and command of the Father—
 Over the wastes of the sea let him go! No aid can I give him,
 Since I possess no ships well fitted with oars and with rowers,
 Such as to help him to traverse the wide expanses of ocean.
 Yet will I readily prompt him thereto, nor will practise concealment,
 So that without all harm he shall come to the land of his fathers."
 Her then in turn gave answer the Messenger, Slayer of Argus:
 "Well now, speed his departing, and slight not the wrath of the Father,
 Lest peradventure hereafter in anger he send thee affliction."

These words uttered, departed the valiant Slayer of Argus.
 Then great-hearted Odysseus to seek did the lady Calypso
 Quickly betake her, as soon as she heard the behest of the Father.
 Him still sitting she found on the shore; incessant the teardrops
 Flooded his eyes, and ebbing away was his life and its sweetness,
 While for his homeland he pined, no longer in love with the sea-nymph.
 Truly at night he had ever (not finding a means of refusal)
 Slept by her side in the cave, unwilling indeed—but she willed it.
 All day long howbeit he sat on the rocks or the shingle

Painfully racking his soul with his grieving and groaning and weeping,
Gazing with tears in his eyes at the barren expanse of the ocean.
Coming anigh now spake and addressed him the beautiful goddess:
"Ill-starred mortal, remain no longer with me on my island,
Wailing and pining to death! I am ready to speed thy departure.
Come now, fell with the axe tall timber and join it together
Into a broad-beamed raft, and a bulwark fix thou upon it
High, that in safety it carry thee over the mist-bound ocean.
Then on the raft will I place wheat-bread, sweet water and red wine,
Food that delighteth the heart of a man and appeaseth his hunger.
Raiment to clothe thee withal will I give, and a breeze will I send thee,
Such as shall bring thee in safety again to the land of thy fathers,
Should the immortals be willing who dwell in the infinite heaven,
Since they are stronger than I to devise what they will and perform it."
Thus did she speak and he shuddered, the patient and godlike Odysseus;
Then upraised he his voice and with swift-winged words he addressed her:
"Other is here thy device, O goddess—not homeward to send me—
While on a raft thou bidd'st me retrace a gulf of the ocean
Such in its terrors and perils that never a well-built vessel
Voyaging swiftly and gladdened by Zeus-sent breezes will cross it.
Ne'er will I mount on a raft—still less if it give thee displeasure—
Art thou not willing to swear me an oath and solemnly promise
Never against me to plot a device that is evil to harm me."
Thus did he speak, and smiling the beautiful goddess Calypso
Touched him with gentle caress, then opened her lips and addressed him:
"Truly thou seemest a rogue—not at all with the wits of a weakling—
Craftily thus to devise in thy heart these words thou hast uttered.
Well—be my witness the earth and the infinite heaven above us,
Yea and the water of Styx which floweth beneath us—the greatest,
Most terrific of oaths e'er sworn by the blessed immortals—
Ne'er will I plot a device that is evil against thee to harm thee.
Nay, what I think and intend to advise is exactly the counsel
I to myself would give, were suchlike need to befall me.
Also in me is a mind which loves what is fair and is seemly,
Nor is the heart in my bosom of iron; it feelth compassion."

These words uttered, at once went forward the beautiful goddess,
Hastily leading the way, and he followed the steps of the sea-nymph.
Soon they arrived, both goddess and man, in the shade of the cavern.
Here did Odysseus recline on the chair from the which had arisen
Hermes, and near him the nymph laid out all manner of viands,

Odyssey Many a meat and a drink—such food as is eaten by mortals.
Then on a chair she reclined full fronting the godlike Odysseus,
197-236 While that her maiden attendants ambrosia brought her and nectar.
Now did they stretch forth hands to the food that was lying before them,
Till, when at last they had lost all longing for meat and the wine-cup,
Once more made a beginning the beautiful goddess Calypso :
“Zeus-born son of Laertes, thou wise and wileful Odysseus,
Dost thou indeed so wish to the well-loved land of thy fathers
Now forthwith to return? E’en so, good fortune attend thee!
Yet, if thou knewst in thy heart what measure of woe and affliction
Still it is fated for thee to fulfil ere reaching thy homeland,
Here thou’ldst wish to remain, and to rule as the lord of my household,
Yea and be made an immortal—how strong soever thy yearnings
After thy consort—for whom thou art sighing for ever and always.
Ay and forsooth not less am I able to boast me of beauty
Either of form or of favour—for surely it never beseemeth
Earth-born women to vie with immortals in form and in feature.”
Her then in answer addressed these words deep-plotting Odysseus :
“Goddess and queen, O speak not in anger! I know it myself too—
Well do I know it that likened to thee wise Penelopeia
Seems less comely in face and in form less noble to look on.
She is an earth-born woman and thou art immortal and ageless.
Still e’en so, it is true, I am longing and yearning for ever
After my home, and I dream of the dawn of the day of returning.
E’en if a god should shatter my raft on the wine-dark ocean,
All will I bear, for the heart in my bosom disdaineth disaster.
Much I have suffered already, and many a peril and hardship
Seen on the sea and in war: let this to the number be added!”
Thus did he speak, and the sun went down, and the darkness descended.
Then did the twain to an inner recess of the cavern betake them.
Here they delighted in love and abode right gladly together.

Now when the morning was newly arisen, the roseate-fingered,
Forthwith donned his apparel Odysseus, his tunic and mantle,
While that the nymph threw round her a garment of glistening whiteness,
Delicate, lovely; and over her waist then fastened a girdle,
Beautiful, fashioned of gold; and her head in a hood she enveloped.
Then she bethought her to send on his way great-hearted Odysseus.
Firstly a great wood-axe, in his hands well fitted, she gave him,
Fashioned of bronze, two-edged; and firmly inserted within it
Fixed was a helve of the wood of an olive, of wonderful beauty.



THE BUILDING OF THE RAFT



Also she gave him an adze well-sharpened, and going before him
Led to an end of the isle where tall straight timber was growing;
Alder was there and poplar and pine which reacheth to heaven,
Dry long since, well-seasoned and buoyant to float on the water.
After the spot she had shown where tall straight timber was growing;
Homeward again she betook her, the beautiful goddess Calypso.

Odyssey
V
237-275

Then did he hew him his rafters, and quickly the work made headway.
Twenty the trees that he felled, and he lopp'd all clean with the wood-axe,
Planed them and cut all straight to the line with the skill of a master.
Now meanwhile she had brought to him borers, the goddess Calypso,
So that he bored each beam, and fitting the one to the other
Hammered and joined all firmly together with clamps and with tree-nails.
Even as much as a man who is versed in the craft of a shipwright,
Making a broad-beamed hull, might measure him off for the bottom,
Such for his broad-beamed raft was the platform made by Odysseus.
Bulwarks too he erected and strengthened with many an upright,
Coping them off from above in the whole of their length with a gunwale;
Made then a mast and shipped it, and hoisted and fitted the yardarm;
Fashioned moreover a rudder to guide its course in the waters;
Fenced it around from the stem to the stern with a wattle of osiers,
Making it safe from the waves; and he covered it over with boarding.
Now meanwhile she had brought to him canvas, the goddess Calypso,
Bidding him fashion the sails, and he wrought these skilfully also,
Binding upon them the sheets; and he rigged her with braces and halyards,
Then with his handspikes hove her down to the vast salt ocean.
Now was the fourth day come, and all of his labour was ended;
So on the fifth day sped his departing the goddess Calypso,
Bathing him first and arraying him freshly in fragrant apparel.
Then to the raft she conveyed dark wine in a bottle of goat-skin
—One was of wine and another, a greater, of water—and viands
Stowed in a wallet; and many a toothsome relish she added.
Then did she send him a favouring breeze both gentle and kindly.

Now exulting his sails to the breeze spread godlike Odysseus.
Keeping the raft to her course by the helm with the skill of a sailor
Seated he steered (nor a moment did drowsiness fall on his eyelids),
Holding the Pleiads in view and the autumn-setting Boötes,
Holding moreover the Bear, that is called by the name of the Wagon.
(Ever she circles around and around on the watch for Orion,
Having alone of the stars no share in the baths of the ocean.)

Odyssey Her—since thus had commanded the beautiful goddess Calypso—
Voyaging over the ocean he steadily held on the left hand.
276 - 314 Seven and ten was the number of days that he voyaged the waters,
Till on the eighteenth day he beheld far shadowy mountains,
Where was arising the land Phaeacia nearest before him,
Like to a vapoury rack, as it loomed on the mist-bound ocean.

Now from the Aethiop people returning, the King Earth-shaker
Forth of the far-off hills of the Solymi looked, and beheld him
Voyaging over the sea, and, enraged more fiercely than ever,
Wagging his head in his wrath, spake thus to the spirit within him:
“Lo now! Truly it seemeth the gods have altered their counsels
Touching Odysseus, when I was away with the Aethiop people.
Now he is nigh to the land Phaeacia, where he is fated
Out of affliction’s net to escape, that was closing around him;
Yet shall I force him, I promise, to suffer his fill of misfortune.”
Thus as he spake he collected the clouds and stirred up the ocean,
Both hands seizing the trident, and wakened to fury the tempests,
Every wind of the heaven. All covered and darkened with storm-rack
Earth was at once and the sea, while down from the sky fell midnight.
Wildly together they rushed—East, South, and the furious West Wind,
Air-born Boreas too, with a huge wave rolling before him.
Then were loosened the limbs and the inmost heart of Odysseus,
While distracted he spake to the valiant spirit within him:
“Ah, poor wretch that I am! What fate in the end will befall me?
Verily now do I fear that she spake too truly, the goddess,
Saying that here on the sea, ere reaching the land of my fathers,
Woes to the full I shall suffer. It surely is finding fulfilment.
Lo, how mighty the rack wherewith envelops the welkin
Zeus; and he stirreth the deep, and down come sweeping the storm-blasts,
Every wind of the heaven. Now sheer destruction is certain.
O thrice happy and four times they, those heroes who perished
Once on the Trojan plain for the sake of the lordly Atridae!
There, O, would I had died and my destined doom had encountered,
Yea on the day when so many a bronze-shod spear of the Trojans
Hurtled around me bestriding the body of fallen Achilles!
So had I gained death-rites and th’ Achaeans had held me in honour.
Now by a pitiful doom overwhelmed I am fated to perish.”

E’en as he spake from aloft came crashing a billow enormous
Bursting terrific upon him and whirling the quivering raft round.

Far from the raft he was swept by the wave, and the rudder in falling
Loosed from the grip of his hand, while clean in the middle the mast snapt,
Smit by the terrible blast of the winds which met in a cyclone.
Far off on to the waves down clattered the sail with the yardarm.
Long did it keep him below in the depths of the water, unable
Swiftly to rise, held back by the rush of the mountainous rollers,
Weighed down too by his garment, the gift of the goddess Calypso.
Slowly at last he arose, and the pungent brine of the billow
Spat from his mouth, while down from his head in a flood it was streaming.
Neither forgot he the raft e'en then, though sorely exhausted.
Making a dash in the water he reached it and clutched it, and climbing
Sat him amidships down, thus saved from the jaws of destruction,
While on the great sea-rollers she tossed, swept hither and thither.
Even as Boreas sweepeth in autumn the down of the thistles
Over a plain, all closely entangled together in masses,
So now over the sea winds carried her hither and thither.
Now for a space she was left by the North as a sport for the South Wind,
Now by the East for a time to the West the pursuit was abandoned.

Seeing his peril the daughter of Cadmus with beautiful ankles,
Ino Leucothœe—erstwhile an articulate mortal,
Now in the depths of the brine by the gods as a deity honoured—
Pitied Odysseus, as thus he was tossed by the storm and distracted.
So as a gannet, uprising on wings from the waste of the waters,
Down on the firm-lashed raft she alighted and spake to him, saying:
“Tell me, unfortunate, how doth it hap Earth-shaking Poseidon
Thus exceedingly rageth and sends thee so many misfortunes?
Nay but he ne'er shall destroy thee, how much soever he yearneth.
Lo now, this shalt thou do—for thou seemst not lacking in wisdom.
Doff these garments, and letting the raft drift loose to the storm-wind
Leave her, and trust to thy hands; they shall bring thee in safety by swimming
Unto the Scherian land, where destiny grants thee a refuge.
Take this scarf—'tis a tissue ambrosial. Bind it around thee
Over thy breast, and thou needst not fear to be harmed and to perish.
Then—so soon as thy hands have grasped securely the dry land,
Loosen the scarf and flinging it back in the wine-dark ocean
Far from the edge of the shore, make haste from the spot to avert thee.”

So did she speak, and, leaving the garment behind her, the goddess
Plunged in the billowing flood once more of the waters of ocean,
Like to a gannet; and quickly the dark wave hid her beneath it.

Odyssey
V
354-391

Then did he ponder in doubt, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,
While despondent he spake to the valiant spirit within him:
"Ah woe! Surely again some snare contriveth against me
One of the gods, thus bidding me leap from my firm-lashed vessel.
Nay, not yet will I do it, for still at a distance I noticed
Lying the land where Fate (as she said) is to grant me a refuge.
Lo now, this will I do—for I think it is certainly better:
While that the timbers shall hold them in all their jointings together,
Here on the raft I shall stay and endure all hardships and perils;
Should howbeit the waves break all of the vessel in pieces,
Then will I swim. I can find no better device and precaution."

Whilst these things in his mind and his spirit he still was revolving
Sent an enormous roller the King Earth-shaking Poseidon.
Terrible, irresistible, vaulted, it toppled upon him.
Even as chaff that is lying in heaps, when a violent storm-gust
Seizes the light dry husks and scatters them hither and thither,
Thus did the wave send flying the beams of the raft; but Odysseus
Mounting on one of the timbers bestrode it, as riding a racer,
Stripping himself of his garment, the gift of the goddess Calypso.
Hastily over his breast then binding the scarf of the sea-nymph
Into the water he plunged, both hands extended before him,
Eager to swim. But the King Earth-shaking Poseidon, who saw it,
Wagging his head in his wrath spake thus to the spirit within him:
"There! thou hast suffered already—and now go toss on the ocean!
Swim till thou reachest the dwellings of earth-born children of heaven!
Not e'en there, do I think, thou'lt carelessly prate of disaster."
Thus in his anger he spake, and, lashing his long-maned horses,
Swiftly was there where standeth his glorious temple at Aegae.

Then did Athena the daughter of Zeus plan other devices.
Staying the furious courses of all of the rest of the storm-winds,
Bidding them cease and be still and peacefully lay them to slumber,
Boreas swift she aroused, and she whitened the billows before him,
Heaven-descended Odysseus to rescue from death and destruction,
Wafting him home to the lovers of oars, Phaeacia's sea-folk.

So two days and two nights did he toss on the mountainous billows
Drifting, and oft in his spirit the coming of death he foreboded,
Till, when the third day rose from the lap of the fair-tressed morning,
Then of a sudden abated the wind, and it ceased, and a calm spread

Breathless around, and the land once more much nearer he sighted,
Gazing intently ahead when aloft on the crest of a billow.
Welcome as life, when again it returneth, appeareth to children
Whose dear father was lying in sickness and suffering anguish,
Withering slowly away, by the wrath of a deity wounded:
E'en as they welcome him back, by the gods set free from his trouble,
So to Odysseus was welcome the sight of the land and the forests.
Strongly he swam, in his longing to tread with his feet on the dry land,
Till, when as far from the shore as the voice of a shouter will carry,
Sudden he heard on the reefs and the shingle the thunder of surges.
Here was a terrible surf that was crashing on rocks of the mainland,
Horribly belching, and all was enwrapped in the foam of the salt spray;
Neither a haven was there for the mooring and shelter of shipping;
Headlands only he saw and reefs and crags overhanging.
Then were loosened the limbs and the inmost heart of Odysseus,
While distracted he spake to the valiant spirit within him:
"Ah me! Lo, of the land unhop'd-for vision had granted
Zeus, and far I had cloven my way in the gulf of the ocean;
Now from the grey salt sea no place for a landing appeareth;
All outside it is rugged with crags, and around them the billows
Thunder and surge, where steeply and smoothly the precipice rises.
Near it the water is deep, nor might one hope to discover
Hold for the feet, whereby to escape from the jaws of destruction;
So that I fear some roller enormous will seize me and hurl me
On to the sharp-jagg'd rocks, and vain would prove my endeavour.
Ay, but if further along I shall swim in the hope to alight on
Beaches that slope to the water or sheltering creeks of the ocean
Much do I fear some blast of the wind may seize me and bear me,
Heavily groaning, away once more to the home of the fishes;
Or peradventure a god might send some monster against me
Out of the brine, where feedeth her sea-droves Amphitrite.
How I am hated I know by the King Earth-shaking Poseidon."
Whilst these things in his mind and his spirit he still was revolving,
On to the rock-bound shore he was borne by a billow enormous.
Here had his skin been stript and his bones all broken in pieces,
Had not the thought been put in his heart by the goddess Athene
Suddenly forward to dart and to clutch with his hands on a boulder,
Clinging to which with a groan he awaited the rush of the roller.
This he withstood and escaped it; but seaward recoiling the billow
Leapt on him, smote him and hurled him away far out on the ocean.
E'en as it haps when a cuttle is dragged from its hole by a fisher

Odyssey While to its tentacle-tips full many a pebble is clinging,
v Thus by the jags of the rock from the strong bold hands of Odysseus
433 - 472 Stript was the skin as the mountainous billow descended upon him.
Now had the hapless Odysseus despite all destiny perished,
Had not a fortunate thought been sent by the goddess Athene.
Steering him clear of the surf of the surge that was thundering landward
Further he coasted along and he gazed at the land to discover
Beaches that slope to the water or sheltering creeks of the ocean.
Then at the last to the mouth of a river of beautiful waters
Swimming he came, and here he believed was the place for a landing;
Smooth was the rockless beach, and withal from the wind was a covert;
Soon too, feeling the stream of the river, he prayed in his spirit:
"Hear me, whoever thou be'st, O King! As thy suppliant I too
Pray thee to succour me fleeing the deep and the threats of Poseidon.
E'en by the gods everlasting is every mortal respected
Should he as wanderer come to entreat them for succour, as I now
Come to thy river and fall at thy knees, outworn with my labours.
Nay now pity me, prince, for thy suppliant, lo, I avow me."
Thus did he pray, and it slackened the might of its billowy current,
Spreading before him a calm; and the deity brought him in safety
Unto the beach at the mouth of the stream—but his knees and his stout hands
Powerless drooped, for the sea had his inmost heart overmastered;
Swollen was all of the flesh of his body, and plentiful sea-brine
Oozed in his mouth and his nostrils, and long time breathless and speechless
Swooning he lay on the ground, for a terrible weariness seized him.

Now when at last he revived and the soul was recalled to the senses,
Forthwith loosing again from his bosom the scarf of the goddess
Into the midst of the tide of the sea-tinged river he launched it.
Down on the current a great wave bore it, and speedily Ino
Held it again in her hands. Then back from the river he turned him,
Knelt on the rushes, and kissing the earth, dear mother of harvests,
Thus distracted he spake to the valiant spirit within him:
"Ah me! what shall betide? What fate in the end will befall me?
Here if the whole of the night I shall anxiously watch by the river,
May not the dangerous rime and abundant dews of the morning
Master the soul that within me already is gasping for faintness?
Cold too breathes ere morning ariseth the breeze of the river.
Should I however, ascending the slope to the shade of the forest,
Seek to recline me and rest in the thick of the bushes, I fear me,
Cold and weariness gone and sweet sleep stealing upon me,

Unto the ravening beasts I shall fall as a prey and a booty." Thus as he pondered thereon this plan seemed surely the better : Up to a coppice he went, and he found trees nigh to the water Standing apart in the open, and 'neath two bushes he hid him Sprung from the selfsame stock—true olive and wilding of olive. These did the might of the wind ne'er breathe through laden with moisture, Neither did ever the sun with the shafts of his radiance pierce them, Nor did the rain drip through them at all, so densely together Woven the one with the other they grew ; and beneath them Odysseus Crept, and anon with his hands he had raked him a litter together Spacious and deep ; for of leafage was lying a plentiful downfall, Such as for two or for three might offer enough of protection During the season of storms, how bitter soever the weather. This then seeing with joy, long-suffering godlike Odysseus Laid him to rest in the midst of the leaves, and he piled them around him. E'en as a man might cover a brand with the blackened ashes Out on a bound of his farm, where living is none of his neighbours, Guarding the seed of the fire (else must he rekindle from elsewhere), So did he cover him closely with leaves ; and the goddess Athene Poured on his eyes sweet sleep, for she wished right soon to release him Out of his weary exhaustion ; and gently she covered his eyelids.

ODYSSEY BOOK VI

HERE then slumbering lay long-suffering godlike Odysseus
All o'ermastered by sleep and by weariness, while that Athene
Hastened to visit the land Phaeacia's city and people.
These once dwelt in the city of spacious squares Hypereia,
Near the Cyclopien people, a race that with pride overweening
Harried them ever and spoiled them and proved more mighty in warfare.
Godlike Nausithöus thence moved them and found them an island,
Scheria, distant from all bread-nourished races of mortals.
Here did he circle a city with ramparts and builded the houses ;
Shrines for the gods he erected and meted the bounds of the corn-lands.
Conquered howbeit by Fate had he gone to the mansion of Hades.
Now reigned Alcinöus, who was wise by the counsels of heaven.

His was the mansion she entered, the grey-eyed goddess Athene,
Planning to bring once more to his home great-hearted Odysseus.
Straight to a rich-wrought chamber she went, wherein was a maiden
Slumbering, like to a goddess immortal in form and in feature,
Nausicäa, sole daughter of Alcinous great-hearted.
Near to her two of her damsels, of beauty endowed by the Graces,
Lay by the post of the door, and shut was the glittering portal,
Yet as a breath of the air to the couch of the maiden the goddess
Glided, and standing anigh to her head these words she addressed her,
Taking the form of the daughter of Dymas, mariner famous,
One that in age was her equal and dear to the soul of the maiden ;
Such was the form, as she spake, of the grey-eyed goddess Athene :
" Nausicaa, how comes it thy mother has borne thee so heedless ?
Lo, still wholly neglected thy glistering raiment is lying
While that thy wedding is nigh and thou needst right beautiful garments
Both for thyself and to give a supply to the friends that escort thee.
Yea too, such is the way in the which one's good reputation
Spreadeth abroad, and a daughter rejoiceth her father and mother.
So come, go we a-washing as soon as the daylight appeareth !
Lo, I will come as thy comrade and share in the labour, that quickly
All shall be ready ; for soon we shall see thee a maiden no longer,
Since thou art woo'd by the best of the whole Phaeacian people,
Chiefs of the race from the which thou also thy lineage drawest.
Come and solicit thy father renown'd, that betimes in the morning
Mules and a wagon be harnessed in readiness, such as to carry

Girdles and garments and all our bundles of glistening bedding.
Yea, and for thee 'twere better to drive than wearily wend it
All upon foot; for the place of the washing is far from the city."

Thus did she speak, and departing the grey-eyed goddess Athene
Won to Olympus; for here, it is said, the abode everlasting
Stands of the gods, which winds ne'er shake nor ever a rain-storm
Wetteth, and never a snowflake falleth, but cloudless the aether
Spreadeth above, and over it floateth a radiant whiteness.
Here dwell happy the blessed immortals for ever and ever.
Hither the goddess betook her whenas she had counselled the maiden.

Now in her glory enthroned came Morning, and soon she awakened
Fair-robed Nausicaa, who marvelling much at the vision
Passed to the outer apartment to make all known to her parents,
Even her father beloved and her mother; and soon did she find them.
Nigh to the hearth was her mother, amidst of the women her handmaids,
Spinning a wool of the rich sea-purple. Her father she happed on
Issuing forth of the palace to join the illustrious chieftains
Met in a council, to which Phaeacian nobles had called him.
Nigh to her well-loved father she stood while thus she addressed him:
"Father beloved, say, wouldst thou not bid them prepare me a wagon
Lofty and strong on the wheels, our beautiful clothing to carry
Down to the river—whatever is soiled? I am wishful to wash it.
Yea and for thee it is seemly, when'er thou consortest with nobles,
Sitting at counsellor meetings, to wear clean clothes on thy body.
Five dear brothers moreover of mine were born in thy palace.
Two are wedded indeed; but the three are younger and lusty,
Clamouring alway to have their garments fresh from the washing
Ere to the dances they go.—Which things were ever my duty."

Thus did she speak, for her gladsome marriage it irked her to mention
E'en to her father beloved; but he noticed it all, and he answered:
"Neither the mules do I grudge thee, my child, nor anything other.
Go, an thou wilt—and the servants shall soon make ready a wagon
Lofty and strong on the wheels, well fitted besides with an awning."
Thus did he speak and commanded the servants, who quickly obeying
Out in the court made ready a wain smooth-running, a wagon
Harnessed for mules—and the mules were brought and yoked to the carriage.
Carrying then from her chamber the glistening garments the maiden
Carefully stowed them away in the smooth-wrought car of the wagon.

Then in a box were placed by her mother provisions delightsome,
Every kind, and the relish she added, and wine she decanted
Into the skin of a goat; and the maiden ascended the wagon.
Then in a vial of gold soft oil of the olive she gave her,
Bidding her bathe and anoint her, and also the women her handmaids.
So with the whip in her hand and the glistening reins did the maiden
Whip to a start; and a clatter arose, and the two mules tugging
Strained unflaggingly forward and carried the clothes and the maiden.
Neither alone did she fare: she was followed by others, her women.

Odyssey
VI
76-114

Now when at last they arrived at the beautiful stream of the river,
Here the perennial basins they found where waters abundant
Welled up brightly enough for the cleansing of dirtiest raiment.
So their mules they unloosened from under the yoke of the wagon,
Letting them wander at will on the bank of the eddying river,
Browsing on clover as sweet as the honey, and then from the carriage
Bearing within their arms to the deep dark water the garments
Cast them in trenches and trod them in rivalry one with another.
So, when the raiment was washed and was thoroughly cleansed of the dirt-stains,
All on the shore of the ocean in order they spread on the shingle
Where it is washed by the tides of the sea as they sweep to the dry land.
Then did they bathe, and anointing themselves with the oil of the olive
Sat them adown to the midday meal on the bank of the river,
Leaving the garments to dry on the beach in the glare of the sunlight.
Now when in food they had fully delighted, both she and her maidens,
Casting aside their scarfs with a ball they betook them to playing,
White-armed Nausicaa with the choral melody leading.
E'en as descending a height moves Artemis, darter of arrows,
Either on Taÿgetus long-ridged or on huge Erymanthus,
Taking delight in the chase of the boar and of timorous roe-deer,
Whilst all round her the daughters of Zeus who beareth the aegis,
Nymphs of the woodland, play—and Leto sees it rejoicing;
Even as over the rest uplifting her brows and her forehead
Easily known in her beauty she stands, though fair be the others,
Thus shone forth in her beauty the maiden amidst her attendants.

Now when at last it was come to the moment of homeward returning,
After the mules were yoked and folded the beautiful garments,
Other was then the device of the grey-eyed goddess Athene,
E'en that Odysseus awaking and seeing the fair-faced maiden
Her might follow as guide and reach Phaeacia's city.

Seizing the ball, at a maiden among her attendants the princess
Flung it, but missing the maiden it fell in a bottomless eddy.
Piercingly all of them shrieked; and godlike Odysseus, awakened,
Sat straight up and pondered thereon in his heart and his spirit:
"Ah me! what is the folk whose country I now am arrived at?
Dwell here savages wanton and wild, despisers of justice?
Have they a love for the stranger and hearts that revere the immortals?
Lo, how piercing a cry as of maidens ringeth around me,
Nymphs peradventure that dwell on precipitous summits of mountains,
Or by the fountain springs of the rivers and leas of the lowlands;
Else, maybe, I am near to a folk of articulate language.
Nay, go to, I will test for myself this matter and view it."

These words uttered, from under the bushes the godlike Odysseus
Issued, and breaking a branch with his powerful hand from the thicket
Girdled his body with leaves, its nakedness striving to cover.
Thus in the pride of his strength from his lair in the mountain a lion
Stalks forth soaked with the rain and battered with wind, and his two eyes
Flame as he prowleth abroad midst droves of the sheep and the oxen
Or on the track of the deer, and often his belly will bid him
Making assay on the flocks e'en strong-built granges to enter;
So to the fair-tressed maidens Odysseus was fain to betake him,
Though all naked his body—on such distress was he fallen.
Sight terrific he seemed to the maidens, disfigured with sea-brine.
Hastily hither and thither in panic they fled to the sand-spits.
Sole stood firmly the daughter of Alcinous; for Athene
Gave to her courage of heart and took from her limbs all trembling;
Facing him calmly she stood; and Odysseus pondered within him
Whether as suppliant clasping the knees of the beautiful maiden,
Or as he was, at a distance, to speak soft words of entreaty,
Begging her show him the city and grant him the gift of a garment.
Thus as he pondered thereon, this plan seemed surely the better,
Holding apart, from a distance, to speak soft words of entreaty,
Since that by clasping her knees he was fearful to anger the maiden.
Straightway therefore a word both gentle and cunning he uttered:
"Thee, O Queen, I implore. O . . . whether a goddess or mortal!
Art thou a goddess—of those who inhabit the infinite heaven—
Then it is Artemis surely, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty,
Both in thy form and thy stature and beauty to whom thou art likest.
Art thou a daughter of man, and dwellest on earth as a mortal,
Happy I deem, yea three times happy, thy mother and father,



NAUSICAA AND ODYSSEUS



Happy and three times happy thy brothers ; for surely exultant
Gloweth in gladness the spirit within them, whene'er they behold thee
Entering into the dance, so lovely a flower of girlhood.
Yet, ah, how in his heart more happy than every other
He that with gifts shall prevail and homeward lead thee as lover !
Never till now have seen mine eyes such beauty in mortal,
Man nor woman : amazement possesseth me while I behold it.
Suchlike wonder indeed by Apollo's altar in Delos
Once I beheld—uprearing its column a sapling of date-palm ;
(Yea, e'en thither I came, and was followed by many a fighter,
Holding a course whereon sore sorrow was fated to meet us).
Even as then this wonder beholding I marvelled in spirit,
Long time gazing—for ne'er such shaft from the earth shot upward—
Thus, O lady, I marvel at thee and am greatly astonished,
Fearing thy knees to approach, though sorrow hath fallen upon me.
Yester-e'en to the shore I escaped from the wine-dark ocean.
Nineteen days from the isle Ogygia billows and storm-blasts
Ceaselessly bore me, and hither at last some deity cast me,
Planning, meseemeth, that still I shall suffer ; for never, I fear me,
All of my travail shall end till the gods much more shall accomplish.
Nay, O Queen, have pity ! To thee, outworn with my labours,
Lo, as a suppliant first I am come, and of others I know not
Any, of all of the folk that inhabit this town or the country.
Show me the city, and give me a garment, to cast it about me,
Even a rag, or the wrapper perchance that thou broughtst for the linen !
So shall the gods all blessings bestow that thy soul desireth—
Husband and home ; and oneness of heart may heaven vouchsafe thee,
Blessing supreme—since nought can be wished that is greater and better
While united in heart and in mind are dwelling together
Husband and wife. 'Tis a sight brings sorrow to wishers of evil,
Joy to the wishers of good ; but the joy in their hearts is the loudest."

Then spake white-armed Nausicaa, and addressed him in answer :
"Stranger,—for truly thou seemest a man nor evil nor foolish—
Zeus, our Father in heaven, alone allotteth to mortals,
Unto the good as the evil, to each as he willeth, his fortune.
He, as I doubt not, hath given thee this—thou wilt have to endure it.
Lo, now—since thou art come and hast reached our country and city,
Neither of clothes shalt thou fear to be lacking nor aught that thou needest,
Such as is due to the poor and the wretched from those that he meeteth.
Gladly the town will I show thee, and tell thee the name of the people :

Odyssey Folk Phaeacian dwell in the land and inhabit the city.
VI I myself am the daughter of Alcinous great-hearted,
196 - 238 Even the king who upholds Phaeacia's might and dominion."

Thus did she speak, and exhorted the fair-tressed girls, her attendants :
"Tarry, my girls! Why thus at the sight of a man do ye scatter?
Surely ye never can hold him for one of a nation of foemen!
Not on the earth there's living the mortal, nor ever shall live one,
Such as shall come to the shores of the great Phaeacian people
Bringing the ravage of war; for the gods everlasting befriend us;
Yea, and apart do we dwell, far over the foam of the ocean,
Furthest of races, nor ever doth visit us other of mortals.
Lo—it is some poor wight that is come in his wanderings hither.
Him it is right that we help. It is Zeus our Father that sendeth
Strangers and beggars; and e'en though small, some gift will be grateful.
Therefore give to the stranger to eat and to drink, O maidens;
Bathe him too in the stream where 'gainst all wind is a covert."
Thus did she speak, and they halted and called each one to the other;
Then in a covert they seated Odysseus—for so had commanded
Nausicaa, fair daughter of Alcinous great-hearted.
Also beside him they laid for his raiment a mantle and tunic,
While in a vial of gold soft oil of the olive they gave him,
Bidding him thoroughly cleanse him and bathe in the stream of the river.

Then forthwith to the maidens the godlike Odysseus addressed him :
"Handmaids, stand ye apart so long, until I shall wash me
Off from my shoulders the brine, and well with the oil of the olive
Rub me—for truly anointing is long to my body a stranger.
Here in your presence I never will bathe, since shyness forbids me
Thus to divest me in front of the faces of fair-tressed maidens."
So did he speak, and returning again to the lady they told it.
Then in the stream of the river his body the godlike Odysseus
Cleansed of the brine all over his back and his shoulders encrusted,
Rinsing his hair from the foam of the barren expanses of ocean.
So when at last he was bathed and anointed with oil of the olive,
After himself he had clad in the garments, the gift of the maiden,
Then by Athena the goddess, the daughter of Zeus the Almighty,
Taller and stronger to view he was made, while down from his head fell
Clustering thickly the locks of his hair, as the flower hyacinthine.
Even as gold o'er silver is poured by an artist—a craftsman
Taught in his art by the god Hephaestus and Pallas Athene

Manifold skill, and of beauty is every work that he fashions ;
Thus did she pour forth grace on the shoulders and head of Odysseus.
Then withdrawing he sat him adown on the shore of the ocean
Gleaming in beauty and grace, and with marvel the maiden beheld him,
Nausicaa ; and she spake to the fair-tressed girls, her attendants :
“ Harken, my white-armed maidens, attend to the words that I utter !
Verily nought but the will of immortals that dwell in Olympus
Granteth this stranger to reach Phaeacia’s glorious nation.
Erstwhile truly methought he was right ill-favoured in person ;
Now he is like to the gods who the infinite heaven inhabit.
Would that a man like this might win him the name of my husband,
Should he be pleased to remain in the land and to settle amongst us !
Therefore give to the stranger to eat and to drink, O maidens ! ”
Thus did she speak, and attentive they listened and followed her bidding
Quickly they set both viands and drink by the side of the stranger.
Then did he drink and eat, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,
Eagerly—seeing in truth no food long while he had tasted.

White-armed Nausicaa in the meanwhile plotted it elsewise :
Folding the clothes, in the car of the beautiful wagon she laid them,
Ordered the strong-hoofed mules to be yoked, then, mounting the carriage,
Unto Odysseus she turned and thus she addressed him, and urged him :
“ Rouse thee, stranger, to come to the city, that now I may bring thee
Unto my home ; for my father is wise, and there in his palace
Soon thou shalt make thee acquainted with all Phaeacia’s princes.
Lo now, thus shalt thou act—and thou seemst not lacking in wisdom.
While in the fields and the meadows we pass and the tillage of farmers
Keep thee anigh to the maidens, and after the mules and the wagon
Hasten thy steps and follow us closely the way I shall guide thee.
After we enter the city . . . around it a battlement runneth
Lofty, and lying to left and to right is a beautiful harbour.
Narrow the mouth of the port, and the mole is defended by vessels,
Twy-beaked galleys that lie on the slip, each one at its station.
Next is the square, that environs the beautiful shrine of Poseidon,
Fitted with flags hauled down from the quarries and deeply embedded.
Here one busily works at the black ships’ tackle and rigging,
Cables and sails, and here one planes and tapers the oar-blades ;
Since Phaeacian men care nothing for bows and for quivers ;
Only for masts and for oarage they care and for well-built vessels,
Proudly rejoicing in which on the grey-green ocean they voyage.
Their rough slanderous speech will I shun, lest any hereafter

Utter reproach—and in truth right insolent folk are among them.
Ay, now too peradventure a clown might meet us and mutter :
'Lo there, Nausicaa ! Who follows her, burly and handsome ?
Plainly a foreigner ! Where did she find him ? 'Tis clearly a bridegroom !
Either she's got for a guest a deserter from one of the vessels,
One of a far-off race—since nobody liveth anigh us—
Or at her urgent entreaty a longed-for god is descended
Down from the heights of the heaven to have and to hold her for ever.
Better in sooth if she wanders abroad and procures her a husband
Elsewhere, seeing she holds in dishonour the men of her country,
All Phaeacian youths, so many and noble, that woo her.'
So will they speak ; and for me such words might turn to dishonour ;
Yea and myself would censure another for doing this action,
One that in spite of her friends, with her father and mother alive still,
Mingled with men, till come was the day of her open espousals.
Give now heed to my words, O stranger, that quickly as may be
Escort safe and return to thy country my father shall grant thee.
Nigh to the road thou'lt find a luxuriant grove of Athene,
Where amid poplars wellet a fount ; and around is a meadow.
Near to the place is my father's domain with a flourishing orchard,
Lying as far from the town as the voice of a shouter will carry.
Here shalt thou seat thee and rest thee awhile, till into the city
I and my maidens be come and arrived at the house of my father.
Now when at last thou shalt deem us assuredly come to the palace,
Start once more, and passing within Phaeacia's city
Ask for the house of my sire, King Alcinous great-hearted.
Easily known is the palace, and even a boy will direct thee,
Even a child, since like to the house none other is builded,
No Phaeacian dwelling—so goodly the home of the hero
Alcinous. Now, passing the shade of the court and the outhouse,
Hastily traverse the hall, until to my mother thou comest.
Here doth she sit at the side of the hearth in the glow of the firelight
Spinning a wool of the deep-sea purple, a wonder to gaze at.
Leaning her chair on a pillar she sitteth with maidens behind her.
Close to the chair of the queen there leaneth the throne of my father.
Here doth he sit when he draineth his wine-cup like an immortal.
Him pass hastily by, but my mother approach, and entreat her
Clasping her knees with thy hands ; and the joyous day of returning
Soon shalt thou see—yea, though far distant lieth thy country.
Shouldst thou be able to gain of my mother her heart and her favour,
Then good hope will be thine to revisit thy friends and in safety

Win to thy well-built home once more and the land of thy fathers."

Odyssey

VI

315 - 331

Thus did she speak, then raising above her the glistering whip-lash
Smote at the mules, and they left right quickly the streams of the river.
Briskly they trotted and briskly with paces inwoven they ambled,
While with the rein she withheld them, applying the lash with discretion,
So that the maids and Odysseus behind might easily follow.

Now was a-setting the sun, and they came to the glorious coppice,
Grove of Athena ; and here did he seat him, the godlike Odysseus.
Forthwith then did he pray to the daughter of Zeus the Almighty :
" Daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis, thou Maiden unwearied,
List, O list to me now—though never thou heardst me aforeside
Smit by the billows of ocean, when smote me the King Earth-shaker.
Grant me to win of the folk Phaeacian favour and pity !"
So did he speak in his prayer, and she hearkened, the goddess Athene,
Though not yet to his eyes she appeared in a manifest vision,
Fearing the brother of Zeus, who still in his furious anger
Raged at the godlike Odysseus—until he arrived at his homeland.

ODYSSEY BOOK VII

THERE as he rested and prayed, long-suffering godlike Odysseus,
Unto the city the two mules sturdily carried the maiden,
Till, when at last she was come to the far-famed house of her father,
Under the portal she halted, and round her collected her brothers,
Like to immortals; and soon they began from the yoke of the wagon
Both of the mules to unloose, and to bear to the palace the garments.
Then did she pass to her chamber, and quickly the hearth was a-blazing,
Lit by the aged Apeiran attendant, Eurymedusa.
Her did the twy-beaked ships once bring from the land of Apeira;
Then as a prize was she given to Alcinous, who as monarch
All Phæacia ruled; yea, e'en as a god they obeyed him.
Ever on white-armed Nausicaa did she wait as attendant.
Now too kindled she fire and prepared in the chamber the supper.

Then did Odysseus uprouse him to enter the town; and Athene
Poured thick darkness around him—for ever she favoured the hero—
Lest Phaeacian men high-tempered, meeting a stranger,
Haply with insolent words might ask him his name and his country.
Now, when at length he was wishing to enter the beautiful city,
Nigh to the gate there met him the grey-eyed goddess Athene,
Likened in form to a maiden, a girl that was bearing a pitcher.
Right in his path she was standing, and godlike Odysseus addressed her:
“Wouldst thou conduct me, my child, on my way to the house of the hero
Alcinous, who they say is the monarch of all of this people?
I am a wayworn stranger, and hither am come from a country
Far, far over the ocean; and therefore none do I know here,
None of the folk that inhabit the town or that work in the corn-lands.”
Him forthwith gave answer the grey-eyed goddess Athene:
“Yea, Sir stranger, the house to the which thou hast bidden me guide thee
Gladly I'll show it, for near to my honoured father he liveth.
Come!—but in silence as much as thou canst! I will hasten before thee.
See that thou starest at none, nor putttest to any a question,
Since Phaeacians cannot away with an alien stranger,
Nor do they welcome and kindly receive who comes from a distance.
Ay but they travel! They cross, on their swift ships proudly reliant,
Even the sea's great gulf. 'Tis a boon they obtain from Poseidon.
Yea and as swift as a bird or a thought is the speed of their vessels.”